

WYOMING WRITER'S JUNE CONFERENCE -2011



Poetry-track Presenter - Chris Fischbach



Conference Chair - Cindy Bower



Linda Ruhle & Lee Ann Siebken



Abbie T; Rose H; Donna H; Aaron H



Tom Spence Mike Shay



Donna Fryer Pat Jones Jane Medved



Nancy Gerlock



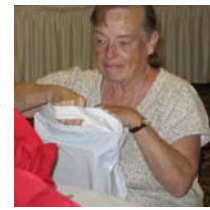
Susan V. Mark



John Nesbitt



Gaydell Collier & Robert Roripaugh



Beverly Wheeler



Patricia Buck



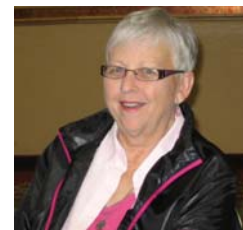
Nancy & Gigi Ruskowsky



Joan Feagins



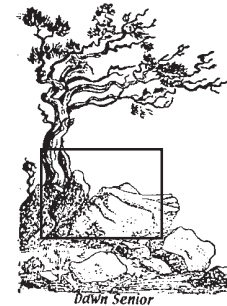
Aaron Holst



Jane Medved

*The crown of literature is poetry. It is its end and aim. It is the sublimest activity of the human mind. It is the acheivement of beauty and delicacy. The writer of prose can only step aside when the poet passes.
.....W. Somerset Maugham.....*

SERENDIPITY POETS OF CHEYENNE
MEETING - JUNE 7TH 2011



WYOPOETS' NEWSLETTER

MID-SUMMER 2011

WYOPOETS WORKSHOP, APRIL 2011 - "WRITING IN THE CRACKS"
LEE ANN RORIPAUGH



Open Mic Night



Open Mic Night



Linda Coatney - Workshop Co-ordinator



Mr & Mrs Robert Roripaugh



The lovely Lee Ann Roripaugh



Aaron Holst receives his Excellence Award from President Abbie Taylor



Jane Medved



Gene Shea



Lou Lenhart



Nancy Curtis & Lee Ann Siebken



Linda Ruhle

POETRY PROMPTS

Our guest contributor for this issue is WyoPoet, Linda Ruhle. Linda is the new chairperson for our **WyoPoets' National Contest** (see page 10)

Linda writes poetry, fiction and non-fiction. She raised her sons in Los Angeles and moved to Wyoming in 1996. Besides writing, she loves nature (rocks, bones and feathers), horses and Native American culture. She has completed three books, numerous short stories and essays, and hundreds of poems. Her published credits and awards include poetry, short stories and essays.

DEADLINE

by
Linda Ruhle

A future dot upon life's calendar. A designated agreed-upon moment in time. A second that looms in the distance like a black hole you are inescapably drawn toward, a magnet that pulls every second toward itself and evaporates moments into the past. Dead line. Cross that time-line and you are dead.

The pressure brought by its nearness is about as welcome as a dead rat hanging around one's neck. While I have done some of my best work when there was no time to ponder, only to act, the intensity of that pressure is not a state of mind I strive to cultivate. It is the pressure of the ax falling upon your neck and more than once I have regrettably seen my head rolling across the floor. It is not an experience one longs to repeat.

Deadline. Race the clock before it beats you to the finish line, the dead line, the bye-bye byline. Some need that pressure to move them to action, but the narrow confines of being choked by dwindling moments is not for me. Chicken is not my game of choice. It is challenge enough to simply find my way out of the endless maze of the rewrite. To focus on seconds ticking away or the blankness of the page drags me toward that dreaded line. I tense up and begin to feel that blade at the base of my neck.

Attitude colors every perception. I can doom myself by watching moments tick toward time's guillotine, or meander through the open potential of eternity's vast passage through time. Better to start the work early when pressure is at its lowest ebb and moments stretch wide as a timeless desert beckoning with ageless wonder, still a myriad of potential and opportunity to explore, select, and rework the work at hand, with all visions of rolling heads no more than vague memories of an ancient dim past.

Yes. That's it. Relax. Breathe. Choose the open meadow. There's time enough to live. Forget the deadline. Give myself a lifeline.



Deadlines! I would like to remind all WyoPoets members that our National Contest deadline of November 30th is fast approaching. Yes, it is fast approaching! If anyone else's summer schedule is anything like mine, their days are full! Then autumn arrives with all the closure of summer and fall preparation for winter. And do you know what? Before you know it, November 30th is here! So be thinking NOW about what you will submit for our contest. Make a list of possible poems you might like to enter. Revise old poems. I recently read Gide said, "I rewrite in order to be reread." I imagine most of us are periodically writing new poems. Try them out (when ready) in our National contest. You can start sending me contest entries as of August 1st. That's just around the corner!

As of 2010's membership list, we have 73 members of WyoPoets. In 2009, out of 104 poets who entered our National contest, 16 were WyoPoets. That's about 15% of our membership. In 2010, out of 89 poets who entered our National contest, 19 were WyoPoets, about 18% of our membership. In 2011, 25 poets entered our Members Only contest, about 33% of our membership.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

From Myra Peak: I was a judge for the Jackson Hole Writers Conference Poetry Contest. Won't know who the winners are until end of June.

From Cork Kelly: On Saturday, June 25, I conducted a poetry workshop for members of the Sublette County Artists' Guild. There were eleven participants and I had some very nice positive feed-back. I would like to believe that there are now eleven new active poets in Pinedale.

For the last five years, I have been publishing poems in our senior center news letter www.rendezvouspointe.com. During those sixty months, I have missed four months of publication for one reason or another. I usually submit poems from my files, many of which have been previously published or have won prizes in contests, but I do not hesitate to submit something recently written like *Getting Out of Bed* for the month of August. This poem has been revised after critiques from the round-robin group I belong to composed of poets from New Hampshire, Arizona, Colorado, and Nebraska. Revision, revision, revision! It's not always easy to get out of bed in the morning, but we do it with fortitude and perseverance.

(See Cork's poem on P. 6.)

From Nancy Curtis: I went to a great program at the Converse County Library on Doris Shannon Garst, the early Douglas writer of books for young readers. Lee Ann Siebken and Patsy Parkin put it on. Patsy has reissued the Garst book about the life of John Kendrick who became a Wyoming governor.

From Henry Goldman: I had two chapbooks of 20 poems each published by In His Steps Publishing. I titled them *Treasured Moments* and *Scattering The Seed*. Wish my wife Ann of 62 years marriage could have been here to share them with me. She passed away January 21 of this year. In my book *Treasured Moments*, I included the poem, which just won an award in the Poet's Pen, an anthology published by The Society of American Poets.

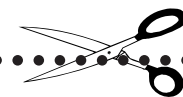
From Pat Buck: Lately, I've read some of the 19th century and early 20th century poets from a collection of my mother's. I always enjoy the American Life in Poetry with the foreword by Ted Kooser that you email.

From Patricia Corrigan: My chapbook called *Peripheral Damage* is now posted on the Finishing Line Press website for prepublication sales. I have a poem in a publication called *Kaleidoscope*, published by United Disability Services through the University of Akron Press. The poem is called **Willow** and the issue is devoted to the theme of animals that make a difference.

From Art Elser: I guess it all comes out even in life. While I was in the hospital with my heart attack, I discovered that my poem "Death on a city sidewalk" would be published in *High Plains Register* and that *Emerging Voices* would publish three poems, "The edges of humanity," "After the Martin Luther King parade," and "Requiem for a young gay man." The TallGrass Writers Guild published my poem "Harrier Hawks" in their anthology *A Bird in the Hand: Risk and Flight*. "Two weeks after the Vernal Equinox" was awarded 3rd place in the Prouty Memorial Award and "Washington D. C., May 1995" was awarded a 7th honorable mention in the Nebraska State Poetry Society Award. And finally, I'm recovering nicely from that heart attack, thanks to all the prayers, thoughts, and good wishes of many WyoPoets. Thank you all.

From Chris Valentine: A few rejections, but *Emerging Voices* published my poem "Snowblower" (no it's not about cocaine :) It was originally written for Art before he had a heart attack and was shovelling snow!

To join WYOPoets or to renew your membership you may use the form below:



Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone # _____ E-Mail: Permission to use for WyoPoets? YES ___ NO ___

Please check one: Adult membership: \$20.00 per year _____ **Student membership 7.50 per year _____

(Year = July 1st to June 30th) Send to: Art Elser, WyoPoets' Treasurer, 1730 Locust Street, Denver, CO.80220

Is this a gift for someone? _____ Anonymous gift? ___ I wish to donate \$ _____ to the WyoPoets' Scholarship fund

** individuals through age 18, and college students enrolled in a degree or certification program through an accredited educational institution.

WYOPOETS' 2011 ANNUAL NATIONAL CONTEST

WyoPoets is sponsoring its annual nationwide poetry contest.

WHO

Contest is open to all poets worldwide; however, submissions must be in the English language and fees in U.S. funds. Prizes will be awarded in U.S. currency.

WHAT

Poems, published or unpublished. Any subject, any form, 40 lines or less (including title and line breaks), that has NOT won a prize larger than \$50.00 in any one contest, or a money prize in a previous WyoPoets Annual contest, is eligible. All poems must be original work of entrant. No pornography, racial or sexual slurs, or language considered obscene by average broad-minded reader.

DEADLINE Deadline - postmarked by November 30, 2011. Send poems anytime after August 1.

PRIZES First - \$100.00; Second - \$50.00; Third - \$30.00; Fourth - \$20.00.
Five or more ranked Honorable Mentions will also be awarded.

FEES \$2.00 entry fee, plus \$1.00 per poem. No maximum number of entries.
(Examples: 3 poems for \$5.00; 5 poems for \$7.00).

REQUIREMENTS Poems, except for Oriental forms, must be titled. Poems must be typed or computer generated, in English, on 8-1/2 by 11" white paper, or similar computer paper. At least 10 point, preferably 12 point or larger font. No more than one poem on a page. Single or double spaced. One side of the paper only. Photocopies okay if clear and legible. Submit two copies of each poem, one copy for the judge with no identification on it. On the other copy, show your name, mailing address, and phone number in the upper right hand corner of the front side. No limit on number of entries. No electronic submissions. No one poet can win more than one monetary prize, but can win additional Honorable Mentions. Include SASE (self-addressed STAMPED envelope) for winners list, to be mailed by mid-February.

SUBMITTING Send both copies of poems submitted, together with entry fee, to:

Linda Ruhle, Contest Chair
692 W. River Rd.
Worland, WY 82401

Final judging will be by a qualified out-of-state judge not affiliated with WyoPoets. Decisions of the judge will be final. The Contest Chair will not enter this contest. Winners will be invited to read their winning poem at the WyoPoets spring workshop (date and place to be announced later).

RIGHTS Winning poems may be published in our spring newsletter only with the author's written permission. All rights remain with the author. Be sure to keep copies of your entries as poems will not be returned. All copies of the poems will be destroyed after the spring workshop.

WyoPoets encourage all poets, in-state or nationwide, to join our organization. WyoPoets is a member of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS). Membership in WyoPoets automatically gives an individual membership in NFSPS, plus eligibility to enter their national contests, and a subscription to their newsletter, STROPHES, which lists most of the contests of member state organizations that are open to the public. Membership dues in WyoPoets are \$20.00 per year. Fiscal year is July 1 through June 30. If interested, send check, payable to WyoPoets, for \$20.00, and mail to: Art Elser, WyoPoets' Treasurer, 1730 Locust Street, Denver, CO 80220.

Why is our national contest averaging less than 20% of our membership participation? 895 poems were entered in the last two years, 435 in 2009, and 460 in 2010. Last year a WyoPoet won 1st place (congratulations to Lauren Donley!) I hope to raise our membership participation in our National Contest! Why not a whopping 100%?

Believe in yourself and your work. Write. Revise. Submit. Be proud of your membership in WyoPoets, and ask yourself, how can I participate more fully as a member of WyoPoets? What do I want to enter in our national contest? This is one of the few ways WyoPoets earns funds, so please, send in your poems. I will happily send anyone the contest rules via email, or for a SASE. Please, post the rules in your local libraries and bookstores. Hand them out to poet friends. Let's talk up our organization and bring in new members. We are poets! What an awesome title!



WYOPOETS' SPRING WORKSHOP
"WRITING IN THE CRACKS"....APRIL 23, 2011

by Aaron Holst

WyoPoets' annual workshop honored National Poetry Month and featured Lee Ann Roripaugh. Her workshop topic, "Writing in the Cracks", focused on examples of different genre and the hybridization that can occur when the poet remains flexible and open to possibility. Workshop attendees explored the elements of traditional genre and how arbitrarily imposed boundaries of genre sometimes limit the poet's potential for creativity. They also examined opportunities for expression and creativity by working with hybrid forms. Specific genre included memoir, creative non-fiction, dramatic monologue, and flash fiction. Hybrid forms included prose poem, narrative poem, haibun, six-word stories, and zuihitsu.

opened doors reveal
possibility new forms
filling in the cracks

I found the work interesting, stimulating; the hybrid forms were so different, especially haibun and zuihitsu. Experimenting with these under the direction of an experienced guide, writing and sharing in a supportive WyoPoets environment, opened, for me, many new ways of expression. Using haibun, now routine, it often fits my poetic content appropriately. What also turned me on: the ideas that the form frames a poem and deserves as much attention as choosing the frame for a picture; and, dropping the rigid boundaries of genre will often aid in "tricking" the unconscious to reveal something special in a poem's content. Well done, Lee Ann!

running with strange winds
old ways erode darkness turns
to light unknown known

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This is the second in a 2-part series of articles contributed to WyoPoets by Elissa Malcohn of the Florida State Poetry Society

THE MANY SHADES OF DARK POETRY

by Elissa Malcohn

In her article, "Defining Our Horrible Terms," Suzette Haden Elgin mentions an unforgettable, haunting image in Robert Frost's poem "The Runaway": "[T]he one that begins with Frost and a friend seeing a terrified little Morgan colt out in a field on a bitter winter night, left out alone and forgotten."

The article appeared in Marge Simon's column, "Blood & Spades: Poets of the Dark Side," a regular feature of the Horror Writers Association newsletter (Issue 73-74, August-September 2006; reprinted in *Star*Line* 29(6), Nov./Dec. 2006). Elgin's own horror poetry relies on real life, differing from horror poetry about vampires and werewolves.

Whether through the use of gothic themes as in Edgar Allen Poe's "The Raven," or everyday despair as in Audre Lorde's "To My Daughter The Junkie On A Train," the "dark" in dark poetry ranges across genres. In addition to writing "Blood and Spades," Marge Simon edits *Star*Line*, the journal of the Science Fiction Poetry Association. More information is available at <http://www.sfpoetry.com/>.

According to Jill Eisnagle, the Victorian Age of poetry included dark works stemming from the author's inner psyche and from religious doubt. Eisnagle includes Alfred, Lord Tennyson and Thomas Hardy in her 2004 article, "Poetry: An Overview" (<http://www.authorsden.com/ArticlesUpload/15389.doc>) as poets who "expressed melancholy moods and darkened tones in their works."

Dark poetry can refer to the poetry of war, such as the Civil War poems of Walt Whitman and the poetry of Iraq War soldier Brian Turner in his collection *Here, Bullet*. It can be poetry about death at sea, such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Wreck of the Hesperus." William Blake's "The Poison Tree" focuses squarely on the emotion of wrath. Robert Service's "The Cremation of Sam McGee" tells the tale of a doomed prospector. Lord Byron's "Darkness" treats the subject literally, painting a nightmarish world in the absence of light. Dark poetry can refer to the psychologically-charged works of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton. It can also refer to the poetry of 15-year-old high school student George T., who in 2004 was sentenced to 100 days in juvenile hall for his poem "Faces," in which he wrote, "For I can be the next kid to bring guns to kill students at school." (The California Supreme Court determined that he could not be prosecuted for "criminal threats" for his "Dark Poetry.")

Dark poems rely on negative emotions: fear, grief, anger, despair, hatred, horror. They address negative events, such as those accompanying loss, be it the loss of life or the loss of romance. They can even be funny, employing dark humor. The first example was written by my mother, Sylvia Alkoff, who penned couplets and quatrains after she was admitted to Marion Community Hospital sixteen days before her death.

Lab Technician

The biggest smile is on the face
Of the worst scourge of the human race.
Her job is cruel, leaning toward gory,
This girl from the laboratory.

She jabs you here and sticks you there,
She'll stab you almost anywhere,
And with a joyful laugh will say,
"We need some blood from you today."



Elissa Malcohn

WYOPOETS BUSINESS MEETING - JUNE 4, 2011 RAMADA RIVERSIDE PLAZA - CASPER, WYOMING

President Abbie Taylor called the meeting to order at 4:15. She welcomed those in attendance and introduced the following officers:

President: Abbie Taylor
Acting Treasurer: Patricia Frolander
Secretary: Pat Buck
Members-only contest: Aaron Hill & Chris Valentine
National Contest: Linda Ruhle
Website Coordinator: Susan Mark

Art Elser, treasurer, was unable to attend this meeting. Charlotte Babcock served as parliamentarian. Pat read the minutes from the April 23 meeting, which were approved as corrected. There was no treasurer's report at this meeting, but it will be sent to members via email. We were asked to send items for the website to Susan Marks. She has replaced Nancy Curtis in this position.

Old Business:

The April workshop seemed to be much enjoyed, though there were no formal evaluation sheets. It was noted the buffet was very good and that attendees were able to take home leftovers. In discussing whether or not one who had registered but was unable to be there should receive a refund, it was agreed one could be refunded the entire amount except for the cost of a critique, \$5 or \$10. We need to let Art Elser know about this. The workshop cost was \$1000.

There have been no problems with the newsletter according to Chris Valentine, editor. AMBI has put Chris personally in touch with the printer, which works well and prevents problems. Several copies of Strophes have been unavailable to mail with newsletter. Chris has written to NFSPS and detailed the problems. Several commented that the newsletter is fabulous.

Linda Ruhle discussed next year's national contest, saying that the rules and information are now available. She asked that members take these wherever poets might read them. The contest will be advertised in the newsletter, on websites and anywhere else members think worthwhile. Linda wants to increase submissions. She has recruited Lee Ann Roripaugh to judge and asked that we submit names of possible future judges.

Once again, it was noted we need to resolve the issues that the latest chapbook printing has encountered. It was stated these are being worked on.

In discussing doing a new chapbook, a steering committee of Linda Coatney (chair), Nancy Curtis (help with product), and Phyllis Dugan (art work) was formed.

It was moved by Phyllis and seconded by Linda Ruhle that we have a members-only contest. Motion carried. Lee Ann Siebkin will obtain a judge for that contest.

New Business:

The question of how we might deal with old chapbooks that have been stored for several years elicited several suggestions. Charlotte suggested Linda Coatney might give them to her Poetry Out Loud contestants. Another idea was to advertise in Strophes or send some to other poetry societies. Also, it was mentioned that Myra could bring the ones she has stored to Cheyenne for easier distribution.

We discussed next year's workshop and where it might be held. Linda Ruhle suggested that several members might lead a workshop. On Pat Frolander's recommendation, a workshop committee consisting of Linda Coatney, Diana Renz, and Tom Spence was appointed by Abbie. After discussion, it was moved by Charlotte Babcock and seconded by Rose Hill that we have next year's workshop in Casper. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Abbie declared the meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.
Respectfully submitted,
Pat Buck, secretary