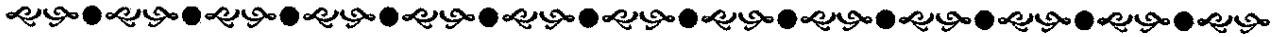


Thistle-Down
Southern Minnesota Poets' Society
Volume 17 Issue 1



Meeting: Saturday, September 12, 1998
11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
(order meal at noon)
Café Camarda (Old Downtown Mall)
12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1655
Use Cherry Street Entrance and Parking Lot
Parking Is Free

Our poetry assignment for September is poetry for children (NFSPS Contest #48). The blessings (and challenges) children bring to our lives are immeasurable. Why not create a poem for a special child who has touched your life, and give him or her a lasting, word-picture gift! Contest #48 poems may be written in any form; please observe a 32-line limit.

Our September meeting will be an ingathering, a time to share summer adventures and accomplishments, read contest-winning poems, hear NFSPS Convention and Woodtick stories, and catch up on what's new! Be sure to bring any poems that won NFSPS prizes. We look forward to seeing you in September. Please come and bring a friend!



Our June picnic at Williams Nature Center was well attended and enjoyed by all. Our informal group feasted on a variety of tasty temptations, and poetry was shared. Thanks to all who turned out for our potluck, poetry fest!



SMPS members would like to thank Meg Kramer for her generosity in giving us copies of *Tending the Flock*, her new poetry booklet. It's lovely, Meg, and we appreciate your gift!



Please pray for comfort and healing for our members who have recently been hospitalized: **Monica Haack** received a knee replacement on August 28. **Elinor Schmidt** had a hip replacement recently. (There may be others we have missed; please let Faye know so she can put it in the next *Thistle-Down*, if desired.) We hope Monica and Elinor will be stronger soon and able to attend upcoming SMPS meetings.





The LOMP Fall Meeting will be held **Friday and Saturday, October 2-3, 1998**, at the Assisi Community Center, Assisi Heights, 14th Street NW and 10th Avenue NE, Rochester, MN. The schedule is as follows:

Friday Evening:

- 3:30 p.m. Registration
- 5 p.m. Evening Meal, Assisi Dining Area
- 6:30 p.m. NFSPS Report by Meredith R. Cook
- 7 p.m. Annual Contest Awards: Doris Stengel, LOMP Contest Chair

Saturday:

- 8 a.m. Breakfast, Assisi Dining Area
- 8:45 a.m. Board Meeting
- 9 a.m. Registration (those arriving Saturday)
- 10 a.m. General Assembly and Business Meeting, conducted by Doris Stengel, President
Memorials by Loraine Schwanke Mueller
- 10:45 a.m. Our featured Speaker is **Diane Glancy**, Professor of Creative Writing at Macalester and a LOMP member. Diane Glancy has won awards for poetry, fiction and drama. The title of her address is "**Backward Through the Pines.**"
- 12:15 p.m. Luncheon
- 1:30 p.m. Seminar (See Entry Rules below): Seminar Chair – Paul Walsh
Presenters – David Harris and Laurel Winter
Door prizes will follow the seminar.

Seminar Rules (Postmark Deadline September 10): The seminar provides expert analysis and evaluation of your poem and an opportunity to gauge your competitive standing.

Send two copies of one poem (any subject, any form), 24 lines or less, on 8 ½ X 11 paper, double-spaced. On one copy only place your name and address at the **upper left** corner. On both copies place the form (Sonnet, Villanelle, Free Verse, etc.) in the **upper right** corner. Awards will be given in two categories: Free Verse and Fixed Form. (Since poems will be displayed on a projector, it is important that you provide good, dark print on white paper. No onionskin, please.)

The seminar is open to LOMP members wherever they reside. Those not planning to attend the conference in Rochester on October 2-3 should include an SASE for return of your submission and critique.

The deadline for submissions is September 10, 1998, postmark.

Mail to Paul Walsh, 112 NE Union Street, Chatfield, MN 55923.

Directions to Assisi Community Center in Rochester, MN: The only entrance to Assisi Heights is located on 14th Street NW, at 10th Avenue NW.

From the **north** on US 52, exit **RIGHT** on 19th Street NW; turn **LEFT** at the light. Immediately upon crossing over the highway, turn **RIGHT** and follow 11th Avenue NW to the first light (8/10 mile). Turn **LEFT** on 14th Street NW and proceed 1 ½ blocks to the entrance on the **LEFT**.



Achievement Report

Meg Kramer: I published the chapbook *Tending the Flock*; I am giving them away to staff and residents of the Lutheran Retirement Home. I gave a half-hour talk on the poems in my chapbook *Tending the Flock* to a sorority, Beta Sigma Phi. I discussed forms, significant titles, etc. I am president of the Resident Council in the Truman Lutheran Retirement Home. I read one of my poems which fits the season at the close of the meeting. We meet once a month.

Super congratulations to SMPS members who won prizes in NFSPS contests! Winners were as follows:

Susan Stevens Chambers--#17, HM1; #20, 1st; #23, 2nd; #26, HM3; #46, HM4.

Meredith R. Cook--#11, HM7; #24, 2nd; #38, HM7.

Shirley Ensrud--#10, 3rd; #39, 2nd; #49, HM4.

Bonnie Ann Wolle--#44, HM5.

Kathleen Pederzani--#7, HM7; #18, 2nd; #22, 1st.

This was a national competition with fifty separate categories, fifty judges, 626 entrants and 10,837 poems submitted. We are proud of you!

Gertrude M. Olson: Gertrude was honored at the Annual All-Community Breakfast and Award Celebration on Sunday, July 12, in Winthrop, Minnesota. A Winthrop Schools Alumni Association Award of Appreciation was presented to her as an outstanding citizens of their community.

Congratulations to all for sharing your love of poetry!

Poetry-related achievements may be sent to your editor, Faye Mattison, at 521 East Main Street, #B, Mankato, MN 56001, or call 507-345-1174.



From the **south** on US 52, exit RIGHT on 14th Street NW. Continue to 10th Avenue NW (1/2 mile). The entrance is on the LEFT.

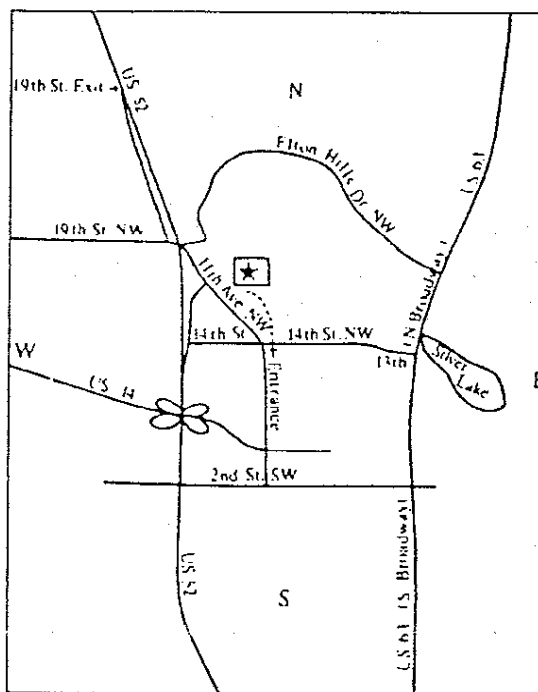
From the **north** on US 63 (Broadway), turn RIGHT on 13th Street NW, which becomes 14th Street NW. Proceed to 10th Avenue NW (7/10 mile). The entrance is on the RIGHT.

From the **south** on US 63 (Broadway), turn LEFT on 13th Street NW, which becomes 14th Street NW. Proceed to 10th Avenue NW (7/10 mile). The entrance is on the RIGHT.

BUS: A terminal may be found 1 ½ miles from Assisi Heights. Taxi service is available.

AIR: The airport is about 11 miles away. A limousine to downtown Rochester and taxi service are available. Limo service is also available to and from the Minneapolis airport.

PARKING: Drive around to the back of the building where a sign, "Assisi Community Center," clearly marks the entrance. There is a large parking area.



Membership Notes: LOMP dues are \$20 for adults or \$12 for students. Anyone may join. Dues for LOMP—which include a year's membership to the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. (NFSPS)—may be mailed to Treasurer Shirley Ensrud, 208 South Main Street, Blue Earth, MN 56013.

Membership for the Southern Minnesota Poets' Society (SMPS) runs from January to January. Dues are \$15 for adults and \$3 for students. Dues may be mailed to Treasurer Elaine Anderson, R.R. 1, Box 43, Trimont, MN 56176.



Thistle-Down
Southern Minnesota Poets' Society
Volume 17 Issue 2



Meeting: Saturday, October 10, 1998
11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
(order meal at noon)
Program begins at 1 p.m.
Café Camarda (Old Downtown Mall)
12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1655
Use Cherry Street Entrance and Parking Lot
Parking Is Free

Our poetry assignment for October is on the subject of flight (NFSPS Contest #23). You may use any form; please observe a 30-line limit. My guess is that if 20 poets each write a poem on flight, in October we may hear poems on flights of fancy, geese flying south for the winter, travel adventures to far places, ... wherever your imagination will let you fly!

The speaker for our October program will be award-winning poet Meredith Cook. She will share her considerable experience on "Writing Memorable Poetry." Don't miss this informative presentation! Pass the word to poetry-loving friends. We'll see you in October!

The Delaven Arts Festival will take place on OCTOBER 13-15. If you are interested, please contact Meredith Cook, 507-526-2653, or Shirley Ensrud, 507-526-2552.

Lee Cummings would like to express his gratitude to Sarah Garcia for helping with the search for publishers for our upcoming SMPS poetry book, which is in the planning stage.

Several of our members have experienced recent challenges to their health and well-being, and we ask you pray for them as they face these difficulties. Five members of **Bonnie Ann Wolle's immediate family** were in a car accident on Grandparents' Day. Please express thank-you prayers that her family was spared and pray that her husband Lyle will mend quickly. Bonnie Ann says that God is using this experience for good.

Edna Busekist is recovering from pneumonia. **Monica Haack** is home following her knee replacement in August. **Elinor Schmidt** must have bypass surgery before she can have a hip replacement done. We wish them every blessing for comfort and peace during these stressful days.

The LOMP Fall Meeting will be held **Friday and Saturday, October 2-3, 1998**, at the Assisi Community Center, Assisi Heights, 14th Street NW and 10th Avenue NE, Rochester, MN. The schedule is as follows:

Friday Evening:

- 3:30 p.m. Registration
- 5 p.m. Evening Meal, Assisi Dining Area
- 6:30 p.m. NFSPS Report by Meredith R. Cook
- 7 p.m. Annual Contest Awards: Doris Stengel, LOMP Contest Chair

Saturday:

- 8 a.m. Breakfast, Assisi Dining Area
- 8:45 a.m. Board Meeting
- 9 a.m. Registration (those arriving Saturday)
- 10 a.m. General Assembly and Business Meeting, conducted by Doris Stengel, President
Memorials by Loraine Schwanke Mueller
- 10:45 a.m. Our featured Speaker is **Diane Glancy**, Professor of Creative Writing at Macalester and a LOMP member. Diane Glancy has won awards for poetry, fiction and drama. The title of her address is "**Backward Through the Pines.**"
- 12:15 p.m. Luncheon
- 1:30 p.m. Seminar (See Entry Rules below): Seminar Chair – Paul Walsh
Presenters – David Harris and Laurel Winter
Door prizes will follow the seminar.

See your September *Thistle-Down* for directions to Assisi Heights.

Membership Notes: LOMP dues are \$20 for adults or \$12 for students. Anyone may join. Dues for LOMP—which include a year's membership to the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. (NFSPS)—may be mailed to Treasurer Shirley Ensrud, 208 South Main Street, Blue Earth, MN 56013.

Membership for the Southern Minnesota Poets' Society (SMPS) runs from January to January. Dues are \$15 for adults and \$3 for students. Dues may be mailed to Treasurer Elaine Anderson, R.R. 1, Box 43, Trimont, MN 56176.

A huge thank-you to Christine Chambers for offering to collect contest information to be displayed each month at a special table during our SMPS meetings! The opportunities are endless for poets who seek to share their work and compete for prizes. Check out our contest table in October!

Copies of *Encore*, which contains 1997 NFSPS contest winning poems, may be obtained at our regular SMPS meetings for \$6. Please make your check out to LOMP and give it to Shirley Ensrud. This attractive book would make an excellent gift for a friend or loved one.

SMPS 1998-1999
PROGRAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS

LOMP Fall Meeting in Rochester, Fri. Oct. 2 & Sat. Oct. 3

OCTOBER 10, 1998

PROGRAM:

SPEAKER: MEREDITH COOK

TITLE: "WRITING MEMORABLE POETRY"

ASSIGNMENT: Following NFSPS #23 Subject "Flight"
any form, 30 line limit.

NOVEMBER 14, 1998

PROGRAM:

Speaker: John Rezmerski
(257-3491)

Title: (Writing workshop)
(more details to come)

ASSIGNMENT: Following NFSPS #26. Subject Nature
Poem, any form, 40 line limit.

DECEMBER 12, 1998

CHRISTMAS AND SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

A CHRISTMAS PROGRAM--KEVIN AND LORI TORBENSON

ASSIGNMENT:

Following NFSPS #22 Subject: Winter Tales Form:
Free verse. 32 line limit

JANUARY 8, 1999

PROGRAM: Speaker: Ike Sarma

Title: "Write Your Own Song" With the talents of
our own we will listen to unfamiliar tunes and
write our own lyrics. Bring your pad and pen!

ASSIGNMENT:

Subject: Humor following NFSPS #35 20 line
limit, any form OR NFSPS #44 Light Verse,
Rhymed, 12 lines limit

FEBRUARY 13, 1999

PROGRAM: ALL MEMBER PARTICIPATION

Moderator: NANCY DAUER

"Battle of the Sexes"

Pick your favorite love poems: one by a male author, one by a female author. We will vote on which poem from each pair we like best--we will see which of the sexes are the best love poems writers.

ASSIGNMENT: What else? A love poem, of course.
Any form, 40 line limit.

MARCH 13, 1999

PROGRAM: to be announced

ASSIGNMENT: From LOMP Contest

Subject: Heritage or Family Roots. Any form. 40
Line limit.

APRIL 10, 1999

PROGRAM: Speaker: Char Donovan, Heartland Poets
Title: "Poetry and Ethics: Where Do Truth and
Invention Diverge?"

ASSIGNMENT: From LOMP contest

Subject: "Critters" give your poem an animal
theme. Any form, 50 line limit.

MAY 8, 1999

LOMP MEETING WILL PROBABLY BE FIRST WEEKEND IN MAY

PROGRAM: Speaker: Francis Cook, long time
assistant editor of the Moccasin

Title: "Signposting Your Poetry--What Punctuation,
Capitalization and Grammar Can Do For Your Reader"

ASSIGNMENT: Sestina

NFSPS CONVENTION IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA June 17 - 21st.

JUNE 12, 1998 PROGRAM: SMPS ANNUAL PICNIC,
At SUE CHAMBERS HOME

Calendar Items

Barnes and Noble Writers' Night: Writers meet the first Wednesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. Join area writers to share your work, do writing exercises and pick up helpful tips. Newcomers are welcome!

Barnes and Noble Poetry Night: This group meets the second Thursday of the month at 8 p.m. Come in and share your own poetry—or read some of your favorite poets' works. On **October 8** poets will be continue their discussion of *Little Girls in Church*, by Kathleen Norris. (The book costs \$10.95 at Barnes and Noble.) The group is coordinated by Jill or Jim E. All poetry lovers are welcome!

Friday-Saturday, October 2-3, 1998: LOMP Fall Meeting, Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota. See above for more information.

Tuesday, October 20, 7 p.m.: A Young Writer's Workshop for ages 12-18 will be held at Barnes and Noble. Do you love to write, discuss authors and learn about different types of writing styles? Come to this new monthly writing workshop for young writers. This month's topic will be science fiction and fantasy writing. For more information call 386-0110.

On Thursday, October 29, at 7 or 8 p.m. (time to be arranged), Barnes and Noble will host **Writers' Harvest**. Call Ann Schwab, 386-0110, if you would like to participate.

Please note that the postmark deadline for the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. 1999 Stevens Poetry Manuscript Competition is **Thursday, October 15, 1998**. (Information was enclosed with your June *Thistle-Down*.) You may submit poems that have been previously published in anthologies or chapbooks, and simultaneous submissions are permitted. The back of the competition sheet contains information on ordering copies of past winning manuscripts. If you have misplaced your copy of the information, please call Faye Mattison, 345-1174, or pick up a copy at the next SMPS meeting.

Looking ahead to 1999:

Submissions for the NFSPS 1998 Edna Meudt Memorial Scholarship Fund must be received on or before **February 1, 1999**. Information on this contest for university/college juniors or seniors was enclosed with your September *Thistle-Down*.

The 1999 LOMP Spring Meeting will be hosted by the Heartland Poets, and may possibly be held at Breezy Point.

Emily Vail, 1999 NFSPS Convention Chair, and the members of the Georgia Poetry Society invite you to Atlanta, Georgia, **June 17-21, 1999**. Accommodations will be at Ramada Plaza.

The Woodtick Poetry Weekend at the Stevens' cabin on Horseshoe Lake will be held the third weekend in July of 1999.

Minnesota hosts the NFSPS Convention in the year 2000. Collect ideas for making this a memorable experience. Plan to attend the 1999 convention for inspiration (see above)!

Please be thinking of nominations for 1999 SMPS officers. 1998 has been a wonderful year for the Southern Minnesota Poets' Society, and we are *very appreciative* of our current officers for their ongoing leadership and dedication.

The following issues are missing from the Moccasin editor's collection:

Any 1945-1950 issues other than Summer 1946, Winter 1970, Spring 1971, Summer/Autumn 1971, Autumn/Winter 1981, Autumn/Winter 1982, Spring/Summer 1984, 1987 (Annual).

If you have—and can bring yourself to part with—any of these, please notify Meredith Cook.

Meredith is also interested in a bibliography of members' published books. Have your data ready to submit at Rochester.

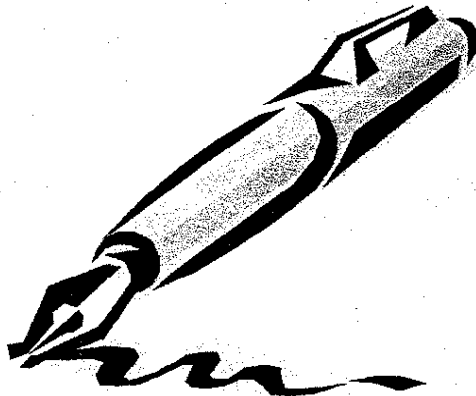
Achievement Report

Shirley Ensrud won two honorable mentions in an Ohio contest.

Congratulations, Shirley!

(Take note, poets: it pays to submit your work!)

Poetry-related achievements may be sent to your editor, Faye Mattison, at 521 East Main Street, #B, Mankato, MN 56001, or call 507-345-1174.



Thistle-Down
Southern Minnesota Poets' Society
Volume 17 Issue 3



Meeting: Saturday, November 14, 1998

11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

(order meal at noon)

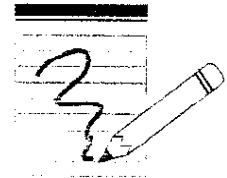
Program begins at 1 p.m.

Café Camarda (Old Downtown Mall)

12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1655

Use Cherry Street Entrance and Parking Lot

Parking Is Free



Take Riverfront Drive to Warren Street (Warren is south of the Civic Center) and head southeast for two blocks. Go northeast on Second Street for one block to Cherry Street; turn left on Cherry and park in the lot on Cherry. Café Camarda is just inside the Cherry Street entrance to the old downtown mall.

Our poetry assignment for November is to write a nature poem, following NFSPS Contest #26 guidelines calling for a 40-line limit, any form. Inspiration surrounds us, and as the yellow-red-gold leaves fall softly to the ground, may the words drop gently onto your notebook pages!

SMPS members and friends look forward to our November meeting with guest speaker **Professor John Rezmerski** of Gustavus Adolphus College. Those of us who attended the 1997 LOMP Fall Meeting will remember his inciteful presentation on "Voice as Tool and Metaphor." For this month's program Professor Rezmerski will discuss prose poetry and he will involve us in a stimulating writing exercise. Be sure to join us in November for what promises to be an exceptional meeting!

Many, many thanks to our October speaker, Meredith Cook, for sharing a special talk on "Writing Memorable Poetry." It is impossible to capture the full breadth of her message here; what follows are some highlights.

Meredith says the poet must "sing and burn," relying on vividness of language, immediacy of details, and poetic devices such as assonance, alliteration, and consonance to convey the unique viewpoint of the poet's experience. The poet must pay special attention to the connotations of each word and keep unnecessary words out--ask yourself what the purpose is of each word. If you have given your poem a unique shape on the page, be sure you do so for a purpose, not just because other poets are doing it. A poem's beginning, ending and title must be strong. The ending is a capstone. A poor ending is like "a temple that was started with marble and alabaster and ended with mud-bricks when the treasury ran out!" Don't use general words for a title. The title should be no longer than 4-5 words; one word is okay IF it lends an air of mystery.

In summary, a poem must have a worthy subject, vivid detail in language, the shaping of sound for musicality, the shaping of appearance if it adds to the poem, concision, a strong beginning and ending, and a memorable title. "A poet brings his or her own experience and viewpoint to the poem; throw these together and stir the cauldron of revision until it tastes right."

Wonderful things happen when you "stir the cauldron," Meredith! Thanks for sharing with us!

Please continue to pray for Elinor Schmidt. She didn't need a heart bypass, which is a blessing, and she was able to have hip surgery on October 7. We are all thinking of you, Elinor, and sending thoughts of strength and healing your way!

Super congratulations to SMPS winners of the 1998 LOMP Contest:

| | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Contest #3 | Meredith Cook | 2 nd Place | "Notice" |
| Contest #6 | Shirley Ensrud | 6 th HM | |
| Contest #7 | Bonnie Ann Wolle | 7 th HM | |
| Contest #8 | Shirley Ensrud | 4 th HM | |
| Contest #9 | Shirley Ensrud | 3 rd Place | "After School Chores" |
| Contest #11 | Nancy Dauer | 6 th HM | |
| Contest #12 | Meredith Cook | 2 nd HM | |
| Contest #14 | Loraine Schwanke Mueller | 4 th HM | |
| Contest #16 | Shirley Ensrud | 3 rd Place | "Grandmother's Gifts" |
| Contest #17 | Loraine Schwanke Mueller | 2 nd Place | "Parable of Orchard, Gifts & Fruit" |
| | Shirley Ensrud | 3 rd Place | "Blueprint for Life" |
| Contest #19 | Meredith Cook | 3 rd Place | "To a Model Only Partly Under Glass" |
| | Loraine Schwanke Mueller | 5 th HM | |
| Contest #20 | Maggie Dauer | 3 rd Place | "My Kitties" |

Kudos to SMPS Fall Seminar Winners:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------|----------------------|
| 1 st Place | Kathleen Pederzani | Fixed Form | "Listening From Bed" |
| 3 rd Place | Bonnie Ann Wolle | Fixed Form | "Climate Control" |
| HM | Shirley Ensrud | Fixed Form | "A Bit of Scotland" |
| HM | Wilfred Johnson | Free Verse | "The Witch Hunt" |

We are proud to have such a strong showing of winners from SMPS!

Membership Notes: LOMP dues are \$11 for adults or \$12 for students. Anyone may join. Dues for LOMP—which include a year's membership in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. (NFSPS)—may be mailed to Treasurer Shirley Ensrud, 208 South Main Street, Blue Earth, MN 56013.

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Copies of *Encore*, which contains 1997 NFSPS contest winning poems, may be obtained at our regular SMPS meetings for \$6. Please make your check out to LOMP and give it to Shirley Ensrud. This attractive book would make an excellent gift for a friend or loved one.

Special thanks to all who contributed their time and talents to make the October SMPS Fall Meeting an enjoyable success. Highlights included Diane Glancy's keynote address, entitled "Backward Through the Pines"; contest chair Doris Stengel's presentation of the annual LOMP awards; Meredith Cook's NFSPS meeting report, precise and colorful as always; and the poetry seminar conducted by David R. Harris and Laurel Winter (Paul Walsh, chair). We congratulate the Root River Poets and Jeanette Hinds (who handled arrangements with Assisi Center as well as registration) on a well-planned and successfully accomplished conference.

Calendar Items

Barnes and Noble Writers' Night: Writers meet the first Wednesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. Those who wish feedback on works-in-progress may bring their work. Newcomers are welcome!

Barnes and Noble Poetry Night: This group meets the second Thursday of the month at 8 p.m. The **November 12** Poetry Night will be an open reading. Come in and share your own poetry—or read some of your favorite poets' works. The group is coordinated by Jill or Jim E. All poetry lovers are welcome!

Tuesday, November 17, 7 p.m.: A Teen Writers' Workshop for ages 11-15 will be held at Barnes and Noble. Do you love to write, discuss authors and learn about different types of writing styles? Come to this new monthly writing workshop for young writers. For more information call 386-0110.

On Saturday, November 21, from 2-4 p.m. local writer Sarah Pearson, author of *A Book for Betsy*, published by the Greater Mankato area United Way, will be a speaker at Barnes and Noble.

Attention Poetry Lovers! On Thursday, December 3, Joyce Sutphen will be the featured speaker for the **Good Thunder Reading Series**. Born in St. Joseph, Minnesota, Joyce Sutphen won the Barnard New Women Poets Prize for her collection *Straight Out of View*. Since then, she has received fellowships from the Jerome Foundation and the Minnesota State Arts Board, as well as seen individual pieces published in *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, and other prestigious journals. Sutphen currently teaches literature and writing at Gustavus Adolphus College.

Talk on Craft: 3 p.m., CSU Ostrander Auditorium **Reading & Signing:** 7:30 p.m., CSU Rm. 253

Looking ahead to 1999:

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The deadline for the 1999 NFSPS Contest is March 15, 1999.

The 1999 LOMP Spring Meeting will be hosted by the Heartland Poets, possibly at Breezy Point.

Emily Vail, 1999 NFSPS Convention Chair, and the members of the Georgia Poetry Society invite you to Atlanta, Georgia, **June 17-21, 1999**. Accommodations will be at Ramada Plaza.

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Minnesota hosts the NFSPS Convention in the year 2000. Collect ideas for making this a memorable experience. Plan to attend the 1999 convention for inspiration (see above)!

Please be thinking of nominations for 1999 SMPS officers. 1998 has been a wonderful year for the Southern Minnesota Poets' Society, and we are *very appreciative* of our current officers for their ongoing leadership and dedication.

Achievement Report

June Rolland Emanuel's poem "Growing Older" was published in *Kato Connections* news.

Berneal Dodge Schindle read two of her fall poems for an Inspirational Moment at Zetetic Club of Mankato, a Women's Study Club.

Loraine Schwanke Mueller won three awards in the LOMP Contest, 2nd Place and 4th and 5th Honorable Mentions. Her picture and poetry achievements were in the *Sanborn Sentinel* recently.

Bonnie Ann Wolfe received a 7th Honorable Mention in the LOMP Contest for "What a Friend I Have in Jesus" and 3rd Place in the LOMP Seminar Fixed Form for "Climate Control."

June Emanuel and Monica Haack read their poetry at the October 29 Writers' Harvest literary event at Barnes and Noble. This national event allows writers to serve through their craft by sharing their work at college campuses and bookstores. Proceeds from the event are returned to the Mankato community through grants from Share Our Strength. At Barnes and Noble there were readings, speakers and musical entertainment. A small, but friendly audience was appreciative of June and Monica's poetry. In thanks for the participation of SMPS members in the event, Barnes and Noble gave SMPS a gift certificate.

Nancy Dauer won a 6th Honorable Mention in the LOMP Contest, and her daughter **Maggie** took 3rd Place in the elementary student LOMP Contest.

Susan Stevens Chambers was featured in an article in the *Lake Country Journal*. The article included biographical information about Susan, with an emphasis on her literary background and achievements. It also described the Woodtick Poetry Retreat which she hosts each summer at the Stevens' cabin on Horseshoe Lake. Take a moment at our November SMPS meeting to read this delightful article on our NFSPS president and LOMP Poet-Laureate.

Congratulations to all!

Poetry-related achievements may be sent to your editor, Faye Mattison, at 521 East Main Street, #B, Mankato, MN 56001, or call 507-345-1174.

Thistle-Down

Southern Minnesota Poets' Society

Volume 17 Issue 4



Meeting: Saturday, December 12, 1998

11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

(order meal at noon)

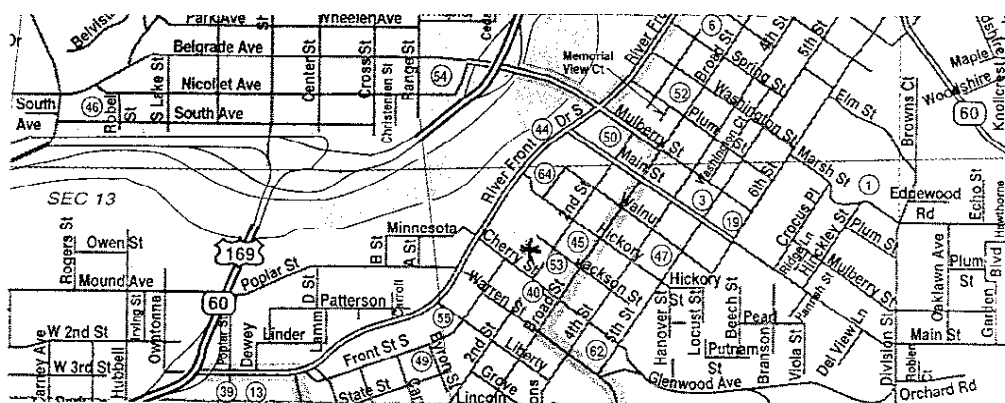
Program begins at 1 p.m.

Café Camarda (Old Downtown Mall)

12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1655

Use Cherry Street Entrance and Parking Lot

Parking Is Free



Take Riverfront Drive to Warren Street (Warren is south of the Civic Center) and head southeast for two blocks. Go northeast on Second Street for one block to Cherry Street; turn left on Cherry and park in the lot on Cherry. Café Camarda is just inside the Cherry Street entrance to the old downtown mall.

Our poetry assignment for December is to write a winter tales poem, following NFSPS Contest #22 guidelines calling for a free verse form and a 32-line limit. In spite of our current gentle weather, winter eventually *will* happen! (It's Minnesota, and Mother Nature will not be ignored!) If any frosty adventures have inspired you or made a child's eyes sparkle, turn it into a poem to share with SMPS poets.

Join us in December for a Christmas and Solstice celebration led by musicians Kevin and Lori Torbenson. Many of you will remember the joyful enthusiasm of the Torbensons from previous Yuletide gatherings. If the Christmas spirit is what you crave during this hectic season, come to this festive event!

SMPS warmly welcomes new members Charlotte Pugh and John Rezmerski! You are wonderful additions to our group, and we look forward to seeing you at our monthly meetings and other events. **Tara Samenieh** was also our guest in November, and we invite her to return!

SMPS poets would like to thank Professor John Rezmerski for sharing a wealth of information on "Prose Poetry" at our November meeting. Brief highlights follow:

John traveled years ago with the Poetry Out Loud Project, which combined readings with other entertainment. When they interviewed people afterwards, they found that people preferred free verse *narrative* poems, even though they had been taught that free verse was inferior. Lyric poems with dense images did not engage them; they tuned out. A passage from *The Party Train*, a book of prose poetry and great American writing, reinforces this viewpoint. One of the editors states that the prose poem uses the speech patterns of American English and frees us from the tyranny of the line. In other words, prose poetry emphasises the natural voice.

Central to John's presentation was the comparison of free verse and prose poetry. An essential difference between the two styles is that free verse has many line breaks, while the lines of the prose poem wrap. *We read and hear* a free verse poem differently; the increased frequency of stresses due to line breaks causes the rhythm to be jerky. As an experiment, John suggests revising a verse poem into a prose poem, and see what lucid details might be added in the process.

It is noteworthy that poets can have greatly differing opinions on what constitutes good poetry. One SMPS member commented that prose poetry is verse poetry disguised as prose! At SMPS we can *embrace* variety and contrasting opinions, for these make us grow as writers and as individuals.

Again, we thank John for a presentation filled with meaning and rich poetry!

Prayers for healing go out to Sara Rodriguez's husband, who has undergone surgery. We are thinking of you and pray for a full and speedy recovery.

Membership Notes: LOMP dues are \$20 for adults or \$12 for students. Anyone may join. Dues for LOMP—which include a year's membership to the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. (NFSPS)—may be mailed to Treasurer Shirley Ensrud, 208 South Main Street, Blue Earth, MN 56013.

Membership for the Southern Minnesota Poets' Society (SMPS) runs from January to January. Dues are \$15 for adults and \$3 for students. Dues may be mailed to Treasurer Elaine Anderson, R.R. 1, Box 43, Trimont, MN 56176.

Copies of *Encore*, which contains 1997 NFSPS contest winning poems, may be obtained at our regular SMPS meetings for \$6. Please make your check out to LOMP and give it to Shirley Ensrud. This attractive book would make an excellent gift for a friend or loved one.

Reminder: We will discuss nominations for 1999 SMPS officers at our December 12 meeting, so please bring your suggestions for new officers. We *warmly thank* our current officers for their ongoing dedication and commitment to making SMPS a dynamic organization!

Please mark these Good Thunder Reading Series dates on your calendar:

Thursday, January 21, 1999: Terry Davis and Cathy Day, fiction. TERRY DAVIS attended Eastern Washington State College, the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop and Stanford University, where he received a Wallace Stegner Literary Fellowship. He has been a high school teacher and wrestling coach. The author of **Vision Quest, Mysterious Ways** and **If Rock and Roll Were a Machine**, Davis teaches creative writing and literature at MSU. A native of Peru, Indiana, and graduate of the University of Alabama's creative writing program, CATHY DAY has had fiction appear in **Quarterly West, Florida Review** and the anthology **Walking on Water**. New stories are forthcoming in **The Gettysburg Review** and **Story**. She teaches creative writing and literature at MSU.

Reading & Signing: 7:30 p.m.—CSU Room 253

Thursday, February 25, 1999: Susan Power, fiction. SUSAN POWER is the author of **The Grass Dancer** and winner of the 1995 PEN/Hemingway Award for Fiction. Her short fiction has appeared in **The Atlantic Monthly, The Paris Review, Story, Best American Short Stories of 1993** and other journals and anthologies. She is the recipient of the James Michener Fellowship, Radcliffe's Bunting Institute Fellowship and Princeton's Hodder Fellowship, and is a graduate of Harvard Law School and the Iowa Writers' Workshop. She is an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and currently resides in St. Paul.

Talk on Craft: 3 p.m.—CSU Ostrander Auditorium

Reading & Signing: 7:30 p.m.—CSU Room 253

Thursday, March 25, 1999: Al Young, nonfiction/fiction/poetry. AL YOUNG spent his formative years moving between the rural south of Ocean Springs, Mississippi, where he was born, and the urban midwest of Detroit, Michigan, where he grew up. Author of more than a dozen books, including novels, poetry and essays, he has also written for film and magazines. His most recent books include the novel *Seduction by Light, Heaven: Collected Poems 1956-1990*, and the collection of musical memoirs *Drowning in the Sea of Love*. Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, he now travels widely, giving lectures and readings and performing his work with jazz and blues artists.

Talk on Craft: 3 p.m.—CSU Ostrander Auditorium

Reading & Signing: 7:30 p.m.—CSU Room 253

Calendar Items

Barnes and Noble Writers' Night: Writers meet the first Wednesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. Those who wish feedback on works-in-progress may bring their work. Newcomers are welcome!

Barnes and Noble Poetry Night: This group meets the second Thursday of the month at 8 p.m. Come in and share your own poetry—or read some of your favorite poets' works. The group is coordinated by Jill or Jim E. All poetry lovers are welcome!

Looking ahead to 1999:

Submissions for the NFSPS 1998 Edna Meudt Memorial Scholarship Fund must be received on or before **February 1, 1999**. Information on this contest for university/college juniors or seniors was enclosed with your September *Thistle-Down*.

The LOMP 1999 15th Annual Student Poetry Competitions' deadline is **February 15, 1999** (postmark). Please see your November 1998 *Thistle-Down* for guidelines for these contests, open to grades 6-8 (Junior Division) and grades 9-12 (Senior Division).

The deadline for the 1999 NFSPS Contest is March 15, 1999.

The 1999 LOMP Spring Meeting will be hosted by the Heartland Poets, possibly at Breezy Point.

The 1999 NFSPS Convention will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, **June 17-21, 1999** at the Ramada Plaza.

The Woodtick Poetry Weekend at the Stevens' cabin on Horseshoe Lake will be held the third weekend in July of 1999.

Minnesota hosts the NFSPS Convention in the year 2000. Collect ideas for making this a memorable experience. Plan to attend the 1999 convention for inspiration (see above)!

Achievement Report

Congratulations to Shirley Ensrud on the publication of *Buckwheat Cakes and Cornmeal Mush (Growing Up in the Thirties)*. An article praising Shirley's book and other poetry achievements may be found in the Friday, December 4, 1998, *Free Press* in the local section, page 1B.

Meredith Cook won a 2nd Place in one of the categories of the Louisiana State Poetry Contest.

Monica Haack received a letter from Amy Zook, past President of the NFSPS, thanking her for her poetry book which Monica gave her while she was here this summer giving seminars and attending the Woodtick weekend at Sue Chambers' cabin on Horseshoe Lake. She was very pleased and complementary and said she would show it to her senior creative writing class as an example of "writing their poetic and prose memories for their family and friends."

Monica Haack, Jim and her sister Charlotte were the panel for Monroe's program about the early days of Mankato and North Mankato, celebrating North Mankato's 100th anniversary. Monica and Jim were also honored guests and speakers for Monroe School's Arbor Day program. Monica read a poem about Wheeler Park which she had written for a previous program there and also a new poem for her grandson Matt and his pal Nathan comparing friendship to growing trees. The program was taped, and teacher Roberta Bartholdi took it on a trip to the Phillipines this summer to show the kids there how some American schools celebrate special holidays with song, arts and poetry.

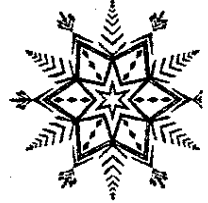
Congratulations to all!

Poetry-related achievements may be sent to your editor, Faye Mattison, at 521 East Main Street, #B, Mankato, MN 56001, or call 507-345-1174.

Thistle-Down
Southern Minnesota Poets' Society
Volume 17 Issue 5



Meeting: Saturday, January 9, 1999
11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
(order meal at noon)
Program begins at 1 p.m.
Café Camarda (Old Downtown Mall)
12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1655
Use Cherry Street Entrance and Parking Lot
Parking Is Free



Take Riverfront Drive to Warren Street (Warren is south of the Civic Center) and head southeast for two blocks. Go northeast on Second Street for one block to Cherry Street; turn left on Cherry and park in the lot on Cherry. Café Camarda is just inside the Cherry Street entrance to the old downtown mall.

Our poetry assignment for January is to write a humorous poem following NFSPS Contest #35 with a 20-line limit, any form, OR NFSPS Contest #44 guidelines for a light verse, rhymed poem with a 12-line limit. With our recent breathtakingly cold, short days, SMPS poets need a warm gathering with lighthearted poems to help us appreciate this frosty winter! We'll see you in January!

Our January program, entitled "Write Your Own Song," will be provided by Ike Sarma. With talents of our own, we will listen to unfamiliar tunes and write our own lyrics. Bring your pad and pen!

New SMPS member Tim Tabor was warmly welcomed into our poetry group in December! Other December guests included **Carol Duthe, Kevin and Lorrie Torbenson and Jessie Armstrong.** The variety and spice that new poets bring to our group is very special. We heartily invite each of you to return!

Super thanks to musicians Kevin and Lorrie Torbenson for sharing the joy of Christmas with SMPS poets and guests in December. What a perfect sendoff into the season!

Prayers for comfort and peace go to Wilfred Johnson, whose beloved new wife Carol has unexpectedly died. You are in our hearts, Bill, as you go through this time of deep loss.

From Bonnie Ann Wolle-- *Thank you* to my faithful Executive Board members: **Berneal Schindle**, Vice President and Corresponding Secretary; **Nancy Dauer**, Secretary; **Elaine Anderson**, Treasurer; **Faye Mattison**, *Thistle-Down* Editor; and **Ike Sarma**, newsletter copier/mailler. 1999 officers are the same except that Ike will be our new Vice President. *Thanks* to ALL of you who come and lend your support to our poetry group. These past two years have been a privilege and humbling honor to serve you. God willing, we will continue to work together to promote poetry within the lives of each other, our club and our community. I challenge each of us to bring a friend to each meeting and become involved in poetry readings, workshops and classrooms. May 1999 see a *poetry awakening!*

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Calendar Items

Barnes and Noble Writers' Night: Writers meet the first Wednesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. Those who wish feedback on works-in-progress may bring their work. Newcomers are welcome!

Barnes and Noble Parent and Child Book Club: This group is open to all parents and their children, ages 6-12. Families read a selected book together at home and meet the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. for a lively discussion of the book. This month's meeting will be on **January 12**.

Barnes and Noble Untitled Writing Group: This workshop is for children/teens ages 11-15 (or older) who are interested in writing. They meet the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. to discuss books about writing and to explore different genres. Untitled Writing is a relatively new group, and at some point in the near future they plan to incorporate writing exercises into the meeting format. They will meet on **January 19** at 7 p.m.

Barnes and Noble Poetry Night: This open poetry reading takes place the second Thursday of the month at 8 p.m. Anyone who is interested is invited to come and read some of their own work or that of a favorite author. The next meeting will be on **January 14**.

Other Barnes and Noble groups include the **Literary Book Club**, which meets the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. (next meeting is **January 21**); the **Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Club**, with meetings the last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. (next meeting is **January 26**); and the **Eastern Thought Book Club**, held the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.

Submissions for the NFSPS 1998 Edna Meudt Memorial Scholarship Fund must be received on or before **February 1, 1999**. Information on this contest for university/college juniors or seniors was enclosed with your September *Thistle-Down*.

The LOMP 1999 15th Annual Student Poetry Competitions' deadline is **February 15, 1999** (postmark).

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The Woodtick Poetry Weekend at the Stevens' cabin on Horseshoe Lake will be held the third weekend in July of 1999.

Minnesota hosts the NFSPS Convention in the year 2000. Collect ideas for making this a memorable experience by attending the 1999 convention (see above)!

Achievement Report

Sue Chambers will be the keynote speaker for the Texas Poetry Society in Fort Worth, Texas, in February, and she will present readings and writers' workshops in Salt Lake City, Utah, in March.

Loraine Mueller: An article about the Fall Convention poetry winnings was published with her picture in the *Tracy Headlight-Herald*. She prepared her 48th original Christmas card for family and friends.

Monica Haack made 400 greeting cards with her own poems and greetings for her Christmas charities. The cards were sold. Monica has also been a member of the Valley Poets for the last five years in McAllen, Texas. They are mighty fine poets who began their group at the same time as SMPS. The group is small, but warm and caring like our SMPS bunch. "Here I was 1500 miles from home, and I felt I was home. We poets surely share a bond, don't we!"

June Emanuel had a poem published in the *Calvary Lutheran Church Cook Book*, published for the 125th anniversary of the church in 1999.

Applause and compliments to each of our creative poets!

Please send poetry-related achievements to your editor, Faye Mattison, at 521 East Main Street, #B, Mankato, MN 56001, or call 507-345-1174.



Happiness

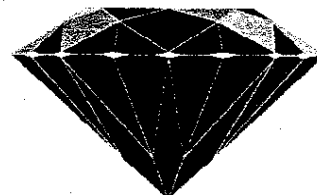
Happiness is like a crystal,
Fair and exquisite and clear,
Broken in a million pieces,
Shattered, scattered far and near.
Now and then along life's pathway,
Lo! Some shining fragments fall;
But there are so many pieces
No one ever finds them all.



You may find a bit of beauty,
Or an honest share of wealth,
While another just beside you
Fathers honor, love or health.
Vain to choose or grasp unduly,
Broken is the perfect ball;
And there are so many pieces
No one ever finds them all.

Yet the wise as on they journey
Treasure every fragment clear,
Fit them as they may together,
Imaging the shattered sphere,
Learning ever to be thankful,
Though their share of it is small;
For it has so many pieces
No one ever finds them all.

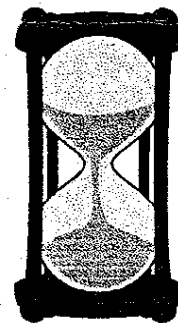
Priscilla Leonard



Today

I have spread wet linen
On lavender bushes,
I have swept rose petals
From a garden walk.
I have labeled jars of raspberry jam,
I have baked a sunshine cake;
I have embroidered a yellow duck
On a small blue frock.
I have polished andirons,
Dusted the highboy,
Cut sweet peas for a black bowl,
Wound the tall clock,
Pleated a lace ruffle ...
Today
I have lived a poem.

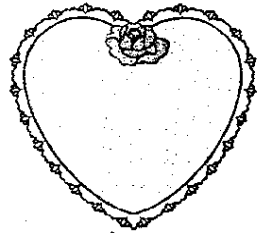
Ethel Romig Fuller



Thistle-Down
Southern Minnesota Poets' Society
Volume 17 Issue 6



Meeting: Saturday, February 13, 1999
11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Order meal at noon ~ Program begins at 1 p.m.
Café Camarda (Old Downtown Mall)
12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1655
Use Cherry Street Entrance and Parking Lot
Parking Is Free



Take Riverfront Drive to Warren Street (Warren is south of the Civic Center) and head southeast for two blocks. Go northeast on Second Street for one block to Cherry Street; turn left on Cherry and park in the lot on Cherry. Café Camarda is just inside the Cherry Street entrance to the old downtown mall.

Our February meeting program will feature an exciting “**Battle of the Sexes**” with all members participating. Nancy Dauer will be the moderator. Please bring two short love poems, one by a male author and one by a female author, to the meeting; send love poems you have written to Nancy Dauer, R.R. 3, Box 175, New Ulm, MN 56073. We will vote on which poem from each pair we like best—we will see which of the sexes are the best writers of love poems!

Our February writing assignment will be (what else?) a love poem using any form and a 40-line limit.

Attention Members: Your attendance is of utmost importance this month, as we will be finalizing plans for a new meeting place beginning in March. Possible things to consider include the following:

- Will we keep the same meeting time?
- Do members prefer to have lunch prior to the meeting (on our own if we choose a place other than a restaurant)?
- Ideas for posters/artwork for making our club more visible are also welcome.

Thanks to Ike Sarma and Charlotte Pugh, we have a number of good options available in Mankato:

- **MN Valley Regional Library, Main and Riverfront.** A comfortable conference room is available. (Possibly the auditorium is also a choice if our group continues to grow.) Ike will have more details to offer at the meeting. The library is beautiful and easily accessible, with lots of free parking. (Embers is on the same block if we feel we would like to meet somewhere for a meal before the meeting.)
- **101 Main Restaurant, Downtown Holiday Inn.** Charlotte reports that they have a separate room that seats 30 people. We can order meals off the menu or help ourselves to the salad buffet. The food is **excellent** and there is **NO** parking charge. Attendees would be given parking tokens; parking is in an enclosed lot (helpful during the winter) with a nearby elevator. Charlotte obtained copies of their menu for us to drool over at our February meeting!

- **Burger King (formerly Hardee's), near MSU campus.** They have a large separate room available to us if we order food and/or drinks there.
- **The Still, 524 North Riverfront Drive.** Their room seats 30 or more people and is available to us if we order off the menu (burgers, soup, etc.)

If you are unable to attend in February, please contact Bonnie Ann Wolle at 507-776-4737 with your opinion. Any of these places would be a comfortable and convenient place for poets to gather.

The 1999 LOMP Spring Meeting will be hosted by the Heartland Poets on **Saturday, May 1**, at St. Francis Center, 116 8th Avenue Southeast, Little Falls, Minnesota, 320-632-2981. There will be a special Pre-Conference Meeting of the LOMP Board on **Friday, April 30**, from 7:30-9:30 p.m. (Dinner will be served from 5-5:30 p.m. for those who make reservations on the registration form.)

The schedule for Saturday, May 1, is as follows:

- 8 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:45 a.m. LOMP Board of Directors Meeting
- 9 a.m. REGISTRATION TABLE OPEN (Coffee, tea and muffins available.)
- 9:15-10 a.m. Open Reading
- 10 a.m. LOMP Meeting and Elections
- 11 a.m. "WRITING THE ART POEM" Workshop and Presentation by **Penelope Swan**, Minnesota Poet and Educator
- 12:15 p.m. Luncheon
- 1:30 p.m. Seminar. (See below for entry rules.) **Maxine Kaiser Russell**, Seminar Chair
- 3:30 p.m. Awards and Door Prizes, Poetry Sharing
- 4 p.m. Adjournment

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 9

Spring Seminar Rules (Postmark Deadline April 1): Send 2 copies of 1 poem (any subject, any form), 24 lines or less, each on a full page of typing paper, SINGLE SPACED. On one copy only, place your name and address in the upper right corner. On both copies give the form of the poem (Sonnet, Villanelle, Free Verse, etc.) in the upper right corner. Awarded prizes will be divided into Free Verse and Fixed Form.

Any member who cannot attend should enclose a SASE for return of the poem and critique. Poems from out-of-state members will be accepted only if they plan to attend.

Send entries by **APRIL 1, 1999**, to Maxine Kaiser Russell, 1375 Russell Road N., Brainerd, MN 56401.

The poetry seminar provides an opportunity to hear a detailed analysis of your poem's strengths, based on anonymous evaluation by an expert. Contests seldom offer specific feedback of this kind, and public evaluations by your friends may be harder to give and to take. Thus, the seminar is a rare and distinctive experience. Seize the day!

The chair of the seminar, named above, receives the entries, retains the identified copies and sends the anonymous copies to the seminar analyst. Names are revealed at the completion of the seminar.

Thistle-Down
Southern Minnesota Poets' Society
Volume 17 Issue 7

⇒ Meeting: Saturday, March 13, 1999 ←
1-3:30 p.m.

Please arrive early ~ Program begins promptly at 1 p.m.

We are thrilled to announce that SMPS poets
have a new meeting place:
the conference room of the MN Valley Regional Library,
located on Riverfront Drive and Main Streets in Mankato!

Parking Is Free! Coffee will be available,
and Ike will bring his specialty treat—cherry fudge brownies!

Those who wish to meet for lunch will gather at 11:30 a.m.
at 101 Main Restaurant in the downtown Holiday Inn,
directly across from the library. The food is excellent
and there is NO parking charge. Bring your parking
ticket to the restaurant and have it stamped.

(Note: In April our meeting will take place at 101 Main Restaurant
due to a carpeting project at the library.)

Shirley Ensrud will share a program with us on "Writing Poems From Memories" at our March meeting. Bring blank paper and a pen. Shirley has just recently published the book *Buckwheat Cakes and Cornmeal Mush (Growing Up in the Thirties)*, and she brings to us a wealth of experience in the field of poetry. Garrison Keeler recently read a poem from her book on public radio. That's great! We look forward to learning from this award-winning poet. See you in March!

Our March writing assignment will be a poem on the topic of heritage or family roots (from the LOMP Contest) using any form and a 40-line limit. Do you have an angel or a scoundrel in your family tree? Introduce us to her or him with a poetic snapshot from your past!



Special thanks to Nancy Dauer for a delightful February program on "The Battle of the Sexes," our contest to see whether men or women are the best writers of love poems. The vote is in, and by a narrow margin, the women won the day. Perhaps the men will challenge us next year to "balance the books"! Thanks again, Nancy.

Poet: Renew Thyself!

As a reminder to those of you who may not have renewed your 1999 SMPS membership, a red dot will appear by your name on the mailing address in this *Thistle-Down*. Your prompt renewal will help us to continue to bring innovative programs and events to poets in southern Minnesota. Thank you!

Membership for the Southern Minnesota Poets' Society (SMPS) runs from January to January. Dues are \$15 for adults and \$3 for students. Dues may be mailed to Treasurer Elaine Anderson, R.R. 1, Box 43, Trimont, MN 56176.

LOMP dues are \$20 for adults or \$12 for students. Anyone may join. Dues for LOMP—which include a year's membership to the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. (NFSPS)—may be mailed to Treasurer Shirley Ensrud, 208 South Main Street, Blue Earth, MN 56013. Eligibility for some contests requires paid up membership of a state society.

Our April 10 meeting will take place at 101 Main Restaurant, Downtown Holiday Inn. (The library is not available this April.) They have a separate room that seats 30 people. We can order meals off the menu or help ourselves to the salad buffet. Attendees would be given parking tokens; parking is in an enclosed lower lot with an elevator. Thanks again to Charlotte Pugh for collecting information about 101 Main, and to Ike Sarma for checking out the library.

Good Thunder Reading Series

Eddice B. Barber Visiting Writer Program: Debra Marquart, Poetry/Fiction/Nonfiction. Tuesday-Friday, April 20-23, 1999. For seven years DEBRA MARQUART was a touring road musician with several rock and heavy metal bands. She continues to perform with her jazz-poetry, rhythm and blues project **The Bone People**, while writing new poems and publishing them in *North American Review*, *New Letters* and elsewhere. Her poetry collection *Everything's a Verb* was published in 1995. She's currently working on a story collection related to her touring experience, and a memoir "about the more macabre and unlikely aspects of growing up in the Midwest."

| | | |
|---|-----------|--------------------------|
| Writing Workshop: Tuesday-Friday | 9 a.m. | CSU Room 203 |
| Talk on Craft: Tuesday | 3 p.m. | CSU Ostrander Auditorium |
| Reading and Signing: Thursday | 7:30 p.m. | CSU Room 253 |

Calendar Items

1999 Manningham Student Poetry Trust Awards deadline: March 15, postmark. (See above.)

The deadline for the 1999 NFSPS Contest is March 15, 1999.

The 1999 LOMP Spring Meeting will be hosted by the Heartland Poets on **Saturday, May 1**, at St. Francis Center, 116 8th Avenue Southeast, Little Falls, Minnesota, 320-632-2981. There will be a special Pre-Conference Meeting of the LOMP Board on **Friday, April 30**, from 7:30-9:30 p.m. (Dinner will be served from 5-5:30 p.m. for those who make reservations on the registration form.) **REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 9.** Send **Spring Seminar** entries by **APRIL 1, 1999**, to Maxine Kaiser Russell, 1375 Russell Road N., Brainerd, MN 56401. (See your February *Thistle-Down* for information and a registration form.)

The 1999 NFSPS Convention will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, **June 17-21, 1999** at the Ramada Plaza. For complete details on this outstanding opportunity for poets, see your January 1999 issue of *Strophes*. Registration forms and partial information are enclosed in this *Thistle-Down*.

Woodtick Poetry Weekend: third weekend in July of 1999, Stevens' cabin on Horseshoe Lake.

Minnesota hosts the NFSPS Convention in the year 2000.

Achievement Report

Loraine Schwanke Mueller was privileged to present an entire evening program of original poetry for the Tracy Study Club on February 7, 1999. Seth Schmidt, the editor of the *Headlight Herald* who arranged the event, handled the overhead projector so that the Study Club members could see the crafting of various sonnet forms, cinquains, quatrains and other kinds of poems. It was interesting, informative and a pleasure for her and the Study Club.

Bonnie Ann Wolle, Ike Sarma and Sue Chambers participated in a Town Talk poetry interview with Pete Steiner on KTOE 1420 AM radio on February 8. They discussed poetry and SMPS.

Monica Haack has heard from a variety of different sources lately of the many ways her "Eternal Daisy" poem has been touching lives. It has been used on the cover of several family genealogy books, and has been read at funerals and in obituaries.

Kudos! to Loraine, Bonnie Ann, Ike, Sue and Monica!



Please send poetry-related achievements to your editor, Faye Mattison, at 521 East Main Street, #B, Mankato, MN 56001, or call 507-345-1174.

TOUR INFORMATION

Saturday, 19 Jun 99

"City of Winners"

8:30 a.m. to Noon

\$24 a person advance registration. \$27 a person onsite (space available basis). Includes deluxe motor coach, tax, driver gratuity, onboard tour guide, and all admission fees. Lunch not included. Minimum registration: 40.

Departs from, and returns to, lobby entrance of Ramada Plaza Hotel, the convention headquarters.

You'll start with a ride through downtown Atlanta, passing the massive **Georgia World Congress Center**, **Centennial Olympic Park**, and **Turner Field**, home of the National League Championship contender Atlanta Braves and, originally, the stadium for the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. Next, you'll move through **Georgia State University** and the **State Capitol** and government complex. Your first stop will be at the **Martin Luther King, Jr. Center**, a living memorial to the outstanding civil rights leader and Nobel Prize laureate. Walk through **Ebenezer Baptist Church** where he co-pastored with his father 1961-68. Visit his grave which is surrounded by a pool of beautiful blue water. Stop in the **Freedom Hall Complex** to view the tribute to his life.

Next you will relive one of the critical Civil War battles around Atlanta at the **Cyclorama**, an awe-inspiring, three-dimensional diorama of the fighting. This is the world's largest

panoramic painting, complete with music and narration that will take you vividly back in time.

A trip up renowned Peachtree Street is next on the agenda. You will see the fabulous **Fox Theater**, the **Joseph M. High Museum of Art**, and the majestic **Woodruff Arts Center**. Your destination is the elegant northwest residential area of **Buckhead**, noted for breathtaking homes. You'll pass the **Governor's Mansion** and many stunning homes. Your guide will regale you with stories of the rich and famous.

Sunday, 20 Jun 99

"Madison: the Town too Beautiful to Burn"

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\$48 a person advance registration. \$51 a person onsite (space available). Includes deluxe motor coach, tax, driver gratuity, onboard tour guide, all admission fees, and lunch.

Minimum registration: 50.

Departs from, and returns to, lobby entrance of Ramada Plaza Hotel, the convention headquarters.

Drive to **Madison**, a small jewel of a town nestled in the lush farm and horse country east of Atlanta where cotton once was king. Spared during Gen. William Sherman's Civil War "march to the sea", it has been called Georgia's "most picturesque town" with its glistening white antebellum homes framed by dogwoods and magnolias.

You will begin with a walk through **Heritage Hall**, an historical home built in 1833-35. This Greek revival home is the only one in Madison with four columns flanked by two square piers. The front entry repeats the design. It is the typical antebellum house with high ceilings, massive woodwork, curving stairs, crystal chandeliers, and double parlors.

Tour the **Madison-Morgan Cultural Center**, an 1895 Romanesque revival school building now housing a beautifully restored auditorium, history museum, art galleries, and a fine collection of area memorabilia. The **School Room Museum** is a faithful reproduction of a classroom of the 1895-1915 period.

Next you will visit the **Rogers Home**, built around 1810. It is one of the oldest Piedmont Plain style homes in Morgan County and is filled with period furnishings.

The last home on today's tour is the **Rose Cottage**, built in 1891 in the eastern part of Madison. From there, you will proceed to a delicious southern buffet amid the breathtaking splendor of the **Blue Willow Inn** in nearby **Social Circle, GA**. The formal hall and elegantly appointed dining rooms of this Greek revival mansion remind you of the antebellum South made famous in *Gone With the Wind*. Second, and even thirds, are encouraged. "To die for" southern fried chicken and nationally acclaimed fried green tomatoes are musts. Families routinely drive here from Atlanta, and many closer cities, for Sunday lunch.

The 20/20 National Poetry Awards Competition "Twenty Great Years: Twenty Great Lines"

The Georgia Poetry Society (GPS), will host the NFSPS national convention in Atlanta in 1999, the 20th anniversary of GPS. Honoring these two occasions, GPS is pleased to announce the 20/20 National Poetry Awards.

- Prizes:** 1st \$150; 2nd \$75; 3rd \$50.
- Subject:** Your thoughts on this quotation from Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892): "I would define, in brief, the poetry of words as the rhythmical creation of Beauty."
- Form:** Any traditional, rhymed, metered form which does not exceed 20 lines. Name the form on your entry.
- Eligibility:** Open to all.
- Restrictions:** Must be your own original work, not submitted elsewhere for publication. Cannot have won more than \$10 in any other contest. Subject matter in good taste. Typed or neatly written in English. One poem per page.
- Fee:** \$2 a poem.
- Deadline:** 15 May 99 postmark.
- Winners:** At NFSPS convention, June, 1999. SASE for winners list.
- Copies:** Two. Your name and address and name of contest at upper right corner of one; name of contest only at upper right corner of the other. MS will not be returned.
- Publication:** GPS reserves the right to publish or not publish the winning poems.
- Entries to:** Emery L. Campbell, Contest Chairman
369 Cottage Way
Lawrenceville, GA 30044

Thistle-Down
Southern Minnesota Poets' Society
Volume 17 Issue 8



Meeting: Saturday, April 10, 1999



1-3:30 p.m.

Please arrive early ~ Program begins promptly at 1 p.m.

Our April meeting will take place at 101 Main Restaurant
due to a carpeting project at the library.



Those who wish to meet for lunch will gather at 11:30 a.m.
at 101 Main Restaurant in the downtown Holiday Inn
on Main Street just off Riverfront Drive
(directly across from the library).

The food is excellent and there is NO parking charge.

They have a separate room that seats 30 people.

Parking is in an enclosed lower lot with an elevator.

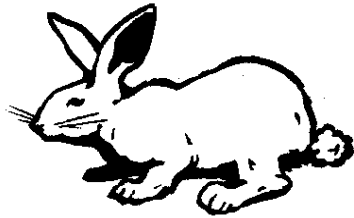
(It may be helpful to call a friend
if you plan to have lunch at 101 Main,
as we don't know how many will come at 11:30 a.m.)



Please join us! Guests are always welcome!

Our April speaker will be Char Donovan of the Heartland Poets. Her program is entitled "**Poetry and Ethics: Where Do Truth and Invention Diverge?**" Char attended a Carol Bly workshop on ethics at Split Rock, and her presentation will be a spin-off of what she learned there.

Char is a longtime member of LOMP and has been involved in many creative activities in the Heartland Poets and beyond. She has written poetry since her teenage years. Char writes prose for the *Lake Country Journal*, has won the LOMP grand prize for two consecutive years, handles publicity for the Heartland Poets and, as LOMP Student Youth Chairman, she coordinates the Manningham Contest. She has a minor in creative writing from the University of Minnesota. We feel privileged to have Char with us in April, and hope to have a good turnout for this engaging speaker.



Our April writing assignment will be a “critters” poem with an animal theme (from the LOMP Contest). You may use any form and a 50-line limit. Pets or wildlife in our back yards can coax us from the doldrums with their antics and charm. Many SMPS poets grew up on farms, where animals were an integral part of the everyday rhythm of life. Animals have the power to calm, delight, frustrate and teach us.

Please join us in April and share a poem with us on how a playful (or ferocious) creature has touched your life. See you on April 10!

SMPS poets would like to thank Shirley Ensrud for sharing an excellent program in March. Shirley discussed many fascinating details about the process she followed to publish her book *Buckwheat Cakes and Cornmeal Mush (Growing Up in the Thirties)*. She has sold 650 copies since December 1998! More books will be printed with the addition of a barcode and square binding, and Bookman in the Twin Cities will distribute them. The book is currently selling like hotcakes for \$7.45 including tax. We rejoice with Shirley on her outstanding accomplishment!

The second part of Shirley’s program involved a helpful writing startup technique called clustering. This exercise is useful at the beginning of a writing session to get your thoughts quickly down on paper, and it is especially helpful for nudging the muse out of writer’s block. Just jot down a topic in the center of the page and circle it; then draw lines outward and connect any words that occur to you. One word leads to another, and before you know it, you have groups of words that will become your next poem.

Thanks again, Shirley!

Membership for the Southern Minnesota Poets’ Society (SMPS) runs from January to January. Dues are \$15 for adults and \$3 for students. Dues may be mailed to Treasurer Elaine Anderson, R.R. 1, Box 43, Trimont, MN 56176.

LOMP dues are \$20 for adults or \$12 for students. Anyone may join. Dues for LOMP—which include a year’s membership to the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. (NFSPS)—may be mailed to Treasurer Shirley Ensrud, 208 South Main Street, Blue Earth, MN 56013.
Eligibility for some contests requires paid up membership of a state society.

*Our May meeting will take place in the conference room of the
MN Valley Regional Library,
located on Riverfront Drive and Main Streets in Mankato.*

Blessings and comfort to Shirley Ensrud on the recent death of her dear sister in California. Shirley was able to spend time with her sister during her last days.

Calendar Items

April is National Poetry Month: Barnes and Noble will host a special poetry event, date and time to be determined. You may call Faye (345-1174) for details or call Ann at Barnes and Noble (386-0110).

Jim Klobaucher, columnist for the *Star and Tribune* for many years, will be at Barnes and Noble on **Saturday, April 24**, at 1 p.m. His new book is *Pursued by Grace*.

The 1999 LOMP Spring Meeting will be hosted by the Heartland Poets on **Saturday, May 1**, at St. Francis Center, 116 8th Avenue Southeast, Little Falls, Minnesota, 320-632-2981. There will be a special Pre-Conference Meeting of the LOMP Board on **Friday, April 30**, from 7:30-9:30 p.m. (Dinner will be served from 5-5:30 p.m. for those who make reservations on the registration form.) **REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 9.** The **Spring Seminar deadline** is **APRIL 1, 1999.** (See your February *Thistle-Down* for information and a registration form.)

The SMPS Annual Picnic will be held on **Saturday, June 12**, at Sue Chambers' home.

The 1999 NFSPS Convention will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, **June 17-21, 1999** at the Ramada Plaza. For complete details on this outstanding opportunity for poets, see your January 1999 *Strophes*.

Woodtick Poetry Weekend: third weekend in July of 1999, Stevens' cabin on Horseshoe Lake.

Minnesota hosts the NFSPS Convention in the year 2000.

Achievement Report

Francis Cook, assistant editor of the *Moccasin* and mother of Meredith Cook, has a part in an upcoming movie called *Coffee Ladies of Delaven*. Another SMPS poet finds the limelight!

The following is an excerpt from a letter from Astrid Campbell VanDeWege, who has been in Sun City West, Arizona, since December 1984. She is an active member of the Sun Cities Poetry Society: "Some of my poems have been printed in our anthology *Palo Verde Verse*. Also, I have been thrilled to have many poems in one of our local newspapers, the *Daily News Sun*. What thrills me is having husbands of my P.E.O. tell me when they like a poem—and when they don't like it as well!

My oldest son Paul D. Campbell has written a book, *Survival Skills of Native California*, to be published soon. Drew R. Campbell, my youngest son, still lives in Mankato and sings, but does not write poetry. Dan and I are quite well and still enjoying life. Again, thank you to all of you."

Monica Haack reports that the new priest enjoys her writing and has used two poems in the church bulletin that fitted his homily ideas. She is finally making her handcrafted greeting cards using pictures from recycled old cards and her own poems and greetings. She calls them "Cards From Scratch." She will sell them for different charitable organizations, such as VINE, Catholic Daughters, etc.

Kudos! to Francis, Astrid and Monica!

Please send poetry-related achievements to your editor, Faye Mattison, at 521 East Main Street, #B, Mankato, MN 56001, or call 507-345-1174.

Thistle-Down
Southern Minnesota Poet's Society
Volume 17 Issue 9

Meeting: Saturday, May 8, 1999, 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Minnesota Valley Regional Library, Mankato
Please arrive timely ~ Program begins promptly at 1 p.m.

It is with deep regret and sorrow that we note the unexpected passing of

Frances Hartwick Cook

Our condolences and heartfelt sympathy go to Meredith upon the loss: not only of a cherished mother, but also a companion and the unlauded de facto assistant editor of the Moccasin.

Faye Mattison, our *non-pareil* editor of the *Thistle-Down* was a bit under the weather and President Bonnie asked Ike Sarma to sub for Faye at this time.

Through circumstance, **Ike Sarma** is going to be our "guest" speaker. His workshop on *Write Your Own Song*, scheduled earlier, did not take place due to inclement weather. He will give you homework to do and humbly requests that you bring a tape recorder you can lay your hands on (any will do). He is not sure how many of appropriate kind (standard, or microcassette) he can make on this short notice.

SMPS poets enjoyed thoroughly the April program by **Charmaine Donovan**. A few words will hardly do, but the charge is "write in a responsible way". Does your poem have a purpose? Does it harm anyone in any way? Is it written to strictly aggrandize yourself?

Now for Ike, speaking on his own. This is a rare opportunity to give credit to Faye for the fine job she has been doing. Bonnie Ann has said it many a time at our meetings, but I think you out there who do not attend regularly ought to know.

Please note: our picnic at Sue Chambers' is set for 11 a.m., June 5th. More detail in a special issue of the *Thistle-Down*.

This issue had to be kept down to the nitty-gritty necessities: one of several reasons being the **LOMP** spring meet at Little Falls, hosted by the Heartland group, on the weekend this issue was to be printed. It was an excellent experience, with weather co-operating. Sue Chambers, Meredith Cook, Shirley Ensrud, Monica Haack (HM fixed form), Lorraine Mueller and yours truly were in attendance. We will need all to attend our meetings to plan and help the **LOMP** in many small, but significant ways to put on the **Annual Meeting of the NFSPS in 2000** in Minnesota.

OUR MAY WRITING ASSIGNMENT is: a "spring" poem, any form. Try a fresh approach. Tell what the coming of spring makes you feel like. Show your age. Make it concise: 24 lines maximum.

SUMMER ASSIGNMENT: a *sestina*. After some "research", I believe it is not difficult, but different a form. It is likely to consume more time than we had prior to the May meeting. Special issue of the Thistle-Down will have more detail on how it is constructed, and more than one example, since there is quite a great deal of variety, especially in contemporary adaptations.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Tim Tabor has sold his book of poems, *WHY*, and brought a nicely hardbound master copy to the April meeting. Way to go, Tim!

Christina Chambers is a member of the West Academic Decathlon team which won the State Championship in February and will compete in the Nationals. She won a Gold (1st) in Arts & Literature at the Regionals and 3rd in Speech at State, helping her team to the championship.

Sue Chambers and Shirley Ensrud were "Poets in the School" March 3rd, teaching poetry to seven classes of 7th graders.

Sue Chambers was the keynote speaker at Dallas, Texas in February and a reader/speaker in Ogden and in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Monica Haack read for the Corpus Christi Church ladies group and read and made (her!) Valentines for all at the Valentines party at Destin, Florida.

HWDOI to all ye poets!!!!

**NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF STATE POETRY SOCIETIES, INC.**

1999 STEVENS POETRY MANUSCRIPT COMPETITION

1st Place: \$1,000 Prize and publication

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

Manuscripts 35-60 pages, typewritten. *No identified author throughout manuscript, pages numbered. One poem, one column of poetry per page. No illustrations, no bulky folders or binders, staple permissible. May contain poems previously published in anthologies or chapbooks. Simultaneous submissions permitted. Manuscript will not be returned.*

Include cover sheet with title of work, name, address, phone number and membership affiliation, if applicable. Manuscript should have additional title page without identification.

NO CERTIFIED MAIL, PLEASE. NO DISKS.

Judging will be anonymous, and by independent judge. Past judges of this competition include: David Maker, Michael Dennis Browne, Anne Marx, Michael Bugeja.

Winning Manuscript will be sold at NFSPS annual convention in June, 2000 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and winner, if present, invited to read from their manuscript.

MAIL SUBMISSIONS TO: Amy Zook, Chairman,

NFSPS Stevens Poetry Manuscript Contest

St. Rd. 56

Mechanicsburg, Ohio 43044

DEADLINE: OCTOBER 15TH, 1999, POSTMARK

NOTIFICATION: (to those who send S.A.S.E) Jan., 2000

ENTRY FEE: \$15.00 Nonmembers; \$10. 00 NFSPS members

(Membership information available by sending S.A.S.E. to Sy Swann, 2712 Scott Avenue
Fort Worth, Texas 76103

Information on purchase of past year's winning manuscript is available by contacting Sue Chambers, NFSPS MANUSCRIPT SALES, P.O. Box 327, Markato Minn. 56002; PHONE (507) 625-3000 or FAX (507)-625-2002; or e-mail to PoetSue@aol.com

Thistle ~ Down

June 1999

Volume 17 Issue 10

Unless announced otherwise, SMPS meets at the Minnesota Valley Regional Library in Mankato on the second Saturday of the months of September through May, from 1:00 through 3:30 p.m.

Please take time to pray for Edna Busekist who has been stricken with leukemia and remember her for the gentle and insightful poetry she has shared with us. She is at Nancy's Comfort Care, Route 1, Box 284, Kasota, MN56050.

Our condolences and heartfelt sympathy to Bonnie Ann Wolle and her husband Lyle on the loss of his mother. Bonnie Ann has kept no secret of the great friendship between her and her mother-in-law.

Calendar Items

Saturday, June 12, 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p. m.

Picnic at Sue Chambers. See attached instructions to get there. Sue will provide a main meat dish, beverage, plates and silverware. You bring the other goodies. (Nothing but your best recipes will do.) Bring poetry to read. If time allows, we will talk about crafting a *sestina*, traditional, contemporary, or otherwise. (There is no otherwise.)

July 16 -18

Woodtick Poetry Weekend at Stevens' cabin on Horseshoe Lake. See attached. Sue will be there the later part of the 15th so it is OK to come a day early. The "admission fee" is waived for those who bring food for one meal and a ½ hour program—either a workshop, or a talk about a (your favorite?) poet, etc.

August

Reserve some time for a likely special meeting to plan and schedule programs and discuss possible activities toward our goals of popularizing poetry, teaching it in schools, and drawing in new members, especially the youth.

September 11

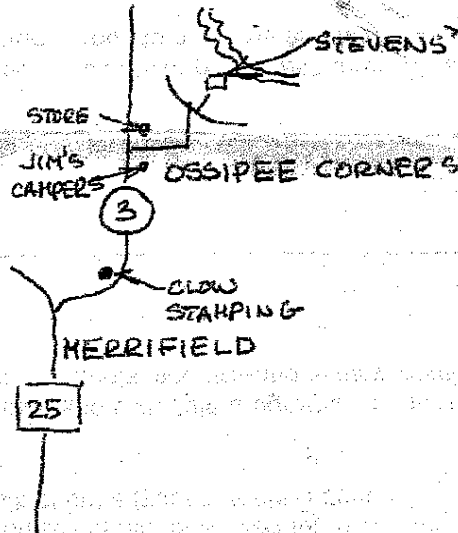
We start a new year of activities.

Achievements & Such

June Emanuel and Monica Haack read poems and talked about poetry with three 6th grade classes at Vernon Center. Monica has been busy trying to gather a study group to meet the first Monday of each month.

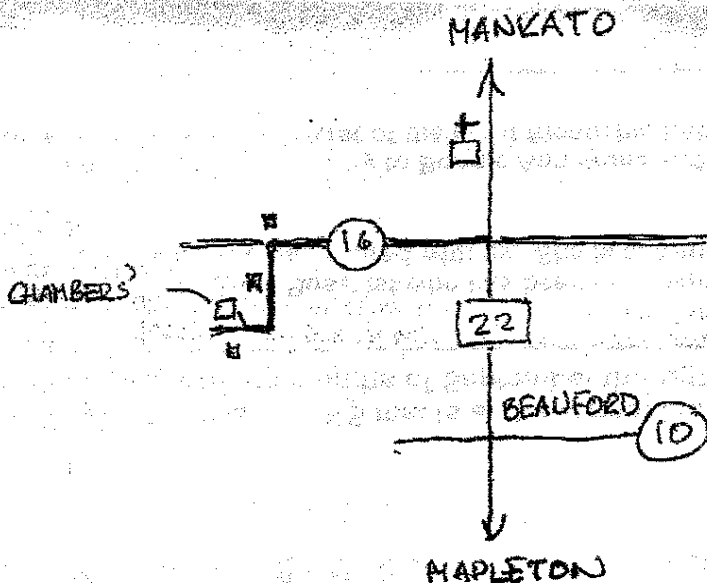
Directions to the Stevens' Cabin on Horseshoe Lake.

Arriving in downtown Brainerd (from Little Falls) on Hwy 371, take a right turn (at the water tower) East, onto Hwy 210, and follow same for about a mile (a shopping mall will be on your left), then turn left (North) onto Hwy 25, and follow same for about 8 miles to Merrifield. Just beyond Merrifield, you will come to a Y and take the right fork, a very sharp turn onto County Hwy 3 (East). You should see, as the road curves North, Clow Stamping factory on your left. Follow 3 for about 7 miles and slow down when you get to Ossipee Corners. This is a small place, a crossroads. Look for Mission Drive on your right. Jim's Campers is just South of it and a store cum eatery and gas pumps (Mobil) just North of it. Turn right (East) onto Mission Drive and then (take the first gravel road, Oak Lane left (this looks more like a driveway). Follow it for about 2/10ths of a mile to a T with a STOP sign (Howard's cabin is right in front of you, take a sharp right and almost immediately into the driveway, with the STEVENS sign out front.



Directions to Chambers' House in Good Thunder.

From Mankato take Hwy 22 South for about 7 miles and look for County Hwy 16 on your right after you have passed Redeemer Lutheran Church. If coming from Mapleton go North on 22 for about 5 miles and look for County Hwy 16 on your left after you have passed Beauford. Turn onto 16 and go West for about 2 miles to the second gravel road on your left which is the leg of a T, (you can not turn right, there is a farmhouse there). Turn left onto the gravel road and go South for about 2/3rds of a mile, pass a farmhouse driveway first, then turn right (West) onto a gravel road (no road to the left) and turn into the first house on the right.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR SOME FUTURE EVENTS!

1. June 10, 1995 SMPS summer picnic, at Mavis Christensen's home in Windom, Minnesota. Details in June Thistledown.
2. June 22nd through the 26th, 1995 NFSPS ANNUAL CONVENTION, Little Rock, Arkansas. We will take a bus if we can get enough riders, so plan on coming with us! Remember LOMP hosts this event in the year 2000, so we all need a few conventions under our belt.
3. July 14 through 16th, 1995 The WOODTICK POETRY GATHERING (South Dakota and LOMP poets) retreat to the cabin of Barbara Stevens on Horseshoe Lake, near Merrifield, Minn. SEE ATTACHED FLIER
4. July 8, 1995 MOCCASIN submission deadline. Send at least 6 poems, 24 lines or less to Editor Meredith Cook, 427 Gorman Street, Blue Earth, Minn. 56013. You MUST be a LOMP member to participate, and why wait until the last minute, if you send the poems in now, Meredith can start work right away!
5. July 31st, 1995 LOMP 11th NATIONAL CONTEST. Rules are at our book table.
6. October 13 and 14, 1995 LOMP Fall Meeting and Contest Banquet. Assisi Community Center, Rochester, Minn. Registration, overnight room, Friday evening meal, Sat breakfast and noon meals total cost \$41.00, single bed, \$59.00 for two with double bed. OCT. 15th is NATIONAL POETRY DAY. This will be our celebration, but don't forget to plan your local poetry events now!
7. October 15, 1995 NFSPS Manuscript Competition. 35-60 pages, cover sheet with identifying info. Complete rules available from Sue Chambers, or on the contest table.

ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

Since SMPS did not meet separately in May, we will have our next achievement report in the Fall Thistledown. We should have a lot to report on!

Do YOU have a poetry-related achievement? Let us know the details and we will be happy to spread the good news! Send any achievements to your editor at RR3 Box 86, Good Thunder, Minnesota. You can also write them down and submit them to your editor at the monthly meetings (Who will try and remember to pick them up).

SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS

Ah, the pleasant days of summer. What better time to lure the muse to your doorstep? Try your hand at these three suggested poetry assignments.

Do them all at once, do them one per month, or do them all just before the September meeting (not recommended). These assignments are created to help you write, so try to create a new poem, rather than dusting off past achievements.

Please try:

1. "A Quoted Beginning" (this follows contest #8 of the LOMP National contest, deadline July 31). Any form, a poem derived from a Quote. 40 lines or less.
2. A rhyming, humor poem. This follows categories in both LOMP and NFSPS contests, as well as many other. Most contests call for short poems in the humor category, so, no more than 16 lines, please.
3. POET'S CHOICE Wow us with your newest creation. Any form, any subject, any length. Just get out there and write!

We will share these poems at our first meeting in the Fall.

COME TO CONVENTION IN ARKANSAS

There are 16 LOMP members attending the NFSPS convention in Little Rock, Arkansas. They will be taking Marquadt the Loon—our good luck charm for contest wins, and noisemakers galore to cheer on our LOMP members. Get in on the fun!

A number of members are renting a van and traveling down together. They will leave on Tuesday, and spend the night on the road (in a motel, of course). Call Bill Johnson (507)387-3730 for details if you would like to join them. There is still time to get your reservations in and you will have the poetry-time of your life!

WOODTICK WEEKEND

You have always said you would like to come, this the time to make an effort and do it. Poets who have attended in the past say they get more done in this one weekend. They also eat a lot, and have a lot of fun. Directions and requirements are on the separate page.