

Magnolia Muse

March 2014

Get ready for the Spring Festival!

Michael Shelton, MPS North Branch President, has a great program planned for the Spring Festival in Starkville, Mississippi, April 26-27, 2014. Make reservations now at the Comfort Inn and Suites, 801 Russell St. A block of rooms has been reserved for MPS participants for \$89 per night. A continental breakfast is available each day. Call [662-324-9595](tel:662-324-9595) for reservations. Ask for rooms blocked for the Mississippi Poetry Society when making reservations. The room block is only good until April 7th, so reserve rooms early.

Because North Branch has so few active members now, Michael asks that Central and South Branches each contribute three door prizes. North Branch will host a pre-festival get together for early arrivals at 6:00 p.m. on Friday night (April 25) in the breakfast area at the Comfort Inn. Snacks and soft drinks will be provided. Bring some poems to read as we spend time visiting together. If you plan to come in time for this, please let Michael Shelton know by phone ([662-418-7969](tel:662-418-7969)) or email (poetsail5@gmail.com).

Although the agenda for the festival is not yet final, highlights include a presentation by **Abigail Vollar**, who teaches English and mentors Teaching Assistants at Mississippi State University. She received her BME degree from Mississippi College in Instrumental Music Education and her MA in English from Mississippi State University. As a secondary teacher, she taught both band and chorus. For several summers she was a major course instructor at Mississippi Governor's School in Columbus. Classes she taught there include "Arts Fusion," and two different courses on aspects of Magazine Publishing, working with students to post their class's work on the Literary Magazine website.

Another program highlight will be "Merging Poetry and Music," a presentation by our own Ken and Judy Davies. They have performed at USM Gulf Coast, multiple locations of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College's Lifelong Learning Program, Pascagoula Senior Citizens Center, Fairhope Writer's Showcase in Fairhope, AL, the Society of Composers Conference at Portsmouth, NH, and the National Association of Composers in the USA Conference at Ruston, LA.

The Festival will begin on Saturday morning at 10:00, and student awards will be presented first. You will have lunch on your own before the afternoon session. There are several restaurants near the hotel. We'll sprinkle contest awards through each session. There will be some sort of writing workshop, so plan to bring a poem (with @20 copies) if you wish to have it critiqued. Michael has arranged for a local chef to cater our evening meal Saturday night.

The Festival Registration fee will be \$25 per festival participant. The non-poets who come along for the ride (or provide the ride) will pay a \$15 fee to cover the banquet Saturday night.

In a couple of weeks, you will receive a detailed program agenda and a list of issues we need to vote during our business session.

In case you misplaced your contest rules, they can be downloaded from the website at www.misspoetry.net/contests. Also available is a flyer [StudentContests.pdf](#) about the student category that can be duplicated to place in libraries and schools in your area.