



September 2020



# The Desert Voice

A quarterly publication of Arizona State Poetry Society

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The Arizona State Poetry Society (ASPS) organized in 1965, supports regional branches in Arizona, publishes the *Sandcutters* anthology annually, and offers additional poetry opportunities for its members.

<https://azpoetry.webs.com/>

## Membership

Annual membership dues: \$25

Membership includes the quarterly newsletter, *The Desert Voice*, the annual anthology, *Sandcutters*, monthly and annual contests, membership in the NFSPS, and their annual publication, *Strophes*. Branch dues vary from \$5-10 and are in addition to ASPS dues.

### Mail dues to:

ASPS Treasurer Bill Brown  
1550 N. Stapley #129  
Mesa AZ 85203

### Branches

East Valley Poets (EVP) in Tempe  
Scottsdale Mustang Poets (SMP)  
Tucson Poetry Society (TPS)  
West Valley Poets (WVP)

**SOME  
THING  
NEW**

## ASPS Poets Reading Series

Looking for a way to connect with your fellow poets and share your work? An idea has been suggested for an “ASPS Poets Reading Series.”

The plan is to have readings via Zoom periodically. At each session, 6-7 ASPS poets will be invited to read some of their work. The venue will give our members the opportunity not only to showcase their work, but to offer the opportunity to all members to hear and appreciate the poetry being generated in our society. Watch future newsletters and E-blasts for dates and times of future readings. We hope to offer the first one in mid-September.



## ASPS ANNUAL CONFERENCE January 8-9, 2021

The ASPS Board is tentatively planning to hold the Annual Conference in early January 2021. The Conference would be conducted via Zoom but would include all of the major activities that are normally held in person. We expect to offer poetry readings, interactive workshops, guest speakers, open mic, an author’s “market place” for poetry books, and of course, announcement of the Annual Contest winners.

Keep these dates in mind and watch the website for additional information and updates.

## CHRISTY'S CORNER

I hope all of you are finding that your poetry, and the poems of others, helps you make your way through our current crises. I have become a dedicated Zoomie, attending workshops, readings, even a poetry conference. These times have thrust many of us into learning and using more electronics to connect with family, friends and other poets, while leaving others of us sidelined. In the last Zoom meeting of the Mustang Poets, I was pleased to welcome back one of our elders that I had not seen since March. She was assisted by another of our elders and a former president of ASPS, all with safe distancing!

One of the poets I have been reading lately is Matthew Zapruder and his book, WHY Poetry, published in 2017. It is a wonderful, affirming read, and his Afterword addresses much about the importance of poets and their poetry in times like these. "To be continually surrounded by language used exclusively for utilitarian purposes is a threat to the disinterested yet sacred attention a poet must have to words. Also, poetry has an intimate, necessary relation with silence. The work of poets is impaired by too much noise and language, a scarcity of silence."

If you live alone, like I do, you have moments of silence punctuated by the hum of the refrigerator, the soft snore of a dog (or a cat, they sometimes snore too!), or someone walking by your front door. Even if you are living with someone, or someones, you may still find the silent moments. With the strictures of safe distancing, staying at home, being safe, human contact has diminished, and as poets we may find that silence is more important than ever to the very real work of language creation. But the poetry comes through the silence of our minds, and that may be harder to achieve.

Settling down our minds, turning off the electronic burlblings of the computer, the TV, and our phones is essential to allowing our poetry to rise up. I mean that in a very real sense of writing poetry that causes others, not just ourselves, to lift up from the malaise of confusion and loss, to find their own silence because you found yours.

I wish you well, I wish you safe, I wish you healthy, I wish you creativity, and most of all, I wish you that your silence is punctuated by a pen or pencil on paper, or the tapping of a keyboard. I look forward to reading and hearing your poems.

## SANDCUTTERS Monthly Contests

Entries to the Sandcutters' Monthly Contest are due by the 5th of each month. Category I is Traditional Form, Category II is Free Verse and Category III is topical.

The topic for September is **STRANGER**

Send all entries to Rhonda Brown (preferably electronic).

Rhonda Brown  
1550 Stapley Dr #129  
Mesa AZ 85204-3705  
[rbpoetmonk@gmail.com](mailto:rbpoetmonk@gmail.com)

*The Desert Voice* is published quarterly (March, June, September, December) by the Arizona State Poetry Society for its members. Please send articles, suggestions, comments or questions to the Newsletter Editor, **Kris Perry** at

[krisperry5019@gmail.com](mailto:krisperry5019@gmail.com)

## Board of Directors

### 2020 Board

#### President

Christy White  
[c.christy.w.16@gmail.com](mailto:c.christy.w.16@gmail.com)  
480-677-0000

#### Vice President

Walter Ralston  
[freeformverse@gmail.com](mailto:freeformverse@gmail.com)  
623-584-3952

#### Treasurer

Bill Brown  
[wandrbrown@gmail.com](mailto:wandrbrown@gmail.com)  
480-962-9235

#### Secretary

Kris Perry  
[krisperry5019@gmail.com](mailto:krisperry5019@gmail.com)  
612-418-5410

### ASPS Appointees

#### Monthly Contest Chair

Rhonda Brown  
[rbpoetmonk@gmail.com](mailto:rbpoetmonk@gmail.com)  
480-962-9235

#### Newsletter Editor

Kris Perry  
[krisperry5019@gmail.com](mailto:krisperry5019@gmail.com)  
612-418-5410

#### Marketing Chairperson

Carol Hogan  
[carolhogan@cox.net](mailto:carolhogan@cox.net)

#### Sandcutters Editors

Kris Perry  
[krisperry5019@gmail.com](mailto:krisperry5019@gmail.com)

Christy White  
[c.christy.w.16@gmail.com](mailto:c.christy.w.16@gmail.com)

#### NFSPS Strophes Reporter

[c.christy.w.16@gmail.com](mailto:c.christy.w.16@gmail.com)

#### Web Assistant

Alan Perry  
[alanperry@comcast.net](mailto:alanperry@comcast.net)

## ASPS 2021 Dues

It is time to send in your 2021 annual dues for ASPS and for the Branch in which you participate/identify. ASPS dues are \$25/year and Branch dues vary for each branch, though most are \$5/year. Youth membership, a new category for ages 13-18, is \$5/year.

You can submit the total payment of both dues by:

- Visiting our website at <https://azpoetry.webs.com>; or
- Send a check directly to our Treasurer, Bill Brown (see address on the sidebar to the left); or
- Send a check directly to your Branch President/Leader for one or both dues.

If new members renew between August-December, the membership is valid through December of the following year.

Current members will be dropped from the membership rolls if renewals are not received **by January 15, 2021**, which coincides with the date that NFSPS renewals are due. Memberships not renewed by January 15 will not be eligible to enter ASPS Monthly Contests, and will no longer receive quarterly newsletters or other pertinent ASPS emails and notices.

See page 9 for 2021 Membership Form if paying by US Mail.

## CHARITABLE GIVING

Recently ASPS received several anonymous donations. Thank you to those individuals who so kindly remembered ASPS in their charitable giving plan this year!

This is a reminder to all members that as a 501(c)3 charitable organization, you may make a donation to ASPS and receive a tax deduction for doing so. We invite all members and friends of ASPS to consider donating to ASPS to further our objectives of making poetry available, accessible, and interactive with our communities.

Thank you!



## Calls for Submissions

This ongoing column highlights a few journals/literary magazines that are seeking poetry submissions. Be sure to check the website of the named journal to make sure your poetry submissions meet their requirements, aesthetic and limitations before submitting.

### Global Poemic

<https://globalpoemic.wordpress.com>

An online blog that publishes poems that engage with this era of global pandemic; no fee; posts daily; send 1-5 poems.

### Sky Island Journal

[www.skyislandjournal.com](http://www.skyislandjournal.com)

Open year-round; online journal; no fee; send up to four poems.

### The Mantle

<https://themantlepoetry.com>

Open year-round; quarterly online journal; no fee; send up to five poems.

Below is a link to a great list of literary magazines accepting summer poetry submissions: <http://dianelockward.blogspot.com/2020/06/summer-journals-2010.html?m=1>

## Strophes

The August 2020 issue of Strophes has been posted to [nfsp.com](http://nfsp.com).

From the home page, click the Strophes Online tab to bring up the Strophes Main Page, then click the Current Issue button.

If you do not want to be included in future notices that the web edition of Strophes is available, just let Paul Ford, Strophes Editor, know and he will take you off the list.

[pmford3@gmail.com](mailto:pmford3@gmail.com)

## Monthly Contest Winners

### May 2020

#### Category I: Traditional Form

**Charles K. Firmage:** "Holes"

**Jon Sebba:** "Reflection"

**Kim Sosin:** "Pandemic Villanelle"

**Mariana Warner:** "I Got Shoes"

**Christy White:**

"The Sound of Wind Rushing"

#### Category II: Free Verse

**Gail Denham:**

"Come Out--Summer's On"

**Charles K. Firmage:** "Cardinal's Fountain (Bone-Dry Souls)"

**Alan Perry:**

"A Passing at Petersen House"

#### Category III: Happy Riders

**Mark Hudson:** "Golf Cart Glee"

### June 2020

#### Category I: Traditional Form

**Stuart Watkins** - "Letter to the Mayor"

#### Category II: Free Verse

**Dianna Brown** -

"Ode to the Common Mango"

**Charles Firmage** - "Two Green Eyes"

**Eva Willis** - "Shanghai Alleys"

#### Category III: Fruit

**Charles Firmage** - "Wasps and Hornets"

**Annette Gagliardi** - "ripe bananas"

**Mark Hudson** - "Bananas"

**Kitty Kaczmarek** - "Untitled"

**Janet Rives** - "Autumn Crunch"

July Winners continued on page 6.

## MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Each quarter we highlight writing accomplishments of ASPS members. If you have a poem that has been accepted by a journal/literary magazine, a recently-received award for poetry (other than ASPS monthly contests), publication of a chapbook or collection of poetry, or some other writing recognition, send it to newsletter editor, Kris Perry, at [krisperry5019@gmail.com](mailto:krisperry5019@gmail.com) for consideration for this column. This quarter we highlight the following ASPS poets:

### Dianne Brown

Dianne's poem "Corona Cactus", won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the COVID-19 poetry contest sponsored by ASPS.

### Janice Fuller

Janice was recently published in *Gyroscope Review*.

### Alan Perry

- His poem "COVID Wing—Day 47" won 3<sup>rd</sup> Place in the COVID-19 poetry contest sponsored by ASPS.
- Alan received two favorable book reviews of *Clerk of the Dead*: one from the editor of *Panoply*, an online journal <https://panoplyzine.com/>, and the other a review posted on the website of *Columbia Journal* <https://columbiajournal.org/review-clerk-of-the-dead-by-alan-perry/>
- He conducted a Zoom joint poetry reading with Tucson poet Gene Twaronite, highlighting poems from their recent books and new work.

### Gene Twaronite

- His poem "I Turn Away" won 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in the COVID-19 poetry contest sponsored by ASPS.
- Gene's poem, "Doppelganger," will appear in the summer issue of *The Tipton Poetry Journal*. If you are interested in submitting, here's their link: <https://tiptonpoetryjournal.submittable.com/submit>
- His first picture book, *How to Eat Breakfast* (illustrated by Diane Ronning), published by Lyric Power Publishing LLC, is now available on Amazon.com.

### Stuart Watkins

Recently had two chapbooks published, *Birds and Beyond* and *Water Colors*.





## Craft Talk

This ongoing column provides tips and information about the craft of writing poetry. In this new series, we are sharing the **Top 10 Tips for Poetry Submissions** from Alan Perry - Senior Poetry Editor, *Typehouse Literary Magazine*.

### Tip #2: Prioritize

After you've done your research, it's time for the next important step of prioritization. This should occur in two ways:

- A. **Prioritize the journals to which you want to submit.** Many poet instructors recommend sorting your desired journals into three tiers - A, B and C. The A journals can be top-tier journals by whom you would love to be accepted. While these might be a stretch, they can represent a goal for which your writing can aspire. The B journals can be solid and well known, but be more achievable goals for your writing, and can represent a realistic goal. The C-level represents journals that have a higher acceptance rate than average, and may be a good source for getting some of your work initially published, especially if you are just starting out.
- B. **Prioritize your poems.** This requires you to assess the levels of depth, humanity, imagery, cohesiveness, structure, etc., of each of the poems that you want to submit. Again, you should be grouping your poems into categories that represent your top tier of work, your middle level work, and other work that still requires significant revision before it's ready to submit to a journal you like.

**Next Quarter: Polish and Cover Letter**

## A Member Poem

This ongoing column features a winning poem from an ASPS member who recently won an ASPS Monthly Contest.

### Reflection

By Jon Sebba

One day you wake up looking like your father  
in the bathroom mirror, bald and lined  
remember when you couldn't wait to gather

your friends and walk along the beach - chatter  
exploring tide-pools. Now your youth behind,  
one day you wake up feeling like your mother

forgetting what you're looking for; your tattered  
sweat pants, a spreading waist and shrinking mind.  
Remember days you couldn't wait to gather

and do the crossword. Now the day's a dither.  
You can't deny your faculties' decline  
the day you wake up looking like your father

his face, 'most-bald, reflected in the mirror,  
with stubbled wrinkles, red eyes that remind  
today's you of family together

in the kitchen frying crepes in butter;  
berries and cream toppings; taste the pain  
of waking up looking like your father  
remembering when the family last gathered.

## Member Announcements

### Hank Dallago

Recommends the book *Light the Dark: Writers on Creativity, Inspiration, and the Artistic Process*. Penguin Books, 2017. Edited by Joe Fassler.

**Joy Valerius** shared the news about the open mic at Book Woman in Austin:

<https://www.ebookwooman.com/event>

<https://www.ebookwoman.com/>

Book Woman Book Store: [bookwomanaustin@gmail.com](mailto:bookwomanaustin@gmail.com)



## Volunteers Needed

As a volunteer organization, ASPS is always seeking individuals who can give of their time and expertise to help our non-profit organization grow and flourish.

Currently we are in need of volunteers to help in the areas listed below. As the adage goes, "many hands make light work." If you are able to help in any way, please contact either Christy White or Kris Perry to learn more about the positions listed below.

We need support helpers as well, especially when hosting annual conferences and ASPS gatherings.

Please consider offering your time and talents to our organization!

**Historian** shall be responsible for maintaining a cumulative log of ASPS activities as well as files of Sandcutters, Newsletters and duplicates of minutes.

**Membership Chair** shall actively seek new members, handle membership applications and assist formation of new chapters.

\* \* \* \* \*

Continued from page 4

## Monthly Contest Winners

### July 2020

#### **Category I: Traditional Form**

**Gail Denham** - "Let Loose"

**Charles Firmage** - "Alone"

**Mark Hudson** - "Distractions"

**Jane Stuart** - "Trip Through Time"

#### **Category II: Free Verse**

**Charles Firmage**

"Rosa Parks Peace Quilt"

**Mariana Warner**

"Memento of Monument Valley"

#### **Category III: Forgetting**

**Gail Denham** - "What to Forget"

**Charles Firmage** - "Legacy"

**Walter Ralston** - "On the Tenth of June"

"On the Tenth of June"



## ASPS August 1, 2020

ASPS established a Marketing Chairperson position last April; however, due to COVID-19, meeting and greeting new people has not been possible. We hope to resume this position in 2021.

The Board established a Youth membership category with annual dues set at \$5/year to encourage youth between the ages of 13-18 to participate in ASPS.

The Board will check into the feasibility of establishing an Instagram account to further promote ASPS.

The Board will change our website domain name to azpoetry.net in late 2021 as well as our website provider from webs.com to WordPress.com. The change will allow more flexibility with our website at a lower price.

The COVID-19 Special Contest had approximately 30 entries. The three winners will be included in Sandcutters 2020. The Board discussed having one special contest each year.

No news yet on if the NFSPS 2021 Conference has been cancelled due to COVID-19. Stay tuned.

The Board plans to purchase a table at the next Tucson Festival of Books. The Festival is usually held the second weekend of March each year, but we do not know if the 2021 Festival will occur.

The next meeting of the Board will be held via Zoom on Saturday, September 12 at 1:00 p.m. If members have an item s/he would like discussed, please send your item to Christy at [c.christy.w.16@gmail.com](mailto:c.christy.w.16@gmail.com) or Kris Perry at [krisper-ry5019@gmail.com](mailto:krisper-ry5019@gmail.com).

## BRANCH NEWS

Due to the COVID-19 social distancing policy, the four active Branches of ASPS are finding new and creative ways to meet and stay in touch, including Zoom meetings. This will likely remain in place throughout the summer, so check the website or the next newsletter to see if Branches resume their usual meeting times and places. When Branches do resume meetings in their previous locations, consider wearing face masks until we know COVID-19 has truly passed. Remain safe, healthy and joyful, everyone!

## EAST VALLEY POETS (EVP)

<https://eastvalleypoets.webs.com/>

Host, Jim Platt  
evpoets@yahoo.com  
602-826-2803

The East Valley Poets branch meets the third Saturday of the month from 9:30am—noon for a short program and poetry readings. During COVID-19, they have met via Zoom and will continue to do so, with hopes of resuming their in-person meetings at the Pyle Center when safe to do so. Contact Jim Platt to participate in Zoom and/or to learn about when in-person meetings will resume.

## SCOTTSDALE MUSTANG POETS (SMP)

Host, Christy White  
C.christy.w.16@gmail.com  
480-677-0000  
Dues: \$5/year

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mustangs will meet via Zoom, since we do not know when the Library will re-open. SMP branch meets the second Monday of each month from 6:00-7:45pm for reading poetry with gentle critiquing. If you wish to participate in the Zoom meeting, contact Christy at the email address above to receive an invitation.

## WEST VALLEY POETS—(WVP)

President, Walter Ralston  
freeformverse@gmail.com  
623-584-3952  
Dues: \$5/year

WVP branch meets the first Saturday of the month beginning at 9:00am for open reading member presentations, round robins and other surprises. Contact President Walter Ralston for specific information on how the Branch hopes to remain in contact during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## POETRY READINGS

<https://northofxford.wordpress.com/>  
<https://dianesahmsguarnieri.wordpress.com/>  
<https://gereutter.wordpress.com/about/>

Visit <https://www.newpages.com/independent-bookstores/arizona-bookstores> to find independent bookstores around Arizona. If you don't see your favorite bookstore listed, let them know! Support and buy locally. Most bookstores have an online portal and, if they don't have the book you are looking for, they usually can get it. Some bookstores have opened and are allowing limited customers, but call before you go. Otherwise, it might just be a drive by. (Don't you love that "drive by" is now a positive thing??)

**Poetry Out Loud** fosters the next gen poets and literati. For more information (teachers are you paying attention?), visit <http://www.azarts.gov/arts-learning/poetry-out-loud/>

**Virginia G. Piper Center** for Writing in Tempe sponsors classes, workshops, readings and more. Website - <https://piper.asu.edu/events/> As with other centers of writing, the Piper Center is closed, but they do have zoom workshops! Here is a sample of what they are currently doing:

Online Classes and Workshops for August: The Piper Writers Studio presents three online classes and workshops in poetry, world building, and short stories for August. <https://piper.asu.edu/classes>

a. Story Starters with Leah Newsom Aug 10: Explore a variety of ways to start the writing process through prompts, exercises, and other avenues of play. <https://piper.asu.edu/classes/leah-newsom/story-starters>

b. World Building with Ilona Andrews Aug 22: Evolve societies, form power, and drive narrative through mythology, magic, and other elements of world building. <https://piper.asu.edu/classes/ilona-andrews/world-building>

c. Poetry Workshop with Sean Avery Aug 24: Investigate the commodification of identity through mass media using narrative, metaphor, and imagery. <https://piper.asu.edu/classes/sean-avery/poetry-workshop>

## POETRY READINGS

Continued from page 7

**Autumn Voices** out of the UK has competitions and accepts poetry and other writing from older writers. To read more about this interesting opportunity and to read some of the pieces of older, talented writers, visit their website: <https://autumnvoices.co.uk/>

**Publishing and Other Forms of Insanity** is a blog with a lot of information about calls for submission, contests, conferences and recipes! Great sense of humor that entertains as well as informs. Of special note is this post: <https://publishedtodeath.blogspot.com>

**Poetry Foundation** provides a place to listen to poetry read by the poet or an admirer. You can also hear interviews and conversations about poetry. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/podcasts>

**COVID LIT** is a monthly online lit mag that is publishing, promoting, and spreading art, poetry, and prose using the disease's name. Instead of paying us a submission fee, writers must donate at least \$3 to a nonprofit of their choice. Visit [www.covidlit.org](http://www.covidlit.org) today! Rolling deadline.

**Words & Whispers** is an online literary journal seeking to publish poetry and short prose by writers of all ages on a year-round rolling basis. Send us the wild and divine, the eccentric and experimental. For more information please visit [www.wordsandwhispers.org](http://www.wordsandwhispers.org). Submissions accepted year-round for genre fiction and poetry.

**Palooka** is an international literary magazine featuring up-and-coming, established, and brand-new writers, artists, and photographers from all around the world. Submissions open year-round. [palookamag.com](http://palookamag.com)

**Tupelo Press** supports poets and poetry events. Writing conferences are coming up! Take a look at what they do here: <http://tupelopress.wordpress.com>

## TUCSON POETRY SOCIETY (TPS)

Due to the COVID-19 social distancing policy, the Tucson branch has been using Zoom to stay in touch with poetry and each other. In addition, members share their poems for critique by email. We've been sharing inspirational works with each other. We will return to the public library for our monthly meetings when allowed.

**President, Elaine Powers**  
**[iginspired@gmail.com](mailto:iginspired@gmail.com)**  
**520-204-2991**

When we are able to resume in-person meeting, the TPS branch meets the second Saturday of the month beginning at 10:00am to read and constructively critique each other's work, allowing diverse voices to be heard and appreciated. We laugh, we shout, we sing, and most importantly, we listen. All are welcome at:

**Valdez Main Library**  
**101 N. Stone Avenue**  
**Tucson AZ 85701**

**Dues are \$5/year.**



**Desert Tracks:** Poems from the Sonoran Desert offers readers an anthology of diverse poems written by 23 poets of the Tucson Poetry Society. Copies are available for sale by contacting President Elaine Powers.

Janice Fuller is looking for a small poetry critique group. Interested? Contact [janfuller5@comcast.net](mailto:janfuller5@comcast.net)

**As always, visit our website for additional information and opportunities to engage in poetry around the country. <https://azpoetry.webs.com/>**



## ASPS Membership Benefits

Your membership in the Arizona State Poetry Society includes these benefits:

- You may be published in our annual poetry anthology, *Sandcutters*
- Opportunity to enter *Sandcutters* Monthly and Annual Contests
- Membership in the NFSPS (National Federation of State Poetry Societies)
- NFSPS annual publication *Strophes*
- *The Desert Voice*, our quarterly newsletter
- Participation in our conferences
- Opportunities to meet and share poems with other poets
- Opportunity to sell books at meetings, events, and online



## Arizona State Poetry Society

### 2021 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Dues: Adults - \$25; Students (Ages 13-18) - \$5; Branch Dues - \$5 (SMP, TPS, WVP)

Please submit dues no later than January 15. Renewals received between August-December of this year are valid through December of the following year.

#### IF PAYING BY CHECK, PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Indicate Branch Affiliation:** ☐ At Large Member (AL) ☐ East Valley Poets (EVP)

☐ Scottsdale Mustang Poets (SMP) ☐ Tucson Poetry Society (TPS) ☐ West Valley Poets (WVP)

☐ Please contact me about volunteer opportunities in ASPS (Historian, NFSPS Conference Chair, NFSPS Reporter, Spring or Fall Conference Host).

**Make checks payable to ASPS and mail to: Bill Brown, 1550 N. Stapley #129, Mesa AZ 85203**

**Or**

**Pay online via PayPal or credit card at: <https://azpoetry.com/membership/>**