



March, 2019

The Connecticut Poetry Society Newsletter

The CPS website is <http://ctpoetry.net/>.

While you're online, *Friend us on Facebook.*

CPS Honorary Board

Rennie McQuilkin, Connecticut Poet Laureate,
2015-2018

Marilyn Nelson, Connecticut Poet Laureate,
2001-2006

Vivian Shipley, Connecticut State University
Distinguished Professor at SCSU

CPS Officers

Co-Presidents: Tony Fusco & Pat Mottola

Vice President: Victor Altshul

Secretary: Christine Beck

Treasurer: Mark Sheridan

Contests: Joan Hofmann

Webmaster: Tony Fusco

Membership: Tony Fusco

CRR Editor: Ginny Connors

Newsletter: Ginny Connors

Outreach: Mark Sheridan & Christine Beck

Program Director: Victor Altshul

Board Meeting Coordinator: Julia Paul

Interested in Getting More Involved?

We are looking for someone to take over as Membership Chair and we'd also like a Publicity Chair. Contact Tony Fusco or Pat Mottola if you can help.

Save the Date!

Our annual CPS **Poetry Blast** is scheduled for May 5th. More information on the Blast will be coming soon. We hope members and their guests will enjoy it as much as people seemed to enjoy the holiday party in December, which featured refreshments, door prizes, a program on poets of note who went on to greener pastures in 2018, and an open mic, always a highlight of our gatherings.



The CPS board at the Holiday Party

NFSPS

Members of CPS are also members of NFSPS (National Federation of State Poetry Societies). You can access their newsletter and find other information on their website

here: <https://www.nfsps.com/>

CPS Chapters & Presidents

Bethel

Liz Massey
finchwhistlehaven@gmail.com

The Bethel chapter meets at Bethel Library, 189 Greenwood Avenue, on the second Saturday of each month, from 2:00 - 4:00 PM June through August. They gather in the Morse Meeting Room. They will revisit their meeting place later in summer. contact Liz.

Farmington Valley

Terence McCaffrey
860-416-6684
tmccaff24@hotmail.com

This chapter meets one Tuesday of each month in the library at Tunxis Community College from 6-8 pm. Contact Terrence to get more information and to get on the email notification list. Bring copies of your poem if you want feedback.

Greater Hartford

Julia Paul
Julia.Paul@cox.net

The Greater Hartford chapter meets on the 2nd Sunday of each month, Sept. through June from 2-4 pm at Welles Turner Library, 2407 Main Street, Glastonbury. Bring copies of a poem to share if you want feedback on your work.

Manchester

Linda Richardson
wwpoetryclub@gmail.com

The Manchester chapter meets from 1-3 pm on the second Saturday of each month from September through June at The Arbors, 403 West Center Street in Manchester. Bring ten copies of a poem to share, although we do not give serious critiques of the poems. The chapter meets informally in July and August at the same location.

Middletown

Pamela Guinan
860-563-5761
Pamela.cps@hotmail.com

The Middletown chapter meets at the Russell Library, 123 Broad Street at 6 pm on the last Wednesday of each month. Bring copies of a poem for reading and critique.

New Haven

Vic and Laura Altshul
lauraaltshul130@gmail.com

The New Haven chapter meets on the third Saturday of the month at the Friends Room at Miller Memorial Library, 2901 Dixwell Ave., Hamden, from 10:15 am-12:15 pm.

Pomfret

Christine Kalafus
CEKworks@charter.net

This new chapter meets the second Monday of every month, excluding July and August. The meeting time is 7 pm and the location is Pomfret Town House, 17 Town House Road, Pomfret.

Southbury

Marion McGauhy
860-354-2157
Mcgauhy@aol.com

The Southbury Chapter meets on the fourth Sunday of the month at 2 pm. Meetings are held at the Southbury Public Library, 100 Poverty Road. New and prospective members should contact Marion for summer meeting schedule times as the library's hours change during the summer.

Wilton

Ray Rauth
Rayrauth@optonline.net

This group meets every third Saturday from 2 to 4 pm in the Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road. Members bring in copies of poems to distribute to all of the attendees. The poems should be no more than 40 lines.

Presidents' Message

—Tony Fusco and Pat Mottola

Welcome to March! The years roll by and so many things change; fortunately, so many things stay the same. The practice and celebration of the art we know is so important to our lives and to the world continues on. Poetry weathers the hard times, brings comfort and solace when we read or hear it. It gives us a sense of camaraderie and strengthens the bonds of friendship as it extends an invitation to knowledge, empathy and understanding of others. Soon like Spring, poetry will blossom again with new writers and new depths of emotion and social commentary. It is a cycle which ripples out across our experience. It is a smile and a nod that says "I get that, I think I get you."

April is National Poetry Month in the United States; some places celebrate it in October. There will be many readings and a spotlight on poetry for those who know very little of it to those who have been immersed in it for many years. The Connecticut Poetry Society will sponsor our annual Poetry Blast the first week of May in order to not conflict with the many April events. We are happy to report that our Poets on Poetry – or POP program – is expanding and exceeding our expectations. Our membership is increasing. We are opening new chapters and workshops and spreading the creation and appreciation of the craft. We have a healthy mix of new members and long-time members.

Poetry raises the spirit, it educates, it spreads happiness, and is a salve that helps us share and shoulder grief and sadness. Poetry is and has always been in the forefront of social

enlightenment, be it as satire or praise, acceptance or denouncement of our state of humanity. We enjoy seeing this love of the art form spread to a new generation as it has done for us and for so many others.

POPs Program Is Expanding

Poets on Poetry, or POPs, continues to draw many who are interested in poets and poetry. At the Hartford Library on 500 Main Street, two outstanding programs have been held so far in 2019: Christine Beck talking about Jane Kenyon and Joe Senno sharing his knowledge of Rainer Maria Rilke. What's ahead? On March 30, Joseph Brockway will do a presentation on Nemir Matos-Cintrón. On April 27, Luisa Caycedo-Kimura will guide a discussion on Louise Glück. On May 25, John Surowiecki will lead a talk about Frank O'Hara. These programs begin at 10 AM and are held in room 139 of the library.

The Southington Library is eager to host the POPs program also. The presentations there will be on Wednesday nights from 6:30-8:30. If you missed Christine Beck's presentation on Jane Kenyon, you can catch it there on March 27. Luisa Caycedo-Kimura's discussion of Louise Glück will take place on April 10, and on May 22 the focus will be Gwendolyn Brooks, moderated by Kate Rushin.

The New Haven Public Library is also going to host some POPs programs, on the second Saturday of each month, at 10:30 am. Mark Sheridan will discuss Sylvia Plath in April, Kate Rushin will present on Gwendolyn Brooks in May, and Pablo Neruda will be the subject of a presentation by Christine Beck and Luisa Caycedo-Kimura in June.

Poet in the Spotlight: Luisa Caycedo-Kimūra



Luisa Caycedo-Kimūra did not intend to become a poet. After leaving her job as an attorney in 2009, she began taking courses at Southern Connecticut State University. Her goal was to develop a strong fiction manuscript, one that would help her get into a good MFA program. When she went to register, the fiction classes were closed. She decided to take a poetry class, and was soon hooked. She now has an MFA in poetry, and poetry is her focus and passion.

She is drawn to poems that have strong images and simple, spare language, as well as sonic appeal, without necessarily relying on rhyme. Although her main concern with poetry is the craft, rather than the content, two of her favorite poems are “Robert Pinsky’s ‘Shirt,’ about a factory fire in New York City that killed 145 workers, and Eduardo Corral’s ‘All the Trees of the Fields Shall Clap Their Hands,’ about a Latina who was hanged for killing an Anglo miner who had assaulted her. Both present important topics in such a beautifully artistic manner,” she says.

Many of her own poems focus on her mother, who died of Alzheimer’s disease around the time that Caycedo-Kimūra began writing poetry. She is also inspired by nature; therefore many of her images and metaphors are taken from flora or fauna found in the United States or in Colombia, where she was born. These days, Caycedo-Kimūra is working on a manuscript that focuses on many kinds of loss.

Currently Caycedo-Kimūra is reading *Simulacra*, by Airea D. Matthews, which won the 2016 Yale Series of Younger Poets prize. She is taken with this poet’s playful use of form and language. She’s also reading many poems by Louise Gluck, since she will moderate some POP programs about Gluck and her work.

Being a member of the Connecticut Poetry Society is meaningful to Caycedo-Kimūra. She likes “being part of a group of individuals who are passionate about poetry and whose goal is to promote it—a passion I share and a cause I believe in.”

When she’s not reading or writing poetry, or teaching writing, she is involved with gardening. She says, “I’m completely self-taught and have only had the opportunity to live in the country for three years, but my goal is to one day grow almost all of the food my husband and I eat.”

Have you renewed your CPS membership?

If not, now’s the time. Use this link to renew online.

<http://ctpoetry.net/membership.html>

Connecticut Poetry Award Opens to Submissions on April 1.

The Connecticut Poetry Award, sponsored by the Adolf and Virginia Dehn Foundation, will be accepting submissions from April 1-May 31. There is a \$15 submission fee. Prizes of \$400, \$200, and \$50 will be awarded. The winning poems will be published in *Connecticut River Review*. Winners will also receive a free two-year CPS membership. Electronic submissions only, of up to three poems on one document.

This link will take you to the CPS Submittable site through which our contests and our literary journal accept submissions.

www.connecticutriverreview.submittable.com

NFSPS Annual Contests

Entries must be in by March 15 for the annual contests sponsored by the National Federation of State Poetry Societies. They offer an assortment of contests with prizes ranging from small cash awards to \$1,000. If you are a CPS member, you are a member of NFSPS. We like to see Connecticut members take home some prizes! Use this link to find out more: http://www.nfsps.com/poetry_contests.htm

Laura and Vic Altshul Share Poems

On March 26 at 7 pm, the dynamic poetry duo Laura and Vic Altshul will share their poetry at Best Video, 1842 Whitney Avenue, in Hamden.

Nutmeg Poetry Award Results Announced

David Cappella, judge of the 2019 CPS Nutmeg Award Contest, has announced the results.

Congratulations go to:

Frederick-Douglass Knowles II, awarded First Place for "Sunday School in the 90s,"

Pegi Deitz Shea, Second Place for "Dys-visioning,"

and Mary Panke, who took Third Place for "Summon Your Breath."

Honorable Mention go to:

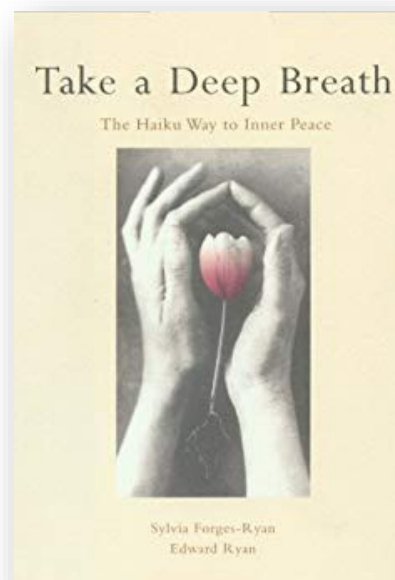
Leslie Bergner for "Apple Picking,"

Mary Kuck for "During that sleepless summer,"

Luisa Caycedo-Kimura for "Lulu Caramelo," and David Boston for "Miko."

Take a Deep Breath: The Haiku Way to Inner Peace

Sylvia Forges-Ryan, one of the nation's foremost haiku poets, has teamed up with her husband, psychotherapist Edward Ryan, to produce a book that teaches readers how to use haiku as an aid in meditation. "Breathe naturally and relax, they say. Read the haiku silently, then aloud twice, then focus on the first two lines before approaching the third, "open to where it takes you."



Hartford Names a Poet Laureate

Frederick-Douglass Knowles II has been appointed the first poet laureate of Hartford. He will serve in this role for three years. Knowles is establishing a youth outreach program called Beat Lit. Its aim is to infuse literary arts with performing arts, and to help young people sharpen their skills to become writers. He wants to help bridge the gap between literary and performance poetry. The program will focus on the work of published authors to inspire young people. Knowles himself fell in love with the poetry scene in Hartford, attending poetry readings at a café in the city and participating in slam poetry performances. He loves performance poetry.

He is the author of a poetry collection called *BlackRoseCity*. It is about experiences of growing up in Norwich, which is nicknamed “The Rose of New England.” The city was not always so rosy for people of color, however.

Manchester Chapter: Wit and Wisdom

In Manchester’s “Wit and Wisdom” group, a different member leads the group each month. This chapter curates a “Poetry Corner” for the *Journal Enquirer* of Manchester.

Submit to *Connecticut River Review*

Submissions to *Connecticut River Review* will be accepted through April 15. There is no fee to submit, but only a small percentage of the poems we receive can be published, as we receive hundreds of submissions from around the country and beyond. Submit up to three poems on one document: electronic submissions only.

***Taking Care of Time* Wins Award**

A recent poetry collection by Cortney Davis, *Taking Care of Time*, was awarded first place in the Creative Works category of the American Journal of Nursing Book of the Year Awards. Cortney Davis was recently appointed Poet Laureate of Bethel.

Guilford Poets Guild’s Holiday Roundtable Poetry Reading: The Seasons - Fall Into Winter

Please join the Guilford Poets Guild during the upcoming reading by award-winning poet Rayon Lennon on March 14 at the Guilford Free Library at 6:30 pm. The Guilford Free Library is located at 67 Park Street in Guilford. This program is free and open to all. Refreshments will be served.

Riverwood Poetry Series at Real Art Ways

The Riverwood Series meets at 7 pm on the second Tuesday of each month at Real Art Ways in Hartford, 56 Arbor Street. On April 9, Hartford’s first Poet Laureate, Frederick-Douglass Knowles II will be the featured poet. He is a dynamic presence—you won’t want to miss this. On May 14, Erica Funkhouser will be in the spotlight. Before the main feature, there is an open mic. Sign up at 6:45 to participate.

Noah Webster House Readings

Maria Sassi will host Julie Choffel and Tom Nicotera at the Noah Webster House in West Hartford for a poetry reading on April 28 at 1 pm. The event includes an open mic, so bring your own poem to share.

