



## Updates from the President

The Annual Convention of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS) was held on June 29-July 2 at Fort Worth Texas. NM attendees/delegates were **Bernadette Perez**, **Hakim Bellamy**, **Shirley Blackwell**, and--last but not least--**Scott Wiggerman**, who kicked off on Friday morning with the convention's first program, a workshop called "Words at the Speed of Sounds: Poetic Effects through Sounds." We learned how various "levels" of English vowel sounds can add emotional resonance and meaning to one's poems and how consonant sounds can affect tone. Scott concluded with a brief writing exercise in which participants "riffed" off a Denise Levertov poem. Educational, inspiring, and wonderfully put together, Scott!

The Ft. Worth convention was also the site for the inaugural running of the BlackBerryPeach Prizes for Poetry: Spoken and Heard (BBP3). This is the first major NFSPS book competition to come on the scene since the mid-1990s, and its objective is to unite stage- and page- poets so that they can learn from each other. The written words of the top six finalists are in a beautiful chapbook titled *Blackberry Peach Poetry Awards 2017*, available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com); a link to the audio submissions, available on SoundCloud, is printed in the book.

**Hakim Bellamy**, Albuquerque's first poet laureate, was the BBP3 judge. The variety of voices and genres was about as diverse as it could be, with first prize going to **Kari Gunter Seymour** of Ohio, whose touching but unsentimental portrayal of an Appalachian woman with sons at war in Afghanistan and Iraq brought more than one listener to tears. Our own **Zachary Kluckman** of Albuquerque won 1st Honorable Mention.

Congratulations to other New Mexico Winners in the 2017 NFSPS Annual Contests, announced in Ft. Worth:

Contest #6 (200 entries)

2nd Prize to **Sylvia Ramos Cruz** of Albuquerque for "Memorial Day 2016"

4th Honorable Mention to **Scott Wiggerman** of Albuquerque

Contest #12 (158 entries)

1st Honorable Mention to **Janet Ruth** of Corrales

Contest #13 **Land of Enchantment Award** (142 entries)

1st Honorable Mention to **Sylvia Ramos Cruz** of Albuquerque

Contest #16 (139 entries)

2nd Prize to **Leah Miller** of Albuquerque for "Evaluation"

Contest #35 (154 entries)

6th Honorable Mention to **Caryl McHarney** of Albuquerque

In addition to recognition for individuals, our Society as a whole received an award from NFSPS for participation in National Poetry Month. New Mexico delegates had an amazing time in Fort Worth. Great connections were made, memories created, and laughs shared. You can read all about the convention and get a complete list of contest winners in the August issue of *Strophes*, our national newsletter, at [http://nfsp.com/Strophes2017\\_Aug.pdf](http://nfsp.com/Strophes2017_Aug.pdf) And be on the lookout for October's *Strophes* as well.

NMSPS observed National Poetry Month (April) with numerous activities that included Poet-in-the-Classroom Day, on Friday, April 7th, at our newest location: Cochiti Elementary School in Albuquerque. Now there are three elementary schools involved. If you are interested in joining as a volunteer poet for the day, please reach out to our new Poetry in the Classroom Project Leader, **Bonnie Rucobo**. Her email is [NMSPSchildpoetryproject@nmpoetry.com](mailto:NMSPSchildpoetryproject@nmpoetry.com). She'll be glad to send you information for the orientation and relevant teaching materials once you volunteer. It's an hour commitment and one of many ways you can be involved in your society.

Our NMSPS Annual Meeting and State Convention was held on April 29<sup>th</sup> in Albuquerque. A huge thank you to **Jules Nyquist**, convention committee chair. Thanks also to committee members **Gayle Lauradunn**, **Megan Baldrige**, **Nate Maxson** and **Mikki Aronoff** who helped organize catering. The full day of activities started with a "Welcome Poem" from Albuquerque Poet Laureate **Manuel Gonzales** and was followed by workshops, a publishers' panel, awards, entertainment by **Bruce Noll** as Walt Whitman, and a catered luncheon. Who would have thought it would snow at the end of April! We had some last-minute substitutions for our publishers panel and those coming from Taos and Santa Fe and it worked out just fine.

The convention also featured a special tribute to Alice Briley, who founded our Society on March 19, 1969, in Albuquerque. Briley was a key player at both the state and national levels.

Her son, **Dick Stewart**, was with us to say a few words about his mother and her legacy. We also heard from Alice's great granddaughter, **Mattie** during the Open Mic. To learn more about Briley, check out our website, [www.nmpoetry.com](http://www.nmpoetry.com).

Also at the Convention, we elected the following new officers to the 2017-18 Board:

- › **Bernadette Perez**, President (Rio Grande Valencia Chapter)
- › **Iris Gersh** Vice President (Albuquerque Chapter)
- › **Dino de Leyba**, Secretary (Albuquerque Chapter)
- › **Terri Klein** Treasurer (Albuquerque Chapter)

Our membership count is currently at 135, in these NMSPS chapters:

- › Albuquerque
- › At-Large Poets (no designated chapter)
- › 4 Corners Poets (Farmington)
- › High Prairie Poets (Roswell)
- › Rio Grande Valencia Poets (Belen/Los Lunas area)
- › River Poets (Silver City)
- › Santa Fe Poetry Trails
- › Mountain Voices (Angel Fire area) Coming Soon
- › Southwest Speaks (ABQ area, slam and spoken word emphasis)
- › Enchanted Mesa (Tucumcari)

Coming Soon . . .

**October Membership Sweepstakes.** Let's sign up 200 members during this drive. Once again, we will have a drawing for two Visa gift cards, for our new members. Deadline is October 31st, but signups received in September will also be eligible. Dues cover your membership **from November 1, 2017 to October 31, 2018**, and must be paid before you can get the members' discounted entry fee for the NFSPS 50 Annual Contests, which opens for submissions in January.

Join or renew online, if you can. Go to our website, [www.nmpoetry.org](http://www.nmpoetry.org) and click on the "Membership" tab. Be sure to specify your chapter affiliation and your educational institution (if you are joining as a student). You can pay online with your PayPal account, debit, or credit card. Or you can download the form and mail it with a check to:

NMSPS Sweepstakes  
P.O. Box 21825  
Albuquerque, NM 87154

Annual dues enroll you as a member of both the NFSPS and the NMSPS. Primarily, they support our state activities, including the website, online calendar, and newsletter; operating expenses; outreach projects; poetry prizes and book awards; annual state convention; and the Children's Poetry Project.

**Before our next board meeting in January, we would love** to hear your ideas and/or concerns. Just contact any Board member (this includes your chapter chairs).

To volunteer your talents or time to NMSPS, contact [vicepresident@nmpoetry.com](mailto:vicepresident@nmpoetry.com)

P.S. Browse through our photos on our [Facebook page](#) (NMSPS) and feel free to tag yourself.

## The Poetic Craft Corner

### Alliteration

The repetition of the same initial letter, sound, or group of sounds in a series of words, as in the Hopkins' line “[king-]dom of daylight’s dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon...”

*The Windhover*, by [Gerard Manley Hopkins](#)

*I caught this morning morning’s minion, king-  
dom of daylight’s dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn  
Falcon, in his riding  
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding  
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing  
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,  
As a skate’s heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding  
Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding  
Stirred for a bird, — the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!  
Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here  
Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion  
Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!  
No wonder of it: shéer plód makes plough down sillion  
Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,  
Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.*

**Challenge:** Write a poem about a moment when you felt uplifted and transformed by watching an animal in nature. For an extra challenge, experiment with some of the poetic devices that Hopkins uses so beautifully in *The Windhover*.

Our poetry community is strong. Together, we have the ability to create change, develop passion, and embrace the art.  
There are many exciting events happening in New Mexico with Poetry, invite a friend and attend one near you.

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