

Fall 2016 WFOP General Meeting
Saturday, October 29, 2016

Meeting begins at 8:35am.

(Just before, round of applause for new members who recited 13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird by Wallace Stevens. Round of applause for the Johanneses taking over conference organizing from ailing Jim Pollock.

Motion to approve spring 2016 minutes (Kriesel) seconded by Lindow. Approved.

Regional VP reports:

1. Sandy Lindow, West Central: Poetry has flagged in Chippewa Valley. She is looking for a replacement. Still, the chapter is actively working to enliven poetry in the area with the Chippewa Valley Writers Guild with two retreats, with Max Garland and Kim Blaeser. Efforts to connect town and gown with “River City Poets,” and to get young people involved. Writers group at library has been meeting for 27-28 years, one of the oldest in WFOP or the state, and meets first Thursdays.
2. James Roberts, South Central: Much going on in the area. Another Winter Festival of Poetry at The Fountain beginning in mid-January for 8 consecutive Sunday afternoons – with theme, Poet Trees. Says Madison poet laureate Oscar Mireles is interested in holding a one-day conference/convention of the state’s local/regional/community poets. Talks just beginning with a view to the spring. Suggests people familiarize themselves with Arts and Literature Laboratory on Winnebago Street in Madison.
3. Ed Werstein, East: Informs members of the death of WFOP member Katarzyna Rygasewicz from Racine. On November 12 there will be a 2017 calendar reading at Central Branch of Milwaukee Library. All welcome. Werstein says Library has been collecting Wisconsin poets’ work – encourages people to submit these. See E-Museletter for details. Spring conference will be in Milwaukee, Ap 28-29 at Park East Hotel on State St. Featured presenter will be Mark Doty. Werstein also reports Joan Kovacs (spelling?) has also died, teacher of poetry. Werstein adds that Woodland Pattern having fundraising drive, with Eileen Myles featured, speaking at public library.
4. Christina Kubasta, Fox: Kubasta reports that things are going well because of wonderful people we have. Monthly events posted on WFOP events page. Needs help in starting a critique group, Fond du Lac area.
5. Welhouse, Northeast: Kids’ zoo project went very well. Ongoing readings in Green Bay and Write-on Door County. Welhouse gives a shout out to Door County hosting March 2017 conference with Naomi Shihab Nye as keynoter.

Chronister points out 25,000 hits on new Web page within less than a year.
Suggests more people keep in touch with poetry events through Facebook.

Poet Laureate Report: Hess reads Zimmerman’s report from PLC rep: “As Wisconsin Poet Laureate Kim Blaeser’s two-year term draws to a close with the coming of the new year, I’m really pleased to thank her for all her fine work—writing, reading, speaking, traveling, and advocating for the art of poetry in our state and beyond it—and I am equally grateful to the WFOP’s ongoing support of the Poet Laureate and the Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission.

On behalf of the commission, thank you to every WFOP member for their financial support and their furthering of the arts across our state. This support matters immensely; everyone on the WPLC knows this and is grateful for it. By now all the applications for our 2017-2018 Wisconsin Poet Laureate have been received; the deadline for applications has passed. In the coming weeks the WPLC will be going through every applicant's poems, accomplishments, and plans in what is sure to be a challenge of selecting only one poet from what is a fine roster of talented hopefuls. I can't name names but I will venture a prediction: Come January 2017 Wisconsin is going to have another fine voice for poetry and the arts in our state. Stay tuned."

Membership Report: Naomi Cochran reminds people to renew their membership. Calls attention to new membership brochure and poster. Encourages people to take these home, post them or distribute. Reminds members of the importance of building membership. Membership is up by about 25 people.

Werstein points out that people should opt in to get Museletter online (with announcement via email), since it will save WFOP money.

Calendar Manager's Report: Farmer says sales are a little low this year with loss of venues. Calendar for sale at conference and back issues available to give to members to distribute to reading groups, doctors' offices and nursing homes. Farmer reports that pricing structure has changed, with round numbers. \$9 for members and vendors – no 60/40 split anymore. Retail price is \$15. If you have events, get calendars from Farmer unless the venue where the event is taking place already has the calendars. Or do a budget deal at \$10 per calendar. Good tradition. Farmer has been the manager for 12 years.

Calendar Editors' Report: Werstein (and Swanson). Deadline is December 1 for 2018 calendar. There is a dedicated e-mail for it but Werstein does recognition on Mondays – so don't worry if you don't get an immediate response. Count so far is about 40 poet submissions with the expectation that the number will increase. Final decisions in late January/early February.

Report from Archivist: Bosworth. Archives are alive and well. Display in back of the room. Take a moment to see what is being archived. Please continue to donate materials that may be noteworthy. Just received a memorial chapbook for Katarzyna Rygasewicz. Bosworth has also taken over for the student poetry contest and points out new poster available with new WFOP logo. Electronic copies also available. Take copies and promote the contest. The contest was promoted at WCTE. Judges are Kriesel and Blanchette.

Update of Activities: Chronister. Announces winners of mini-grants; Liz Rhodebeck's workshop and poetry book "Hear My Voice: Poems from the Unheard Girls from the House of Love," is a fine example of what mini grants can do. Points out that members' dues go toward projects like this, for "solid, tangible things" not administrative costs.

\$300 donation from Wisconsin Writers Association. Thanks to Nancy Rafal for coordinating and other WFOP members who presented at the WWA conference.

Reminds that WFOP gives \$500 annually for WPLC. Announces that WFOP Board voted last night to give \$500 to Lorine Niedecker Friends.

New Business:

Kriesel (past president 2013-2015) announces Swanson being given honorary life-time membership. "Richard Swanson helped me to grow as a leader."

Sandy Lindow honors Margaret (Peg) Lauber, who is given honorary life-time membership as well. Reads Peg's response in absentia.

Second reading, by Hess, of proposed by-law changes. Informational only reading, Chronister says. Mentions that discussion underway to make voting more widely possible, via survey tool. Membership is over 400 but meetings attended by only about 70.

Chronister says Board approved chapbook contest changes, lowering entry fees to \$7 from \$10. But \$15 for non-WFOP members. Prize money will increase to \$200 and \$100 from \$100 and \$50 for first/second prizes. With sheets of seals so winners can put these on the chapbook. Steve Tomasko, co-coordinator of chapbook coordinator along with Jeannie Tomasko reminds that 2016 chapbook contest open for the awards.

Christina Kubasta announces start-up of quarterly on-line literary/poetry review. Gives basic information about this new initiative and asks for help. Will rotate guest editors, beginning with Kubasta to ensure variety of aesthetics. Unsolicited manuscripts ONLY from members. First (online) edition in January with first call in November. Check Museletter and Facebook pages for details. WFOP will be paying for poetry, a small amount. Theme: interpreted as loosely as possible with the first theme being "Beginnings." Kubasta says she needs name suggestions for the review. Please suggest/submit. Questions? Email Kubasta, her email is at the WFOP Web. No previously published poems. A benefit of membership. Photos/artwork also welcome.

Chronister has a dedicated email. wfoppres@gmail.com
Please write to her there.

Phyllis Wax suggests payment to the calendar editors. Chronister says the Board will discuss this.

Moment of silence for deceased members.

Motion, second to adjourn. Meeting adjourned 9:38 am.
Respectfully submitted by Ronnie Hess, Secretary