

# Thistledown

Vol. 28, Issue 4

Southern Minnesota Poets Society

January/February 2008

## Member News

Our heartfelt condolences go out to Sister M. Justin Wirth, whose brother Jack passed away recently. In her words, he "went safely and peacefully home to God". Also: two of Sister's poems have been featured in recent print & online editions of the magazine *Sacred Journey* ([www.sacredjourney.org](http://www.sacredjourney.org)). Kudos!

In November, Shirley Ensrud's poem "Rich Dessert" was featured on public radio as part of American Public Media's special program, *Giving Thanks*. You can listen to the program online at this address: <http://americanpublicmedia.publicradio.org>

John Calvin Rezmerski has received a grant from the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, to be used toward the completion of a collection of ghazals. On January 28th 2008 John read at Speculations, a monthly reading series presented by S.A.S.E. (Intermedia Arts) at DreamHaven Books in Minneapolis.

Apologies to Dorothy Lutz – her phone number was incorrectly listed in the previous roster. The correct number is (507) 934 2769.

## Submit your Minnesota poems!

The League of Minnesota Poets needs your poems for their anthology titled *County Lines*, celebrating Minnesota's statehood sesquicentennial! Poems should touch upon life, history, or nature in a Minnesota county. The submission deadline is **February 17, 2008**. For full guidelines, visit [www.mnpoets.org](http://www.mnpoets.org) or contact:

LOMP Editors, "County Lines" Anthology  
PO Box 96  
Pine City, MN 55063

## Note from the President



At Again this past month, SMPS poets were busy!

We had a great turnout for our Third Thursday poetry reading on January 17, featuring poets John Rezmerski and Sue Chambers.

Did you catch the Blizzard Poetry Retreat? More than twenty poets (from as far away as the state of Virginia!) found their way to Sue Chambers' house for this annual event, Jan. 25 – 27. If you didn't get to participate in this amazing gathering of poets, be sure to reserve July 18-20 for the annual Woodtick Retreat at the Chambers family cabin near Brainerd.

On Sunday, January 27, John Rezmerski hosted "Prairie Stories and River Rhymes" at the Cambria Town Hall (co-sponsored by Blue Earth County Historical Society and SMPS). Our own Ike Sarma was there to share some harmonica tunes. Nearly thirty persons attended this celebration of pioneer cooking.

Keep reading to learn about a host of poetic events and opportunities in February. Hope to see you at our upcoming events!

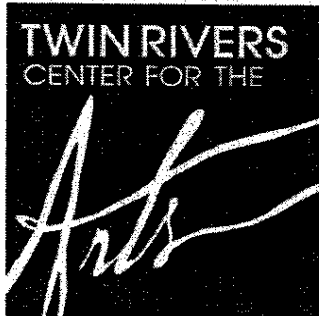
Regards,  
Jana Bouma

## Saturday Meeting Dessert Sign-up List

Thanks to the following people for offering to bring a yummy treat to our monthly luncheon meetings. We had a suggestion to add this to the newsletter, so here is the current list.

Feb 9	Yvonne Cariveau
Mar 8	Shirley Ensrud
Apr 12	Faye Mattison
May 10	Sister Margaret Mary

Proud Member of



**SMPS Events**✓ **Saturday Luncheon Meeting: The State of Youth Poetry**

Saturday, February 9th

Meal at 12:30pm ... program/meeting at 1:00pm  
Emy Frenz Arts Guild

Come and hear — from those involved with young writers — about the state of youth poetry. What mediums, forms, and directions are young poets exploring? What do young poets seek in their encounter with poetry? Panel: Bethany Berry and Christina Flaughter, Youth Co-Chairs, League of Minnesota Poets, John Rezmerski, former Poet-in-Residence at Gustavus Adolphus College, and Tania Lyon, AP Language and Composition teacher, West High School.

✓ **Third Thursday Evening: Poetry and Wine!**  
Thursday, February 21st at 7:00pm

Emy Frenz Arts Guild *Beverages by Sue Chambers*  
No cost to attend. Featuring a reading by Shirley (Baker) Ensrud of Blue Earth, Minnesota. Ensrud's poems have been featured on public radio on Garrison Keillor's *Writer's Almanac* and on American Public Media's recent broadcast, *Giving Thanks*. Her books include *Small Town and Everyday Things*, *Come Dance with Me*, and *Buckwheat Cakes and Cornmeal Mush*. An open mike reading will follow. Don't be shy; share your poems! Or come just to listen!

✓ **Wine and Cheese Tasting (benefitting TWCA)**

Wednesday, February 13th at 7:00pm

"Contessa" restaurant, 124 E Walnut St, Mankato  
Come enjoy four flights of wine, four desserts, and live music! [ *editor's note: Excellent* ] This isn't exactly an SMPS event, but it's an exciting fundraiser to support the TRCA, of which we're an affiliate organization. Hope you can be there!

✓ **SMPS Road Trip and Poetry Slam**

Tuesday, April 8th

Kieran's Pub in Minneapolis

SMPS members will road-trip to Kieran's for a SlamMN Poetry Slam! SlamMN hosts an open slam on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month. The April 8 event is the SlamMN Semi-Finals, will feature previous slam winners competing for the honor of traveling to the National Poetry Slam.

Jana Bouma attended the December Semi-Finals, and says it's worth taking a day off from work to make the mid-week trip to the Cities for this one! Mark your calendars, and stay tuned for more info.

**Other Literary Happenings***In the Mankato area*✓ **Good Thunder Reading Series: Poet James Armstrong**

Thursday, February 7th at 3:00pm and 7:30pm

Student Union building, MSU Mankato. Visit [www.english2.mnsu.edu/gt](http://www.english2.mnsu.edu/gt) for details.*In the region*✓ **SlamMN Poetry Slam**

Tuesday, January 29th at 9:00pm

Kieran's Pub in Minneapolis

Final qualifier for Women of the World Poetry Slam (Detroit, March 2008).

✓ **Intermedia Arts Mentorships: Writer-to-Writer**  
Deadline is February 8thEmail [info@intermediaarts.org](mailto:info@intermediaarts.org), call 612-871-4444, or visit [www.intermediaarts.org](http://www.intermediaarts.org) for details.✓ **SlamMN Poetry Slam**

Tuesday, February 12th at 8:00pm

Kieran's Pub in Minneapolis

✓ **Jerome Travel and Study Grant Program**

Deadline is February 13th.

Grants for emerging creative artists. Visit [www.jeromefdn.org](http://www.jeromefdn.org) for details.✓ **Call for Poems: What Light Poetry Series**

Deadline is February 16th.

Presented by Magers & Quinn and [www.mnartists.org](http://www.mnartists.org).✓ **Dylan Days**

Poem submission deadline: February 28th

Event dates: May 22 - 25

Hibbing, MN

Celebrate with an exciting lineup of Dylan Days arts and entertainment activities. Visit [www.dylandays.com](http://www.dylandays.com) for all the details, including the Creative Writing Contest call for poem submissions! Cash prizes and publication in *Talkin' Blues*. Contest link is [www.dylandays.com/writers.htm](http://www.dylandays.com/writers.htm).

✓ **Poetry Workshop Series -- "Digging to the Roots: Poetic Form and the Natural World"**Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Visit [www.writersrisingup.org](http://www.writersrisingup.org) for details.✓ **Poetry Classes at The Loft Literary Center**

1011 Washington Ave S # 200, Minneapolis

Visit [www.loft.org](http://www.loft.org) and click on "Adult Education" and "Poetry" for details and a list of numerous offerings.

*SMPS Officers*

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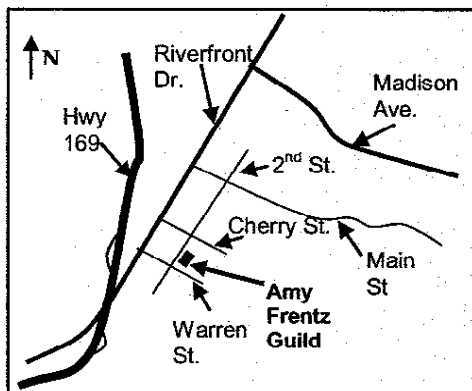
If you haven't renewed your SMPS membership for 2008 yet, send your renewal form to Doria Wachter today!

Don't miss out on the Thistledown newsletter and all of SMPS's great programming. The membership year runs from January 1st to December 31st 2008.

See the membership form on the outside of this newsletter mailing. Thank you!

*The Emy Frenz Arts Guild*

523 So. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Mankato, MN  
(East side of 2<sup>nd</sup> St., between Cherry and Warren Streets, next to the YWCA)



*"Poetry and Wine" Evenings*

Third Thursday each month at the Emy Frenz Guild

We still need one "featured poet" for February. If you can be a featured reader (for about 15 to 20 minutes), contact Jana Bouma. Each night will feature readings by 1 - 2 poets, followed by an open-mike reading.

Here is the current reading schedule:

Date	Featuring
Feb. 21	Shirley Ensrud (need one more!) Beverages by Sue Chambers
Mar. 20	Poetry Film Night Beverages by Ike Sarma (maybe?)
Apr. 17	Derek Liebertz & Sandy Newbauer Beverages by Sue Chambers
May 15	Meredith Cooke & Dorothy Lutz Beverages by June Emanuel

These readings are very informal and low-key. Don't be intimidated—share your poems! Or just come to enjoy the wine, the words, and the company.

*Less than 90 ...*

My holiday-time contest didn't net too many poems, so I am extending it through this newsletter. Submit entries to me by email by February 20th and they will be included in the next issue.

Write a couplet where the first words rhyme **and** the last words rhyme, **and** it includes a five-letter animal name. It's the ol' "Five & Rhyme" contest! As always, writing the poem should take you under 90 seconds. Take all the time you want to pick your animal(s), though. An example from Jana, who submitted this for the skipped December newsletter:

**Mr. Peeps Asks a Question**

Will you guess my favorite choice for dinner?

Silly question. For a **gecko**, cricket's always the winner!

*Editor's Note*

The creative metamorphosis of this newsletter has been very slow, but I still have related news this month. I am delighted to announce that **SMPS** has its own dedicated website as of January 17th! A big thanks to Yvonne Cariveau for her work in setting this up.

Visit [www.southernmnpoets.org](http://www.southernmnpoets.org) when you can and see what's been added. One thing I will be sure to include on the website going forward is a PDF copy of all future newsletters.

Your editor, **DEREK**