

Thistle ~ Down

Southern Minnesota Poets Society

The S M P S, a regional chapter of the League of Minnesota Poets holds open meetings at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 1857 Adams St. in Mankato on the second Saturday of the months September through May from 1:00 p.m. through 3:30 p.m. Membership is open to all lovers of poetry. For further information contact Ikars (Ike) Sarma, VP, at 1-507-345-2211 (voice mail), or via e-mail at icarusj@mnic.net

October Meeting Change

To promote the attendance of our members of the LOMP Fall Conference we will not, repeat not, meet on October 14th, our scheduled meeting date. However, many of our members have expressed a desire to have a meeting at another, later date, and the date chosen is October 21st. Since this creates an overlap with other scheduled activities at Barnes & Noble the meeting will be at the new City Library of North Mankato, between 1:00 and 3:30 p.m. The library is located next to the North Mankato City Hall on Belgrade Avenue.

As we hope to hold a small critiquing workshop you are advised to bring a pad or some other item to support your writing. While there is plenty of seating space, there is not a huge amount of desk space. It would be nice if you were to bring not only poems to share but also a 'special' poem, one you like but are not quite satisfied with. It should be either typed or written in neat handwriting. Short poems not taking more than one page are preferred.

We will also try to hold a group 'meditation' to begin what should become an ongoing effort to elicit the particular aspects of poetry writing of concern to individual members and as a reference for future program planning.

A repeat reminder: Those of you who find it convenient to arrive in Mankato early (to make greater opportunity of the trip) may want to gather for a quick lunch at the food court of the River Hills Mall. You may find your fellow poets and poetry lovers in the area nearest the West entry and the J.C. Penney store starting at about 11:30 a.m.

Program Schedule

Your editor apologizes for not following up on the promise of including a listing of poetry contests sponsored by the various state poetry groups. Several deaths in his family back in Latvia have affected his routines. He hopes to complete the task with the November issue.

Several program prospects have turned up negative, at least for the time being, and others have not yet been reached for confirmation.

Meanwhile, consider attending the programs of the Good Thunder Reading Series. Special consideration should be for readings by our member **John Rezmerski** and the one featuring Professor **Robbins**. Professor Robbins teaches creative writing at MSU in Mankato and is the Director of the Good Thunder Reading Series. He has agreed to give us a program on some very near future date. It will most likely be on the subject of writing open form poetry, a subject for which he has received a grant from the State Arts Board. He and his wife, the poet **Candace Black**, have been very supportive of our endeavors to further poetry, and it would be nice if we were to return the favor by supporting the GTR series if only by attending.

Plan to attend the LOMP Fall Conference on October 13 and 14 at The ASSISI COMMUNITY CENTER in Rochester, Minnesota. Those of you who are members should have all the info. Interested others may contact our VP (see the masthead) for further details.

As stated in the last issue, our guest speaker in November will be **Jim Englert**, Assistant Manager at Barnes & Noble, who will give us an overview on "Regional Poets". The 'assignment' for that month is a poem on environmental issues, the theme for the NFSPS contest category #4.

Remember that assignments are not compulsory, but intended especially for those who: are looking for poem ideas or novel to them ways to write poetry and/or wish to enter certain contests.

By the way, the deadline for the NFSPS contests is March 15. See attached brochure for the rules and descriptions of the various categories.

Achievements etc.

Monica Haack's poem "Wheeler Park, First Day of School" was framed and hung at the Holy Rosary School. A similar fate befell two of her poems-and-flowers creations (she was not very clear on whether these were combinations or what) which you can see at the new North Mankato Library. A birdie told this editor that she showed up at the opening of some institution, 'scolded' them for having 'outsider' poets do readings and was then asked to read. (One worries about the lack of public awareness of our existence.) Way to go! Monica!

Lorraine Mueller has been invited by the Kiwanees of Tracy to do a reading of her poetry on September 28.

You are invited to the celebration of her 80th birthday for **Lorraine** on November 4th, 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. at the United Methodist Church in Tracy, Minnesota. Please send your RSVP by October 14th to John & Jeanie Endres, 1106 18th St. N.E., Watertown, ND 57204 If you can not come, it would be nice to have a card shower. Send cards to 761 Center St, Tracy, Minnesota.

Marguerite Kramer has tendered a letter of resignation from the SMPS. The membership has expressed regrets and unanimously decided to award her a **Life Membership** with all the rights, honors and privileges thereof.

VP's Corner

As you may know, SMPS is a chapter of the League of Minnesota Poets. However, dues paid to SMPS are only there to support some basic activities such as the costs of generating and mailing this publication and carrying out the PR to draw not only new members but those genuinely interested in poetry. For that reason, feel free to copy this and hand it out to any and all willing to read it or to display it for the general public. The only limit to what this might be is your imagination.

You may elect to pay dues to the LOMP which entitles you to further privileges.

The main one is an automatic membership in The National Federation of State Poetry Societies which brings you its newsletter, the **Strophes** and unlimited entry to its contests. Many contests sponsored by the member state societies are announced in **Strophes** and all the information concerning the annual conferences of the NFSPS. Many of our members have won prizes and publication of their poems in the NFSPS Annual Anthology.

Membership in the LOMP brings you its newsletter, the **Lomplighter** which keeps you up to date on League activities and contests and the annual issue of the **Moccasin**.

You do not need to hold any of the above memberships to have your poems published in the **Moccasin**.