

News of the Illinois State Poetry Society November/December 2024

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Haiku (meets via Zoom)
Tom Chockley

North Central (Pontiac)
Kathleen Murphy

North Suburban
Mary Beth Bretzlauf

Southern (Carbondale)
Kathy Cotton

West Suburban
Caroline Johnson

President's Message



Dear Fellow Poets,

There is breaking news! ISPS now has a Facebook page! The Facebook page is not going to take the place of emailed communications and announcements. There may be some overlap where the same information goes to both places, but the Facebook page is going to be used more to reach people who aren't members and to have some content there that might help people check us out. So far, we've had good feedback and clamors for a group page. Stay tuned...

A reminder: our student contest sponsorship deadline is **November 15th**. Please see the form included in this newsletter. For a very modest investment, you might inspire the future generation of poets to play with words.

Last month, we had another great virtual get-together with members (across the state, country, and the pond!) when many of us read our poems from *Distilled Lives, Volume 7*. It was so nice to connect with others – some knew each other, and several didn't, but we aren't strangers anymore! So, I decided to call these events **Poetic Connections**. Our next virtual Poetic Connections will be **Wednesday, December 4th via Zoom at 6:30PM Central**. Email me at isps.manningham@gmail.com by November 30th to reserve your spot to meet, listen and read!

I hope all of you can get out and enjoy this beautiful weather we are having! The colors here in my corner of the state are quite vibrant. I hope we can all find inspiration in their brilliance.

I wish all of you a wonderful holiday season as it seems to be sneaking up on us!

Keep writing,

Mary Beth Bretzlauf

ISPS Chapter News

Champaign – Central Chapter (Champaign) will hold a joint meeting with the North Suburban Chapter via Zoom on **Sunday, November 10 at 1 PM** on Zoom. This will be a joint meeting with the North Suburban Chapter. Contact Mary Beth Bretzlauf at isps.manningham@gmail.com to RSVP. You can also submit a poem for critique at that time as well.

Founding Chapter (Lisle) hosts a hybrid meeting at **1:15 pm CT on Sunday, December 1, 2024**. Join in-person at Lisle Public Library, 777 Front Street, Lisle, or on Zoom. Email wildamorris@ameritech.net for the Zoom link. You may submit up to three poems (or three pages) for critique so they can be distributed ahead of the meeting. Please put your poems in one single document, with each poem beginning on a separate page, with your name in the upper right-hand corner of each page [not in a header]. Poems should be submitted by Thursday, November 28. Those attending in person should print out the poems for themselves. You may bring snacks to share and refreshment for yourself.

ISPS-Haiku Society of America Haiku Chapter - The Illinois State Poetry Society-Haiku Society of America Haiku Chapter held its bimonthly Zoom chapter meeting on Sunday, October 20, 2024. Those who attended were Tom Chockley, Susan Farner, David Green, Lee Gurga, Margie Gustafson, Julia Harper, Jeff Kressmann, William Lederer, Win Morgan, Michael Nichols-Wisdom, Elizabeth Shack, Jill Spealman, and Jennifer Thiermann. After introductions and a brief description of our workshopping method, we spent the rest of the meeting in rewarding discussion of the ten poems submitted for critique. **Our next Haiku Chapter Zoom Meeting: Sunday, December 8, 2024, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. CDT.** The deadline for RSVPs to attend will be Tuesday, December 3. Contact Tom Chockley (tomzhaiku@outlook.com) to attend the Zoom meeting and to receive further information.

North Central Chapter (Pontiac) - The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, December 10 at 10AM on Zoom. Contact kathleenzmurphy@mail.com for the Zoom link or more info about the PAC collaboration.

Northern Suburban Chapter (Northbrook) - Meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 10 at 1PM** via Zoom. This is a joint meeting with the Central Chapter (Champaign). Contact Mary Beth Bretzlauf at isps.manningham@gmail.com to RSVP. You can also submit a poem for critique at that time as well.

Southern Chapter (Carbondale) – Has two upcoming meetings: (1) the next will be held on **Sunday, November 10 at 1:30PM** at the Carbondale Library, 405 West Main, Carbondale, IL 62901. For directions, visit <https://www.carbondale.lib.il.us>. Please bring 10-12 copies of your poem for critiquing. (2) Kick off your poetry resolutions and attend the first meeting of the new year on Sunday, January 12, 2025 at 1:30PM at the Carbondale Library. Please note: there will be no Zoom meeting in December.

West Suburban Chapter – Next meeting is **Saturday, November 2, 2024, 1 PM to 4 PM CT at the Westmont Public Library, 428 N. Cass Avenue, Westmont, Illinois 60559 *NEW LOCATION***. Please bring 8 - 10 copies of up to two poems for critique. Also a food item to share, and a beverage for yourself. Any questions please contact the facilitator, carolinejohnson.author@gmail.com.

Reminder – It is never too late to renew your ISPS Membership! Send your fee, and completed form to Treasurer Marjorie Rissman. The new year began July 1st! Email marjorierissman@gmail.com. Forms available on website, illinoispoets.com.

The Last Sunday of the Month Poetry Readings at **Brewed Awakening** in Westmont from 12:30 – 2:00 PM (co-sponsored by ISPS). Email Wilda Morris - wildamorris@ameritech.net to recommend someone as featured poet.

Accepting Submissions for Book of the Year Award

ILLINOIS STATE POETRY SOCIETY

Book of the Year 2024

Award

- \$100 and featured author opportunities

Eligibility

- Current ISPS members living in Illinois at the time of publication
- Book includes 2024 copyright date & ISBN
- Book has a minimum of 40 pages of poetry

Book Submission

- Deadline: Postmarked by December 31, 2024
- 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 2024 poetry book to:

2024 ISPS BOOK OF THE YEAR
1019 Applewood Lane
Anna IL 62906

isps.bookoftheyear@gmail.com

Submissions are open through **December 31, 2024**, for the ISPS Book of the Year Contest.

Winner of last year's contest was *Sonnets of Love and Joy* by Paul Buchheit.

Share this opportunity with Students & Teachers

Annual NFSPS Student Poetry Contest

Encourage the young poets you know to send a poem!

- Manningham Student Poetry Contest for students in grades 6–12
- Submission deadline Friday, Nov. 15
- Free entry; 20 cash prizes
- Submit one poem online at [NFSPS.submittable.com](https://www.nfspssubmittable.com)
- Sponsored by the National Federation of State Poetry Societies
- Information and submission link – www.nfspss.net



Seeking Sponsors for ISPS 2025 Student Contest



ILLINOIS STATE POETRY SOCIETY 2025 Student Contest Sponsorship

- Complete and mail a form for each 2025 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 **Friday, Nov. 15, 2024**
- 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**

kac10224

Welcome ISPS New Member!

Caleb Delos-Santos is a graduate student and TA at SIUE who lives in Carbondale with his wife. His fourth poetry collection, *When Will You Water Me?*, was released last April. After earning his MA in English Literature, Caleb hopes to one day earn an MFA in Poetry.



Hunting Little Mangers

Inspired by "Viewmaster" by Shane Seely

As the annual hunt began, the tracking
between the vines and bristles of lights
for the brightest lawnside nativity scene,

my finger launched out immediately,
as if the genes of a hunting hound scurry
inside me, passing around my bones,

stretching the skin leashed to my wrist.
I pointed to woodcuts whitewashed:
panels of ivory and duct tape in the shape

of the shepherds, the mother, and the Godchild,
the son of man, the Christ. But my mother
groaned, like a lion famished for meatier game,

and advised me, like my father once did
when fishing, that outlines are promising
but cannot count, since silhouettes are wide

and can carry colors even deeper than white,
but once hunters loosen and leap into shapes
without faces, blood, or skin, they taste nothing.

by **Caleb Delos-Santos**

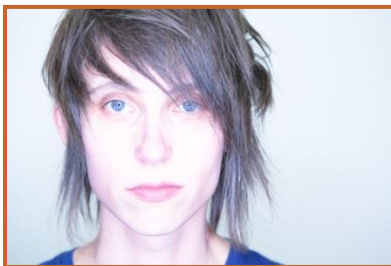
Lynn West is a photographer and poet who finds inspiration from open eyes and ears. She has been featured in *East on Central*, *Highland Park Poetry* and other



publications. Her photos have been shown at The Art Center in Highland Park, where she hosts poetry events, and she has won numerous awards in the City's *Capture the Heart of Highland Park* photography contest. Lynn received first place in the environmental category for *Let's Snap Lake County* contest. Her poetry has been featured in *Vigilance* at The

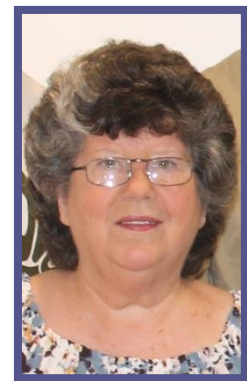
Brushwood Center in Riverwoods.

Jenna Goldsmith is a poet, writer, and teacher living in the Midwest. She is the author of 4 poetry chapbooks, including *CRUSH*, winner of the 2022 Baltic Writing Residency Chapbook Contest. Her writing has been featured in *New Delta Review*, *South Carolina Review*, and *Belt Magazine*, among other venues. She is the Director of the Low-residency MFA Program in Writing at Oregon State University Cascades, and is the 2nd City Poet Laureate of Rockford, Illinois, where she



resides. [Read a poem by Jenna Goldsmith on the next page.]

Janice Canerdy is a retired high school English teacher from Potts Camp, Mississippi. She has been writing and enjoying poetry for decades. She is very dedicated to her church, her family, and poetry. Her second book, *From Serious to Slapstick - - Poems, like Life*, is available on Amazon.



Julia Harper [pictured on next page to the right] is a new member of ISPS' Southern Chapter and describes her poetry journey here: "I am a 69 year old retired RN,

Hope

Despair melts over my soul
like candle wax
Pull of gravity as the douter
snuffs the light

Hot veins of pain pull the spirit
A ghost wanders in dank halls
She once felt, danced and romanced
Now only to hold onto a small flame
quivering warmth,
slivers of sunshine

Lynn West

and a lifelong resident of Southern Illinois. I have always loved language and have been writing off and on since childhood, but never shared work outside of school. I am excited to connect with, and hopefully learn from, other people with the same passion for wordcraft.”



Maggie Capettini is an award-winning artist who has a home studio in Downers Grove and is a Resident Artist at Water Street Studios in Batavia. She started writing poetry in early 2024 feels the inverse of Georgia O’Keefe: that she can say with words what

she cannot say with color and shapes. She has not yet shared any of her poetry publicly. She has joined the West Suburban chapter of ISPS and

looks forward to learning and growing as a poet.

Carol Alfus is a retired special educator, community volunteer, gardener, traveler and poet. She loves the way a poem can tell a story, capture a moment, or express a range of emotions from wonder, to anger, to joy, and beyond. Her poetry is informed and inspired by current events, personal memories, the ingenuity of the natural world, and occasional ponderings of the great what-ifs of Life.



Midwest politeness

The house sprouts
mid tree line, replica of
Frank Lloyd Wright’s
sharp-edged tabletops
and too-late-for-our-ankles
step-ups (the man must have
been obsessed with minor
movement). These only slight
plane shifts up and down a
vertiginous nightmare.

My eyeballs are happy, though.
So are my hands.
You mark the edges with a
Kleenex box for safety,
sweet reminders: *step here,*
watch your step, step down.
Warnings so tender— all of this
Midwest politeness so thick—
I want to show you very courteously
to bed. I’ll say please
and thank you
and together we’ll trace
the hidden hazards, surpass them.

~ Jenna Goldsmith

Poems, My Mirrors - a double acrostic

Poetry shakes me, wakes me up.
Other poets open my mind to
Endless layers of reality and enable
Me to thrive in this special realm.
Sharing through poetry helps
Me know myself and others better. When I’m
Yearning to describe honestly my
Mindsets, whether stormy or calm,
I find that reading poetry provides stimuli,
Readies me for each expressive endeavor,
Reminding me that poetry is like a mirror,
Offering the reflection of one who
Realizes words possess inestimable power
Such potential for enhancing our lives!

~ Janice Canerdy



Instructions for the last lunch of the road trip

Find a rest stop with picnic tables under a shelter.
Make sandwiches with the bread you bought five days and three states ago, and (if it passes the sniff test) the last of the ham you picked up two states back. There’s an inch of chips left in the bag, mostly crumbs – finish what you want and scatter the rest for the shelter sparrows watching you from the rafters. Better eat that apple that’s been rolling around the bottom of the cooler. One final swig of soda, (bring the bottle home to recycle) then step out of the shelter, lift your face to the sun, take a deep breath, say a quiet thank-you, get behind the wheel and drive back to your life.

~ Carol Alfus

Road Trips: Poets Respond to Travel on Life’s Highways and Byways (Highland Park Poetry Press, July 2024)

ISPS Member News

David Green won 3rd place in the Haiku Society of America haiku contest. Well done!

Alan Harris has gathered all of his poems from his .pdf books into a single, alphabetized 511-page collection titled, *Noon Out of Nowhere – Complete Poems and Aphorisms of Alan Harris*. Interested readers may use the following link to be connected to the work and enjoy reading it gratis - <https://alharris.com/poems/pdf/noon.pdf>.

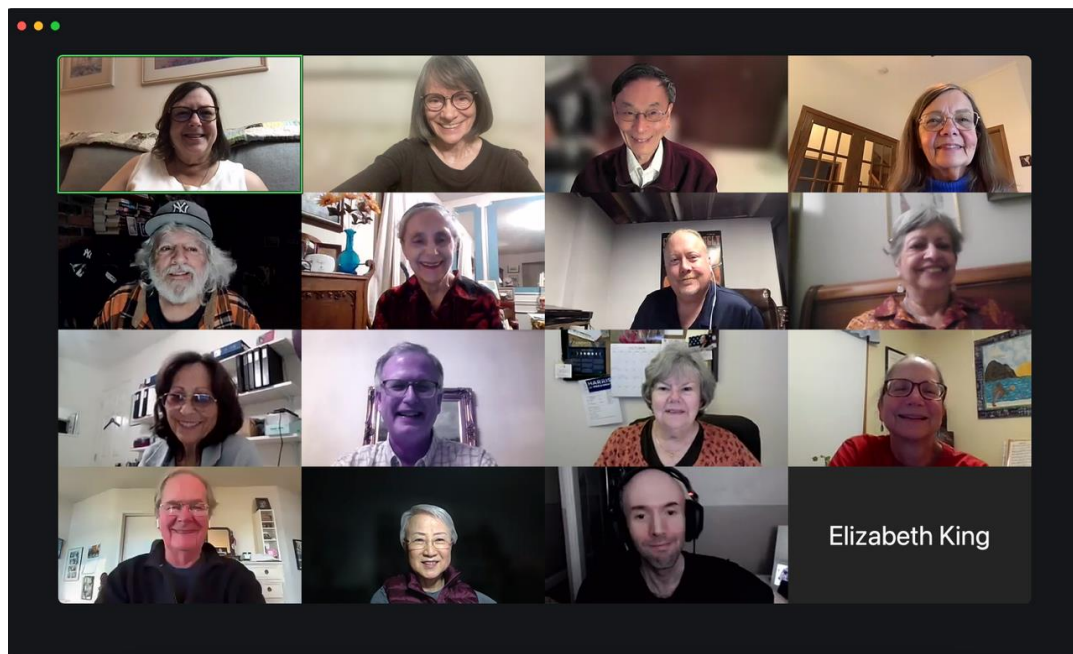


Photo at left is a screen shot of participants at the **ISPS Distilled Lives, Volume 7, Zoom Poetry Reading** held on Thursday, October 17, 2024. From left to right. Top row: **Mary Beth Bretzlauf, Kathy Cotton, William Marr, & Jane Richards**. Second row: **Ken (Fog) Gilbert, Marie Asner, Jim Wilkerson, & Bakul Bannerjee**. Third row: **Carole Bolinski, Joe Carey, Candace**

Armstrong, & Jill Spealman. Bottom row: Guest **Rick Ackerly, Guest Lucy Park, Daniel Moreschi, & Elizabeth King**.

Highland Park Poetry has announced its **2025 Poetry Challenge**. Visit highlandparkpoetry.org to download the submission guidelines, entry form and instructions on how to write a dodoitsu poem. Join HPP at their **Pure Open-Mic** event on **Saturday, December 14 from 4 – 6 PM** at the Wayfarer Theater, 1850 Second Street, in Highland Park.

Marie Asner and husband, Harold Asner, participated in a “Halloween”

themed October poetry reading at the Bear Necessities Coffee Shop in Overland Park, Kansas, sponsored by the Johnson Country Kansas Public Library System. Marie also joined in a Kansas Authors Club Poetry Reading on Zoom. She is also pictured above in the ISPS Poetry Reading for poets included in "Distilled Lives, Volume 7" poetry anthology from the poetry society. Poets read their poems and are included on the new face book page of the Poetry Society.

2025 POETRY CHALLENGE

Highland Park Poetry is now accepting submissions for the 2024 Poetry Challenge from poets of all ages - 1) **The Roaring Twenties** (honoring the 100th publication anniversary of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*); 2) **Ode to a Geographic Place** (inspired by Diane Redleaf's *Odes to the States: Poems Inspired By the 50 States and the District of Columbia*); or 3) **Dodoitsu** (any subject written as a dodoitsu, Japanese form of four lines where first three lines have 7 syllables and the last line has 5; usually concerning topics of work or love. **Download submission guidelines, entry form, and Dodoitsu form instructions and examples.**

Deadline is Monday, January 27, 2025.



More ISPS Member News & Events

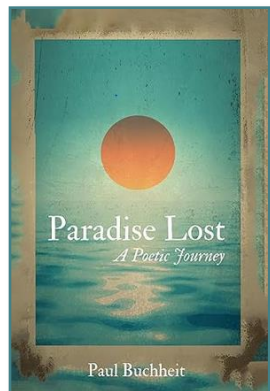


Lynn West, a new ISPS member introduced earlier in this issue, regularly hosts poetry readings and open-mics at The Art Center Highland Park located at 1957 Sheridan Road in Highland Park. Be sure to attend the Poetry of Gratitude program on Saturday, November 23rd from 1 – 3PM featuring ISPS President Mary Beth Bretzlauf.

The next **Open Mic at Barbara's Bookstore** in Yorktown will be **Friday, Dec. 13**, from **6 to 8 PM**. This will be holiday-themed. Come join us for poetry, music, and story telling. Bring up to 5 minutes of material to read. Contact

Caroline Johnson - carolinejohnson.author@gmail.com.

Two opportunities from **Poets & Patrons of Chicago**: (1) **Wilda Morris** will be hosting an online Write! Ekphrastic workshop for Poets & Patrons on Saturday, November 16, from 2 to 4 PM. Participants will be visiting Boston's Museum of Bad Art virtually and writing poetry based on some photos of the exhibit. Contact wildamorris@ameritech.net or poetsandpatrons@gmail.com for more information. (2) Poets & Patrons of Chicago will host its online reading of winners of the **68th Chicagoland Poetry Contest** on Sunday, Nov. 17, from 2 - 4 PM. Please email poetsandpatrons@gmail.com for the zoom link closer to the date.



Congratulations to **Paul Buchheit** on his newest poetry collection, *Paradise Lost: A Poetic Journey*, published in hardcover this year by Wipf and Stock Publishers. Paul provides a fresh voice to John Milton's classic work.

Chapter Contacts

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

Central Chapter (Champaign)

Jim O'Brien, facilitator
journaljim@gmail.com

Founding Chapter (Lisle)

Wilda Morris, facilitator
wildamorris@ameritech.net

Haiku Chapter

Tom Chockley, facilitator
tomzhaiku@outlook.co

North Central Chapter (Pontiac)

Kathleen Murphy, facilitator
kathleenzmurphy@mail.com

North Suburban Chapter (Northbrook)

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

Southern Chapter (Carbondale)

Kathy Cotton, facilitator
kacotton7@frontier.com

West Suburban Chapter (Westmont)

Caroline Johnson, facilitator
carolinejohnson.author@gmail.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 E - H may submit from November 1 - 7, and poets whose last initial is I - M may submit from December 1 - 7. For submission guidelines, please go to "Submitting Poems" on our website (illinoispoets.org/submitting.htm).

