



The Legend

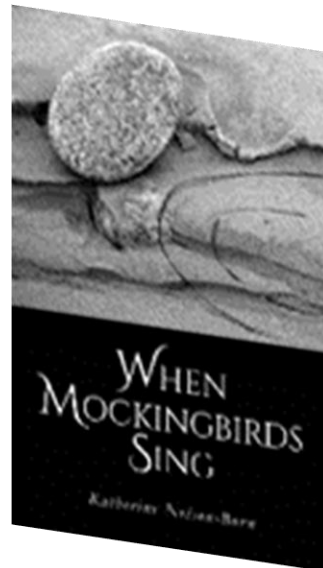
West Florida Literary Federation, Inc.

www.wflf.org

OCTOBER 2020

Zoom into Open Mic on October 20, Third Tuesday

Our new NW Florida Poet Laureate, Katherine Nelson-Born, will be inducted during the October Open Mic scheduled for October 20 at 6:30. Many of us have known Katherine for many years as a member of WFLF, a former president, and reader at open mics.



Katherine Nelson-Born photo
by Belinda Todd of
Belinda Todd Photography, Pensacola

We hope you'll join us to welcome Katherine to this new and well-deserved position. Katherine will be our featured guest, followed by open mic. If you would like to read or just attend Zoom Open Mic night in October, please email us at wflf.org to let us know. If you haven't used Zoom yet, below is a link for a short tutorial.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/hIkCmbvAHQQ?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc_load_policy=1

NEWEST POET LAUREATE PROMOTES HEALING POWER OF POETRY

By Diane Skelton

Writing poems in school didn't keep Katherine Nelson from dropping out, but her lifelong love affair with writing and literature propelled her from GED to Ph.D., even if the odyssey took over twenty years. Often derailed, sometimes irreverent, but always faithful to her poetic passion, Katherine Nelson-Born is Northwest Florida's newest poet laureate.

The award-winning poet, editor, and author of *When Mockingbirds Sing*, brings a message of hope for young and old. Katherine first encountered poetry as a middle-schooler when a social worker tried to steer her away from juvenile delinquency with a book of poems. Soon Katherine was writing her own teenaged poetry, a better outlet than drugs or alcohol.

But poetry couldn't keep Katherine at school. By age sixteen, she emancipated herself and dropped out of Grace King High School in Metairie, a suburb of New Orleans. Even though she had passed her classes, including Honors English, the school refused to let her advance -- she had skipped too many classes. Thumbing her nose at high school, she lied about her age and earned a GED certificate. A year later she worked as a receptionist by day, waited tables by night and made plans to attend the University of New Orleans, where she took her first poetry workshop and in 1987 earned her first degree.

"Hope for everyone" will be the key phrase in Nelson-Born's program as the eighth Poet Laureate of Northwest Florida. Appointed by the West Florida Literary Federation, the poet laureate is charged with bringing poetry to life in the community as well as continuing to write poetry reflecting the region. Nelson-Born plans to collaborate with other poets beginning with a roundtable focused on finding creative ways to implement HOPE, the acronym for her theme—The Healing of Poetry is for Everyone.

"This year," she explains, "we have seen our local community and the broader country torn asunder by the pandemic and by politics. No matter where on the spectrum people fall, 2021 should be a year we promote healing, and there's no better way than to invite people to share their poems on similar themes."

She also wants to implement a program like the National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read which she facilitated for Pensacola 2008-2009. This time, she'll recommend residents read Claudia Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric*, a best-

THE HEALING OF POETRY IS FOR EVERYONE (HOPE) *Katherine Nelson-Born's Poet Laureate plan*

- *Encourage social unity through the healing power of poetry*
- *Establish a poet's roundtable to generate creative ideas to spread **The Healing of Poetry for Everyone***
- *Provide under-represented poets an opportunity to shine along with recognized ones*
- *Facilitate a community read of Claudia Rankine's **Citizen: An American Lyric** poetry collection*
- *Adopt Robert Pinsky's **Favorite Poem Project** with residents sharing their favorite poems in a public forum*
- *Organize a **Poem-A-Day** chapbook competition*
- *Implement **HOPE** in the first 100 days*



Katherine Nelson-Born photo by Belinda Todd of Belinda Todd Photography, Pensacola

selling poetry collection and 2015 NAACP Image Award winner. While the Jamaican-born author is not local, promoting her poetry about citizenship and fighting racism could provide an opportunity for emerging, under-represented poets to shine along with recognized regional ones, says Nelson-Born.

As for poetry keeping kids in school, Nelson-Born explains “poetry, like other forms of creative writing, including music, is a creative outlet that can be beneficial to students and encourage them to express themselves in more positive ways than other forms of rebellion like dropping out or becoming the next Juvenile Justice statistic.” After all, poetry got Nelson-Born back to school, earning an MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University and her Ph.D. from Georgia State. She even attended the Grace King High School Class of '78 Reunion, though she never graduated.

A frequent participant in local open mics and literary events from Pensacola to Fairhope to New Orleans, Nelson-Born knows the regional writing and poetry scene well. She has participated in Pensacola’s Foo Foo Fest, A Hundred Thousand Poets for Change, New Orleans Poetry Festival, the Tennessee Williams Literary Festival, the Alabama Writers Conclave, and the Gulf Coast Association of Creative Writing Teachers Conference.

She is well-versed with the expectations for the poet laureate as well as West Florida Literary Federation, the sponsoring organization. She served as president of WFLF from 2007 to 2010. In 2014 she served on the selection and induction committees for the seventh poet laureate, Jamey Jones, and in 2019 she edited the twentieth volume of *The Emerald Coast Review*, which included a special section featuring the poetry of past poets laureate.

Nelson-Born’s poems have won awards in the University of New Orleans Tennessee Williams competition, the Agnes Scott College Writing Festival, and the Alabama Writers Conclave. The introductory chapter for her debut novel *Before the Thunder* was recognized in the Tallahassee Writers Association’s literary competition and is included in its 2020 *Seven Hills Review*. Her poetry and creative writing have appeared in numerous other literary journals, including *The Dark Sire*, *Emerald Coast Review*, *Alyss*, *Birmingham Poetry Review*, *GSU Review*, *Ellipsis*, *Maple Leaf Rag* and *Penumbra*. Her first poetry collection, *When Mockingbirds Sing*, published by Finishing Line Press in 2016, is available on Amazon or from the publisher. She is currently seeking publication of her second poetry collection entitled *Bone Geometry*.

KATHERINE NELSON-BORN: POET, AUTHOR, EDITOR, POET

Poetry published in Alyss, Birmingham Poetry Review, Emerald Coast Review, Excelsior ReView, GSU Review, Longleaf Pine, Maple Leaf Rag and Penumbra. Poetry honors from University of New Orleans Tennessee Williams Ellipsis Award, Alabama Writers Conclave, Agnes Scott College Writer’s Festival

AUTHOR

When Mockingbirds Sing poetry collection (2016)
Bone Geometry poetry collection
Before the Thunder—Big Easy Demons Book 1, Young Adult novel

EDITOR

Emerald Coast Review (2019, 2009, 2007, 2005)
Prompted by Cindy Rickey, Poem-A-Day poetry chapbook winner (2014)
Big Read Grant editor (2009)
K & K Manuscript Editing Services (2016 to present)



Nelson-Born has lived in Pensacola with her husband, Tim Born, a Pensacola native, for more than 20 years. She grew up in New Orleans, spending many weekends at Pensacola Beach where she met Tim. They have one daughter, Rowan, a senior on scholarship at University of Southern California. One-half of K & K Writing Services, Nelson-Born provides content editing with copy editor and partner, Katheryn Holmes, a fellow poet and artist.

Nelson-Born will be a featured speaker at the Fairhope Public Library Local Writers' Night on Oct. 15. More information is available at <https://fairhopelibrary.org/index.php/cal-event/local-writers-night-giddens-2020-10-15/>

A Stone's Throw

Stuffed purple elephant in her left arm, my daughter
 kneels, chalks twilight with her right hand on the back
 window of a dollhouse nestled in the corner of our library.
 Our cat sits in the window, tail twitching,
 glaring at a lizard on the other side of the glass.
 Across the bay, a storm walks the waves.
 It is difficult to paint rain while the twilight sound of crickets
 creeps into the room and frogs croak and the setting sun glints
 strong as noon on a distant sandbar. There are stones in the sea
 no one has ever seen. Outside in the waning light, acorns cup
 the worn earth at the edge of orange-kissed waters.
 A spider's slick embroidery shudders in the lone dwarf pine
 among the oaks. I watch the trembling web go suddenly
 still. I collect these moments, delicate,
 like a carton of eggs on the edge of a countertop.
 I am a shadow falling briefly across my daughter's face.
 The bloodspot of a single egg is a map back to the mother.

Katherine Nelson-Born



Katherine Nelson-Born photo by Belinda Todd
 of Belinda Todd Photography, Pensacola

POETS LAUREATE OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA

- 1986 - *Adelia Rosasco-Soule, world traveler*
- 1989 - *Leonard A. Temme, (1989), Ph.D., research physiologist with Naval Aerospace Medical Research Lab*
- 1992 - *Mary Hood, Ph.D., UWF professor of microbiology*
- 1995 - *Laurie O'Brien, UWF director creative writing program, associate professor*
- 2003 - *Henry Langhorne II, M.D, Pensacola cardiologist*
- 2009 - *Juliet Zachary DeMarko, M.A, restaurateur and chef*
- 2014 - *Jamey Jones, MFA, English instructor at PSC*
- 2020 - *Katherine Nelson-Born, Ph.D., poet, author, editor*

MEMBER NEWS

Mandy Fernandez is one of the winners of the Nickie's Prize for Humor Writing Contest through Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop of the University of Dayton. She considers this to be a real honor and says, "I'm just thrilled over the moon." She will receive a cash prize and a complimentary registration to the Oct. 29-31 virtual Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop. Her winning essay, "Code Word: Hoobasflagen" is expected to be included in a new book.

https://udayton.edu/blogs/erma/2020/09/nickies_prize_winners.php

**WELCOME NEW (RETURNING)
MEMBER
SUSAN LEWIS**

SURVEY SPARKS NEW INITIATIVES, PROJECTS FOR 2021

Lisa Rawson, President WFLF

As President of the WFLF Board, I want to thank all of those who took the time to take our survey. The board will be using this data to help guide future budget decisions and to plan future events. The board has read and tabulated all of the input from the survey questions and this is what we learned about our organization. The survey results were collected from May 4 through July 31, 2020.

Some quick numbers:

- Survey takers who are members: 84%.
- Average years as members: 5.4 years
- Number 1 reason for WFLF membership: "Active writer looking to network and to improve my craft or learn about publishing my work"
- Survey takers who are published authors: 52%
 - 15% used major Publisher/publication;
 - 70% used small press/journal publication;
 - 40% were self-published.

Survey takers are actively writing or planning to write in the following areas

- 52% Poetry
- 40% Novel
- 36% Short fiction
- 32% Memoir
- 32% Book reviews
- 24% Flash fiction
- 16% Non-fiction
- 16% Commercial
- 8% Scripts
- 4% Novella
- 4% Other

The top ten WFLF Programs/activities that survey takers said they support are (ranked on a scale of 1-5):

1. Member educational programs (workshops on craft/publishing, writing conferences, web design) (4.08)
2. Promotion of the literary arts to the community (4.04)
3. Writing contests for students/members/general public to encourage and reward quality writing (4.04)

4. Monthly meetings with member or guest speakers (4.00)
5. Opportunity to publish in WFLF publications (4.00)
6. Critique groups (3.96)
7. Collaboration with arts organization to sponsor literary events (3.88)
8. Marketing / promotional support (Palafox Market, workshops, book fairs) (3.67)
9. Public forums for writers to read their work (Open Mic) (3.60)
10. Social/Networking opportunities (3.56)

Below is an abbreviated list of comments/recommendations summarized from the essay questions about; why people joined WFLF, what they hope to get out of WFLF, how WFLF can help achieve their goals and other insights they shared:

Enjoy social networking aspects

Need to recruit new and younger members

We grow the membership when we make aspiring writers feel comfortable and valuable

Love getting The Legend

Keep up the zoom readings/meetings

COVID -19 submissions encouraged new member to join

Grant submissions

Follow-up with authors who sold books at book festival last year to see if they joined

Coordinate with greater community

More visibility needed with Poet Laureate

Want inspiration from WFLF

Workshop with state regional and national levels

Offer writing program for middle school students

Smaller breakout groups are easier to share ideas for improvement

Writer support groups are crucial

Prefer morning programs/events/workshops

Educate members about collaboration opportunities

Provide instructions on how to best present your work before an audience

Bring ad hoc groups together to help break down old paradigms and involve poet laureate

Need unifier to mend fractures and poet laureate position should assist in this

WFLF get more involved with local public and private middle and high schools

Virtual book launches via zoom for members

Board to think and plan for the future of the organization

Using the analysis of the survey results, the Board met several times to devise a list of initiatives/projects to be launched in 2021.

They include the following:

1. A quarterly blog entry on the WFLF website about the "Writing Life."
2. A quarterly "Meet the Agent/Editor meeting (via Zoom or face-to-face per health guidelines) where members can ask questions of a literary agent or an editor from a publisher.
3. A quarterly networking social/mixer for members to meet to exchange ideas and get to know each other.
4. Addition of a list of writing resources to be posted on the WFLF website.
5. Addition of recently published writing craft books to the WFLF library located in the WFLF office. Books will be available for checkout by members.
6. Production of monthly workshops on writing and publishing. These will be live online webinars and/or recorded sessions. In-person workshops will be held per health guidelines.
7. Launch of a monthly Flash Fiction (500 words or less) writing contest with prizes for the best entries.
8. Development of a brochure on the mission, goals, and programs offered by WFLF.
9. Establishment of a standing committee to solicit grants.
10. Quarterly virtual Book Launches for members' newly published books.
11. Establish corporate sponsorships of WFLF.
12. Establish a NaNoWriMo interest group within WFLF.
13. Establish a "Welcoming" committee to help mentor new members.
14. Addition of a new column in the *Legend* to highlight/introduce new members.

Each of these initiatives will require new volunteer members to step up. They cannot be accomplished by just the WFLF Board. If any of these projects sound like something you are interested in helping with, let us know by sending an email to Lisa Rawson (mandydakota2015@gmail.com) or to WestFloridaLiteraryFederation@gmail.com.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

West Florida Literary Federation and the new Poet Laureate of Northwest Florida invite YOU to participate in the NOVEMBER 2020 POEM-A-DAY CHAPBOOK CHALLENGE!

Winning chapbook gets publication, with five free author copies and \$100 prize!

NOVEMBER 1-30, 2020, WFLF will post each morning on its Facebook page a daily poetry prompt.

ANYONE ANYWHERE can participate in the NOV PAD, no registration required, but original work only please!

NOV PAD participants submit a Microsoft Word manuscript of 20-30 pages by or before DECEMBER 15, 2020, ONLINE to WFLF with \$15 reading fee and this subject line: 2020 WFLF NOV PAD Chapbook Challenge (stay tuned for more details).

Winner announced January 2021 at WFLF's 3rd Tuesday Open Mic celebrating 100 days of the new Poet Laureate of Northwest Florida and YOUR new chapbook!

Chapbook Final Judge is newly appointed Northwest Poet Laureate Katherine Nelson-Born.

Contest is limited to first 50 submissions.

WFLF 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

TUESDAY WRITING FOR PUBLICATION 10:30 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. ronaldtew@yahoo.com

WEDNESDAY PORTFOLIO & EXCHANGE SOCIETY Critique Group meets every Wednesday, 9:30-11:30 a.m., on ZOOM. 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. The participants are notorious for exchanging writing tips, websites, and general trivia. For more information, contact dianeskelton@att.net

Please contact the appropriate facilitator mentioned above regarding meetings during this time.

CREATIVE WRITING



Fallen Trees after Hurricane Sally
by Mandy Fernandez

Thinking of Our Trees

I look at you beauties
No longer standing tall
Frail, fragile and some fallen
Stripped of your covering
Your beautiful leaves gone
Your arms ripped from your sides
Once a home for squirrels and birds
Now scattering along the few remains
You fell down before Fall arrived
In ways neither of us wanted.

Oh Sally, hurricane Sally, how could you
Take out and rob us of so many trees?
Cypress, Juniper, Magnolia and Holly
Cedar, Laurel, Olive and Maple,
Palm, Oaks, Pines and Pecans
Even those that remained after Ivan
Those surviving the storms before then
With roots planted firmly in the ground
Roots with a long history and mystery
That we may never know about now.

I cry seeing them broken or uprooted
Do they cry or bleed like you and me?
It's just a tree, some will think or say
Yet it's part of our home and community
I look to them as guide posts and light
Now taken from us without a proper goodbye
But we will rebuild and we will replant
Not quite the same, but their memories live on
And for those left, I will whisper to them
"You just have a bad haircut that will grow out."

Mandy Fernandez

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

Literary Things To Do

at Page & Palette Bookstore
Fairhope, Alabama

[https://www.facebook.com/PageAndPalette/
events/?notif_id=1599113886514861¬if
_t=event_calendar_create&ref=notif](https://www.facebook.com/PageAndPalette/events/?notif_id=1599113886514861¬if_t=event_calendar_create&ref=notif)

Saturday, November 7, 2 p.m., Mike Bunn
Fourteenth Colony

*Please check the above link for more
information on events at Page & Palette.
Guest numbers are limited.*

More Literary Things To Do

*Please check with the venues below for
updates on their activities.*

First Wednesday of each month – Say the
Word open mic in Niceville. Check out their
meetings on Facebook. **First and third
Saturdays** – In Our Write Minds is a
writers' group that meets 1st & 3rd
Saturdays of every month in Navarre. We
are published and unpublished authors who
explore topics of interest to writers.
Critiques of works submitted are shared in
an atmosphere that encourages and supports.
We believe that writers of all levels and
publishing experience can increase their
skills, "with a little help from their friends."
For more information, contact Claire
Massey at cmd3929@gmail.com **Each
Tuesday from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Pensacola
Poetry** Constant Coffee & Tea, 615
Scenic Highway.

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President: Lisa Rawson
Vice President: Bob Holmes
Secretary: Elizabeth Holmes
Treasurer: Tom Roberts

Director: Claire Massey
Director: Ed Stanford
Interim Director: Jeannie Zokan
Directors can be contacted at
WestFloridaLiteraryFederation@gmail.com
Legend editor: Andrea Walker

Check out our website at www.wflf.org and
“Like” us on Facebook, (under) West Florida Literary
Federation.
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/WestFlorida-Literary-FederationWFLF/255101747857712?ref=hl>

West Florida Literary Federation ~ Join or Renew ~ 2020

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

I would like to sponsor
(NAME)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

New _____ Renewal _____ Date _____

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



**West Florida Literary Federation, Inc.
Pensacola Cultural Center
400 South Jefferson Street Suite 212
Pensacola, FL 32502**