

Next Issue Deadline:
May 1, 2021

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Welcome!

NEW MEMBERS

Tom Alesia, Madison
Joe Engel, Kenosha
Sara Lomasz Flesch, Mineral Point
Barb Geiger, Waukesha
Joylyn Gong, Madison
Callen Harty, Monona
Ron Houssaye, Two Rivers
Adrienne Jaeger, Hazelhurst
John Kenworthy, Kewaskum
Adel Korkor, Hartland
Mel Koronelos, Portola Valley CA
Marie Messenger, Evansville
Jacqueline Redmer, Viroqua
Jenna Rindo, Pickett
Madelyne Rose, Appleton
Christy Schwan, Cedarburg
Jesús Marcelo, Appleton
Terri Walters, Wauwatosa

President's Message

This is the first winter in many years that hasn't involved a trip down to Florida (where my husband is from) to visit family and stay on the beach. Needless to say, I'm feeling the urge to lament my situation, especially looking ahead at a week of highs below zero!

What keeps me positive (also busy) is WFOP. Unfortunately, once again we've had to cancel our upcoming spring conference, scheduled for the first weekend in May. Since it's been so long (my last "live" conference was in April 2019), I want to use this column to thank the hardworking volunteers who have kept WFOP growing and vibrant during the pandemic.

As poets, we all want opportunities for recognition and publication. WFOP's annual contests play a vital role in providing both of these, as well as a motivation to create new work. So thanks to contest chairs **Annette Gruneth** (chapbook), **Fred Kreutz** and **Jerome Jagielski** (Muse), **Joan** and **Jeffrey Johannes** (Triad), and **Jane Osypowski** and **Suzu Wedeward** (2022 *Calendar* editors).

Though the student contest is not for adult members, **Jeff Anderson** has done a super job his first year, processing a record number of submissions. WFOP's stellar literary journal, *Bramble*, continues to thrive under the guidance of **Christina Kubasta** and **Tori Grant Welhouse**. And the 2021 *Calendar* team managed to edit, publish, promote and facilitate delivery of an outstanding issue despite many challenges; thanks to **Gillian Nevers**, **Nancy Jesse**, **Keesia Hyzer**, **Steve Tomasko**, and all the folks who helped distribute copies.

The regional VPs plan and promote poetry events, and keep members around the state connected and motivated. Thanks to **James Roberts**, **Sandra Lindow**, **Tori Grant Welhouse**, **Ed Werstein**, **Kathleen Serley**, **Christina Kubasta**, **Cathryn Cofell**, and **Nancy Austin**.

The two newest (and youngest?) members of the leadership group are **Nathan Reid** (under 40 board member) and **Katherine Yets** (social media coordinator).

Volunteers working behind the scenes to make sure things run smoothly are **Naomi Cochran** (membership), **Michael Kriesel** (executive VP), **Dennis Collier** (secretary), **Colleen Frentzel** (treasurer), and yours truly (president). Many thanks also to **Jeanie Bergmann**, who edits the *Museletter*, keeps the membership roster updated, and sends out the weekly Events email.

The WFOP website with all its complexity is in the capable hands of **Tori Grant Welhouse**. Archivist **Lewis Bosworth** collects and safeguards WFOP records and memorabilia.

Every three years WFOP holds elections for officers in October. After serving for six years, I am hoping to "retire." Thus, I am seeking individuals with an interest in taking on the position of president. We are also looking for an executive vice-president. **Dennis Collier** (secretary) and **Colleen Frentzel** (treasurer) have graciously agreed to continue, though their names will appear on the ballot as a formality. Voting will be done as it was



Triad Contest
DEADLINE

August 15



Info in next issue, or
wfop.org/annual-
contests/

The Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets is online at wfop.org

three years ago, by electronic ballot. Members without email addresses will receive their ballots in the mail. Elections are months away, but it takes time for the board to plan the process and get everything in place.

Though not an elected position, WFOP is also looking for a *Calendar* business manager to take charge of calendar production and promotion, order fulfillment, and finances. Please contact me if this is something that interests you.

Well, I see I have far exceeded my usual word count for this message. Keep writing, Zooming (if that is something positive for you), and hopefully it won't be long before we can meet in person.

Plans are in place for a fall conference (thanks to **Joan Johannes** and **Kathleen Serley**), but the decision whether to hold it won't be made until sometime this summer. So stay tuned...

Yours,
—Jan

What's Happening in Your Region?

All events free & open to the public unless stated otherwise.

CENTRAL-FOX VALLEY

VPs: Cathryn Cofell, ccofell@gmail.com &

Christina Kubasta, cckubasta60@marianuniversity.edu

Your regional VPs wish to share your news! Please send. Email **Cathryn Cofell** to be added to the area events list. Poetry Unlocked (coordinated by **Bobbie Lovell**, **Cathryn Cofell**, and **Sarah Gilbert**) continues regular readings with open mics via Zoom. Email poetryunlockedappleton@gmail.com or find on FB for more info.

Christina Kubasta was a finalist for the Wisconsin Poet Laureate, 2021–22 term, and recently enjoyed a residency at Write On Door County with **Cathryn Cofell** and **Bruce Dethlefsen**. The Fall *Bramble* issue was guest-edited by students from Marian University, who had a great experience and learned much in bringing the issue out.

Cathryn Cofell, **Christina Kubasta** and **Bruce Dethlefsen** created a video on the intersections of poetry with other art forms for Write On Door County, posted at writeondoorcounty.org. Cathryn also has a poem in *Through this Door: Wisconsin in Poems*, edited by **Margaret Rozga** and **Angela Trudell Vasquez**.

Thom Singleton took the Grand Prize in the adult division of the Wisconsin Sijo Competition.

EAST

VPs: Ed Werstein, wersted@gmail.com, &

Colleen Nehmer, colleen.nehmer@hotmail.com

Karl Elder appears in these anthologies: "Increase Claflin" in *Halfway to the North Pole: Door County in Poetry* (Door County Poets Collective, 2020); "Arboreal" in *Trees in a Garden of Ashes* (Local Gems Press, 2020); and "Ode in the Key of O" in *Universal Oneness: An Anthology of Magnum Opus Poems from Around the World* (Authorspress, 2020).

Elisabeth Harrahy's recent publications include the poems "Progress" in *Zone 3*, "Growing Up in Worcester" in *Constellations: A Journal of Poetry and Fiction*, and "The Waiting" in *Edison Literary Review*.

Scott Lowery, who splits his time between Wauwatosa and Winona, MN, had a poem chosen for the Bright Light Stories in the Night e-chapbook contest, in Rochester, MN. The six poems selected will be illustrated by regional artists and read aloud for the book launch by Rochester dignitaries. Tune in on Friday, February 26, 7–8 PM for the launch: facebook.com/events/2646226775707621/.

Carolyn Muchhala has several poems on jerryjazzmusician.com, on *Your Daily Poem*, and also in *Thimble 3:3*, as well as in the following anthologies: *Halfway to the North Pole: Door County in Poetry*; *Never forgotten: 100 Poets Remember 9/11*; *Fresh Fish: Textile Artists & Poets Explore Underwater Life*. Her video *Diary of a Pandemic* and a series of published and unpublished pandemic poems have been archived at the Shorewood Historical Society.

Eileen Mattmann has two poems in *Sheltering with Poems: Community & Connection During Covid*.

Bob Koshin Hanson, a member of Warrior Writers, a national program for veterans and their families, invites poets to Lunch Break Writing Prompt, a writers group that meets on Zoom on first and third Fridays 11:30–1:30 PM. The meeting is facilitated by Bob, and Jake Thomas. You can check in to the meeting at any time. Go to warriorwriters.org, or to the Warrior Writers Facebook page and look under Events. Their mission is to create a culture that articulates veterans' experiences, builds a collaborative community for artistic expression, and bears witness to war and the full range of military experience.

Lastly, thanks to **Colleen Nehmer** for agreeing to join the WFOP Board as co-VP of the East Region. Welcome to the WFOP Board, Colleen!

MID-CENTRAL

VP: Kathleen Serley, kserley@dwave.net

Jeffrey Johannes and **Joan Wiese Johannes** had poetry and art in *Moss Piglet*.

Kathleen Serley's poem "RSVP" appeared in the Winter issue of *Third Wednesday*. Her poems "Opening

Night at the Symphony” and “Your Call” each got an Honorable Mention for the Hal Prize 2020.

Patricia Williams had “Art History for \$15.99” published in *Barstow & Grand* 4. “Lockdown is Frying My Brain” was among five finalists in the Covid 19 Poetry Competition sponsored by *Dissonance Magazine*, and “Insomnia in Winter” was published in *The Weekly Avocet* 42 and “Winter Sunlight” in the *Fall Poetry Quarterly*.

Vlasta Karol Blaha’s poem, “Valentine’s Day Prelude” was in *The Avocet, a Journal of Nature Poetry*, winter.

Linda Aschbrenner’s poem “Art Galleries through the Paths of the Pandemic” appeared in *Poetry Hall* 10. By invitation, her poem “Icing the Night” is on the December 14th Wisconsin Humanities Facebook page. “Pictures We Sent, an Apology” is in the anthology *Sheltering with Poems: Community & Connection During Covid*.

NORTHEAST

VP: **Tori Grant Welhouse**, torigrantwelhouse@gmail.com

A number of important Wisconsin poets have been included in a new international poetry anthology, *No More Will Fit Into the Evening*, (Four Windows Press, Sturgeon Bay, WI). Edited by **Thomas Davis**, a Door County poet, and Standing Feather, a poet from New Mexico, the volume is headlined by some of the most important poets writing in the world today. Among these are Terence Winch, winner of the American and Columbia Book Awards; John Looker, a major British poet; Kimberly Blaeser, a Native American, former Wisconsin Poet Laureate who has an international reputation; and James Janko, the winner of the AWP Novel of the Year and other awards. 39 poets in the anthology are from throughout the United States, Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and the Netherlands. Publication of the volume indicates how far Wisconsin poets have come in establishing a presence in international poetry circles, according to Davis. WFOP members in the volume are **Sharon Auberle, Kimberly Blaeser, Robin Chapman, Ethel Mortenson Davis, Thomas Davis, Annette Langlois Grunseth, Maryann Hurtt, Gary Jones, Michael Kriesel, Estella Lauter, Ralph Murre, Mike Orlock, Nathan J. Reid** and **Tori Grant Welhouse**.

Carol Lee Saffioti-Hughes’ poem “Dark Eyes” was included in “Artery” at Spectrum School of Arts and Gallery in Racine, a joint show featuring poets and artists. Her poem “Wind Eye,” was published and translated into Chinese in *Poetry Hall* 10.

Annette Grunseth had “The Big Cover Up” in *Bramble* Fall. She was December Door County Poet of the month in *Peninsula Pulse*, with three poems included

in the article. “On Behalf of a Grateful Nation” won 2nd place in The Mill Poetry contest; three poems were in the Military Writers Society of America magazine, *Dispatches*, and her haiku “Cranberry Harvest” was published in *Poetry Hall*. She did a reading from *Becoming Trans-Parent* with an educational presentation for First Congregational Church UCC of Appleton.

Doris Bezio published “Basket Weaver” in the anthology *Under a Blushing Sky: Poems about New Beginnings* and “Christmas Remembered” on *Your Daily Poem* December 26.

Tori Grant Welhouse’s poem “Owl” was a runner-up in the Princemere Poetry Prize, and her poem “Winding Walks” appears in the latest issue of *Chestnut Review*.

Thomas Davis has published *Meditations on Ceremonies of Beginnings: The Tribal Colleges and World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium Poems* with Tribal College Press. The poems are an introduction to the tribal college movement and the world of Indigenous nations.

Adrienne S. Wallner’s debut book of poetry *To the 4 a.m. Light* will be released March 26 by Finishing Line Press. Her virtual book launch will take place via Zoom on April 14. Details on Adrienne’s website, inkinthebranches.com.

NORTHWEST

VP: **Nancy Austin**, austin10929@gmail.com

Jan Chronister’s poems “Learning from Beans” and “Winter Weight” appear in the Spring 2021 issue of *Last Stanza Poetry Journal*. “Golden Delicious” was featured on *Your Daily Poem* January 27, and Jan had poems on the Highland Park Poetry Facebook page November 5, December 2, and January 1. Her poem “Progress” appears in *Birth*, and “Uncle Bill” in *100 Lives*, both anthologies from Pure Slush Books.

Lucy Tyrrell had “Encounter with Thirty Ravens” in both *Capsule Stories* (winter) and *New Beginnings*, “Golden balloon moon” in *Avocet* (winter), “A Villanelle for the Ice Worm” in *The Weekly Avocet* 426, and “Alaska: The Lights Are Out” in *Alaska Women Speak* (winter). She was invited to submit a poem (“Currency”) to *Through this Door*, edited by **Margaret Rozga** and **Angela Trudell Vasquez**. She was one of nine poets to read from this anthology at the January 16 reading sponsored by Write On Door County. Lucy (as emcee) and **Jan Chronister** hosted the *Ariel Anthology* reading November 29, attended by 26 contributing poets. Lucy participated in WFOP workshops by Kimberly Blaeser (concrete poems) October 14 and 28, and by David Southward (sonnets) December 17 and January 21.

Peggy Trojan had poems published in the *Ariel Anthology* and the Fall issue of *Bramble*.

SOUTH CENTRAL

VP: James P. Roberts, jrob52162@aol.com

June G. Paul had two of her Christmas Poems, “Santa Drew Near” and “On Christmas Eve” published in *Christmas* by *The Poet Magazine*.

James P. Roberts had a poem, “The Seamstress Sews Dragon Wings” published in *Corvid Queen* in January.

The following South Central members participated in the Woodland Pattern Virtual Poetry Marathon January 30: **Sharon Daly, Martha Kaplan, Ronnie Hess, Nathan J. Reid, Jodi Vander Molen, Angela Trudell-Vasquez.**

F. J. Bergmann has three poems, “Chrono-Man,” “Lesser Eternity” and “Regarding” nominated for the SFPA Rhysling Awards, and “The Hydrologic Cycle, Long Before the Invention of Meteorology” on *Unlost*.

WEST CENTRAL

VP: Sandra Lindow, lindowleaf@gmail.com

The Writers’ Group at the Library, now in its 33rd year, continues to meet via Zoom on first Thursday. Email **Sandra Lindow** at lindowleaf@gmail.com for more information. February’s below-zero nightly temperatures has brought fanciful frost patterns to Chippewa Valley windows. This morning I saw a fairy flying above a garden when I pulled up the shade. When you read this the scene will have faded to wet droplets and be gone.

In December and January **Sandra Lindow** was pleased to attend David Southward’s Sonnet workshop. Her poem “The Scent of Green” appears in *Climbing Lightly through Forests: A Poetry Anthology Honoring Ursula K. Le Guin*. Two poems, “Darning” and “Rapunzel at Seventy” were nominated for the SFPA Rhysling Award.

David Blackey’s poem “Ode to a Sunflower” was in *Avocet*’s winter journal and his “Dancing on the Dunes” appears in *Bramble*.

Karen Loeb’s poem, “Facetime for Hanukkah” is in the December issue of *Quill and Parchment*. She is also serving as a judge for Poetry Out Loud’s regional competition.

Submissions for the 2022 *Wisconsin Poets’ Calendar* have now closed. We thank the 265 poets who took the time to submit. Now we begin reducing the 428 wonderful poems down to approximately 200 excellent poems. You will hear from us by April 1st with the status of your entry.

In House WFOP members may inform the membership of a move to a new postal address, an email address change, a member’s illness or convalescence—with that member’s permission.

Contact Michael Belongie at poetpow@gmail.com.

In Memoriam

Josephine “Josie” Zell, longtime member of WFOP, passed away on November 16, 2020, in Madison. Josie actively served the WFOP as Regional Vice-President, Executive Vice-President and co-editor of the 2007 *Wisconsin Poets’ Calendar*. Many in the WFOP will remember Josie as a welcoming and encouraging presence to new members and fledgling poets.

Josie was born on April 26, 1934, in Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, England. After emigration to the United States, she taught at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and later in the Madison Public Schools, where she encouraged her students and colleagues to read and write poetry. Josie held degrees from the University of Manchester, England, and UW-Madison. She is survived by a son and daughter and eight grandchildren.

Excerpt from “Early Maple”

These radiant moments will transcend

This day. Those who are generous in life

Wait to confer their gifts; their patience is

Their virtue, more than we are conscious of.

In golden silence they exemplify

The sacred prodigality of love.

Muse contest chair **Fred Kreutz** reports that there were 64 entries in the 2021 Muse contest, and they are currently being read by this year’s judge, Joyce Sutphen.

Donations to WFOP

Our gratitude for your generosity!

Charles Dahlen

Susan Fiore

Richard Merelman

Thomas Murtha

Robert St. Louis

(in memory of Nadine St. Louis)

Wausau Bird Club

Publications by Our Members

Alpha Images: Poems Selected and New by Karl Elder (Water's Edge Press, 2020), 270 pp. \$24, Amazon or watersedgepress.com.

Distanced: Poems from the Pandemic by Jan Chronister (self-published 2020), 32 pages, \$7. Available from the author at whispertreepress@gmail.com or on Amazon.

Elbow Room by James Botsford (2020), 130 pp. \$15, available at Janke's Bookstore, Wausau.

A Kayak is my Church Pew by Patricia Carney (Kelsay Books), 46 pp. \$16, kelsaybooks.com.

The Lawyer Chronicles by Thomas J. Erickson (Kelsay Books, 2020) 56 pp, \$16 at Amazon, or \$15 by check (includes shipping) directly from author, 4646 N Elkhart Ave, Whitefish Bay, WI 53211 or thomerick@aol.com.

Reverie's Illk: Collected Prose Poems by Karl Elder (Cyberwit.net, 2020), 59 pp. \$15, Amazon.

River by Peggy Trojan (self-published 2020), 44 pp. \$10, Amazon.

POETRY CRITIQUE GROUPS

Looking for a group to join? Contact your regional VP. If your group is open to new members, notify the *Museletter* editor.

Museletter submissions: Send news to your regional VP or to wfopmuseletter@gmail.com (include region!), in body of e-mail. Please format as in *Museletter*; no .pdfs or press releases.

Poetry news only; send only poetry publications, *not* acceptances; don't bother including WFOP awards or *Museletter* or *Calendar* appearances. **Please** don't double-space after periods.

Advertise books, etc., to the WFOP membership in the *Museletter* or Events e-mail at the following rates:

\$15 eighth page	\$40 half page
\$25 quarter page	\$75 full page
\$10/100 wds in Events e-mail	

Please send WFOP correspondence, photos, conference/workshop programs/handouts, regional memorabilia, personal mementos, etc. Returnable; postage reimbursed!

Lewis Bosworth, WFOP Archivist
2829 Barlow St, Madison WI 53705-3621
lewisabosworth@gmail.com ~ 608-238-3648

NOTE TO MEMBERS WITH NEW BOOKS

Have a new poetry book or chapbook? Send the title, publisher, date, # of pages, price, and a place to buy the book, or your email, to wfopmuseletter@gmail.com

Remember ...

Notify *in advance* of address change. Only first-class mail forwards; bulk is returned: at WFOP's expense. Request e-mail instead; the .pdf link is sent earlier, and you'll save WFOP funds!

Get the weekly Events e-mail: wfopmuseletter@gmail.com

About Your Membership

Renew NOW—before you forget!

All memberships are CALENDAR YEAR—January through December. Only new memberships October–December are automatically extended through the following year. **Renewal payments** are due by **December 31** each year. Your membership expires at the end of the year on your *Museletter* mailing label. Contact wfopmembership@gmail.com with any questions. To receive reminders and official news, make sure we have a current email address.

NB: If you lapse, then renew, you will be entered as a new member. Continuous membership is required for service awards.

If you vacation elsewhere, mail must be sent first class in order to forward. We are charged for returned bulk mail. Signing up for e-mail-only *Museletter* (.pdf online) saves WFOP \$ and arrives 2 weeks before the print *Museletter*. Notify wfopmuseletter@gmail.com to opt out of print delivery.

The Events weekly e-mailing is a separate opt-in list; to receive it, notify wfopmuseletter@gmail.com. Send all address changes or *Museletter* delivery inquiries to wfopmuseletter@gmail.com.

DASHA KELLY HAMILTON named Wisconsin Poet Laureate for 2021–2022

“Dasha Kelly Hamilton’s infectious energy and demonstrated history of transforming lives through the written and spoken word make her the perfect ambassador for poetry in the state of Wisconsin,” says Nick Demske, Chair of the Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission. “Her reputation precedes her, and we know that Wisconsin residents will benefit in many ways from this outstanding poet.”

Dasha is a writer, performance artist and creative change agent, applying the creative process to facilitate dialogues around human and social wellness. She is the author of two novels, three poetry collections, four spoken word albums and one collection of personal vignettes. She has taught at colleges, conferences and classrooms and curated fellowships for emerging leaders. An Arts Envoy for the U.S. Embassy, Kelly Hamilton has facilitated community building initiatives in Botswana, Toronto, Mauritius, and Beirut. Her touring production, *Makin’ Cake*, uniquely engages communities in a forward dialogue on race, class, and equity. Kelly Hamilton is a national Rubinger Fellow and, concurrently, Poet Laureate for the City of Milwaukee and the State of Wisconsin. For appearances by and updates about new Wisconsin Poet Laureate Dasha Kelly Hamilton, visit wisconsinpoetlaureate.org or follow her on Facebook at [@WisPoLo](https://www.facebook.com/WisPoLo).

Community Poets Laureate flourish throughout Wisconsin. State Poet Laureate **Peggy Rozga** and Door County Poet Laureate **Nancy Rafal** are compiling a list of all Poet Laureate positions in the state. If you know of any community PL program please send the information to Nancy: **mrsticket@gmail.com** or PO Box 340, Baileys Harbor WI 54202-0340. Please include the following: 1) date program established 2) names of poets laureate & dates of post. 3) selection procedure, 4) any other significant information.

Bramble, WFOP’s literary magazine, will open again to submissions from Wisconsin writers on **April 1**. Check the website then for guidelines.

Issues are guest-edited by WFOP members and open to all Wisconsin poets. For queries about art, editing, and all other things *Bramble*, please email **bramble@wfop.org**. *Bramble* is now web and print. Full guidelines at:

wfop.org/bramble-how-to-submit

Postal submissions (*only* if unable to email) to:

C. Kubasta

***Bramble* submission**

2312 Oregon St

Oshkosh WI 54902

A Note from the Membership Chair

We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions regarding membership! Please contact Naomi Cochran at **wfopmembership@gmail.com** or mail to W1598 Lee Rd, Hayward WI 54843.

Membership Renewal Form KEEP YOUR MEMBERSHIP CURRENT.

All renewals are due by December 31. Expiration year follows your name on the mailing label. Dues MUST be current to enter WFOP contests, be in the *Museletter*, receive mailings, and to have a page on wfop.org. Contact **wfopmembership@gmail.com** if you are not sure when your membership expires.

SAVE POSTAGE and renew or join online at wfop.org

or mail to: **Colleen Frentzel, 1410 N Wuthering Hills Dr, Janesville WI 53546**

Please make checks payable to: **WFOP**

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip+4 _____

E-mail address _____

Active \$30.00

Student \$15.00

*** *5 for 4 Deal* ***

\$120 paid now will give

5 years of membership

for the price of 4! Save \$30!

Check to get weekly Events e-mail.

Willing to help WFOP save \$?
 Check to get *Museletter* via e-mail.

Poems BY Our Membership

—SHERYL SLOCUM & KIM PARSONS, EDITORS

VERBAL MAGIC—use all 6 of these words
in a poem of fewer than 20 lines:
abracadabra, award, barb, crack, drawback, dark.

MATHEMATICAL VERSE DEADLINE APRIL 15

Send us an unpublished poem that does math (correctly or not) in 15 lines or fewer. (Do count the number of lines correctly!) Only one submission per poet, please. Editors, **Sheryl Slocum & Kim Parsons**.

Send poems to museletterpoems@gmail.com
or by post to **Sheryl Slocum**
8025 W Oklahoma Ave Apt 2
Milwaukee WI 53219

IT WASN'T MY FAULT!

I know why I didn't win the award for Best Magician.
"Abracadabra" didn't work. Nothing happened. So what!

Consider the barb on the hook that purposely missed the fish.
Or the crack in the dark that let light through
and ruined the Halloween prank.

Don't blame the fisherman or the prankster.
It's the fault of the barb and the fault of the dark,
not the fault of the drawback of being a master
of magic who thought you had a sense of humor.

Didn't you get the joke I told about the wife whose husband cheats?
He's a total cad. Beside him in bed one night, she feels something
touching her foot, reaches down, pulls it up, and realizes
it's a bra, and not one of hers. She shows it to him. "What's that?,"
he asks. She answers, "A bra, cad, a bra!" Abracadabra, right?
A magical palindrome? No, it's not, so it failed. Her fault.

And the rabbit refused to get out of the hat. What about that?

So give me a break and remember the barb, the light, the wreck
of the prank in the dark, the wife, and the hare stuck in the hat.

It wasn't my fault!

—Mel Koronelos, Portola Valley CA

MY MAGIC

There were all these negatives
not really about being with me,
just about me,
that would appear like an award
to your desires.

Abracadabra "Look, there,
that dark spot in your eye,"
"That barb in your memory,"
"That crack in the sky,"
twisting up my magic
until there was no drawback
to disappearing.

Sometimes, I miss
how your mother would look at me
walking up to the front door,
and I think of how magnificent
the lights probably still look on 6th street,
though I do not know where you are now.

—Heather Rose, Sheboygan

A BUSKER'S LAMENT

In the abracadabra line of work
there are a number of drawbacks
and very few rewards—or awards
for that matter. Too often I've
heard someone make a dismissive
crack about sidewalk illusionists.
These barbs are the dark underbelly
of the trade. Unlike a mime,
a magician gets no respect—
nor tips in the top hat
strategically placed upside down.

Sadly, abracadabra isn't strong enough
to soften the blow, peel away
the drawbacks, posit awards, blunt
the barbs, deflect the wisecracks or
pull acceptance (and sawbucks)
out of a midnight-dark top hat.

—CJ Muchhala, Shorewood

WISCONSIN FELLOWSHIP OF POETS
938 E DAYTON ST APT 1
MADISON WI 53703-4618
WFOP.ORG

Forwarding Requested.

Next Issue Deadline MAY 1, 2021

THE WITCH ENTERS A POETRY CONTEST

All she wanted was an award!
“Best Of” this or that, it didn’t matter,
Really.
After years of picking and choosing,
Counting each submission
And ignoring the judicious barb:
Desiring only a crack of success.
Always, there was a drawback, a frantic,
Bitter realization she needed some type of
Resolution; a workable spell
Assiduously wording the dark.

—James Roberts, Madison

WATCHING AN ARTIST AT WORK

She was a family legend, my Aunt Barb,
winning award after award every September
at the county fair for her luscious
and whimsically decorated cakes,
cookies, and surprise pies.

When I was twelve, I spent a week
at her house learning how to crack eggs,
whip meringue, bake a dark chocolate cake.

The drawback—I could never achieve
her abracadabra-inspired flair,
her imaginative joyrides when it came time
to frost the waiting bakery.
Where I shone—licking the beaters clean.

—Linda Aschbrenner, Marshfield