

Museletter Editor

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Welcome!

NEW MEMBERS

Ted Chisolm, Milwaukee
Seth Copeland, Milwaukee
Imru Currie, Madison
Kathryn Gargo, Appleton
Mikaela Hagen, Madison
Mary Ellen Marnhotz, Wausau
Lisa B. Martin, Osceola
Tim McMahon, Appleton
Andre Pietrzykowski, Rice Lake
Michelle Seaman, Madison
Rebecca Swanson, Spooner

Co-Presidents' Message

Despite everything that's wrong with the world, these are wonderful times for poetry. Several Wisconsin organizations have been expanding their programs and awards for starters, new grants and fellowships at Woodland Pattern and Friends of Lorine Niedecker in partnership with Write On, Door County; and creation of town/city laureates and first-ever youth poets laureate for Milwaukee and Madison. We're happy to say that WFOP is also moving forward, with our chapbook contest in partnership with Brain Mill Press and conversations with Shake Rag Alley, and discussions about expanded programming in our regions.

We'd especially like to note that longtime member **Richard Swanson** and his partner **Fanny Aragno** have donated \$16,000 to the WFOP, in part to encourage emerging poets in Wisconsin. Although WFOP has been the beneficiary of other donations in our nearly 75-year history, we believe this is the largest single gift that the organization has ever received. We've formed a task force to begin discussions on how best to apply these funds. We welcome your input (and your donations, too) as we move forward to honor not just poetry, but Richard. Thanks to **Colleen Frentzel** for facilitating the gift and **Kathrine Yets, Jeff Anderson, and James Burton** for volunteering, with Ronnie, to narrow down recommendations for the board to review and approve.

If you know Richard and/or Fanny, please join us in sending them a note of thanks for their generosity. Richard has been a member since 2002 and a lifetime member since 2016 in recognition of his contributions to WFOP. He was Secretary from 2010 to 2015 and 2018 WFOP *Poets' Calendar* editor with **Ed Werstein**. Richard is the author of several collections of poetry, including *Men in the Nude in Socks*, winner of the Posner Award; *Not Quite Eden*; *Eastern Europe 1989*; and *Paparazzi Moments*. His most recent book, *The Shoeshiner's Rag Pops and Sings*, was published in 2022 by Bent Paddle Press.

In other news, thanks go to **Amanda Reavey** who is our new 2024 Chapbook Contest coordinator, taking over from **Shoshauna Shy**. East-Milwaukee Regional VP **Ed Werstein** has organized a committee that's busy planning for our next conference. Please save the dates: **April 26–28, 2024**, at the Blue Harbor Resort in Sheboygan. It's quite a place—check it out—on Lake Michigan, with a variety of activities beyond poetry to make the weekend worthy of a family gathering. Our keynote will be **Nikole Brown**! We hope to see many of you there.

Last but certainly not least, be sure to check out the new swag available (totes, tees and tops) and stay tuned for information on new member orientation.

—Cat & Ronnie

Chapbook &
Muse Contests
DEADLINE

February 1

See wfop.org/annual-contests

Remember ...

MOVING? Notify wfopmuseletter@gmail.com in advance of address change. Mail is returned at WFOP's expense. Request e-mail instead; it's sent earlier, and you'll save WFOP \$!

The Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets is online at wfop.org

What's Happening in Your Region?

All events free & open to the public unless stated otherwise.

CENTRAL-FOX VALLEY

VPs: Mike Gadzik, mgadzik@yahoo.com
& Thom Singleton, thomsingleton@gmail.com

Poetry Unlocked continues on 2nd Mondays at ACOCA Coffee and Cafe in Appleton. Featured poets in July were **Tom Cannon** (Oshkosh Poet Laureate) and **Mike Orlock**. Upcoming featured readers are **Meredith Mason** and **Sarah Venaccio** in September and **Kathryn Gahl** and **Scott Lowery** in October.

Ron Houssaye's poem "The Passions of Soren Kierkegaard," was a winner in the Kierkegaard Poetry Contest sponsored by *Dappled Things*. His poem "Bob Dylan, American Troubadour," appeared in the April *Moss Piglet*.

Katie Chicquette was a featured reader at Resonant: An Evening of Poetry and Acoustic Music at The Book Store in Appleton.

EAST

VP: Ed Werstein, wersted@gmail.com

Scott Lowery has poems in the Fall issues of *Canary, I-70 Review*, and *Sky Island Review*. His poem "Capricorn" was a Regional Winner in the Maria Faust Sonnet Contest (Winona, MN). Three recent poems are in the online Annual Members Exhibit of the River Arts Alliance: <https://riverartsalliance.org/member-exhibit/member-exhibit-2023/>.

Brenda Cardenas will offer the workshop "Ekphrasis: Poems that Converse with Visual Art" at Washington Island's Art and Nature Center during the 2023 Washington Island Literary Festival, where she will also give an author talk and participate in a panel with all of the teaching authors, September 21–23: <https://writeondoorcounty.org/washington-island-literary-festival-2023/>.

Heather Hanlon's poem "A Nameless Place" will appear in the Foster Gallery exhibition Exchanges: dialogues between poetry and art September 8–October 4, 2023.

July 27, Mama D's Coffee in Wales hosted Poetry Fest 2023. The fest gathered 14 poets at the coffee shop on a hot July evening. Each poet read from their work for 10 minutes, providing a cameo peek-in of their style and work in front of a warm and appreciative audience. Poets' books were also available for sale and signing throughout the event. The event was coordinated by **Jim Landwehr**, the Wales poet laureate emeritus, and book sales were handled by **Kathrine Yets** and Milwaukee poet laureate,

Mario Willis. It was a fast, furious and fantastic evening of words, coffee, friends and laughter. We hope to explore new venues for an even bigger Poetry Fest 2024!

Christy Schwan's poem "A Matriarch's Shawl" won first place in Wilda Morris' Blogspot July Challenge.

Mark Zimmermann's poem "Cancer Drug Commercials" appears in the current issue of *Mobius: The Journal of Social Change*.

Elisabeth Harray's poems "Kansas," "Meet Me in Wyoming," and "The Safest Place" were published in *Portage Magazine*. "Only God Should Move Mountains" was in the Winter *Tipton Poetry Journal*, and "Bruce" was in the Summer/Fall *Naugatuck River Review*.

MID-CENTRAL

VP: Kathleen Serley, kserley@dwave.net

Joan Johannes' poem, "One Fine Day at Disney France," written from the point of view of A. A. Milne's Piglet, is featured in the Central Wisconsin Book Festival's poetry walk. Joan is a regular contributor to *Moss Piglet*.

Jeffrey Johannes regularly contributes to *Moss Piglet*.

Victoria Lindsay had two poems in the June "Art that Blooms" exhibit in Portage.

Kathleen Serley's poem "Dilly Beans" is in the summer issue of *Bramble*. Two poems, "All Dressed Up" and "Bella Blush," were in the Art as Poetry as Art exhibit.

Patricia Williams had two poems, "First Course: Feeling the Wind" and "Autumn Lament," in the 2023–2024 Wisconsin DNR calendar.

Vlasta Blaha's poem, "Hanging Floral Wallpaper" was in the August *Moss Piglet*, and "Bird Dog Alert" appeared online in the *Weekly Avocet* 551.

Carol Bezin has haikus printed in the *Weekly Avocet* 551 and 540, and in the Spring and Summer editions of *Avocet*. She presented "Deepening Awareness of Nature" at the Christine Center May 6, on writing a nature acrostic poem and a nature-based haiku. Participants wrote poems to display along a "Trail of Beauty" in the woods.

Freesia McKee has poetry in *Fugue* and *Stained: An Anthology of Writing about Menstruation*.

NORTHEAST

VP: Tori Grant Welhouse, torigrantwelhouse@gmail.com

Carol Lee Saffioti-Hughes published the following poems "Tapestry and Song," *Heterodox Haiku* 2, "Studies of the Water Lilies," *Ekphrastic Review*, 6/30/23, "Highway 17," *Moss Piglet*, July, "Worn Days," *Parliament Literary Journal*, Summer, "Redwings," *Solitary Plover*, Summer, and "Potential Historical Weeds," *Tiny Seed Journal: Poetry of the Wildflowers*, June.

Annette Grunseth had two poems in *Portage Magazine*; poems in May, June, July *Moss Piglet*; two poems in *Dispatches Magazine*, Summer; two poems in the *Military Writers Society of America 2023 Spotlight Anthology*. A three-page excerpt plus two poems from *Combat and Campus: Writing Through War* was featured in the summer *Veterans Breakfast Club Magazine* (Philadelphia); another excerpt was included in a play about Vietnam in Maryland. Two poems featured this summer on the Door County Poetry Trail in Newport State Park.

Carrie and Peter Sherrill continue to facilitate “Art/ Speaks” ekphrastic writing events at various galleries throughout Door County on most Friday mornings through October. For more info and schedule visit writeondoorcounty.org. Carrie has published “Summer Abecedarian” and “Altophobia” in recent issues of *Moss Piglet*. Peter has published “Solstice Meditation” and “The Elements of Altitude” in *Moss Piglet*. Both Carrie and Peter are serving as preliminary judges in the “Hal Prize” poetry contest this fall.

Building on the 50-year School of the Arts (SOA) tradition, ArtStart and Nicolet College are teaming up to bring an exciting array of workshops, demonstrations, and special events for a 2023 experience. SOA remains committed to the vision of a vibrant statewide arts gathering in the Northwoods but need additional partners and resources to realize this vision. Learn more and get involved at <https://artstartrhinelander.org/soa2022/>

NORTHWEST

VP: Nancy Austin, austin10929@gmail.com

Terry Andre Dukerschein’s poem titled “Up on Minnesota’s Iron Range” was in the April *Moss Piglet*.

Peggy Trojan had six poems in *Goose River Anthology*. She was published on Wilda Morris’s Poetry Challenge in April and July. She gave a joint reading in honor of Father’s Day with **Jan Chronister** from books about their fathers at the Cable Forest Lodge Library on June 13.

Diana Randolph, Drummond, shared “Early Summer Hike” during a service at Cable UCC. It introduced the Pastor’s sermon “Hope When All Seems Hopeless,” in which he weaved in some lines from her poem.

Jan Chronister has three poems in Issue Five: Sweet Venom of *The Graveyard Zine*, “Under the Pecan Trees” in *Blue Heron Review* 16, “Daffodils” appeared on *Your Daily Poem* in April, and “Kitchen Secret” in the Highland Park Poetry *Herbs and Spices* anthology. The *See Me* anthology includes Jan’s poem “Adjustments.” *Poetry Hall* 20 includes “Sunset” and “Four o’Clock Moon.” *Pure Slush* published “Sweet Victory” in Achievement.

Lucy Tyrrell’s poem “Red Dress” was in the concrete poem display at the Center for Visual Arts in Wausau. She organized a poetry walk with eight poems (not hers) about nature and blooms along the Salmo Trail, for Bayfield in Bloom’s Garden Tour in June. Her blog post about it was on the Bayfield Area Trails website. Lucy has “Witness” in *Cirque Journal*. She has read her poems on four occasions at the open mic at Big Top Chautauqua’s “Backstage.”

SOUTH CENTRAL

VP: James P. Roberts, jrob52162@aol.com

Catherine Young’s ecopoetry collection *Geosmin* received a Silver Medal in the Midwest Book Awards. Her poetry set to music, “Water, Tree, Heart” was published by About Place. Catherine’s poetry was selected for and she was a reader for the AGU22 Community Poem video “Dear Sky, Dear Blue Planet” based on the poetry of Kimberly Blaeser: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7MyTkPGEMtQ&ab_channel=AGU

Marilyn L. Taylor won a First Place Regional award in the 2023 Maria Faust sonnet contest.

Cynthia Marie Hoffman had a poem, “Savior,” published in *Subnivean Magazine*.

Angela Trudell-Vasquez read with **Dylan Welch** at A Room Of One’s Own in Madison on June 5.

James P. Roberts read poems at Oakwood Village-East Retirement Community, Madison, June 21 and was a reader at the Wales Poetry Festival in Wales, WI, July 27.

F. J. Bergmann had “Getting Lucky” in *Star*Line*, “Après Vie” in *Eye to the Telescope*, “Small Doses” in *Spectral Realms*, and “R’lyeh” in *For the Outsider: Poems Inspired by H. P. Lovecraft* (Hippocampus Press, 2023).

WEST CENTRAL

VP: Sandra Lindow, lindowleaf@gmail.com

Poetry rises like lilies in the steamy Chippewa Valley. The Writers Group at the Library continues to meet first Thursdays, usually 2–4 PM at the Phillips Memorial Library in Eau Claire, although the August meeting was a potluck held at **Sandra Lindow**’s home in Menomonie. The food and fellowship were lovely. **Yvette Flaten** has proposed that we create a booklet of our recipes. Maybe we will include some food poems as well. *Wisconsin Poets’ Calendar* distribution for contributors and buyers will once again be a tailgater in Owen Park in Eau Claire beginning August 15. Write **Sandra Lindow** (lindowleaf@gmail.com) for more details.

June 25, **Yvette Flaten**, **Linda Frank**, **Michael Doran** and **Sandra Lindow** participated in the Summer Solstice White Pine Celebration at 1st Congregational

in Menomonie. The next White Pine will be Sunday September 25, 2–4 PM, at Wilson Park Pavilion, Menomonie.

Karen Loeb has caught us up on her publications, including “My Father Makes Bread in Sacramento” on Wilda Morris’s Poetry blog, June. “Sojourn in My Neighborhood,” *Sangam Literary Journal* 3.1. “One Visit,” *Creosote*, Spring. “In the Drawer Under the Oven,” *First Literary Review—East*, 2022. “Photo Opportunity” on Wilda Morris’s Poetry blog Feb. 2022. “The Truth of the Matter,” *Switch Online* 2022. “Eight Ways to Break Up” and “Items Left Behind,” *Muddy River Poetry Review* 22. “Dog Years Count,” *Hole in the Head Review*, 2021. “Review,” *Big City Lit* Winter 2021. “Baking in the Age of the Corona Virus” and “Glamor in the Age of the Pandemic,” *Poetic Medicine* blog, 2021.

Sandra Lindow’s “Butterfly Effect” appears in *Eye to the Telescope* 49. “Intergalactic Baba Yaga” appears in the 2023 SFPA *Rhysling Anthology* for the best speculative poems published in 2022. Lindow’s collection *Chasing Wild Grief* is nominated for the Elgin Award for best speculative collection.

Formatting Tips: Titles & Dashes

by F. J. Bergmann

Do you wonder when titles should be in italics? Or when to use quotes, and what kind? It depends on what the item in question is. Books (and chapbooks), movies, TV series, all works of visual art, plays, operas, longer musical pieces (like symphonies) and music albums should be italicized—as should all magazines and periodicals, including those online. Poems, as well as stories, essays, articles and songs or shorter pieces of music, should be in quotes: “double,” not ‘single.’ Periods and commas go inside quotes; other punctuation, unless part of a title, should be outside (this is American usage; British formatting puts all punctuation outside quotes).

Dashes come in three sizes: hyphen (-), en dash (—), and em dash (—). Hyphens can join words in combined form, break long words when lines wrap, or indicate stuttering. En dashes are used for date or number ranges and constructions like “University of Wisconsin—Madison.” Em dashes (not double hyphens, which are an abomination) generally indicate a break in thought or an aside—like this one, where I have gone to refill my coffee cup—or an interrupti— (in this last instance only, a space follows the em dash; otherwise, no dashes should be preceded or followed by spaces in American usage). The Brits use space-en dash-space (–) where we use em dashes.

Publications by Our Members

Beneath the Southern Crux by Marilyn Zelke Windau (Water’s Edge Press, 2023). 65 pp. \$15 from marilynzekewindau@gmail.com or watersedgepress.com or Amazon.

Duluth: Zenith City & Beyond by Jan Chronister (Poetry Harbor, 2023). 94 pp. \$15 from amazon.com or whispertreepress@gmail.com.

Mutual Life by Scott Lowery (Finishing Line Press, 2023). 46 pp. \$17.99. Preorder: finishinglinepress.com/product/mutual-life-by-scott-lowery/.

Rejection to Acceptance: 59 Poems That Finally Made It by Patricia Williams (Kelsay Books, 2023). 147 pp. \$23. Available from Amazon and kelsaybooks.com.

The Suitcase by Gary C. Busha (Wolfsong Mini-Chapbook Series, 2023). 26 pp. \$5 to Gary C. Busha, 3123 S Kennedy Dr, Sturtevant WI 53177.

When Wilding Returns by Carol Lee Saffioti-Hughes (Cyberwit Press, 2023). 52 pp. <https://www.cyberwit.net> and bookstores.

NOTE TO MEMBERS WITH NEW BOOKS

Have a new poetry book or chapbook? Send the title, publisher, date, # of pages, price, and a place to buy the book, or your email, to wfopmuseletter@gmail.com

Poet Critters

Looking for a poetry critique group to join? Contact your regional VP. If your group is open to new members, notify the *Museletter* editor: wfopmuseletter@gmail.com. A weekly Madison east side group currently has openings: contact the *Museletter* editor.

The fall issue of **BRAMBLE** is open for submissions **August 1–September 15**, with guest editor **Catherine Young**, on the theme of “ripening.”

Ripening can mean sensuous and full, or it can mean coarse or indecent. In the ripening, something is brought to completion or perfection, ready for reaping or gathering. Think aging and fermentation: wine, vinegar, cheese. Think maturity, wisdom, accomplishment.

Full guidelines: wfop.org/bramble-how-to-submit

2024 WFOP CHAPBOOK CONTEST RULES

The Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets is dedicated to promoting poetry in Wisconsin and seeks to honor the best chapbooks published in the previous year by Wisconsin residents.

1. Contestant must be a Wisconsin resident 18 years of age or older. A resident is a person who maintains a permanent residence in Wisconsin or who has lived for at least six months in the state during 2023.
2. Contest opens September 1. Entry form must be completed in full, included with submission and entry fee, and postmarked by **February 1, 2024**.
3. **Chapbooks must be published in 2023.** Proof of publication date must be printed in the book.
4. Total finished length is not to exceed 48 pages.
5. Chapbooks may be entered by the author or the publisher and may be self-published.
6. Chapbooks can be published in collaboration between multiple poets.
7. The non-refundable entry fee is \$7 per chapbook for WFOP members and \$15 per chapbook for non-members. Mail chapbook, entry form, and check (made out to WFOP Literary Fund) to:
Amanda Reavey
1220 E. Locust St, Unit 109
Milwaukee, WI 53212
8. Prizes: 1st Place – \$200; 2nd Place – \$100; 3rd Place – \$50. Prizes will be awarded only if there are sufficient entries, and the contest judge determines that an entry warrants a prize.
9. The contest is judged by a writing professional who resides outside the state. This year's judge is **Pamela Uschuk**: <http://www.pamelauschuk.com/>
10. Winners will be notified prior to announcement at the Spring Conference and posted in the Summer Museletter and at wfop.org.
11. The 1st Place winner of the WFOP Chapbook Prize will be ineligible to enter that contest again for three years.

The WFOP is not responsible for lost books. Entrants will receive email acknowledgment of receipt. Entries will not be returned. Failure to follow any of the above rules may result in disqualification. Author retains all rights to his/her work. Questions? Contact ajreavey@gmail.com

***About Your Membership* Renew NOW before you forget!**

All memberships are **CALENDAR YEAR—January through December**. Only new memberships October–December are automatically extended through the following year. **Renewal payments** are due by **December 31** each year. Your membership expires at the end of the year on your *Museletter* mailing label. Contact wfopmembership@gmail.com with any questions. To receive reminders and official news, make sure we have your email address. Renew online at wfop.org/join-or-renew. **NB:** *If you lapse, then renew, you will be entered as a new member. Continuous membership is required for service awards.*

If you vacation elsewhere, only first-class mail forwards. We are charged for returned bulk mail. Signing up for e-mail-only *Museletter* (.pdf) saves WFOP \$ and arrives at least 2 weeks before the print *Museletter*. Notify wfopmuseletter@gmail.com to opt out of print delivery. The Events weekly e-mail is separate and opt-in; request from wfopmuseletter@gmail.com. Send all address changes or *Museletter* delivery inquiries to wfopmuseletter@gmail.com.

2024 CHAPBOOK PRIZE ENTRY FORM

DEADLINE (postmark): **February 1, 2024**

Poet's Name _____

Telephone _____ e-mail _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Chapbook Title _____

Publisher and Date (month and year) _____

CHOOSE AND SIGN ONE:

___ I am a Wisconsin resident, 18 years of age or older. The chapbook I am submitting is my own original work.

Signature _____ Date _____

___ As publisher, I am submitting this chapbook for _____, who, to my knowledge, is a Wisconsin resident, 18 years of age or older, and contains his/her original work.

To my knowledge, the poet ___ is ___ is not a member of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets.

Signature _____ Date _____

[Optional] Newspaper (name and address) to be notified if this chapbook is chosen as First, Second, or Third Place.

Enclose published chapbook, entry form and fee (\$7 member/\$15 non-member per chapbook; make check payable to "WFOP Literary Fund").

Mail entry to:

Amanda Reavey
1220 E. Locust St, Unit 109
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Membership Renewal Form KEEP YOUR MEMBERSHIP CURRENT.

All renewals are due by December 31. Dues **MUST** be current for you to enter WFOP contests, receive mention in the *Museletter*, receive mailings, and to have a page on wfop.org. Contact wfopmembership@gmail.com if you are not sure when your membership expires.

SAVE POSTAGE and renew or join online at wfop.org/join-or-renew

or mail to: Colleen Frentzel, 1410 N Wuthering Hills Dr, Janesville WI 53546

Please make checks payable to: WFOP

Active \$30.00

Student \$15.00

***** 5 for 4 Deal *****

\$120 paid now will give

5 years of membership

for the price of 4! Save \$30!

Name _____

Address _____


City/State/Zip+4 _____

E-mail address _____

Check to get weekly Events e-mail.

Check only if you must get the *Museletter* via snail mail.

Meet Your Members!

 More board member intros coming in future *Museletters*!

Meet Ed Werstein: I grew up on a small farm in southeastern Michigan in a strict Catholic family, the oldest of six siblings. Both my grandfathers were full-time farmers. Mom and Dad were raised on opposite sides of the small town of (don't laugh) Maybee, population 450, named after Abram Maybee, who built a grist and sawmill in the 1870s.

My dad and uncles were autoworkers, as well as part-time farmers. It was an idyllic childhood with grandparents, aunts and uncles, and a couple dozen cousins all living on adjacent farms and interacting daily. (Sometimes I think I haven't suffered enough to be a good poet.)

In high school I was exposed to poetry and took a liking to T.S. Eliot and Shakespeare's sonnets. After high school I entered the Holy Cross order but lost the calling in 1968 after watching Chicago policemen beat people during the Democratic National Convention. I wanted to do more to try to end the war in Vietnam. In 1969, the order asked me to come to Milwaukee to fulfill my temporary vows, and I've been here ever since.

Working as a draft counselor in the backroom of a bookstore, I came across Ferlinghetti's *A Coney Island of the Mind*, and I was hooked on poetry. When the war started winding down, some of us peaceniks decided to take our organizing skills into the labor movement. I was active in the union at Briggs & Stratton from 1973 until 1996, when I started working in the job center system helping displaced workers find new employment. I retired in 2014.

I didn't start trying to write poetry until my late 50s. Surprisingly, a few of the first poems I sent out won prizes, and I started to redefine myself as a poet. I joined WFOP in 2009 and have only missed a couple of conferences since then. I've been the VP for the East Region for the past several years. After our 2024 conference, I will be handing the reins over to co-VPs Kathrine Yets and Jim Landwehr, both of whom are already active members.

I won't be disappearing, though. I hope to find a lesser role in which to contribute. The friendships I've made in WFOP are invaluable to my quality of life. I treasure this organization.



Community Poets Laureate

Former Poets Laureate Peggy Rozga (State) and Nancy Rafal (Door County) are compiling a list of all Poet Laureate positions in the state. Send info about any community PL program to Nancy: mrsticket@gmail.com or PO Box 340, Baileys Harbor WI 54202-0340. Please include: date established, names of poets laureate & dates of post, selection procedure, and any other significant information.

Museletter submissions: Send news to your regional VP or to wfopmuseletter@gmail.com (include region!), in body of e-mail. Please format as in *Museletter*; no .pdfs or press releases.

Poetry news only; send only poetry publications, **not** acceptances or forthcoming; don't bother including WFOP awards or *Museletter* or *Calendar* appearances. Strive for brevity!

Advertise poetry books, services, workshops, etc., to the WFOP membership in the *Museletter* at the following rates (send to Treasurer):

\$15	eighth page	\$40	half page
\$25	quarter page	\$75	full page

For the weekly Events & Opportunities mailing: \$10/100 wds in Events e-mail

ODES

Congratulation to those who were chosen for the Ode Edition of the *Museletter* Poetry Pages. Selection is never easy when all of the submissions demonstrate the Spirit of Poetic Quest. Each of you have earned your Poetic License—please watch your inbox for a printable certificate.

To My Electric Bike in Summer

with gratitude to Walt Whitman and his poem, "To a Locomotive in Winter"

Thee for my palliative!
Thee in blistering sun even as now, the weeds, the summer-day ripening,
Thee in thy audacity, thy languid thrust aroused by slight invitation,
Thy black tubular body and fulsome taupe leather saddle,
Thy nibbling gears and chain, dexterous spokes and couplings, bracing the latent tremors in me,
Thy mute approach chased by admiration, cheers now tapering in my wake,
Thy headlight trembling over uncured ruts,
Thy taillight unspooling a froth of ions tinged with siren red,
The mum, pallid purr of thy battery unbridled,
Thy branched steel frame, thy knuckles and pulleys, the muffled rub of thy tread,
Thy rear fender deflecting all stone and slush, all wounds and splash,
Through light or heavy air, now swift, now nimble at ragged turns;
Type of the critical realism—emblem of what is—shrewd choice for boomers,
For now you free me from indoor sloth, even as you lavish ease,
With wind aft or stern, with heat shuddering on asphalt,
By day thy pavement exhalations sound no alarm, by night thy coy lamp bewilders cars.

Tightly lipped beauty!
Roll through my daily duties with thy silence, thy wildering lamp,
Thy velvet-throated computer, rousing aid for all inclines, slope or mountain,
Law of thyself incomplete, thine power starts with me,
(No sweat of labor forced nor effort's doleful snort and wheezing thine,)
Thy whispered stride through my town returned,
Launched o'er street past warehouse and bungalow,
To gambol with the sky's wild, soundless wings.

—Lora Keller, Milwaukee

Ode to My Feet

Yours were always ordinary
compared to hers, the dancer
in the family, with the perfect arch,
the pointed toes. I was the clumsy one,
dropped a Coke bottle on them, lost
toenails, developed onychomycosis,
a darkening fungus. No sandals, wore shoes.
But like yeoman's hands, you knew how
to do the work, carried me

from the Heights to the Bowery. So now,
let me bathe you, rub away callouses,
anoint you with oils Nefertiti would choose.
The pedicurist I see twice a year flatters you,
allows you to drift through her lacquered palaces.

—Ronnie Hess, Madison

Endless Cycle

Pump up my eyes to 60 p.s.i.
Breezes etch friezes with tears and grease
I'm chained to the rear hub
My life hums circles in a straight line
Two wheels made my acropolis
On two-handed columns: steel tubes

Spare not a part: this rig is excess
Fifty pounds and red and salt-sanded by January
The engine sputters its cardiovascular carburetor
Oh, the places are gone! Oh, as fast as arrived! Too fast—
This seat post makes my capitol dome wriggle under its helm
Cloud helmet, may my soft landing never come
As I float above buses and airplanes and cars

To virtue!
By signal!
Past barking dogs!

I am the angel of risk
Zeus promised to burn less and make more lightning
As we thunder quietly down pantheon road

—Roman John Ryan, Madison

Ode to Electric Bikes

Vehicle of chrome and gears
Close friend to Boomers everywhere
You return us to our youthful days
As your rechargeable motor
Boosts our strength and stamina

Willingly we plug you in
Grateful for your power assist
You lift us from past dismounting shame
Steep hills, long rides don't threaten us
We bask in sweat-free riding

We praise your virtues no end
Manual ten-speeds eat our dust
You inspire us to plan state-wide trips
If we could ask just one more thing
Could you add a comfy seat?

—Christy Schwan, Cedarburg

STORM PERSONA

Next Prompt: Write a poem about a time that you found shelter from a storm, from the storm's perspective. Onomatopoeia is strongly encouraged and conjunctions are not. 24 lines max. Please include "2023 Q4 WFOP Museletter Poem" in the subject line. 12-pt Times New Roman appreciated. Send by October 25 to skalmar@wi.rr.com or by post to:

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Ode to the Pedal

Learning on sister's bicycle
out to gravel roads, corn fields, fresh breeze
Yet, those days of yore
left gravel in both skinned knees.

Oh, to the glory years of rides
Friends carrying smiles count miles of back roads,
pedal past streams overflowing with beauty.

Growing, slowing in age
needing better body, better bike.
With new brakes one sunny bright day
a car from the right, quick hard squeeze
to brake, tip, flip.

Left wrist came up from street heat
tangled and mangled.

After years four score and five
now pushing pedals on stationary bike
sitting in stale, lifeless basement.
Mind free to pump hard uphill,
coast ever so easily down.

—*Hannah Pinkerton, Madison*

Ode to Joy

With gratitude to composer Ludwig van Beethoven, poet Henry Van Dyke, and my Volvo C70, Joy

Oh, Joy, what rapture awaits
our precious moments together.
Your supple leather seat spoons
my curves, caresses my back
with the warmth of a lover's embrace.

The moment you caught my eye I knew,
from your silver gleam and classy lines,
you would be mine. Yet even then,
you dazzled me with your retractable top,
offered me your inner self . . . and the world.

Oh, what joy I feel, what paradise you provide,
meandering topless on an exquisite afternoon.
All God's works with joy surround us:
field and forest, vale and mountain,
flow'ry meadows, flashing sea.

Beethoven's ninth symphony rings out,
driving the dark of doubt away,
leaving the winds of worry behind.
Joyful music leads us sunward,
toward a fresh horizon of hope.

—*Barb Geiger, Waukesha*

Chicken Feet

I lock my eyes in place
giving them time to survey what's around
then finally move you, oh lovely feet,
allowing my body to catch up to my head.

You're glorious on the ground, walking bare in the grass
although most likely back pedaling or braking
when soaring downhill
unlike those other birds that stick out their feet, risking a fall.
I avoid taking you places too high, too far, too fast.

I've learned you're not particularly elegant, nor graceful,
so I paint you red, oh and yes, in case you didn't realize
I was born with webbed toes, so you may be surprised
when I take you out for a dip, wade you out a bit.
Mostly I'm OK with you sticking close to home
while I forage for treasures right in front of my nose.

—*Angela Hoffman, Jefferson*

Desert Ship

Heaved up from the bowels of Mother Earth,
upon her massive hull the crowded deck set,
carved and molded by eons of wind and rain,
painted by the hand of the Great Spirit,
the majestic liner plows the desert waves
with her crew of lizards, falcons and bats,
coyotes, jackrabbits and snakes;
she sets sail without embarking,
forever adrift and returning to port.

—*Dave Benson, Madison*

Ode to the Train

departure begins the click, click, click
slightly rocking rhythm
accelerating,
immense power and weight
on wheels of steel
sliding through cities' backside lots
where graffiti-tagged flat and box cars
loom like ghosts
unseen by voyagers
in any other mode
slowly passing
buildings, streets, people,

and then emergence;
full-speed spectacle of open travel
the iron horse
transporting history and anticipation
from Hendrix's albatross
to carriage of the promise

how could a heart
not feel the pulse of the moment
found sitting in a window seat
of the carrier with no equal.
the ever-glory-bound,
untamable train

—*Pepe Oulahan, Milwaukee*

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Next Issue Deadline NOVEMBER 1, 2023

Ode to a Kayak

Oh Kayak flat on the creek surface,
I am tempted by paddles
dipped deep into water,
rippling this placid universe
of blue-green algae blooms and water striders.
Glide, my Kayak, through the sky reflected.
By and by beside cattails, reeds,
and milkweed covered in caterpillars.
Kayak swirled in turquoise and cornflower blues,
your beauty only matched by territory you float through
Oh Kayak, take me through the twists and turns
to the center of all: the lake's wake
which splashes against your side,
the creation of a lullaby only we know.
Row, row, row to the pebbled beach.

This is not a dream, but our reality
as I wade and pull you to the shore,
wishing time to be as slow as a tree grows,
but our encounter comes to an end
as the sun sets in purple streaks to the west.
This world we created waits in patient admiration
in dewy grass next to the garage
for our next adventure
over fallen maples and rocky currents.
I dream of you until then.

—Katherine Yets, *St. Francis*