

President's Message



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Haiku (meets via Zoom)
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Wilda Morris

Northbrook - N. Suburban
Mary Beth Bretzlauf

Pontiac - N. Central
Kathleen Murphy

Hello Fellow Poets!

Did you know that November is NaNoWriMo? National Novel Writing Month is quite the thing among writers. I'll be using the inspiration of the month to work on my mystery at a writing weekend the first weekend of November. Carving out time for writing is difficult for me. Sometimes even getting a poem to paper is a struggle, so I look forward to that time to focus.

I realized we poets don't really have that kind of month-long organized motivation like NaNoWriMo, do we? Is anyone aware of such a thing for poets? Please reach out to me if you know of one. Perhaps we can use April as our "get out and write" inspiration, like writing a poem a day with prompts of form or subject.

Maybe January, when it's dark longer than it is light, and with our hands wrapped around a steamy mug of cocoa or tea, we can use that time to write a poem or two. That could be our "stay in and write" month of motivation. Please reach out to me with ideas, suggestions, or share where and when you find motivation to write.

Now as the holidays creep upon us, we want to address more of the suggestions we received last year from our survey. One of those was publishing. We will begin a series of programs designed to help the unpublished achieve their goals. Keep watching your inbox from William Shakespeare for news. Now that I think of it, perhaps April could be the motivation to get your manuscript ready!

One of the items on the Board's agenda when we meet next week will be Poetry Month events. Believe it or not, it's not too early to start thinking about it. One way I'd like to challenge all of you is to contact your local libraries and see if you, as an ISPS member or as a chapter, can be of assistance with their planning - which will begin in December for them. It may be as simple as helping with collecting and displaying poems from local poets, hosting an open mic, or even programs.

This seems odd to say this since autumn is on full display in my corner of the state, but I wish each one of you a wonderful holiday season!

Keep on writing,
Mary Beth

Book of the Year 2023

Submissions for the 2023 ISPS Book of the Year award will open October 1, with a **December 31** deadline.

Our judge for the 2023 contest will be **Shirley Blackwell** of Los Lunas, NM.

During 2008–20, Blackwell served the New Mexico State Poetry Society as chapter chair of the RGV Poets, chancellor, president, and again as chancellor. She's the author of two poetry books—both finalists in the NM-AZ Book Awards, and also a cofounder of the annual NFSPS performance poetry competition, BlackBerry Peach Prizes.

ILLINOIS STATE POETRY SOCIETY

Book of the Year

2023

Award

- \$100 and featured author opportunities

Eligibility

- Current ISPS members living in Illinois at the time of publication
- Book includes **2023** copyright date
- Book has a minimum of 40 pages of poetry

Book Submission

- Deadline: Postmarked by December 31, 2023
- Include with submission: name, address, email address and phone number
- Send \$10 Judge's Reading Fee for each book submitted—payable to Illinois State Poetry Society

Mail your **2023** poetry book to:

2023 ISPS BOOK OF THE YEAR
407 Logan Run Road
Murphysboro IL 62966



ISPS Chapter News

ISPS West Suburban (Brookfield) Chapter – New location! This group formerly met at the Indian Prairie Library in Darien. The next ISPS Brookfield poetry critiquing group will meet **Saturday, November 4**, from 1 to 4 p.m. at the **Brookfield Public Library, 3541 Park Avenue, Brookfield, IL 60513**. Please bring 8 - 10 copies of up to 2 poems, and a food item to share. Bring a beverage for yourself. Contact Caroline Johnson at carolinejohnson.author@gmail.com, Chapter facilitator, if you have questions.

ISPS-Haiku Society of America Haiku Chapter - The ISPS-HSA Haiku Chapter held its bimonthly Zoom chapter meeting on Sunday, October 15, 2023. Those who attended were Susan Auld, Jo Balistreri, Tom Chockley, Jeanne Cook, Janice Doppler, George Gerolimatis, Sangita Kalarical, Rita Melisano, Win Morgan, Michael Nichols-Wisdom, Elizabeth Shack, and Jennifer Thiermann. After introductions, we began our meeting with an old haiku chapter tradition, discussion of a published haiku that delights and one that mystifies. Then we enjoyed the discussion of participants' haiku. These were presented anonymously.

Our next Haiku Chapter Zoom Meeting: Sunday, December 12. The deadline for RSVPs to attend will be Tuesday, December 5. Contact Tom Chockley (tomzhaiku@outlook.com) to receive further information and to receive the Zoom meeting link to attend.

ISPS Northern Chapter and ISPS Champaign – Central Chapter (Champaign) will hold a joint meeting via Zoom and will meet on **Sunday, November 12 at 1 p.m.** on Zoom. Chapter meetings are open to all ISPS members. Those wishing to attend the meeting can contact Mary Beth at ISPS.Manningham@gmail.com. You can also submit a poem for critique at that time as well.

ISPS North Central Chapter (Pontiac) will meet on **Saturday, December 9 at 10:00 am** via Zoom. Contact Kathleen Murphy, Facilitator, kathleenzmurphy@gmail.com for how to participate.

ISPS Southern Chapter meets at the Carbondale Library at **1:30 p.m., Sunday, November 12**. The Library is located at 405 West Main, Carbondale, IL 62901. [<https://www.carbondale.lib.il.us>]. Kathy Cotton, Facilitator, sipoets7@gmail.com. Please bring 10-12 copies of your poem for critiquing.

ISPS Southwest Suburban Chapter (Lisle) The Chapter meeting in December will be hybrid. The meeting will be in-person at Lisle Public Library, 777 Front Street, Lisle, as well as on Zoom, at **1:00 pm CT on Sunday, December 3, 2023**. Email wildamorris@ameritech.net for the Zoom link and to submit up to three poems (or three pages) for critique so they can be distributed via email to those who plan to attend in person or virtually. If possible, put your poems in one document, with each poem beginning on a separate page, with your name in the upper right-hand corner of each page. Poems should be submitted by Friday, December 1st. Those attending in person may bring snacks to share. You may want to bring some water, soda, or lemonade for yourself.

It is never too late to renew your membership!
For membership information, renewal form,
joining ISPS email marjorierissman@gmail.com,
our new treasurer!

ISPS sponsors a hybrid poetry reading the last
Sunday of each month from 12:30-2:00 pm at
Brewed Awakening in Westmont (and Zoom).
Featured poets TBA, plus open mic. Contact Wilda
Morris for details – wem@ameritech.net

ISPS 2023 Student Contest Sponsorship – due Nov. 15!



ILLINOIS STATE POETRY SOCIETY 2023 Student Contest Sponsorship

- Complete and mail a form for each 2023 Student Poetry Contest sponsorship.
- Make check payable to **Illinois State Poetry Society**. If your proposed category is not accepted, your check will be returned.
- Submission must be postmarked no later than **Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023**
- Mail form(s) and check to: **Majorie Rissman, 1100 Kent Ave., Highland Park, IL 60035**

SPONSOR INFORMATION [Please Print]

Name of Contact Person _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Mailing Address _____

PROPOSED CONTEST INFORMATION

Contest Division: Junior Division (grades 6–8) Senior Division (grades 9–12)

Contest Category Name _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Contest Category NOT In Memory or In Honor

Sponsored by _____

Subject: Any Designated Subject _____

Poetry Form: Any Designated Form _____

Line Limit: 40 Lines Designated Line Limit _____

Senior Division Suggested Prizes

\$90 Sponsorship: 1st \$40 2nd \$30 3rd \$20 Other: _____

75 Sponsorship: 1st \$35 2nd \$25 3rd \$15 Other: _____

Junior Division Suggested Prizes

\$60 Sponsorship: 1st \$30 2nd \$20 3rd \$10 Other: _____

\$55 Sponsorship: 1st \$15 2nd \$10 3rd \$5 Other: _____

Judging: Yes, I would like to judge this category. No, I do not want to judge, but would like to read the entries afterward.

Thank you for encouraging and supporting the art of poetry with this sponsorship.
For more information contact: **Mary Beth Bretzlauf, isps.manningham@gmail.com**

kac9723

Welcome New Members!

Jill Spealman discovered poetry in Jim Ballowe's Nature Writing course at The Morton Arboretum. A technical writer and IT trainer for decades, expressing concise ideas through poetry and haiku is a logical step for her creative writing. Jill leads nature programs, including seasonal haiku walks, at St. James Farm



Forest Preserve in Warrenville. She is happy to join the Southwest Suburban chapter of ISPS!

Phillip J. Cozzi is a Pulmonary and Critical Care physician, serving as Medical Director of Critical Care at Elmhurst

First Clinic Visit With Mr. Shrammel

The last time I saw him, encephalopath, addict to ethanol, his soft accent had been replaced by a dirge of ventilator valves opening and closing in chorus. His hair was a greasy mat and his sheepish, guilty, half-hidden grin had fallen open, a mouth incapable of subtlety. Even the sweet stink of his breath was gone.

But the first time I saw Mr. Shrammel when sunlight poured into the clinic like a draught of beer and shone on that likable grin and the hair he claimed to comb with Danish butter, straight back, when his breath spoke more of perfume than poison, I thought I am so lucky to be in medicine.

~ Phillip J. Cozzi



Hospital for the past 25 years. He received the inaugural poetry prize from

the American College of Physicians and the 2019 Morton Marr Poetry Prize from The Southwest Review. His collection of poems, *A Stranger's Heart*, was awarded the 2020 Gold Wake Press Autumn Prize and the book was published by Gold Wake in 2022. He completed a Masters of Fine Arts in Writing at The School of The Art Institute of Chicago in 2021. Dr. Cozzi lives in the Western Suburbs of Chicago with his wife Darlene. They have four children.

Olivia Geringer-Spagnola

is a senior at Beecher High School. She found her passion for writing poetry in the midst of the virus outbreak and has continued writing since. Besides writing, Olivia is also a committed dancer in her fifteenth year at LM Premier Dance in Cedar Lake, Indiana.

NEW ISPS Vice President **Gay Guard-Chamberlin** is a Chicago writer and artist whose first book of 36 poems, *Red Thread Through a Rusty Needle*

(New Wind Publishing) has been favorably reviewed. A long-time member of ISPS, as well

Before the Downbeat

I open the door and a swirl of sounds bursts out.
Clarinet shrills up a scale and trombone lopes along a line.
Fourteen other fragments emerge, underscored by a snotty snare drum.

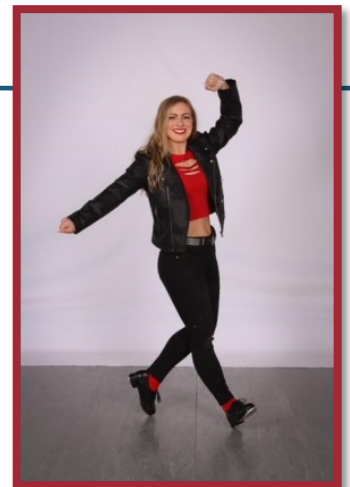
The scents of rosin, warm metal, and cork mix
with aftershave and a little alcohol.
Some dust on the timpani head a last-minute distraction.

The cacophony, the buzz,
the joy of this place;
I'm loyal to the aural art.

Tonight, in our blackest blacks, we are elegant.
Black tux, black dress, black ties pop
the wood, the silver, and brass of our instruments.

All eyes forward for too-ning, the ancient song.
If there's a curtain, it opens; if there's a pit, we rise a little.
Hearts a flutter, we're on.

~ Jill Spealman



When the Wave Remains Calm

Together, sitting and watching as the waves protract-pretty
Now pondering what it's like beneath the surface-deep blue
There are so many creatures undiscovered-unknown
We'll never quite understand all that occurs below-coral
Until the moment when the wave remains calm-quiet

~ Olivia Geringer-Spagnola

Ars Poetica

if every poem is a stone
tossed into a pond
it is also the arc of the throw
the rise and fall
the shift as it pierces
the silk swathe of water
the splash
and the ripples
that reverberate
the slow drift
down to the muddy bottom
and the silence

~ Gay Guard-Chamberlin

*Ars Poetica won 2nd HM in the 2023
Poets & Patrons contest*



Unsalted Blue Sunrise: Poems of Lake Michigan. Her poems have been published in *New Croton Review*, *Written River*, *The Bedford Record-Review*, *Clinch*, and *East on Central* as well as in books and academic journals. The founder of Sparkitivity, Kathryn writes and speaks widely on creative thinking and the secret strengths of outlier learners. Say hello at www.sparkitivity.com.

as several city poetry organizations, she co-leads readings and workshops on the craft of writing with her sister, Anara Guard, as *Sibling Revelry*. Gay mentors middle school and high school poets, and edits manuscripts. Lately, when not weaving words, she can be found making textile art pieces. [Gay's not technically a new member but a new officer.]

Kathryn P. Haydon writes poetry to think with fresh eyes. She has written six books, including her latest poetry collection



Judith MK Kaufman was born at the age of 50, before which she had one middle initial and neither the ability nor the inclination to write creatively. Her

late-in-life muse directed her to other writers and visual artists and the founding of *East On*

Central, a Journal of Arts and Letters from Highland Park, Illinois. After 22 years as Editor-In-Chief of *East On Central*, Judith has retired from that position to focus on her own writing. Poet & freelance editor, Judith's writing is inspired by her two children and four amazing grandchildren, as well as ancestors, friends, and relatives. Judith is the author of *Caught Laughing: the Esther and Bernie Story*, a collection of humorous true tales about her parents. A volume of poetry about her grandchildren, to be titled *The Cookie Jar*, is currently in the works.



the ghosts arrived at four a.m.

I was nudged from slumber by honesty,
foolishly taken for granted,
the last to go had died a slow death

ardor began to play a fiddle
as fidelity performed
the dance of seven veils

distracting me from watching
respect fly out the window
as fantasy and reality merged

and truth was mere memory
whose existence may also
have been a dream

~ Judith MK Kaufman

Poetry and private investigations might not otherwise spring to mind as practice companions. After serving a tour in the United States Army Military Police Corps, **Edward J. Herdrich** spent over twenty years engaged in private investigations, which ranged from undercover operations to adoption searches to criminal defense investigations. He considers himself fortunate to have been friends with Lakota and Dakota people, and to have spent time with them in ceremony. He graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a double major in Criminal Justice and English/Creative Writing. He is the proud father of six strong, intelligent and compassionate human beings. His poetry is inspired and influenced by all of these experiences, voices and souls. His first poetry chapbook, *Surface Tensions and Undercurrents: A Collection of Poems and Observations Along the Water's Journey*, was released in early 2023. He is grateful to, and for over ten years has been a proud member of, the St. Charles Writer's Group. [Edward's poem on next page].

They flipped summer's off switch
as we passed through the equinox
right on cue

On cue
the wind called up waves
and the lake churned

Heavy not menacing clouds
saunter above swells
Goodyear blimp circles the stadium

That narrow portal
of peach light on the horizon
swiftly shrinks to midnight.

~ Kathryn P. Haydon



Thanagila ~ Edward J. Herdrich

Thanagila, the name given by those who first saw her here,
Medicine of joy and love, the warmth of the sun brought near,
Her delicate beauty observed and revered
Her strength and speed, protector, not feared.

Undulating rhythms of iridescent green and ruby red
Waves of beauty cross her breast, back and head,
And the thin, probing beak gently moves into blooms
Brighter color in nature, not to brides but to grooms.

With my morning coffee, when in stillness I sit,
Her swift, silky movement joins on the feeder alit,
Up and down she hovers, wings just a blur
Side to side when it suits, even drawing close
Intoxicating moments, even in a small dose.

As she leaves, on her way who knows where
Flitting past my head, thrumming I hear
For the speed of her wings and the hovering motion
Perhaps cause for the name humming, and that notion.
As I smile for the beauty I now know
Think perhaps, in numbers, the indigenous, tremolo.

Each Leaf Must Fall, an excerpt

Red and yellow, orange and brown,
Leaves flickering in the light,
Gently falling to the earth,
Displaying an awesome sight.

All seasons are special and yet it's clear,
Autumn is best of all.
It seems a shame that in the end,
Each colorful leaf must fall.

~ Idella Pearl Edwards



LOVE OF NATURE

~ Idella Pearl Edwards

When we look at nature, what's not to love?
There is beauty everywhere.
Our world is filled with mesmerizing sights,
A grandeur beyond compare.

The harmony of nature makes us feel alive,
Our spirits dance and soar,
But we also experience profound peace.
How could we ask for more?

Whether it's the dance of a butterfly,
Or an ocean's rhythmic wave,
It creates in us momentous admiration,
Satisfaction for that which we crave.



Jennifer Dotson,
Photographer



In Memoriam



Idella Pearl Edwards was born and raised in Aurora, Illinois. Idella attended Olivet Nazarene University and received a degree from College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. After retiring from the State of Oklahoma in 2005, she and her husband Jack moved to Marion, Illinois where she was an active member of Aldersgate United Methodist Church. She wrote a weekly faith column for The Marion Star Newspaper. She was a member of The Little Egypt Writers' Society and a board member of The Little Egypt Arts Association.

She was married to her husband Jack for over sixty wonderful years. Together they lived in eight different states, had five children, twelve grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. They spent several years coordinating Lay Witness Missions and served as Certified Lay Speakers for the United Methodist Church for about 20 years.

Idella self-published her first book at age 71 and wrote at least twenty-five devotional books, poetry books and children's books. She also enjoyed writing a weekly column for one of the local newspapers. Her favorite pastimes included: spoiling the grandchildren, working jigsaw puzzles, writing poetry, birdwatching, oil-painting (example, *The Falls*, at right), photography and spending quality time with her husband, Jack. After Jack's death, Idella relocated to Fenton, Missouri.

Idella Pearl Edwards died on October 27, 2023 of pancreatic cancer. She was a longtime faithful and supportive ISPS member of the Southern Chapter. Many of her poems and art work were also published by Highland Park Poetry in several anthologies, the online Muses' Gallery, and daily poem posts. Included above are two examples from 2022 and 2023.



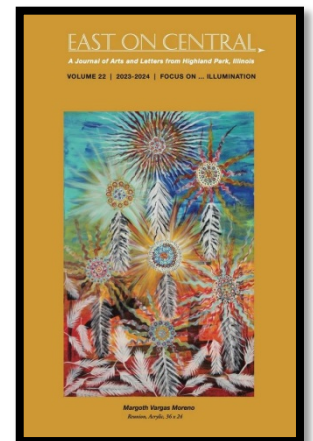
ISPS Member News

ISPS members are invited to browse at the **Local Author Book Festival** sponsored by *East on Central* and The Highland Park Public Library, 494 Laurel Avenue, Highland Park. The Festival will be held on **Saturday, November 18** from 1 to 4 pm. The event will feature readings at 1:15 PM and 3:15 PM from **Kathryn Haydon's** Lake Michigan poetry book, *Unsalted Blue Sunrise*. For more info: <https://www.eastoncentral.org/news-and-events>

Michael Lee Johnson is an internationally published poet in 44 countries, a song lyricist, has several published poetry books and anthologies, and has been nominated for 6 Pushcart Prize awards and 6 Best of the Net nominations. As of August 2023, Michael has created over 293 YouTube poetry videos.



Monthly ISPS-Brewed Awakening Readings - ISPS sponsors a hybrid poetry reading the last Sunday of each month except December from 12:30-2:00 pm at **Brewed Awakening** at 20 E Quincy (across the street from the METRA station), Westmont (and on Zoom) with two featured poets and open mic. Pictured left are in person participants from September's event [from right to left: Tom Moran, Barbara Loeb, Mardelle Fortier, Karen Forslin-Bojnansky, Mary Beth Bretzlauf, and Ray Ziemer. November details on the ISPS Website (illinoispoets.org). Contact Wilda Morris - wem@ameritech.net - with recommendations for poets to be featured in 2024.



Linda Wallin's poem, "Meditation on a Monarch," was published in *East on Central*, Highland Park's Journal of Arts & Letters. This volume (#22, 2023-2024) celebrated its publication in early October. It is an exquisite journal featuring poetry, prose, and visual art and includes the work of multiple ISPS members. Copies are \$20 and are available for purchase at www.eastoncentral.org or stop by Sunset Foods next time you are in Highland Park. The journal will begin accepting submissions for its 2024-2025 edition on December 1st, 2023. The deadline is February 29, 2024. Go to eastoncentral.org for the submission guidelines for art, poetry and prose.

Jennifer Dotson is pleased that in addition to being included in the newest *East on Central*, she has four poems in upcoming publications. "Listening to gospel music while I mop the floor" is slated to appear in the next online edition of Hamilton Stone Review in November – www.hamiltonstone.org/hsr.html. "How Emily Dickinson Makes Black Cake" will be published on www.YourDailyPoem.com on December 10. Evening Street Press & Review #40 released in December will include two poems: "Sequoia's Secret Strength, a Cascade" and "Sequoia and Fire, a Sweetelle."

Invitation to join the **Addison Center for the Arts Ekphrastic Collaboration** – RSVP deadline to participate is November 25th.

Step 1: Enter by November 25, 2023. Contact Julie Mars by email at julie@addisoncenterforthearts.org with the email subject POET ENTRY and your name.

Let us know you are participating and write the following information in your email:

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email: (just in case)

Website and/or social media (optional)

There is no entry fee for the poets.

Step 2: Sit tight. The artists' due date isn't until December 16, 2023. As soon as December 17 rolls around, though, I will be building a web page featuring all of the eligible art works. One or two at a time, ISPS poets will receive a link to the web page.

More ISPS Member News

Printers Row Lit Fest in Chicago 2023 Recap. It was great! ISPS shared a tent with **East on Central Association**, which prints an annual journal of art, poetry and prose, and **Poets & Patrons of Chicago**. So many wonderful people – students, teachers, professors, parents, photographers, writers, and readers stopped by to talk and sign up for information about our group. When it was quiet, we had a chance to get to know our tent mates, and although some of us were associated with all three groups, to be able to be with our poetic family was energizing and uplifting. ISPS member **Kathryn P. Haydon** was one of only three women poets

featured that Saturday on a Printers Row Lit Fest stage! She read from her new book, *Unsalted Blue Sunrise: Poems of Lake Michigan*. Pictured here at the ISPS table from left to right: Marjorie Rissman, Judith MK Kaufman, Melissa Huff, Kate (seated) Hutchinson, James Lowell, Maggie Kennedy, Mary Beth Bretzlauf. Pictured left is West Suburban Chapter facilitator Caroline Johnson representing Poets & Patrons of Chicago.



Highland Park Poetry seeks submissions for the **2024 Poetry Challenge**. This year's challenges are 1) Advice – Good or Bad, 2) Mystery, or 3) a poem on any subject written in the style of a Prime 53. Deadline is **January 29, 2024**. For complete contest guidelines, visit www.highlandparkpoetry.org. Also, looking for volunteer book reviewers as well as poets with recent books they'd like to have reviewed. Plus, seeking feature poets for the 2024 monthly reading events line-up in Highland Park. Email Jennifer@highlandparkpoetry.org.

Help us keep our database up to date!!!!!!

Please let our treasurer, Marjorie Rissman, know of any address, phone number or email changes. We can only communicate with correct info.

marjorierissman@gmail.com

Chapter Contacts

All ISPS members are welcome at any monthly meeting (space permitting) after first contacting the facilitator.

Southern Chapter (Carbondale)

Contact Kathy Cotton, facilitator
kacotton7@frontier.com

Central Chapter (Champaign)

Jim O'Brien, facilitator
journaljim@gmail.com

West Suburban Chapter (Brookfield)

Contact Caroline Johnson, facilitator
carolinejohnson.author@gmail.com

Haiku Chapter

Contact Tom Chockley, co-facilitator
tomzhaiku@outlook.com

Southwest Suburban Chapter (Lisle)

For the Zoom link, contact
Wilda Morris
wem@americtech.net

North Suburban Chapter (Northbrook)

Contact
Mary Beth Bretzlauf, facilitator
ISPS.Manningham@gmail.com

North Central Chapter (Pontiac)

Contact
Kathleen Murphy, facilitator
kathleenzmurphy@mail.com

Procedure for Posting ISPS Member Poems on Website

ISPS members may submit one poem and/or one haiga for posting on our website (illinoispoets.org). Poets whose last initial is N - Z may submit from November 1 - 7, and poets whose last initial is A - D may submit from December 1 - 7. For submission guidelines, please go to "Submitting Poems" (illinoispoets.org/submitting.htm) in our site.