

# LANGUAGE OF ENCHANTMENT

## *New Mexico State Poetry Society*

2011 September 2011

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*From the desk of*  
*Shirley Balance Blackwell*  
*NMSPS President*

On July 23, I met with 11 members to brainstorm ideas for moving NMSPS forward in a new era. I prefaced what proved to be a free-flowing and inspirational discussion with a couple of observations: (1) I knew when I took on the job of NMSPS president that the Society would be going through a period of transition as we put our new Constitution and management model into practice, but (2) I didn't expect that new—and rather wonderful circumstances—would bring us change at whirlwind speed. This summer has been anything but sleepy for the NMSPS.

Since our annual meeting in late May, the Society has gained several new members, with more to come. We have a Taos group putting the finishing touches on joining the Society as the tentatively named Walking Rain Taos Chapter of NMSPS. Susan Paquet is organizing a Corrales/Rio Rancho chapter; members in Las Vegas are looking at a chapter there; and Santa Fe poets are working on founding a chapter in The City Different.

During the brainstorming session, we discussed ways to create a youth chapter using social media like Facebook, and YouTube and to launch a cowboy poetry chapter from Deming, where the local radio station broadcasts a weekly cowboy poetry show.

We are reaching out to other New Mexico poetry associations and venues by providing publicity for their events, as well as ours, on our website's calendar. For example, we now have links to a newsletter based in Las Cruces that publicizes poetry readings and gatherings in the southern parts of the state.

We are researching ways to increase interaction and share resources and ideas among our own chapters. Just imagine being able to sit in your own office and view the Roswell chapter's awards ceremony for student writers via YouTube or Skype or to listen online to a guest speaker at an Albuquerque chapter meeting. I was delighted to welcome Roswell members Chuck and Candace Russell to my home in Los Lunas for the brainstorming, but in this telecommunications age, no member is really more than five seconds away, if we just use the technology.

One suggestion made at the meeting was to put a blog on our website so that we can easily communicate with each other on a daily basis. A group of people more knowledgeable than I about such technology will be meeting soon to explore tools to allow our members to participate in the Society's doings even from distant places. As we grow statewide, we will need people adept at these new media to step forward and help their chapter mates stay in the loop.

When I was at the NFSPS convention in Dearborn in June, I was told that there was a time when the NMSPS was a powerhouse in the Federation. I believe we can reclaim that prestige. More important, though, is the mission we have in our own State of New Mexico. These are hard times in our country: for our economy, our culture, our schools, and our people's confidence in themselves and hopes for the future. I believe that poets are especially needed in such times and that we can accomplish most by helping each other.

At the July 23 meeting, NMSPS vice president Kitty Todorovich quoted Jose Martí's words for the dedication of the Statue of Liberty in 1887, "A grain of poetry suffices to season a century." I propose that we adopt that quote as the NMSPS motto and that we remember it when we need reminding that we have important work to do.

I detect a sense of excitement and inspiration as the Society grows and moves toward new horizons, but I acknowledge that, however ardent my own hopes for the success and vitality of our Society, I cannot achieve anything alone. We will prosper only to the degree that each member takes part in the effort. So, I humbly ask for your help, ideas, and support. If we work in community, we will achieve more, lighten individual loads, and reap the joys of fellowship. That, in a nutshell, is my philosophy of management.

Thank you, again, for electing me to the leadership of this fine group of people. I look forward to the next two years. Let us reach beyond our grasp "or what's a Heaven for?"

Shirley B. Blackwell

## Taos Verse/Converse Festival a Hit with NMSPS Poet

By Gary Stewart Chorrè, Rio Grande Valencia Poet

Wow! Who would have guessed that a world class poetry festival was evolving right before us, tucked away in the verdant meadows of Taos, New Mexico. June 2-5, 2011 saw the fourth incarnation of this literary gem. David Behrstock, a teaching genius in the Stanislavsky style, is the founder of the Verse/Converse Poetry Festival.

This year, with the helping hand of poetry powerhouse James Nave, the show was popping. Thursday was reserved for the sharply sliced insights of various New Mexico youth slam teams. Friday, the over 21 slam crowd devoured good food and verse at Shadow's Lounge. Saturday, the big dogs exploded on center stage at the Harwood Museum. Roger Bonair-Agard and Lynn Procope from New York City, by way of the West Indies Islands of Trinidad & Tobago, were two of the most powerfully dynamic writer/performers to grace the stage. Nikola Tesla could not have created a more electrifying scene for this 5-Star performance.

Be hip, be square, I don't care, just go! Verse/Converse Poetry Festival, Taos, first week in June 2012. Don't forget to bring some of your own work for the open-mic sessions.



[www.nfsp.org](http://www.nfsp.org)

New Mexico State Poetry Society (NMSPS) is a member of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. (NFSPS), an educational and literary organization dedicated to the writing and appreciation of poetry in America.

The NFSPS can be found at website [www.nfsp.org](http://www.nfsp.org). You can also view this site through the *NMSPS website* at [www.nmpoetry.org](http://www.nmpoetry.org).

### Radio Spot Latest Ploy in Poetry Scams

Scams to separate poets from their cash don't really die, they just fake a new way. One of our members warns us of another variation in a seemingly inexhaustible string of schemes.

It seems someone got wind that our member had published a book and offered the poet a "radio interview," citing the sales boost this could give the book. So far, well and good. I mean, wouldn't we all love to think that our talent had been recognized by someone out there in media land? When the interviewer, instead of offering our member remuneration, wanted to charge for the interview, our savvy member smelled a rat and canceled any further negotiations.

This isn't to say that radio spots wouldn't be worth purchasing, if you were so inclined, but they should be on the poet's terms and initiative. We've said it before: unless the check is already made out to you, back away when folks come knocking at your door. When you are asked to pay to receive high-sounding titles or honors, whether it involves your paying for expensive conferences, anthologies, jewelry, trophies, or—in this case—a radio show, the "offer" is most likely bogus.

Having a string of mass-produced titles or awards will do nothing for your publication credit. In fact, many fine authors who have fallen victim to these scams see them later as a detriment to their credibility, or, at the very least, an embarrassment.

### Black Cat Setting for Bezansky Award

Truth or Consequences author and longtime *Sierra County Sentinel* columnist Helen "Hoot" Bezansky added another feather to her literary cap on Sunday, June 12, as she received a Lifetime Membership Certificate from the New Mexico State Poetry Society. Bezansky has been a member of the NMSPS and the National League of American Pen Women since February 1975.

NMSPS president Shirley Blackwell and vice president Kitty Todorovich presented the award to Helen at the monthly poets' meeting at Black Cat Books and Coffee in T or C. Bezansky won the honor by unanimous vote of the NMSPS membership at the Society's annual meeting in May, the same month that she celebrated her ninetieth birthday.

About 16 poets from various parts of New Mexico were present to see Bezansky receive the award, including Las Cruces writer (and former Poet Laureate of Alaska) Joanne Townsend; Hillsboro poet, teacher and author Lou Anne Johnson; and the NMSPS officers, who traveled from Belen. Also present were members of the local press. The event was aired on TV Channel 9 News in El Paso. A color photo of the presentation with a caption directing readers to the NMSPS website also appeared in the *Sentinel*.

Congratulations, Helen.

You are an inspiration to us all.

## 2011 Annual New Mexico State Poetry Society Contest

Dear 2011 Annual NMSPS Poetry Contestants:

It has been my pleasure to be this year's 2011 Annual New Mexico State Poetry Society's Contest Chair. There were 116 poems entered in the four categories. There were no entries for the Youth category.

The breakdown was as follows: 27 poems in the #1 category-rhymed, 56 poems in the #2 category-free verse, 16 poems in the #3 category-southwest theme, and 17 poems in the #4 category-humor.

Amy Jo Zook was our volunteer judge for this year. She was born in Illinois and grew up in Texas from 1940 thru 1958. She has lived in Ohio since then (except for her graduate school). She received a BA from Wittenberg University and an MA and PhD from West Virginia University. She currently teaches at Urbana University in Urbana, Ohio. She is the author of eight collections of poetry. Ms. Zook was named the "Ohio Poet of the Year" in 1988. Amy Jo Zook is the past President and the current Editor of *Common Threads* for the Ohio Poetry Association. She has held the position of President for the National Federation of State Poetry Societies. She has been the Contest Chairman for 19 years and is currently the Treasurer of the Ohio Poetry Day Association. We were very fortunate to get Amy Jo Zook as our volunteer judge for the 2011 Annual NMSPS Poetry Contest.

Thank you all for supporting the NMSPS Annual Poetry Contest, and congratulations to all the Place Winners, Honorable Mentions, and Judge's Special Mentions.

Sincerely,

Annamarie H. Pearson, 2011 Annual NMSPS Contest Chair

<u>#1 Rhymed</u>	<u>#2 Free Verse</u>	<u>#3 Southwest Theme</u>	<u>#4 Humor</u>
First Place: Lee Pelham Cotton Locust Hill, VA A Shower of Stones	First Place: Catherine Moran Little Rock, AR Beneath the Layers	First Place: Ray Reeder Albuquerque, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) Brown	First Place: Nick Sweet Shepherd, TX Blast From the Past
Second Place: Jerri Hardesty Brierfield, AL Apt Pupil	Second Place: Rose Ann Spaith Columbus, OH A Letter to Theresa from Oscar	Second Place: Shirley Balance Blackwell Los Lunas, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) Bone Orchard Promise	Second Place: Susan Whitley Peters Lenexa, KS Emergency Poems
Third Place: Von S. Bourland Happy, TX Anticipation	Third Place: Von S. Bourland Happy, TX A Burning Promise	Third Place: Shirley Balance Blackwell Los Lunas, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) Fly-in at the Bosque del Apache	Third Place: Shirley Balance Blackwell Los Lunas, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) Les Folies de la Mer
First Honorable Mention: Rose Ann Spaith Columbus, OH Canticle of the Rose Window	First Honorable Mention: Sara Gipson Scott, AR A Fair Day	First Honorable Mention: Hilda Wales Albuquerque, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) Restitution	First Honorable Mention: Susan Whitley Peters Lenexa, KS Weekenders
Second Honorable Mention: Catherine Moran Little Rock, AR Building the Treehouse	Second Honorable Mention: Elaine Schwartz Albuquerque, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) Bubbie's Sabbath Midrash	Second Honorable Mention: Rose Ann Spaith Columbus, OH Desert Challenge	Second Honorable Mention: Barbara DuBois Socorro, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) Communication
Special Mention: Joseph Shaffer Yuma, AZ ( <b>NMSPS Member</b> ) Indianapolis Water	First Special Mention: Susan I. Paquet Corrales, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) The Moral Decline Of American Laundry	Special Mention: Barbara DuBois Socorro, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) New Mexico Makeup	Special Mention: Lee Pelham Cotton Locust Hill, VA Make Mine Melancholy
	Second Special Mention: Ray Reeder Albuquerque, NM ( <b>NMSPS Mbr</b> ) At The Shrine Of St. Georgia		

## Letter from the Editor

Dear NMSPS Members:

It has been my pleasure to edit the *Language of Enchantment* newsletter these past few years. With the new NMSPS Board of Officers, we have had some shift changes in volunteer responsibilities. The new Editor, Ms. Jules Nyquist, has volunteered to edit the *Language of Enchantment* newsletter starting next quarter. This will be my last edition.

I have volunteered to become the Chair of the NMSPS Poetry Contests. We are considering sponsoring a quarterly poetry contest. A committee has been appointed to research the possibility of a poetry contest to run four times per year with all winning poems to be printed at the end of the fourth quarter in an annual NMSPS Poetry Anthology. We hope to offer all members who submit poetry to the quarterly contest an opportunity to get one of their favorite poems or their winning poem printed in the NMSPS Poetry Anthology. The details will be refined by the Poetry Contest Committee. If you have any input that you would like to share with this Committee, please send to Annmarie Pearson at [altbalance@q.com](mailto:altbalance@q.com) or mail to 454 Diana Dr. NE, Los Lunas, NM, 87031 or you may leave a message at 505-865-5605.

On another note, this will be the last time we will be mailing our newsletter to many of our members. Starting in January 2012, the NFSPS will be sending out the national newsletter, *Strophes*, online only. They will be going paperless due to the enormous expenses of printing and postage. To a large degree, the NMSPS will follow suit. In the future, the *Language of Enchantment* will be posted on our website and members will receive an email reminder that will link them directly to the newsletter. Members who do not have Internet access or a computer that can print out a copy will continue to receive paper copies. Members who have online access and printing capabilities but prefer to receive paper copies as well will be asked to consider donating money (under \$10) to defray printing and mailing costs. The NMSPS officers and chapter chairs will be working to find the most efficient and economical way to distribute the *Strophes* and *Language of Enchantment* to all members. *Strophes* has been posted for several years on the National Federation website ([nfsp.com](http://nfsp.com)). If you do not have Internet access, please notify your chapter chairperson or the new editor, Jules Nyquist. Contact information for these officers is on page 6 of this newsletter.

Thank you for your cooperation in all the changes that are making our Society function more smoothly and efficiently.

Sincerely,

Annmarie H. Pearson

*Language of Enchantment*, Editor

## 2011 Encore Cover

NFSPS members are being asked to submit a photo or original art work to be considered for the cover of the 2011 *Encore* that will be presented at the 2012 summer convention in Indiana. These photos/artwork may be submitted in hard copy by mail or digitally by email to Encore editor, Valerie Martin Bailey. Send hard copies to 2207 Parhaven Drive, San Antonio, TX, 78232 or by email to [vbailey@satx.rr.com](mailto:vbailey@satx.rr.com). Please write your name, address, phone number, and email address on the back of each photo or include it with your email. Vertical or horizontal layouts will be considered. In horizontal formats, the focal point of the photo must be on the right side of the photo, so it can be used as a wrap cover. A horizontal format will be scaled to 12.5 x 9 and a vertical format will be scaled to 6 x 9. Photos/art do not have to be these exact sizes, as they will be reduced or enlarged to fit. Very small or very large photos may present a problem when reduced or enlarged. Hard copies will need to be scanned and must be no larger than 8.5 x 11 in order to fit the scanner. No photos will be returned unless specifically requested and a suitable envelope with postage is provided. The editor will keep the photos/art on file and they may be used in later years as well as the current year. The deadline for sending submissions is March 1, 2012.

### Taos Chapter Up and Running

By Andrea L. Watson, Taos Poet

The currently forming Taos Chapter of the NMSPS was delighted to hold a meeting in Taos when Shirley Blackwell and George Forrest visited on Friday, August 19, at Andrea Watson's casita. In attendance were poets Leslie Ullman, Veronica Golos, Judith Thompson, and Andrea Watson. Five other poets have signed up to join the new Chapter.

Shirley offered a history of the NFSPS and the NMSPS. She talked about membership and the new constitution. The Taos members were excited to hear about the possibility of the 2013 national convention to be held in Albuquerque. Taos Chapter members volunteered to host workshops, readings, help to contact speakers, artists, musicians, and party planners from a variety of locations in New Mexico for the convention. The Taos Chapter felt that this was a strong suit for membership. It was also mentioned that David Behrstock, Director of Verse Converse, was one of the new chapter members and was excited to hear about the convention. Judith Rane, of RANE Gallery and host of *ekphrasis* events, offered to host events at her gallery in Taos for the 2013 convention.

All the Taos chapter members look forward to meeting and working with members from across our wonderful and unique state in the future months.

**Santa Fe Poets Forming New Chapter**

Santa Fe poetry patron Paul White hosted a gathering of poets interested in forming a new NMSPS chapter at his Chupadero home on August 20. President Shirley Blackwell and New Members Project Leader Princess Ifeoma Ahusim were there to outline the Society's activities and mission for the poets and answer their questions. Six persons joined the NMSPS on the spot as tentative members of the newly forming chapter.

Paul is contacting other poets in the area, and when a larger group has coalesced, they will officially join as a Santa Fe chapter under a name of their own choosing.

Welcome to our fellow poets from the City Different. We look forward to getting to know you better. Muchas gracias to Paul White, who has championed the cause of poetry in the area and whom we are proud to have as a member of NMSPS.

**Corrales/Rio Rancho Forming a New Chapter**

Susan Paquet has taken on the challenge to create a new chapter in the Corrales and Rio Rancho area. The first meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, September 13, at 6:00 p.m. at the Corrales Public Library on 84 West La Entrada in Corrales.

For more information about this new chapter, you can contact Susan Paquet at 817-597-9539 or email her at [paquetadoption@sbcglobal.net](mailto:paquetadoption@sbcglobal.net)

**Society to Host Poets Picnic in Tijeras**

A global movement called 100 Thousand Poets for Change has challenged poets in some 400 cities in 90 countries to raise awareness of the part poets play in society and culture by participating in a day of awareness scheduled for Saturday, September 24.

The NMSPS will observe the day by hosting a Poets' Picnic and Open Mic at the Fine Arts Center in Tijeras, just a few miles east of Albuquerque off I-40. (directions below) This is the first of what may become an annual NMSPS Fall Festival, so come out and help kick it off.

The festivities begin at 10:30 a.m. with live music from the Free Verse in Reverse Band and sign-up for the first open mic, which starts at noon. From 12:30 until 2:00 p.m., NMSPS member Stewart Warren will emcee presentations by feature poets, including (in alphabetical order) Tani Arness, Rich Boucher, Yasmeen Najmi, and Richard Vargas. Following the feature poets, the open mic and more live music will round out the afternoon.

The poetry event will be in conjunction with an arts fair. Vendors will have booths around the perimeter of the open-air stage and performance space. Bring your lawn chairs or a blanket. Pack a lunch or buy one from several nearby sandwich shops (Subway is in walking distance; Pinkie's, Greenside Cafe, and Cedar Crest Grill are two miles away north on Hwy 14). Anna King, who is providing us this venue free of charge, offers gourmet coffees in her Just Imagine art gallery and coffee shop next door.

Our host has advised us that the audience may contain young children. As NMSPS supports bringing appropriate poetry to the children and youth of New Mexico, poets are asked to use discretion in selecting poems for the open mic.

Directions: Go east on I-40 to Exit 175 (a few miles from Juan Tabo Blvd). When the ramp forks, turn right and right again to get on the old highway heading back toward Albuquerque. Look for the Just Imagine Gallery on your left less than 100 yards along the old road. The space is clearly marked.

**NFSPS SECRETARY VISITS NEW MEXICO**

Christine Delea, secretary of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (parent organization of our Society) had dinner with NMSPS members Mary Fogarty, Gary Chorrè, Shirley Blackwell, and Debbi Gutierrez at the historic Pete's Café in Belen on August 10. Delea was near the end of a two-month road trip from her home in Oregon that had taken her to the NFSPS convention in Dearborn in June, on to the East Coast, and back through the Deep South.

Delea shared with NMSPS members her experiences with many previous national conventions and her ideas for how to organize and fund the gatherings, and how to choose speakers and workshop leaders. Her advice and insight were immensely valuable as we consider whether to host an NFSPS convention here in New Mexico, since few of our members have attended them in the past.

NMSPS wants to thank Christine Delea for stopping by, and Shirley Blackwell especially enjoyed sharing some time with Delea, whom she first met at the 2008 Utah national convention.

**CONGRATULATIONS**

**Barbara DuBois**  
**(Socorro Chapter Chair)**

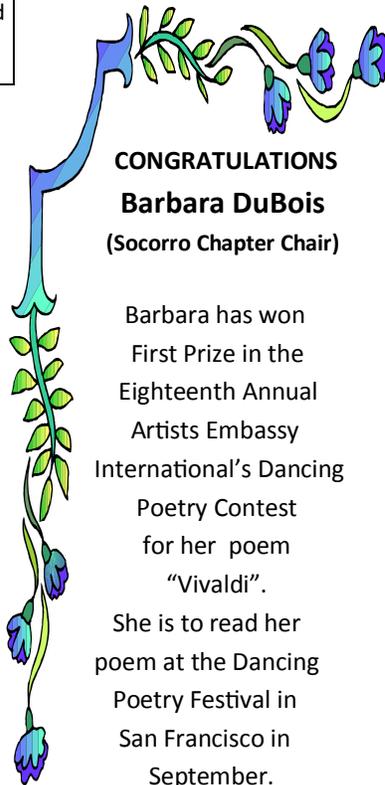
Barbara has won First Prize in the Eighteenth Annual Artists Embassy International's Dancing Poetry Contest for her poem "Vivaldi".

She is to read her poem at the Dancing Poetry Festival in San Francisco in September.

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**The NMSPS Board Meeting**

will be held on September 10th at 11:00 a.m. at the Manzano del Sol Good Samaritan Village, 5201 Roma Ave. NE. The meeting is open to all members but only Board Members are permitted to cast votes.



**New Mexico State Poetry Society****Dr. Sylvia Cruz Ramos****Secretary****PO Box 7398****Albuquerque, NM 87194-7398****NMSPS ELECTED BOARD****APPOINTED BOARD**

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**CHAPTER MEETING TIMES AND LOCATIONS**

All members of NMSPS are welcome to attend meetings of any chapter, whether or not it is the member's "home chapter" and are encouraged to bring guests who might consider joining the NMSPS. Members at large are especially invited to drop in on meetings whenever they get the opportunity. Let us get to know each other better, no matter where we live.

The **ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER** meet on the second Saturday of every month from September through April at 1:00 p.m. at the Manzano del Sol Good Samaritan Village, 5201 Roma Ave. NE (one block South of Lomas and one block West of San Mateo) in Albuquerque. Contact Chair Elaine Schwartz at delschwartz@juno.com or call (505) 255-1742.

The **HIGH PRAIRIE POETS, ROSWELL CHAPTER** meet on the third Saturday of every month, from September through April only, at 2:00 p.m. at the Roswell Museum and Arts Center (11th and North Main) in Roswell. Contact Chair Ann H. Applegarth at aapple@plateautel.net or call (575) 627-6014.

The **RIO ABAJO POETS, SOCORRO CHAPTER** meet on the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the library at the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, 801 Leroy Place in Socorro. Contact Chair Barbara DuBois at brduboiss@sd.org or call (575) 835-3437.

The **RIO GRANDE VALENCIA (RGV) Poets** meet on the first Saturday of every month at 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Belen Public Library, 333 Becker Avenue in Belen. Contact Chair Annmarie Pearson at altbalance@q.com or call (505) 865-5605.

**New Chapters forming:**

Corrales/Rio Rancho: Contact person Susan Paquet at paquetadoption@sbcglobal.net

Taos: Contact person Andrea Watson at watsona@taos.org

Santa Fe: Contact person Paul White at whitegrappawireless.com