



The Legend

West Florida Literary Federation, Inc.

www.wflf.org

May 2016

May 17 ~ THIRD TUESDAY OPEN MIC



Camaraderie and refreshments at 6:30
Followed by open mic at 7

Come to listen and/or to read.
Bring a snack to share and bring a friend.

FREE ~ open to public

Pensacola Cultural Center ~ 400 South Jefferson Street ~ Room 201

ATTENTION MEMBERS ~ URGENT!!

If you haven't paid your dues for 2016, please do so immediately.

WFLF needs your support and commitment.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The good news just keeps rolling in! The grant for WFLF's participation in the Foo Foo Festival that I mentioned in last month's article has been approved. This grant will bring in two noted American poets, Barbara Henning and Lewis Warsh, who will present readings and presentations, workshops, and even a "breakfast with the poets" is planned. We will cooperate with the First City Arts Center, Open Books, Art Beyond Walls, Artel, J. Earle Bowden Foundation, Pensacola State College and the University of West Florida. This raises our visibility in the community and strengthens the literary arts environment in Pensacola. Many thanks to Susan Feathers, John Baradell, Jamey Jones, and Andrea Walker for their hard work in making this come true. The Foo Foo Festival will be November 4-16, so mark your calendars. Exactly what is the Foo Foo Festival you might ask? This is from their website: <http://www.foofoofest.com/>

"The Foo Foo Festival is a 12-day eclectic mixture of art and cultural events ranging in tastes, with everything from Blue Angel air shows and songwriters' music festivals to ballet, opera, high art and even the Big Green Egg Cook-off."

On another note, I attended the awards ceremony for the Student Poetry Contest at Books-A-Million and enjoyed watching the students, ranging from grades 1 to 12, proudly read their poetry. Thanks to Susan Lewis for all your hard work in making this so successful, and thanks to Books-A-Million for hosting. Around 150 people attended, and I know it meant so much to these young people. Be sure to read Charlotte Crane's excellent article in this issue. I posted photos on our Facebook page, so be sure to check those out also.

My presentation to the Escambia Retired Educator's Association went well; a big thank you goes to Richard Hurt for being a part of the presentation. Hopefully some of them will join our organization and conversely, some of you that are retired educators from anywhere may want to join their group; yours truly has been a member since 2011.

Some of you still have not paid your memberships for this year; you know who you are. Don't make me come to your house!

Your ideas and feedback are always welcome! You can reach me at estanford@cox.net or 850-449-6771.

Ed Stanford
WFLF President

Writers Weekly Workshops Room 210 at the Cultural Center

MONDAY WILD WRITING POETRY

WORKSHOP 2 ~ 4 p.m. Explore the world of writing poetry in this writing workshop ~ For details contact Ora Wills. owills@bellsouth.net

MONDAY PURE POETRY LOUNGE 6 ~ 8 p.m.

A poetry class focusing on critique and assignments designed to break class participants out of "comfort zones," led by Susan Lewis. New experiences, old lessons with a different twist and in the end, hopefully the ability to see poetry from a new perspective. Show up with a great attitude and willingness to work together. susanlewisbooks@yahoo.com

TUESDAY WRITING FOR PUBLICATION 10

a.m. ~ noon. For seasoned writers and members of WFLF who are working on book-length manuscripts and seeking publication. Manuscripts and written critiques are emailed within members of the group and members discuss their comments. The group is limited to seven required. ~ Ed Stanford, estanford@cox.net

THURSDAY PORTFOLIO SOCIETY 9:30 –

11:30 a.m. This workshop includes writers with a project(s) they hope to accomplish in one calendar year. Sessions involve timed discussions for each participant and can include critiques or discussion of issues as marketing and publishing. Work may include any genre. The self-paced workshop is facilitated by participants. Limited to seven members of WFLF with one current opening. For more information contact, dianeskelton@att.net. This group remains deadline and project oriented. **During May, the Portfolio Society will meet on Thursdays in the library of the Presbyterian Church at 33 East Gregory Street, at 9:30 a.m. For more information contact dianeskelton@att.net**

Student Poetry Awards

See sidebar: *the Legend – poetry breakout*

For teachers of language, the value of poetry as an education tool might come as no surprise.

But for students, it can open up possibilities they hadn't imagined, says Jill Robinson, who teaches 6th and 7th grades at Episcopal Grade School and in 2016, for the sixth year, made WFLF's Poetry Contest a core component of poetry awareness lessons.

"One of the best things poetry writing does is encourage students to really explore their own ability to create without limit," says Robinson, who's taught for 13 years, six at Episcopal Grade. Of 50 students in Robinson's classes, all participated in this year's contest; six were winners. "For students who struggle with prose, poetry takes away some of the limits and conventions. My students really love doing it; they look forward each year to seeing what the theme is going to be." This year's theme was "When I'm Alone."

For Tate High School English teacher Cynthia Sarikaya, 2016 was her inaugural year with the Poetry Awards program. Almost all of her 130 students chose to participate. "I think they will have a new appreciation for poetry now, and some will realize they have a skill that they didn't realize they have."

Jeremiah K. Hodge, a 10th-grade Tate student who is also enrolled in the ROTC program, was one of those who excelled, winning a Director's Selection award for his poem, "The Hurt."

Poetry writing, says Jeremiah, "helps me get all my thoughts and perspectives together. When you go through the day, everything gets jumbled; it helps to just sit by yourself, relax and go over what's on your mind." Jeremiah's poem reflects not his own experiences, but those he's observed of others who are bullied and bully in return. "It's sort of the Hollywood bully type of thing -- what happened to my friends, and how to help them." He plans to continue writing poetry.

This year's 35 overall contest winners, selected from 415 entries, received awards at an April 23rd Reception held at Books-a-Million,

Among the 2016 contest's 35 winning poems was sixth-grade first-place award winner "Porcelain Doll," written by Episcopal Grade School student Amelia Myers, and "The Hurt," a Director's Selection poem written by Jeremiah K. Hodge of Tate High School.

Here are excerpts:

Porcelain Doll

...
"Her limbs are strung by elastic strings,
Her heart stays lifeless; it cannot beat.
... She seems so dull, so insecure
But when she's alone
You'll see something more.
...She dances wildly, her heart in flames
...She becomes strong
She knows no bounds
When she's alone."

The Hurt

"When I am alone I hide
I hide not only from the darkness and silence of
being alone
From the pain and discomfort of having no one
...Or maybe if I hang on you will see me and
help
The one to sit by me
...That one who is also hurting
...So help me for I am not just one
I am 'that kid' whom you overlook
I am the bully and the bullied
I am *Hurt*."

where the audience, including parents and the public, watched with interest – and usually delight – as shy and smiling students came forward to read their poems. Among observers, Jan Hervieux, a K-12 schoolteacher for 35 years, said, "I'm interested in what the students were thinking as they wrote their poetry. I am aware that students of those ages have a lot of developmental changes and that is reflected in their poetry. Something that will help their development is the chance to present in front of an audience."

MEMBER NEWS

WFLF's Poetry Contest evolved from a Student Writers Network launched by Ora Wills and Friends of the Library around 1987; WFLF soon became involved and in the past several years the contest has become solely a WFLF event. WFLF board member Susan Lewis, after seven years as contest director, had considered turning over the volunteer task next year to someone else, but then discovered she couldn't – "because of the children. I was them." What has impressed her the most about the students' poetry in response to this year's theme, she said, "is their courage – the sheer gutsiness to write down exactly what has taken a razor to their little hearts."

Two winners this year capped her decision to stay with the contest, Lewis said. In one case, the father of a third-grade winner called to hear his daughter's poem read and learned only then how she felt about her parents' divorce, which she had kept to herself. "He was so grateful that he now knew; he felt he was reaching out, finally."

In the other case, the mother of a young man with Asperger's cried when Lewis informed her that her son's poem was a winner, and shared with her the thoughts concerning his disability that he had shared when he was writing his poem. Said the mother, amid tears, "I had no idea."

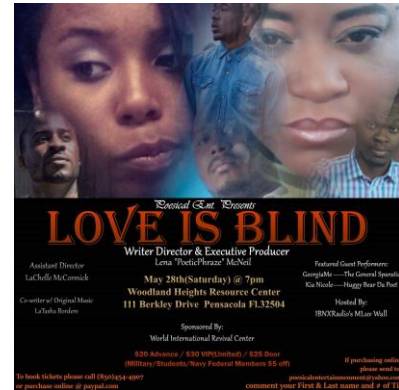
The WFLF Poetry Contest is growing. This year there were approximately 415 entries, said Lewis, compared to 270 last year. There's also a possibility the program could grow much more. Of 51 Escambia County Schools, plus 32 private schools, the contest drew participation from 8-to-10 schools this year, Lewis said. Prize money awarded for 2016 totaled around \$750.

Printed books of the winning poems will be given to the winners and made available, for sale to the public, at a reception early this fall – date and place to be announced.

Charlotte Crane

May 28, 7 p.m.

WFLF member LaChelle McCormick is assistant director of *Love Is Blind*.



The writer Lena McNeil is a Spoken Word artist in Pensacola and a victim of abuse:

"One day, while listening to my cousin talk about her experiences with abuse in her past, I realized that domestic violence is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. I wanted to apply my talent towards something that could possibly help bring about change and awareness. I sat down with my cousin and wrote a play and she wrote the music to accompany inspired by our experiences titled *Love Is Blind*. We wanted to share our story and the stories of many others who have suffered the same woes. This play is not your typical play; it is the combination of poetry and music within a play called a Poesical Stage Play.

"*Love Is Blind The "Poesical"* will premiere on **Saturday May 28th, at the Woodland Heights Resource Center, 111 Berkley Dr., Pensacola, 32504.** Tickets are \$20 advance, \$30 VIP (limited and includes preferred seating, gift, and dinner) and \$25 at the door, Military and students get \$5 off ticket. If you need more information or would like to schedule a meeting with me to speak more in detail about what this Poesical production is about, or who I Am, you can reach me through e-mail at poesicalentertainment@yahoo.com or you can call me at [850-454-4907](tel:850-454-4907)."

Lena McNeil

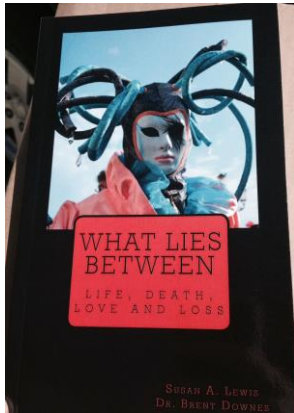
Some of you know LaChelle as a vibrant and talented poet and new member.

CREATIVE WRITING

Mystic Morning

The morning is sad and gray,
yet overhead a gull hangs white,
whiter than white,
against the towering pines
and extends motionless
on a shelf of air as it heralds
a storm across the bay
where a ponderous thunderhead
flowers, stews a minute,
tattered edges crinkling in,
its linings so dark, so bright
an onlooker could not decide
until the end, or even then,
what it had revealed
and what had been hidden
from him and all to know.

*Dr. Henry Langhorne
Pensacola Bay, circa 2015
In Search of Solitude*



Susan Lewis' latest collection is out. Also available on Kindle on amazon or from Susan. Stay tuned for a review next month.

Welcome New Members!

Aaron Gilmore

Julie Schelling

Returning member Joyce Smandra

SAVE THESE DATES! November 4 – 14 for the FOO FOO Festival. You'll be hearing much about this in upcoming issues. With the approval of this grant, WFLF has the opportunity to grow on the Pensacola scene. As participants of the Foo Foo Festival, Nov 4-14, WFLF presents *Writing Off the Wall ~ November 3 – 7. Featuring guest poets from NYC, local Pop up Poets - at various locations, readings, workshops and more.* **STAY TUNED – We'll need a committee to help with this fun fun event!**

Please let us know if you are interested in helping and we'll later contact you about specific volunteer activities. Some of the categories we'll want:


- Volunteers at specific venues (readings, workshops, brunch).
- Volunteers for implementation (marketing, sponsorships, memberships/registration; Girl/Guy Friday-s including transportation, assisting guest poets, putting up posters and distributing marketing materials around town.)
- Volunteer Pop Up Poets (read poetry around town during the Foo Foo Festival)

If any of you have connections with business (print, advertising, restaurants, hotels, etc.) that might give us a discount or become an event sponsor, please let us know. estanford@cox.net or 850-449-6771.

SUBTLE JAMAICA

My elfin detachment dictates
The touted choices of morning
Naturally like pixel mirrors of peaches
In a basket forming mazes
Which in the end bring clarity
In the form of a woman's robust
Breakfast laughter
Before and after the comings and
Goings that got us to here

She enters the quieted air
As if touching a subtle Jamaica
A touch, a tout, an infant palpitation
Surrounded by what might be mistaken
For a type of jaded scrutiny, or a mutiny
Of morning, which is hardly the case
But simply the wafting of light
Through the mingling window merging
Pouring into the new space of today

Jamey Jones 
Blue Morning Rain
Poet Laureate NW Florida

Epiphany in Mississippi

I was riding shotgun in your old blue pickup
in the backwoods of Biloxi
when a snowy egret shot out of the marsh
into the sun, wings ablaze in the windshield.

You stared straight ahead into nothing,
kept driving without so much as a shift
of your blue eyes in my direction.
I blinked and the wings were gone.

But that night your eyes shined
as you gave me the egret feather found
in the backyard. We danced on the porch
despite the buzz of gnats around us in the damp,
black rain on black earth,
lightning feathering the heavens.

A thunderbolt split the sky, close,
blinding white light blasting
the dead pear tree into a single veined flame.

From the new dark edged with sparks
exploded out of the burning tree –
wings.

NOTE: This poem was published in the *Maple Leaf Rag*
15th Anniversary Anthology (1994)

Katherine Nelson-Born

Hope in the Alone

Alone sings a song of trickery
Drowning into the galaxy
Melting into the stars
A steady pace
Running, running to home.
Alone doesn't help you.
It brings you into a new path
Of darkness, despair, a new dimension
One I myself have never seen
Full of miserable people
Dying to get out of this place
They can't escape
No one can

The darkness consuming them
There is one thing they don't know
A song no one sings to them
A nursery rhyme left untold forever
Hope
All they can do is wish and yearn and sing
For what they need is Hope

Hope can escape the trickery of alone
Hope can win every battle, and can heal every scar
It can escape the foreign dimension of alone
Hope will keep me company.

Ashlyn Arnold

Word of South A festival of literature and music

On a glorious spring day in April a friend and I drove to Tallahassee for the second annual Word of South Festival at Cascades Park. There we were immersed in a well-planned collaboration of literature and music. Because my first love is literature, my focus was on the book talks and interviews with writers. It was worth the drive to meet poets and prose authors of both fiction and nonfiction, including Florida Book Award winners. The readings and interviews were well-attended by readers as well as writers.

The first book talk included interviews with Pensacola author Katherine Clark; Tallahassee poet Brandi George; Tampa poet Donald Morrill; and Jacksonville author Gracie L. Chandler, all 2015 Florida Book Award winners. Clark's *The Headmaster's Daughter*, a Mountain Brook Novel with a foreword by Pat Conroy is "a satirical comedy of manners" based on the privileged life of Mountain Brook society outside Birmingham. I'm looking forward to delving into George's *Gog* and Morrill's *Awaiting Your Impossibilities*. The other book I could not resist was Chandler's *Free to Be*, a historical nonfiction work based on the Gullah community of former slaves on the South Carolina barrier islands. These are the writers whose readings and interviews persuaded me to purchase their books. Dozens of other excellent authors read and related their stories of how and why they write. Ah,

so many books, so little time; perhaps I'll get to some of those if I ever fully retire.

Despite the presence of performing musicians, I preferred to hear those who write about music, so we ended our day listening to an interview of George Clinton aka Dr. Funkenstein by Mark Binelli, contributing editor to *Rolling Stone*. Fascinating and entertaining, Binelli ever the brilliant professional and Clinton in his shiny green suit with matching hat and sunglasses mesmerized and "put a spell on" us.

For me this will be an annual event. Readers can look forward to my reviews of the works I purchased in future Legends. You may want to check out www.wordofsouthfestival.com or some of these talented writers. In fact, planning for 2017 is already underway. Finally, as I look back on Jamey Jones' *Thoreau-ly Natural* collaboration with Artel and Susan Lewis' annual Student Poetry accomplishment, I also look forward to our Foo Foo Festival event in November. Pensacola is talented and ingenious. Let us continue to enhance each other's literary, music, and visual artistic imaginations and not keep our creativity a secret.

Andrea Walker



ALABAMA WRITERS' CONCLAVE

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AWC

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www.alabamawritersconclave.org

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Springville, AL 35146

**WFLF thanks Bingo Paradise
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for its continued financial support!**

Pensacola Cultural Center

Bathroom Renovations/ Building Closure

Through fundraising efforts of the Pensacola Little Theatre Board of Trustees, the first floor restrooms between the North Lobby and Atrium will undergo renovations beginning Monday, April 4, 2016.

The renovations are expected to take eight weeks, with an anticipated completion date of Friday, May 27, 2016.

During this time, the North Lobby may be used as a staging area for construction materials and a thoroughfare for project workers. Furthermore, first floor restrooms will be out of commission and all patrons should plan to use 2nd floor restrooms, via the Grand Staircase by the Mainstage Theatre or elevator in the Box Office Lobby. For safety reasons, patrons and volunteers should enter and exit through the Jefferson Street awning/Atrium.

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andrea48@aol.com

Check out our website at www.wflf.org and "Like" us on Facebook, (under) West Florida Literary Federation. Please visit often for updates and other Federation news.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/West-Florida-Literary-Federation-WFLF/255101747857712?ref=hl>

West Florida Literary Federation ~ Join or Renew ~ 2016

Memberships are good for one calendar year beginning January 1 and ending December 31.
Individual membership is \$30/year. New members joining after July 15, pay \$15 or may pay \$45 which also pays for the following year. Subsequent years are due annually by January 1.

One Year ~ Individual \$30 ~ Couple \$50 ~ Student \$15 ~ *Two years* ~ Individual \$50 ~ Couple \$85

Name _____

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Circle the items you **do not** want published in the WFLF "members only" directory:

1) address 2) phone or 3) email. If no item is circled, we will include all your information in the next published directory.

Use PayPal at <http://wflf.org> and email this form to westfloridaliteraryfederation@gmail.com or mail your check and this form to

West Florida Literary Federation, 400 South Jefferson Street, Suite 212, Pensacola, FL 32502

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To sponsor a new member in WFLF. Add \$20 to total payment & include member information on a separate form.



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400 South Jefferson Street Suite 212
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