

## Southern Minnesota Poets Society

The SMPS is a regional chapter of the League of Minnesota Poets, holds opens meetings on the second Saturday of the month from September through May at the River Hills Mall, Mankato, MN. from 12:00 – 3:30 p.m. Meetings are open to all who love poetry and writing. For further information contact *Bethany Berry*, Editor at [bethanyberry@hotmail.com](mailto:bethanyberry@hotmail.com), or *Sue Chambers*, President, at 507-278-4200 or e-mail [PoetSue@aol.com](mailto:PoetSue@aol.com).

### **SMPS Officers:**

Sue Chambers, *Pres.*

Ike Sarma, *VP.*

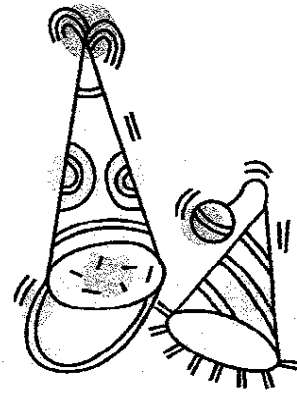
Faye Mattison, *Sec.*

Dorla Wachter, *Treas.*

Monica Haack, *Corresponding Sec.*

Sandra Newbauer, *Regional VP*

Happy New  
Years from the  
Southern  
Minnesota Poets  
Society!



Please join the Southern Minnesota Poets Society on **January 13, 2007** as member *Gerry Tostenson* presents Mary Oliver—in her own words. *Gerry Tostenson* share her exploration of *Mary Oliver's* works and life.

Remember to bring a 35 line or less poem for critiquing next month. No names. **TWO COPIES.**



## Coffee Hag Reading

*SMPS Poetry readings continue at the Coffee Hag every 3rd Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*

### 8th ANNUAL

## BLIZZARD WRITER'S POETRY RETREAT

**WHEN:** 4<sup>th</sup> weekend of January. Come Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup> afternoon or night through Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007. (Or who knows how long if we get snowed in!)

**WHERE:** At the home of Sue Chambers, located in the country on 10 lovely wooded acres next to the Big Cobb River, 10 miles south of Mankato, Minnesota. There are many bedrooms in the main house, additional if needed in garage apartment. There are fireplaces to curl up in front of, a full library so we can consult the authorities, and good places to hike, ski or skate.

**Directions:** *Approximately 8 miles south of Mankato on Highway 22. Turn west (right) on County Road 16. (Or 2 miles north of Beauford, if coming from the south, and turn left (west) on County Road 16). Follow Co. 16 and turn left on the 2<sup>nd</sup> gravel road on the left (approximately 2 miles). Follow gravel road to first right (Don't turn into farmhouse driveway!) (Approximately one--half mile), turn right. House is on the right, is milk chocolate in color. Look for the dogs! (Friendly)*

**WHO:** You! This retreat is for all who are interested in poetry.

**WHAT IS REQUIRED:** Bring a poetry program that is at least half an hour in length and some food to share. The program can be anything that tickles your fancy--a writing workshop, a favorite author, a new form, a lecture, a special taped program that you want to lead a discussion on...the possibilities are endless. Joint programs are also permissible.

Not required, but you might also want to bring hiking boots, cross-country skis, skates, a sled. Please notify Sue Chambers at least 3 weeks in advance so that food selections can be coordinated.

Want to Come?

Contact Sue Chambers:

57310 166<sup>th</sup> Lane

Good Thunder, Minnesota 56037

Home Phone: 507.278.4200

Fax: 507.625.2002

Email: [PoetSue@AOL.Com](mailto:PoetSue@AOL.Com)

SMPS is a member of the Twin Rivers Center for the Arts. This organization is a collaboration of many arts groups, and it is through them that we have participated in the River Crossing Art show, the Musicorum poetry/composition project and the poetry reading events with the Blue Earth County Historical Society. The next event, the Arts Showcase scheduled for March 3, 2007 is a chance for our poetry to get out to a large audience. We are invited to be a part of this. Last year Derek Liebertz and Sue Chambers read poetry from many of the members, but it would be nice to have additional voices. Also, this year, if you don't want to read in front of a large audience, please consider submitting a poem that you want us to read, rather than the way we did it last year (which was to check old publications and pull poems). Finally, come and be a part of the audience. So mark your calendars now! The next collaborative Arts Showcase is tentatively scheduled for March 3, 2007

at the Lincoln Community Center. The time will probably be 7:00 p.m., but we will let you know definite times in the February Thistledown. This is a spectacular event, full of music, theater and poetry, so don't miss it!

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

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## President's Message



The Southern Minnesota Poet's Society would like to wish Susan Chambers the best of luck as she steps away from the law firm she has worked at for seventeen years and begins to focus on her gift of poetry and fiction. Congratulations Suel!

"A ship in the harbor is safe, but that's not what a ship is made for." -William Shedd

**TAKE A LOOK AT THE LOMP WEBSITE! IT MAKES YOU PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA POETS. BE SURE AND CHECK OUT WHAT SOME OF THE OTHER CHAPTERS ARE DOING AT THIS WEB SITE!**



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Member's  
Critiquing  
Session This  
February!

**Join the Southern  
Minnesota Poets Society on  
Saturday, February 10, 2007  
as members of SMPS share  
their feedback on poems  
that were submitted last  
month. We'll be meeting at the  
**Riverhills Mall in  
Mankato.****

**Come for a Dutch treat  
Lunch at 12:00pm, the  
program will begin at  
1:00pm.**



## Coffee Hag Reading

*SMPS Poetry readings continue at the Coffee Hag every 3rd Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.*

*This February, we'll be featuring the works of Monica Haack and June Emanuel.*

*Please come and show your support for these special poets, and bring some of your own work to share after their program is over and we open the mike up to everyone!*

***The 8th ANNUAL Blizzard Writer's Poetry Retreat was a huge success for all involved! Four wintry days of workshops and sharing proved to be the incubus for many promising pieces of poetry. There was an instant camaraderie in the room, as fellow artists were inspired, and in turn inspired others with their own talent.***

***Be sure and get all those poems that were created into final form so you can enter them in upcoming competitions. The NFSPS annual contest, with well over \$8,000.00 in prize money and 50 contests is a great opportunity to test your poems. Polish them and enter today—if you don't try you can't win.***

***Don't forget the Manningham Student competition either. The LOMP web site has details on the contest. The deadline is February 15<sup>th</sup>.***

SMPS is a member of the Twin Rivers Center for the Arts. This organization is a collaboration of many arts groups, and it is through them that we have participated in the River Crossing Art show, the Musicorum composition project and the poetry reading events with the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

The next event, the **Arts Showcase** scheduled for **March 3, 2007** is a chance for our poetry to get out to a large audience. We are invited to be a part of this. Let Sue Chambers know right away if you would like to be a reader. Also, this year, if you don't want to read in front of a large audience, please consider submitting up to three poems by this meeting that you want us to read. Please make sure your name is on the poem. Finally, come and be a part of the audience. So mark your calendars now! The Showcase is scheduled for Saturday, March 3, 2007 at the Lincoln Community Center. This is a spectacular event, full of music, dance, art, theater and poetry, so don't miss it!

**The Assignment for this month and next:** February Subject: American North, Historical events, cultural aspects, landscapes weather, etc., any form, 10 to 100 lines

March There are a number of subject poems, any form in NFSPS this year: try writing a couple of new poems on one of the following subjects (pick one you don't already have a poem on): A Sound in the Night, Teenager, Place or Places; Games; Hurricanes; A Road; Rivers; Lunch; Mothers & Daughters; Heritage.

# President's Message



How often do we say "I would like to see my organization doing more things", but then sit back and just let the others do the work? **SMPS needs your active participation.** As my Presidency winds down I am looking around and seeing all the great talent we have within our group, and thanking each of you for being active. Our group is thriving because of your willingness to help out.

Did you know that next year is our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary? That shows remarkable staying power—that the poets who have been a part of the organization over the years have built a strong base that allows the group to thrive, even after the founders passed on. We should put our thinking caps on and decide what we want to do next year to celebrate our past achievements, and do a little planning to make sure the group remains a thriving place that encourages all to write.

We have some exciting events coming up that we would like to see you at. The first is our coffee house reading next Monday. What better way to spend a

February evening, then with yours hands wrapped around a delicious Hag coffee creation, and poetry to listen to and share. In March we are participating in the Arts Showcase. We need your voice! On April 28th, Musicorum will be singing the prize winning poem and they have asked that other poets read from their works as well. Mark your calendars and plan on bringing the whole family for this wonderful event!

We are going to be hosting the **LOMP Spring meeting on April 13 and 14.** Once again, we will use the lovely facilities at Good Counsel. This is going to be a **Friday afternoon and all day Saturday event.** **Chet Corey**, has agreed to be our guest speaker. He is an excellent poet from Iowa, whom Sister Justin and Sister Margaret had the opportunity to meet when they attended a writing conference where he was a featured speaker, and John Rezmerski enthusiastically endorses as a great speaker.

As an additional treat, Chet Corey is willing to conduct a writing workshop on Friday afternoon. We will have a discount for members, but also offer the workshop to the public. In the evening we will have a Dutch treat dinner and a chance to share our poetry. Start thinking about a theme and what decorations we would like for the Saturday meeting. **BE SURE AND MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR ALL THESE EVENTS! SEE YOU THERE!** Sue Chambers

## GARDENING FOR POEMS



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Join the Southern Minnesota Poets Society on April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> as the League of Minnesota Poets gather in Mankato for their Spring Meeting. The keynote speaker is **CHET COREY** who will conduct an interactive workshop entitled: "*Editor's Ear, Editor's Eye*" on Friday afternoon, in addition to his key note address on Saturday. Contact Faye Mattison for registration information—it is not too late to register! After this workshop there will be a Dutch treat dinner and an opportunity to share poetry and fellowship with other participants.

#### **FRIDAY AGENDA:**

1:00 Registration

1:30 Workshop

2:30 Break

2:45 Workshop resumes

3:30 Workshop ends

5:30 Dutch treat dinner (place to be determined)

7:00 Informal poetry sharing at the Microtel Inn

#### **SATURDAY AGENDA**

On Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, Chet will be our keynote speaker and will share his works

9:00 REGISTRATION

9:30 Board meeting—all others, Open Mike Poetry Reading

10:30 Keynote Address,

Chet Cory

11:30 LOMP business meeting

Noon Luncheon

1:00 Poetry critique by John Rezmerski

3:00 Open Mike Poetry & door prizes

*Since SMPS is hosting this, we hope for a good turnout of our members!*

## ABOUT CHET COREY

Chet Corey's poetry and short fiction has appeared in literary and religious publications since the early 1960s, including most recently **The Backwards City Review**, **Metal Scratches**, **The Mid-America Poetry Review**, **South Dakota Review** and **Windhover**. From 1977-1981 he held a variety of editorships on **The Great River Review**. He has received two Loft Mentorship Awards in Poetry, among other fellowships and awards. Since retiring from teaching poetry and creative writing college-level courses, he has led poetry writing workshops at retreat centers in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, and has worked individually with writers and poets.



## Coffee Hag Reading

*SMPS Poetry readings continue at the Coffee Hag every 3rd Monday. Please note, that due to the Coffee Hag's winter schedule, we'll be moving the reading up to 6:00 p.m.*

*This April on the 16th, we'll be featuring the works of Marie Crawford & Sandra Newbauer.*

*Please come and show your support for these special poets, and bring some of your own work to share after their program is over and we open the mike up to everyone!*



**This April's Assignment is: "On the Light Side." Any form, no more than 32 lines**

**Because Chet Corey will be speaking at the LOMP Spring Meeting, the SMPS schedule for May is no longer correct. Arrangements are being made for the May program. Thank you. Changes will be announced in the Thistledown**

## **Remember: SMPS Elections this May**

**Faye Mattison will be heading all nominating committees. For any questions she can be reached at [fayem@hickorytech.net](mailto:fayem@hickorytech.net)**

## **Regional News Publications and Radio Stations** **March 25, 2007**

We are including information below concerning a collaboration between the Southern Minnesota Poet's Society and Musicorum, a Mankato-based chamber choir directed by Dr. Gregory Aune. If space and time permit, please include some or all of the information from the following in your community calendar or public service announcements.

### What:

Concert and poetry reading presented by Musicorum and SMPS: "Word and Song" will highlight music by Brahms, Whitacre, Paulus, Bernstein, and poetry by Silvestri, Schiller, de la Vega, and local poets.

A special feature will be the premiere of a newly commissioned piece for this joint venture. After a poetry contest, judged by acclaimed poet Bill Holm, local attorney and poet Susan Chamber's poem "Chickadee" was chosen to be set to music by local composer David Dickau.

We are excited by this collaboration between two regional arts organizations and would be happy to give you any further information you desire or to grant interviews.

### Where:

St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church, 423 W. 7th St., Mankato

### When:

Saturday, April 28, 2006, 7:30 p.m.

### Tickets:

Single Admission - \$10.00, Seniors \$8, Students \$5

Tickets available at the door

Contact Anne Dickau for further information:  
507-625-1357



## President's Message



How does your poetry garden look? We are hosting the LOMP spring meeting and have an exciting line up that should nurture your own poetry growth. Make a special effort to join us for both the Friday workshop and LOMP meeting on Saturday. Please help spread the word to friends who have mentioned they like poetry and have been thinking about attending some of our events—this is going to be a terrific program with dynamite speakers, they will greatly appreciate your invitation!

It is also time to look ahead to the National convention, which will be held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on June 7<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup>. Our own LOMP member Diane Glancy, a well-known poet and author, is a featured speaker. This is an opportunity to meet poets from around the country and is really very economical. There are opportunities to share rooms with other participants, to further cut your costs. Let me know if you are thinking of going! Next year Utah is planning a spectacular convention, so think ahead!

My thanks to all who conveyed best wishes to my son and SMPS member Colin

Chambers, who broke his right femur while skiing. We were out in Utah so that I could present a program "Write Out of Golden" to the Bountiful State Chapter. Unfortunately, he hit a tree on the fourth day of skiing. Fortunately, he is recuperating well and now boasts a titanium rod in his leg, so will become a sort of superman.

I was fortunate enough to also be able to go down the Red Rock Writer's Conference in St. George, Utah where four writers were featured speakers—including our own John Rezmerski, whose workshop on repetition was excellent! One speaker had to cancel at the last minute due to a family emergency, so once again I presented my talk. What a pleasure to be on the same program with Rez! What a joy to be with the incredible writers of Utah, who put a tremendous amount of effort into their poetry. I can't wait to greet them again at NFSPS.

I especially look forward to greeting you at our spring meeting—the perfect opportunity to make our own poetry the best it can be! Bring many poems to share! Bring a friend! See you on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. SUE

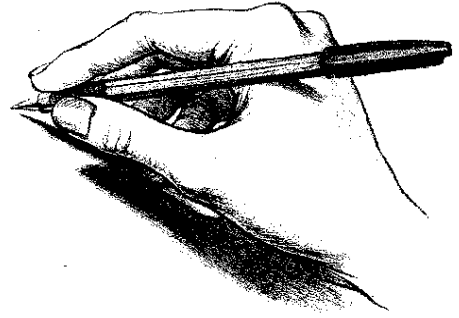
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# Thistle Down

May '07 Volume 27, Issue 5

Repetition. Repetition. Repetition!



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Come, join us on May 12<sup>th</sup> as Southern Minnesota Poets Society member and published poet John Rezmerski presents “Repetition. Repetition. Repetition!” at the River Hills Mall in Mankato. This will be a special treat for all members, don’t miss it!

### ABOUT JOHN REZMERSKI

John Calvin Rezmerski taught creative writing and journalism at Gustavus Adolphus College. In the past he was appointed Poet Laureate of the League of Minnesota Poets. Leading writing workshops is nothing new for Rezmerski, he has done so over the last 30 years or so. Rezmerski has been deeply involved in the poetry community; his recent efforts have gone toward the **Cambria Eisteddfod** project. He has also worked with the **Heartland Storytellers and Poetry Outloud**.

Publications that have printed his work include:

*The Wall Street Journal*  
*Mennonite Life*  
*New Letters*  
*Chelsea*  
*Nursing Outlook*  
*Poems of Exotic Places*

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*The Party Train*  
*The Sumac Reader*  
*Tales of the Unanticipated.*

Rezmerski's own published work features titles such as: *Counting Sheep* and *Growing Down*

He has received a number of awards including: a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Devins Award, and the Rhysling Award.



### Coffee Hag Reading

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*This May, we'll be featuring the works of **Berneal Schindle** and **Dorla Wachter**.*

*Please come and show your support for these special poets, and bring some of your own work to share after their program is over and we open the mike up to everyone!*



**This May's Assignment** is: "the turn of the season." *Any form, no line limit.*

**Remember: May's meeting should be the last taking place at the River Hills Mall. In the future, SMPS anticipates meeting at the Twin Rivers Center for the Arts.**

The League of Minnesota Poets is now officially apart of the Twin Rivers Centers for the Arts. Here are a few upcoming events with this organization that might of interest for SMPS members:

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE PERFORMANCE

There are a couple of opportunities coming up for TRCA partner organizations:

\*BECHS Lawn Party at the Hubbard House & Lifeworks Summer Art Show on Saturday, June 23: This will be the first preview event at the new Emy Frenz Arts Guild! Lifeworks will have art on display at the Arts Guild, while just next door at the Hubbard House, BECHS will be having their annual summer lawn party. Jessica Potter, Executive Director of BECHS, would like to offer TRCA partner groups the opportunity to perform as a part of the afternoon's festivities. If you are interested, Jessica can be reached at [bechs@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechs@hickorytech.net).

\*RiverCrossings Art Fair in Motion – October 6 & 7: All TRCA partner organizations are invited to participate in this year's event, which is shaping up to be a fantastic celebration of local art and culture! Since the Arts Guild will be up and running, performance groups will have the opportunity to use that space for poetry readings, music, song, etc. throughout the weekend. Please let Shannon know if you are interested at [mrsshannonrobinson@hotmail.com](mailto:mrsshannonrobinson@hotmail.com).

#### NEWSLETTER STORY IDEAS WANTED

TRCA is hoping to print its first quarterly newsletter in July 2007. They'd like to feature articles profiling a partner organization or two in each issue, and also highlight events or programs. If you have story ideas, articles you would like to submit for review, or members who might be interested in writing or editing, please let them know!

#### CULTURAL, ARTS, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT TASK FORCE

The City of Mankato has convened a task force to develop an arts & culture district in downtown Mankato. The TRCA is almost halfway through the process. If you'd like to stay up to date on the plans being developed by this task force, you can visit the website at <http://www.fosteryourdreams.com/mankato.php>.

To contact TRCA with comments, questions or ideas:

Twin Rivers Center for the Arts  
PO Box 293  
Mankato, MN 56002  
[www.twinriversarts.org](http://www.twinriversarts.org)  
507-387-1008

***Congratulations to Sister Justin who's poem "Proclamation" has recently been featured in the publication SACRED JOURNEY. You can see Sister Justin's poem online by going to [www.sacredjourney.org](http://www.sacredjourney.org) and clicking on the link to prayers/meditations/poetry.***

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