



A grain of poetry serves to season a century – José Luis Martí

Language of Enchantment

**News from the New Mexico State Poetry Society (NMSPS)
November/December 2022**

Welcome to the newsletter of the New Mexico State Poetry Society (NMSPS). To keep information flowing at a manageable rate, we have reinvented our newsletter to an email format. Look for it in your inbox every other month.

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A Word from the President

Bernadette Perez, NMSPS President

Dear Friends,

It has been quite a year in my life, as I'm sure it has been in yours. My family and I, thanks be to God, are happy and well. I pray you and yours are, too.

One of the gifts that comes with a long life is a treasure chest filled with a great many good friends, including some you may never have met. It's one of my most cherished blessings. Life may not have brought me the wealth of riches, but it has brought me a wealth of friends.

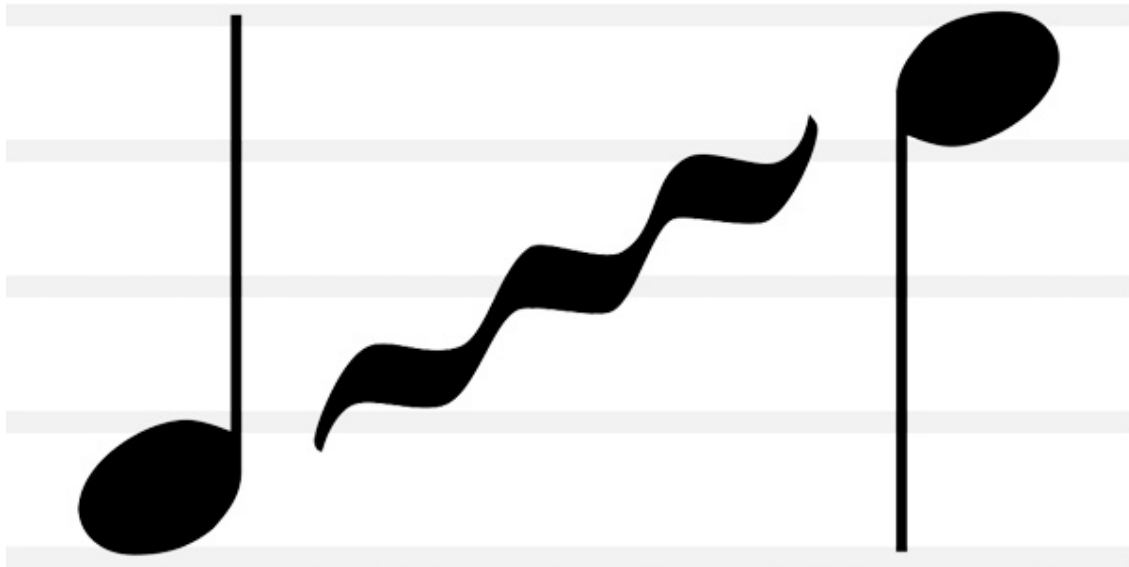
One of the most incredible things about our Society is that none of you has to try to be so amazing. It's just the way you are built. Poets naturally come with friendliness, generosity, and welcoming voices—gifts that enrich the lives of others.

Poets, you are the storytellers who open your lives, uplifting others with creativity and grace, allowing everyone around you to shine, helping them walk up to an open mic more confident than before, encouraging them to read more. The poets I know are nonjudgmental and compassionate. Although I still tremble each time I step up to read, knowing my fellow Poets and friends are there lets me raise my voice with pride.

All of you are amazing. You are thoughtful, kind, funny, smart, and all of the things that make the perfect friends. You spend every day making people around you feel special and important. I want you to know how much you mean to me.

Here's wishing you and yours a blessed Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice, New Year—or whatever holiday reminds you of goodness, warmth, and light coming back into our world.

Sincerely,
Bernadette Perez



NMSPS Anthology Call for Submissions

Poetry! Cover art! And More! *Glissando!* is now open for online submissions. Deadline: January 20, 2023.

NMSPS Members and 2022 State Convention Presenters can enter up to five (5) poems on the theme of “Transition” (*glissando* is a musical term for a smooth transition between notes). Visual Artists everywhere (NMSPS membership not required) can send up to five (5) pieces of your art for the *Glissando!* front cover.

For full details and guidelines, click [here](#).



**BLACKBERRY PEACH NATIONAL
SLAM POETRY COMPETITION**

It's All About Community

From Shirley Blackwell, NMSPS Board Chancellor

In the past two issues of this newsletter, I wrote about *Contests* and *Conventions*, two of the four benefits I've cited for why poets should join NMSPS and, by extension, the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS). I had planned to write about Benefit #3, *Collaboration*, but I'll skip to # 4, *Community* for this issue because of two recent experiences.

The first was that I attended the inaugural NFSPS National BlackBerry Peach Poetry Slam in Daytona Shores, Florida, in late October. To read a review of the BBP Slam, click [here](#).

If you just clicked and read that, you can guess that the event was something special, but there is no way to express how it made me feel to actually be present. There was an almost palpable sense that we were witnessing a historical turning point, and a definite feeling that it would change us personally as well.

I cannot imagine a more diverse group than the 40 contestants who came, nor a more “establishment” group that welcomed them. But the welcome was warm and sincere, and connecting with one another was amazingly swift. Everyone there seemed committed to create a magic bubble in time, a community built on honesty and trust. It sounds cliché, but it was real and profound.

The second experience was the open mic readings my home chapter, the Rio Grande Valencia (RGV) poets gave at the Hub City (Belen) Art Co-op on December 11, 2022. Like other Society chapters, some RGV folks have known each other for years. I've learned that, when poets repeatedly share their poetry—and, therefore, their lives—with each other, it creates a special bond between them. At the open mic, I read poems to my RGV friends that I would seriously hesitate to share with strangers; and, I wasn't the only one who did.

What happens in NMSPS is common everywhere in the Federation. I have lasting friendships with poets I see only once every year or so at the national convention, and I'm not at all unusual in that regard. Call it friendship, community, camaraderie, or fellowship, but many of our members say that it is their main reason for joining NMSPS. It is also a bedrock principle of the NFSPS, whose mission statement concludes with these words:

It [NFSPS] is dedicated solely to the furtherance of poetry on the national level and serves to unite poets in the bonds of fellowship and understanding.

New Board Members



Stan Crawford, Secretary, Member of the NMSPS Executive Board

Stan is an attorney and poet who moved to Albuquerque in 2019 with his wife, Dawn, and their menagerie of dogs and cats. He has published his work in *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review*, the *Comstock Review*, the *Midwest Quarterly*, *Poet Lore*, the *Water-Stone Review* and elsewhere. His poetry collection *Resisting Gravity* was selected as a Finalist for the First Book of Poetry award given by the Texas Institute of Letters in 2017. Before moving to New Mexico, he served on the Board of Mutabilis Press, an independent publisher of poetry in Houston, for 18 years.



Edward Pittman, Chair, Santa Fe Poetry Trails Chapter

Years ago, Edward Pittman's poems and short stories were published in the literary journals *Analecta*, *Wellspring*, *Tilted Planet Tales* and *Sidewinder*. At the University of Texas, he was fortunate to study poetry with celebrated poet Albert Goldbarth and fiction with novelist, poet and essayist Zulfikar Ghose. Pittman also studied poetry with acclaimed poet and teacher Thomas Lux at the University of Iowa. To date, he's written four feature film screenplays and a 60-minute grounded sci-fi pilot for television. In addition to screenwriting, Pittman worked with charted Americana recording artist Arthur Godfrey to co-write the full-length Americana musical "If I Only Knew Your Name." He recently adapted his horror script *Dark Forest* as a short novel. He lives in Santa Fe with his wife, Michelle, and their large pet family.

Contests and Other News



Ready? Get Set... GO!!!

The Federation's (NFSPS) Annual Contests and its BlackBerry Peach Poetry Prizes (BBP3) open for submission on New Year's Day 2023, and close on the Ides (15th) of March.

The NFSPS's traditional 50 Annual Contests have expanded to 53, with the addition of three free contests for students in Grades 3-12. We're proud to say that NMSPS sponsors two of those student contests. Membership in NFSPS (via membership in our NM Society) lets you enter Categories #2 through #50 for \$10 total, plus a small PayPal fee if you enter online via Submittable.

Category #1, the Founders' Award (First Prize of \$1,000) charges members \$5 each for up to four poems; nonmembers pay double. Deadline is March 15. Click [here](#) for the NFSPS Poetry Contests for all contest rules and downloadable brochure with category themes. NM Newbies—read the rules carefully, and call Shirley at (505) 235-5735 if you have questions on how to submit.

BlackBerry Peach (BBP3) offers prizes for “Poetry Spoken and Heard.” Contestants submit audio files, plus a print version of the four poems they have recorded. Prizes include cash, publication, and invitation to perform at National Convention, among other perks. Read rules carefully [here](#).

Hints to Submitters: Don't wait until the last five minutes to submit your files electronically.

For **Annual Contests**, there will be one application form (it goes to the Contest Chair) for all the poems you enter. Each poem (they go anonymously to the judge on a separate electronic channel) needs to be entered as its own file, and the best way to do that is load them in numerical order. That requires some back-and-forth in the Submittable system and will take time. So, put your poems in order from #2 to #50, pour a cup of coffee or tea, and get to it before noon on March 15.

Shirley will not be available for advice after 5:00 p.m. on March 15 regarding the Annual Contests submission. Nor will she be able to help with BBP3 at any stage, beyond referring you to the BBP3 Contest Chair. Good luck to all!



Looking Back on 2022

NMSPS members are so active year round in poetic venues inside and outside the Society that we don't have room in this publication to salute all the good things they have done. However, we should acknowledge and thank them for carrying our light so well in the larger literary community. NMSPS sponsored, promoted or was well represented at the following events in 2022. We know there were others, so please forgive any omissions, and keep us informed so we can celebrate future accomplishments.

APRIL/Virtual NMSPS State Convention, ABQ Poet Laureate Ana Castillo, Keynote.

MAY/Poets' Picnic at Open Space Center in Albuquerque (co-sponsor).

JUNE/NFSPS Annual Convention in Columbus, Ohio (five delegates).

AUGUST/Slam4All to select contestants for National BBP3 Slam (sponsored).

OCTOBER/NFSPS BlackBerry Peach National Poetry Slam, Florida (sponsored two contestants).

NOVEMBER/NM-AZ Book Awards (co-sponsored two poetry categories).

DECEMBER/Winter Solstice Poetry Readings at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church.

View the event [here](#).



P.S. From the Editor *pro tem*

From Shirley Blackwell, NMSPS Board Chancellor

While our Communications director, Jannetta Lamourt, deals with the aftermath of two housefires, I will be holding down the fort at *Language of Enchantment*. You can reach me on email at chancellor@nmpoetry.com, or call me at (505) 235-5735. As noted in the previous issue of this newsletter, it now comes to you via Mailchimp, so be sure to clear it through your spam blockers. I wish all of you a Happy Holiday Season, and may your hearts be merry and bright!

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Upcoming poetry meetings and events are listed below. For complete details on these and future events, click the **NM Poetry Calendar** button below, or go to [this link](#).

NM Poetry Calendar

BIG THINGS are coming in April 2023! The NMSPS State Convention.

Do you have a poetry-related item to post? Post it for free on our the [NMSPS Calendar](#).

The NMSPS Board of Directors

Contact Our Board

To contact any of the leaders listed below, go to our website, www.nmpoetry.com, and click on the "Contact Us" tab. Click on the person's name, and a simple form will pop up on which you can comment, and your message will be sent directly to that person in a way that notifies them it concerns NMSPS. Or, you can send it to the email addresses listed below. Although personnel may change, the assigned emails will persist for future holders of the respective offices. The chapter affiliations of current individual board members are in parentheses.

Executive Board

President: Bernadette Perez (RGV) president@nmpoetry.com

Vice President: *position vacant*

Secretary: Stan Crawford (ABQ) secretary@nmpoetry.com

Treasurer: Helen Knoll (ABQ) treasurer@nmpoetry.com

Chapter Chairs

Albuquerque: Janet Ruth (ABQ) abq_chair@nmpoetry.com

Rio Grande Valencia: Kuan Tikkun (RGV) rgv_chair@nmpoetry.com

River Poets (Silver City): Pending installation of Carole Cvujko (RP)

rp_chair@nmpoetry.com

Santa Fe Poetry Trails: Edward Pittman (SFPT) sfpt_chair@nmpoetry.com

Appointive Board (Directors)

Chancellor: Shirley Blackwell (RGV) chancellor@nmpoetry.com

Communications: Jannetta Lamourt (ABQ) communications@nmpoetry.com

Convention: Marissa Prada (ABQ) convention@nmpoetry.com

Fundraising/Contest/Publications: Zach Kluckman (ABQ) publications@nmpoetry.com

Membership: *position vacant* membership@nmpoetry.com

Youth: JC Wayne (RGV) youth@nmpoetry.com

Website questions or comments? Contact Debbi Gutierrez at

webmaster@nmpoetry.com

Have a question, comment, or suggestion? We want to hear from you!

Contact us!

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