



# *The Legend*

**West Florida Literary Federation, Inc.**

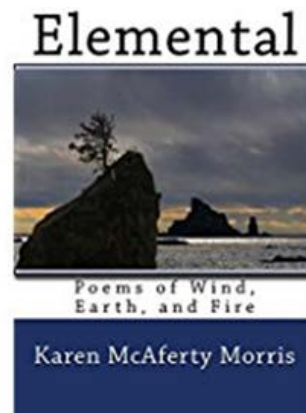
[www.wflf.org](http://www.wflf.org)

**June 2018**

## **THIRD TUESDAY OPEN MIC JUNE 19**

**Karen McAferty Morris reading from her award-winning book of poetry**

***ELEMENTAL: Poems of Wind, Earth, and Fire***



Member and “Southern poet Karen McAferty Morris’ *Elemental* was awarded second place in the National League of American Pen Women’s 2017 Vinnie Ream Competition in Letters. Social issues, nature, and love compelled these poems of wind, earth, and fire. Morris’ poetry, written in both free verse and forms, has been recognized for its ‘appeal to the senses, the intellect, and the imagination.’”

- Bring your creative writing – both prose and poetry –
  - Bring a friend
  - Bring a snack to share

Refreshments and camaraderie at 6:30

Program at 7 followed by open mic at 7:30 (remember our 5-minute time length)

Pensacola Cultural Center room 201  
400 South Jefferson Street  
Pensacola, FL 32502  
FREE – Open to public

June 2018 Legend

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

June has rapidly arrived, and I hope you are all doing well. Our Foo Foo grant was approved, and planning has begun in earnest for the event, scheduled for Thursday, November 8, 2018. This will mark WFLF's third year of participation. This year's theme is You: The writer. We will be covering three areas of that rather broad theme: memoir writing, song writing and writing for social media. Everyone has a good memoir or two in them, either about their own past or of their family. Many of you have a song or two ready to bust out of you, and a lot of you are on social media. Maybe you wish to be better at it. If any of these three types of writing interest you, then we have you covered. Stay tuned, more to come. Thank you, John Baradell, for writing the grant and thanks to Julie Still-Rolin for taking the lead on its implementation.

We have also plans to upgrade our website, and work will begin shortly. You will be very pleased with the results. Our webmaster will be Jef Bond, who has also agreed to join our board. He will be filling the slot left vacant when John Baradell resigned. We sincerely thank you for all your service, John and we wish you all the best.

Please join us this month for open mic, where WFLF member, Karen McAferty Morris will read from and discuss her new book of poetry *Elemental*. Wine, cheese and comradery at 6:30 and the program begins at 7.

Congratulations to founding member Ora Wills on the publication of her memoir, *Fish Head Soup and Sassafras Tea*. I am certainly looking forward to reading it, and I know you are also.

Congratulations to *Legend* editor/publisher and former Vice President Andrea Walker on her new website, which showcases some of her writing. [www.andreaswritinglife.org](http://www.andreaswritinglife.org)

Well, that's the news from WFLF, where all the members are talented, intelligent and good looking. Tell me what you think [estanford@cox.net](mailto:estanford@cox.net), 850-449-6771.

*Ed Stanford, President*

## Writers Weekly Workshops

**MONDAY POETRY** led by Julie DeMarko meets from 6 ~ 8 p.m., Mondays at the Cultural Center. Like the "wild writing" workshop she led for two years, the goal is to practice writing and, in the end, find the path to authentic poetry. [JulieDemarko@hotmail.com](mailto:JulieDemarko@hotmail.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 writers ~ Ron Tew, [tuesday@bellsouth.net](mailto:tuesday@bellsouth.net)

## WEDNESDAY PORTFOLIO &

**EXCHANGE SOCIETY** ~ The Portfolio & Exchange Society Critique Group meets every Wednesday, 9:30-11:30, at the library of the First Presbyterian Church on Gregory Street in Pensacola. We're a lively group looking for writers who have a project for a year – no matter the genre, memoir, poetry, fiction, nonfiction – 12 months to complete a project. Since the conception of the group in January 2014, four members have published books and a fifth writer's manuscript is being finalized for press. Plus, the participants are notorious for exchanging writing tips, novels, paintings, and garage sale items. For more information contact [dianeskelton@att.net](mailto:dianeskelton@att.net)

## MEMBER NEWS

Member Charlotte Crane was featured in the May 24, 2018 edition of *inweekly* with an informative article about Pathways for Change. If you're unfamiliar with the program and/or haven't seen the article, it's worth knowing about and good reading. Here's the link: <http://inweekly.net/wordpress/?p=32210>

## SAVE THE DATE THURSDAY, JUNE 28

Member Julie Still-Rolin and Book Pedlar are hosting a book signing and talk about the ups and downs of life candidly addressed in Julie Still-Rolin's nonfiction works! 5 p.m. at Book Pedlar, 2475 C Nine Mile Road, Pensacola.

### REVIEWS

Writers, are you aware how valuable reviews are? If you have published, you know. If you have read a good book by someone you know, you can do that writer a favor by reviewing, or even commenting on, his/her book on Amazon. Thinking about someone else's writing helps you understand it better, and it's fun to put your thoughts on the page. Consider reviewing a few of the books you've enjoyed.

### CREATIVE WRITING

#### Fragile

Last night you let slip  
the green vase  
you had given me to hold  
the red roses  
from your garden

This morning you knocked  
to the floor  
the top of the small  
painted sugar pot  
we had chosen together  
one sultry morning in Mexico

And now you let drop  
it slid so easily –  
the empty bowl I would have filled  
with sweet succulent oranges  
for your breakfast  
if you had asked me.

*Juliet Demarko*  
from *Fashioned by Memory*

## A Prose Poem on Father's Day

June 18, 2017

Memory is the sense of loss  
and loss pulls us after it.  
On this Father's Day, my fifty-sixth,  
my father had only twelve.  
He was also short-changed in life.

He was a medic in the Great War,  
wounded in the Argonne and sent home  
to recover in a Hoboken hospital.  
Instead of medical school, his dream,  
he became a pharmacist to keep  
his mother's drug store alive.  
He was also a traveling salesman  
to support his family in the Depression.

Our times together were special.  
He took me to football games,  
taught me baseball, and called me  
"Daddy's man." Sunday church,  
kneeling beside him at communion,  
was a special time with him.

And my most painful memories?  
A telephone call one rainy April day  
telling us he was critically injured  
in an automobile wreck while  
on his second job. During four days  
and nights I sat in Room 107  
at a Selma hospital, watching  
his broken body die. I still recall  
the pattern on the linoleum floor.

Early on the morning he died,  
our parish priest walked with me  
to the hospital. He did not speak  
but kept his arm around my shoulder.  
The room was quiet, Daddy was not breathing.  
The drive home with my mother was  
just as quiet. It was a clear, spring day,  
cool and without a cloud in the sky.

May 3, 1945

*Dr. Henry Langhorne*  
from *Four West*

### Late Friday Afternoon

drinking wine, yawning  
time clicks away like numbers  
at the gasoline pump  
each moment should be momentous  
U-2 and Van Morrison on the iTunes playlist  
deepen the minutes  
sometimes the breeze stirs the fan blades  
on the back porch  
wish this day's end could be flash-frozen  
like a say-cheese photograph  
yesterday at sunset I pulled over to watch  
a cloud like a Viking warrior set ablaze for  
Valhalla  
I'll forget it soon though, give me time

*Karen McAferty Morris*  
from *Elemental*

### Time Passed

I have been here too long;  
Years ago I should have gone  
Leaving my gardens nipped with frost  
And the magnolias mysteriously lost.

I know now where poor folks dwell,  
Where incidents happened I cannot tell,  
I remember promises being made  
And why truth-tellers were laid.

I have been here too long.

Too many friends have passed here  
With too few left to quaff news and beer;  
I stare at the street light's blinding beams,  
And remember lost moments, forgotten dreams.

Businesses have gone and also their stores,  
Shopping is pointless and dull as are chores;  
A dinner is now often another time to be sad,  
A birthday but a reminder of years we've had.

I have been here too long.

You were with me when I came here,  
A treasure valued, yet with me no more.  
Return you must, I have heard you say,  
Still it was not your choice to go away.

You had been here too long.

*Charlotte Crane*

### BOOK REVIEWS

***Four West* by Dr. Henry Langhorne**  
**Pelican Press ~ ISBN 978-0-9911640-6-6**  
**108 pages**

*Four West*, the cardiology wing of the hospital where Dr. Henry Langhorne spent most of his professional life, befits the title of his eleventh book of poetry. The theme of death and dying appears pervasive on first read; however, additional contemplation reveals themes of compassion and accepting mortality along with hope and the dignity of life.

The first half of the book is a collection of fifty-three of his doctor poems, written during a span of over fifty years. These somber poems give us a glimpse into the heart of a caring man. Beginning with the title poem "4 West" the scope of dealing with death and survivors is laid bare. There is no easy or different way to say, "He's dead." What loved ones dread to hear, what readers hear a few unwelcome times during a lifetime, is a phrase the physician must use too frequently.

Reading Langhorne's poems shows us the other side of the doctor/patient relationship. We discover the very human in whom we place much trust, who does all he can to fight his battle against death, but who knows death will win ultimately. He manages to remain human day after day, year after over fifty years of doing what he can before death wins.

One beautiful aspect of this collection is how it reaches back in time to the past, for

example, when doctors still made house calls. “My Last House Call” addresses that time with the simple words spoken by a dying man’s wife who “kissed his cheek, promised him strawberries in the morning.” Another example of the medical field from the past is found in “Hands and Images” as the poet compares centuries long ago when doctors palpated “lymph nodes, tumors, swollen livers and spleens” to the current use of “an ultrasound transducer over the body, producing images, brightly colored and cold.”

Throughout the pages, the mystical resides in the physical realm, for instance, in the dreams of the heart transplant recipient in “Michael’s Gift” and in references to the dissection of the human body without finding the soul.

The second half of the book, aptly named “New Poems” subtly offers hope and new life in the titles of “Morning Rally,” “Legacy of a Live Oak,” “A Nobel Prize Dream,” and “Stem Cells.” The new poems afford a look into the thoughts of the retired physician. Each poem affirms some aspect of the continuity of life such as “we are indispensable,” “I would receive the Nobel Prize,” the godparents looking at the baby at Baptism.

Langhorne articulates the theme of giving dignity to death in lines from “Thoughts on Dying,”

“The good death is a myth;  
death with dignity is a rare event  
but the dignity of the life preceding  
is what gives dignity to death.”

Through the eyes of one looking back over his life, Langhorne offers the reader good advice like “I could have been more kind” and “listen as your body speaks its words to you” and “your dreams, listen to what they yearn to tell you.” He suggests new ideas for funerals

like “open the shutters, play waltzes . . . visit a favorite place. . . walk together in sun or rain.”

Herein lie the reflections of the doctor who has seen much and now embraces this late phase of life with open eyes. Langhorne defines poetry as a companion when medicine fails leaving the patient alone. The poetry in *Four West* is indeed a benevolent friend who speaks truth.

*Andrea Walker*

***In the Shadow of Statues:  
A White Southerner Confronts History*  
by Mitch Landrieu, Mayor of New Orleans  
Viking (2018) 227 pages**

*In the Shadow of Statues*, Mitch Landrieu’s book delineating the removal of Confederate monuments in the City of New Orleans, might change a few minds. As a native Mississippian, I read the book hoping its subtitle *A White Southerner Confronts History* would help me understand my history.

The book, more memoir than a contemporary narrative, shows how one man’s life can build toward a realization of truth. Growing up in what became a predominantly black New Orleans neighborhood, young Landrieu played with African American children at home and on sports teams. The Landrieu Family never joined the “white flight” exodus, even after Hurricane Katrina. His mother Verna insisted on kindness, and his father Moon, who also served as Mayor of New Orleans, advocated fairness through civil rights. Mitch attended mainly white catholic schools before entering Catholic University in Washington, DC, where he studied theatre. As a SAG card-carrying actor, he faced reality upon graduation, abandoning the stage for the law.

Landrieu writes as a patient politician learning from his people and trying to do the right thing. His accounts are sometimes self-serving, and, occasionally, bold in assumption. For example, in drawing a parallel between Donald Trump and David Duke, he concludes “There is nothing the country is experiencing today that we in Louisiana haven’t seen or faced in the last 30 years.” Landrieu places no blame except perhaps on former mayor William J. Behan, who was part of an 1874 armed

revolt resulting in deaths of black police officers along with white supremacists. An obelisk monument, however, memorialized the white supremacists. As mayor, Behan organized the monument's installation ceremony in 1891. This, Landrieu saw, as a wrong he as current mayor should correct.

Woven among incidents in Landrieu's life is an explanation of the diversity of New Orleans, historically and geographically. The author loves the city and praises its uniqueness in America but faces the fact New Orleans operated the largest slave market in America where hundreds of thousands of human beings were bought, sold and separated from loved ones. The city is also responsible for some of Louisiana's 540 cases of lynching. His description of the white supremacy rebellion plus an explanation of The Cult of the Lost Cause solidified my thoughts on the removal of the statues. Landrieu's recollection of an African American school girl asking, "What did he do for me?" upon seeing the statue of Robert E. Lee convinced me it was time to face facts.

We white Southerners, in the 1940 through 1960s, were taught fiction -- a philosophy ennobling a lost cause. The Civil War wasn't about states' rights, as I learned in history classes. It was about preserving a way of life -- and that way of life included slavery. While antebellum plantations, belles of the ball, and mint juleps on the veranda were romanticized; we never saw the slavery picture of those days. In truth, it was ugly and inhumane. We don't need monuments to remind us of our inhumanity to man. Sadly, Landrieu's account of the clandestine maneuvers to legally and safely dismantle the statues justifies the need for a book as this.

He hopes by writing the book "many of those who once stood against taking the monuments down will think again and commit to working through the issues of race in our country after learning more about our real history." Though Landrieu's book might not heal any wounds, it may well spark discussion and realization on the part of many in society today. For me, it did just that.

*Diane Skelton*

***Just Like That* by Barbara Henning  
Spuyten Duyvil 283 pages  
ISBN 978-1-947980-21-1**

Barbara Henning's latest novel *Just Like That*, tells a love story, but even more, it explores relationships, cultural differences and expectations. As protagonist Sara gets to know her new acupuncturist Jabari, she thinks, "I was white and he was black and behind those words were centuries of problems" (12). The handsome doctor has an allure about him, both attractive and puzzling, which develops throughout the pages as Sara's emotions are laid bare. Henning's succinct style tells her story matter-of-factly like a journal and includes the most private of thoughts and details. Inexplicable at times, Jabari's silences and moodiness keep the reader wondering.

Sara's character unfolds via childhood memories, grief for her mother, and her years as a young mother. Henning conveys emotions and personality traits by weaving Sara's dreams throughout the story. Writer as character shows clearly in passages like "holding these children and listening to them emerge into language" (36) and "making words and sounds in the quiet of my mind" (71).

Within or because of the cross-cultural liaison, the responses of family and friends affects the relationship, and Henning thoughtfully illustrates the effects others have on the pair. Somewhat alternative from the mainstream, lifestyles of the main characters add appeal: yogi, vegan, poet. With detailed description, place becomes character as it influences the relationship. Characters come alive in their tiny New York City apartments and in the parks, on the streets and subways of New York. As Sara and Jabari relate to each other, the reader glimpses inside each and develops his/her own strong opinions.

Although Henning's clean, neat style feels terse, passages of beauty, description, even mysticism soften the narrative. The protagonist seeks and therefore finds beauty in simplicity that helps her maintain her equilibrium and gives her insight. Sara and Jabari's bond, though unique in ways, can be typical of most couples at times, yet the incidents and phases of their lives together will provoke strong responses from the reader.

Sara sets a good example. With thoughts of loving-kindness, not blaming others, lessons of staying steady, Sara attempts to balance her world. Easy to read, difficult to put down, so much happening in this unpredictable relationship.

*Andrea Walker*

**WFLF thanks Bingo Paradise**  
**4469 Mobile Hwy, Pensacola, FL 32506**  
**(850) 457-0067**  
**for its continued financial support!**

### Literary Things to Do

**Second Tuesdays** – open mic poetry and music jam, 6 p.m. – 7:30, Crestview Public Library, 1445 Commerce Dr, Crestview, 32539. Contact Esther @ 682-4432.

**First and third Saturdays – In our write minds** - at eleven in the conference room of the fellowship hall, St. Augustine Episcopal church on Highway 98, Navarre. If you have friends or colleagues who are interested in creative (or non-fiction) writing, bring them. Contact Claire Massey.

**First Wednesday of each month** – Say the Word open mic in Niceville. Check it out on FB.

**June 19** – Third Tuesday Open Mic – Karen McAferty Morris reading from *Elemental* followed by open mic

**Thursday, June 28, 5 p.m.** - Member Julie Still-Rolin and Book Pedlar. Book signing and talk. Book Pedlar, 2475 C Nine Mile Road, Pensacola.

**July 17** – Third Tuesday Open Mic Charlotte Crane reading from *The Tales of Aunt Maddy* followed by open mic

### 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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## West Florida Literary Federation ~ Join or Renew ~ 2018

**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*

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

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



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