

The Oklahoma Rose

Volume VII Issue IV

PSO ~ ESTABLISHED IN 1934

September 2022

Patti Koch: “The Candle Still Burns”

As I bid you adieu as your President of the Poetry Society of Oklahoma, I want to say “Thank You” to one and all. It has been quite a journey these last seven (almost) years, a wonderful and fulfilling journey and an honor to have been your President. I am very humbled and appreciative of all the wonderful and positive responses I have received from many members as I step down.

Each President has always published a newsletter for PSO. With input from several members I named the one I was to publish the Oklahoma Rose after Oklahoma’s State Flower. Our first issue was published January 2016 with a history of the Oklahoma Rose and also a history of PSO, our mission statement and what the Poetry Society of Oklahoma was all about.



During my seven years we have added new members but sadly, we have also lost some very special and active members. It was eighty-eight years ago **The Poetry Society of Oklahoma** had its beginning and, here we are, so many years later still writing and promoting poetry. I am so very proud to be a part of that.

These past few years have been like no other we have ever seen or lived through. We have dealt with changes in our world, country and personal lives that have been very challenging, to say the least. As with all things, “This too shall pass,” and “The best is yet to come!” I believe that and this is not good-bye. God Bless each and every one of you and “THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!”



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For PSO Patti ~ An Appreciation

Patti Koch’s candle has burned at both ends throughout her presidency. As “The Face of PSO” for many years, she has been consistently competent, cheerful, positive, and encouraging. The past three years have been trying ones, however—first with the Pandemic shut-down and, more recently, health issues, including a fall which seriously injured her back.

Patti has been forced to resign as president, temporarily snuffing one end of the candle. Her legacy, however, is great—almost as large as her personality! Barbara Shepherd captured Patti beautifully when she wrote—

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1: PSO Patti

The Blonde

*Coifed hair, flawless peach skin,
her smiles melt stone.
She works for PSO without a pause.
With dedication to poets, she strives
To bring Oklahoma to the forefront
of literary success and acclaim.
Mini but mighty – don't stand in her way!*

We know and love that about Patti, but some of us know little about her background. What roads did she follow to reach Oklahoma and PSO?

Patti spent the first years of her life in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Later, she moved to Reykjavik, Iceland to work for the American Embassy. Her travels in Europe enabled her to meet many wonderful people and see lovely places.

Patti cannot remember when she wasn't writing. After graduating from college she became more serious about poetry and had several poems published.

Her arrival in Oklahoma in the late sixties felt, she said, "Like coming home!" She enjoys writing about Oklahoma, life experiences, and her family, who is supportive of her writings. Whether it is a funny little poem, a birthday poem, poems of encouragement – they say, "Go for it!"

Writing is one of the ways Patti expresses her thoughts and feelings. Believing that the Lord blessed her with whatever ability she has, she gives Him all the glory, hoping to continue to learn and grow in the world of poetry.

Some of our members have asked if Patti is leaving us. Of course not—PSO is in her blood . . . and her candle still burns!



Contact Information

PSO Website: <http://www.angelfire.com/poetry/psa>

<https://www.facebook.com/Poetry-Society-of-Oklahoma/psa>

SEND MEMBER NEWS to jsycroft@yahoo.com

From Your Very-New President

This is my first letter as PSO President. I must admit that I am slightly "whelmed"—not overwhelmed because I know you'll help me make a success of this leadership role.

We have been unable to get together for meetings for too long a time, so many of you don't know me. Here's a condensed introduction:



I am a retired dual-national, now living in Oklahoma City. I keep extremely busy with writing, volunteering for the blind, Tai Chi, occasional traveling, poetry groups, and visiting with friends. My days are brightened by my artist daughter and two dogs.

I grew up in Oklahoma City and Edmond; but much of my adult life was spent outside the United States, as a teacher and as a British diplomatic wife. I have now "come home." The unbroken thread in my long life has been my writings—essays, journals, poetry. They enable me to process life, preserve memories, explore my ideas and emotions.

I love the PSO contests because they offer forms which discipline my writing and topics which often take me into new directions.

As your new president, I cannot be a Patti Jr., but I will work hard to maintain her positivity and cheerful approach. Do contact me with any suggestions and/or ideas. I hope to see you at our meeting October 8th, 1:00, at the Belle Isle Library!

Member News

Get Well Wishes—

Barbara Shepherd is healing well from two surgeries in July

Sandra Soli continues to deal with serious health issues.

Delores Walker is recovering from knee replacement surgery.

Welcome to two new members—

Maria Polson Veres and Paul Buchheit

New U.S. Poet Laureate Chosen



Ada Limón was appointed our 24th U.S. Poet Laureate in July. She succeeds Oklahoman Joy Harjo.

Originally from California, Limón now lives with her husband in Kentucky. She has published six collections of poetry.

This fall, Limón will host *The Slowdown*. On this podcast she will deliver a poem and a moment of reflection daily, offering listeners a different way to see the world – through poetry.

*Poetry is elemental,
necessary, & deeply
human.*

~ Ada Limón ~

New episodes of *The Slowdown* are available every weekday starting September 21 on all major podcast platforms.

The Slowdown is produced by American Public Media in partnership with the Poetry Foundation.

PSO Officers 2022-2023

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President: Judith Rycroft
Vice-President: TBA
Treasurer: Karen Kay Bailey
Secretary: Keith Jones
Parliamentarian: Ed Roberts
Past Co-Presidents:
Joan & Eddie Wilcoxon

*Poetry is an echo asking a shadow to dance —
Carl Sandburg*

*I need about one hundred fifty drafts of a poem
to get it right, and fifty more to make it sound
spontaneous.* — James Dickey

Writer-Friendly Habits

Have you ever had a time when you wanted to write but just could not get started? Writer's block or a dearth of inspiration hits most of us from time to time.

Maria Polson Veres is a freelance writer, creative writing teacher, author of four books of poetry, AND a PSO member. In her monthly newsletter, she lists ways to keep writing momentum going. These are writer-friendly habits she has developed and found useful.

Keep a journal, an easy, low-pressure way to put words on the page.

Always keep a notebook handy, at home and away. Ideas, lines, words, sometimes entire poems, may come to you at any time. If you prefer to keep notes digitally, you can also jot them on your phone.

Do regular, deadlined work. Contest entries are a prime example. Even business and personal letters require a certain amount of creativity, and they keep your skills moving forward.

Belong to a critique group, to build accountability and production.

Work on a book. Whether the subject is poetry, plays, memoir, historical research, fiction, or a children's book, keeping a project going provides a long-term goal to work towards.

Take guilt-free breaks. Sometimes the best thing you can do for yourself as a writer is to step back from writing entirely and enjoy other parts of your life.

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You can sign up for Maria's newsletter at [maria@mariaveres.com](mailto:maria@mariaveres.com)

## PSO ~ The Year Ahead ~ 2022

October 8: **PSO Annual Meeting & National Poetry Day**,  
1:00 pm, Belle Isle Library, 5501 N. Villa Avenue, OKC

November 6: Daylight Savings Time ends—Lose one hour

November 24: HAPPY THANKSGIVING

December 15: Deadline for Annual Poetry Contest (winners  
to be celebrated at Spring Meeting, March 11, 2023)

December 18: HAPPY HANUKKAH

December 25: MERRY CHRISTMAS

December 26: KWANZA GREETINGS

December 31: PSO Annual Membership dues are payable  
before the end of the calendar year



# PSO Poets' Successes



## JULY CONTEST WINNERS

### Category #1: Claribel Nelson Memorial Award

1st Place: Judith Rycroft, *So Big*  
 2nd Place: Barbara Shepherd, *Incarcerated*  
 3rd Place: Sara Gipson, *Poetry Inspired by Birds*  
 HM1: Jerri Hardesty

### Category #2: Chase Memorial History Award

1st Place: Sara Gipson, *Homage to the Homestead*  
 2nd Place: Anna S. Keeseey, *Eden on the Prairie*  
 3rd Place: Dena R. Gorrell, *High Stakes - The Run of 1889*  
 HM1: Judith Rycroft  
 HM2: Dr. Emory D. Jones  
 HM3: Beverly Stanislawski

### Category #3: The Nonet Award

1st Place: Sara Gipson, *Hugging Dawn*  
 2nd Place: Beverly Stanislawski, *Out for Lunch*  
 3rd Place: Anna S. Keeseey, *I Do*  
 HM1: Patti Koch  
 HM2: Dr. Emory D. Jones  
 HM3: Judith Rycroft

## Monthly Poetry Readings

With featured reader and open mic\*



2nd Sunday, 2:00 pm:

**Tidewater Winery Poetry**, 54560 Hwy 16, Drumright. Contact: Sharon Martin on FB.

3rd Thursday, 7:00 pm:

**The Lunch Box Poetry Reading**, 217 E. Main St., Shawnee. Contact: naspurline@aol.com

3rd Saturday, 6:30 pm:

**Coffee House Poetry**, 816 W. Gore Blvd, Lawton. Contact: jgmmorris8116@sbcglobal.net

3rd Saturday, 7:00 pm:

**JC's Funky Hair Ranch Poetry**, 22 E 3rd St, Edmond. Contact: 405 340-4140.

3rd Sunday, 2:00 pm:

**Poetry on Lost Street**, 109 W Lost Street Durant. Contact: Ron Wallace on FB.

Last Sunday, 2:00 pm:

**Full Circle Poetry Reading**, 50 Penn Place, 1900 NW Expressway

\* "open mic" = "open mike" – a term which is now, evidently, passé.

## NFSPS 2022 ANNUAL CONTEST

Among 6,045 entries, **LaVern Spencer McCarthy** won 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place awards and **Karen Kay Bailey** won two 3<sup>rd</sup> place awards.

Honorable Mentions were awarded to **John W. Coppock (2)**, **Dena R. Gorrell (2)**, **Trina Lee**, **Catharine L'Herisson**, and **LaVerne Spencer McCarthy (2)**,

***Way to go at Nationals, PSO Poets!***

## Recent Publications

**Karen Kay Bailey's** recent publication, *Witnesses Along the Washita*, has been reviewed and catalogued in the Oklahoma Historical Society's Research Center in Oklahoma City, as well as each of the eight Libraries in the Western Plains Library System, including locations in Washita, Custer, Dewey and Roger Mills Counties.

The poems were written in the Persona Form which allowed the author to embody and speak for the distinctive cast of voiceless characters.... to imagine what transpired on that momentous day if not a Cheyenne or soldier. They reflect on The Battle of the Washita between the Southern Cheyenne Tribe and the United States Army in 1868.

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Trina Lee's first book of poems, *And...Then...* is a collection about love, loss and coping.

Audrey Streetman's *River of Light* features poems rooted in the touchstones of faith, memory, and spiritual quest.

Maria Polson Veres' 4th book of poetry, entitled *The Breaking Place*, reflects her journey of seeking, questioning, and healing during the difficult times of the Covid-19 pandemic."