

Thistledown

❧ Monthly Photo ❧



This month's thistledown photo is by christaki
(see the Editor's Corner for more info)

❧ Holiday Poems ❧

If you are planning on attending our holiday meeting Saturday -- and I hope you are -- we encourage you to bring a holiday-themed poem with you. Snow, reindeer, hearth & home, a mountain of gift wrap ... the inspirations abound this season.

We look forward to seeing you at the guild next week, and to sharing holiday poems as we go around the room!

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❧ You're Invited! It's Party Time ❧

Make plans to attend the SMPS holiday gathering next Saturday, December 13th. Our farewell to 2008 (which was a very good year, I'd say) features a delicious meal provided by Matt's Catering and a presentation, "Unpacking *The Night Before Christmas*" by John Calvin Rezmerski. We will enjoy a round-robin of holiday poems (see above) and music by local harpist Amy Kortuem. Invite a friend and we'll see you there!

- When** Saturday, Dec 13 at 12:30pm
- Where** Emy Frenz Arts Guild, 523 South 2nd Street, Mankato
- Cost** \$10.00 *Please reserve your seat today!*
- Meal** Fettuccini alfredo (chicken or vegetarian), salad, garlic toast, beverage, & dessert

Contact Jana Bouma by Monday, December 8 to reserve your meal (specify chicken or vegetarian).



Located at 523 South 2nd Street
in downtown Mankato

❧ From the Poetic Oval Office ❧

The heat is on! The upgrade to the EFG heating system is complete. The gallery was toasty warm for our November Third Thursday reading. Now, even in the midst of winter, you can come and enjoy the warmth and fellowship of the Southern Minnesota Poets Society!



On Nov 30, the Mankato Free Press featured a story about the *County Lines* poetry anthology edited by John Rezmerski (and company). The story was featured on the front page of

the "Currents" section, with photos from our November performance poetry event. Way to go, poets!

I hope to see all of you at the Dec 13 holiday celebration. Matt's Catering received raves for the meal last year, and they're back! Come and enjoy some holiday cheer, and a program with our own John Rezmerski -- a new and different look at "The Night Before Christmas.

Regards,
Jana Bouma



❧ Poetry Events, Near and Far ❧

✓ **Luncheon Meeting**

December 13, 2008

12:30pm Catered luncheon

1:00pm **Unpacking "The Night Before Christmas"**

Emy Frentz Arts Guild

Our own John Calvin Rezmerski, Professor Emeritus of Gustavus Adolphus Collegus, will shine a new light on the classic Christmas poem.

✓ **Membership Renewal Time**

A friendly reminder -- renew your membership in SMPS and LOMP today. It's fun and easy! Plus, it helps with ...

✓ **NFSPS Poetry Contest Season**

Submissions to the contests must be postmarked between January 1, 2009 and March 15, 2009. Some contests are **only** open to NFSPS members. [If you are a member of LOMP, you are also a member of NFSPS] Contact Jana Bouma if you need a contest brochure.

✓ **Blizzard Poetry Retreat of '09**

January 22 - 25, 2009 (Thu - Sun)

Home of Susan Chambers

57310 166th Lane, Good Thunder, MN

Don't miss out on this favorite annual event, hosted by Susan Chambers. Be inspired -- go home with a batch of new poems! All poets welcome. Accommodations provided for out-of-town guests; drop-ins are also welcome. There is NO CHARGE to attend the retreat, but all guests are asked to pitch in and provide food and/or assist with meal prep and cleanup. Each guest should also plan to give a presentation on some aspect of poetry.

For more info or to sign up, contact Sue Chambers by emailing chambersmediator@yahoo.com or calling (507) 278-4200.

❧ Photography/Poetry Collaboration ❧

Last year in the spring, our SMPS members teamed up with two local photographers to put on a show called *The Image and the Word*. It was an art-inspires-poetry show that was featured in the gallery of the Emy Frentz Arts Guild.

The responses we received were positive all around, so we're doing it again! This year we're lining up more photo contributors by working with MSU students, including one using an artist studio at EFG. Right now it's looking like we will have between 7 and 9 photographers participating.

At the January 11 meeting, all submitted photos will be on hand for SMPS members to view. In addition, we will scan all of them for viewing on our website. The deadline will be somewhat quick; we are under a bit of a time crunch this year due to very limited gallery time available. All entries must be sent to Derek Liebertz **by January 31**. More info will follow in the first newsletter of 2009.

Despite the shorter timeframe than last year, this should be an exciting event for SMPS. Teaming up with students at MSU should also bring new blood and more people to the gallery's opening night celebration and reading. The exhibit at EFG will run from February 12 through March 18, so we will also get to enjoy the photographs and poems during a few of our normal Thursday and Saturday gatherings. Bonus!

As I said, more to come next month. Please plan to attend the January meeting so you can view the entries. Let's show off our "stuff" and make this a terrific show!

The event list is light this month so I've got real estate to fill for this issue. I present (or subject you to?) ...

Horrible Christmas Limericks

A jolly, fat grandpa from Vail
had a vision from eggnog and ale.
"No Kringle are thee",
said the cop named McGee,
and threw not-Santa in the North jail.

That Frosty's a tough nut to crack --
He melts, but each Winter he's back.
Beta-carotene nose,
frozen through to his toes,
and unhurt by a snowmobile's track.

❧ SMPS Officers ❧

President	Jana Bouma jbouma@hickorytech.net (507) 243 - 4050
Vice President	John Rezmerski rez@gac.edu
Regional VP	Susan Chambers poetsue@aol.com
Treasurer	<i>Dorla is hanging on for now, but the position's open ... interested?</i>
Recording Secretary	Yvonne Cariveau ycariveau@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Derek Liebertz bajanorthwest@yahoo.com
Publicity	Ikars Sarma icarusj@hickorytech.net
Correspondence Secretary	Sandra Newbauer snewbauer0147@charter.net

❧ Editor's Corner ❧

If you're like me, you get pulled in many directions over the holiday months. Lists are made (and checked twice), events abound to pique your interest, family and friends all hope you'll make time to visit.

Remember: keep yourself **grounded**. For some that's enjoying a spouse's company; for others it's reading a favorite book. Use those grounded moments to your advantage. Tune out the clamor for plastic toys and 20% off sales. Listen to the quiet ... let it breathe. Then, see if you can take the silence and make music (or in our case, poetry!) out of it. ☺

The December newsletter Flickr photo is by "christaki". For the time of year when the light wanes and the darkness holds sway, I thought a stark b/w image was best. To see the original in higher resolution, go to:

www.flickr.com/photos/christaki/2613901809/

Your editor, **D E R E K**

❧ I Signed Up For What?!? ❧

Let Us Hear Your Poems!

Be part of our Third Thursday Poetry Evenings! If you have plenty to share, pick a "Poetry and Music" slot (each poet will share about 20 minutes of poetry). If you'd rather share just a few poems, sign up for our "Five Minutes of Fame" evening on January 15. At most meetings, we also still have time for a brief poetry "read-around." Don't keep all of that poetry to yourself -- share!

Poetry & Music Evenings (Featured Poets)

Feb 19, 2009	Jana Bouma & Karsten Piper
Mar 19, 2009	Derek Liebertz & John Rezmerski
Apr 16, 2009	<i>more info coming</i>
May 21, 2009	Ike Sarma & Meredith Cook

Five Minutes of Fame Poetry Evening

Jan 15, 2009	Chuck Van Buskirk
	Craig Groe
	Marilyn Frank
	Yvonne Cariveau
	Ike Sarma
	<i>add your name to the list!</i>

Saturday Meeting Desserts & Third Thursday Beverages

(SMD) Jan 10	Sue Chambers
(TTB) Jan 15	Marlys Neufeld
(SMD) Feb 14	<i>volunteer needed</i>
(TTB) Feb 19	Derek Liebertz / Yvonne Cariveau
(SMD) Mar 14	Ike Sarma
(TTB) Mar 19	Ike Sarma
(SMD) Apr 18	Janet Fisch
(TTB) Apr 16	Craig Groe
(SMD) May 9	Meredith Cook
(TTB) May 21	<i>volunteer needed</i>

❧ Member News/Announcements ❧

- Meredith Cook had a tremendous showing in the Indiana State Federation of Poetry Clubs contest. She netted a first prize ("The Laughing Lake"), multiple second prizes ("Sentenced to Death: Of Ghosts and Cuckoos", "Good Luck Telling", "The More Seasons Change, the More They Stay the Same"), and an honorable mention ("The Water Skiers"). Congratulations!

Southern Minnesota Poets Society
Jana Bouma, President
935 Melwood Court
Madison Lake, MN 56063

Be sure to keep SMPS as a part of your life! Just fill out the form below and send it with your membership fee to Jana Bouma. Thanks for supporting Southern Minnesota Poets Society!

The upcoming SMPS membership year will run from **January 1, 2009** through **December 31, 2009**

SMPS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Email Address: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Cell #: _____

New Member? Yes No (circle one)

Dues Enclosed: Regular (\$15.00) ____ Student (\$7.50) ____

Mail application and check to **Jana Bouma SMPS President, 935 Melwood Court, Madison Lake, MN 56063**

All SMPS members are encouraged to also become members of the League of Minnesota Poets (<http://www.mnpoets.org>)