



# Magnolia Muse

Newsletter of the Mississippi Poetry Society

May 2014

[www.misspoetry.net](http://www.misspoetry.net)

## President's Message

Last month I officially accepted office as your President. Although 2014 was not to have been a normal election year, sometimes life situations change and we need to adapt to those changes. I am both honored and humbled by the faith you have placed in me and will do all that I can to help us continue to grow as an organization.

By now I think most of our members are familiar with using computers, and our website will continue to be used to disseminate pertinent information to you in a timely manner. For those who do not have computer access, we will make every effort to keep you informed by other means.

Please depend on your branch officers to keep you up-to-date with information and feel free to contact me if I may be of service. I can be reached by email at [judydavies@cablone.net](mailto:judydavies@cablone.net) or by phone at 228-522-0028 if you need an immediate response. If there is a problem, we will work together to find a solution. Since I travel with my husband on a fairly regular basis, it may take a few days to get back to you if we happen to be out of town. Please do not use Facebook to contact me as I read those entries on a sporadic basis.

Because this year we chose to move to only one contest and one festival per year, there will be no Mini-festival this fall. Economics being as they are, this was felt to be in the best interest of everyone as many of us are on limited or fixed incomes. I will be working with our new Contest Coordinator to start the process of seeking contest sponsors early so that our one contest will have more categories and there will be more time to write excellent poetry.

*Judy Davies  
MPS President*

*“Painting is poetry that is seen rather than felt, and poetry is painting  
that is felt rather than seen.”*

*— Leonardo da Vinci*

## ***Spring Festival 2014 Recap***

Michael Shelton and his North Branch crew provided a delightful location for this year's Spring Festival. Friday night, we met at the Comfort Inn and Suites for a pre-festival party of snacks, poetry reading, fellowship and laughter. Saturday morning (Apr. 26) we welcomed members and guests for registration and Dierdre Payne announced student awards. The workshop "Merging Poetry and Music" that Ken and I presented seemed to generate good response along with several questions and comments. Dierdre revealed a few adult awards after which we broke for lunch before resuming to conduct our business meeting.

Members voted to raise at-large dues to \$25.00 beginning this fall to be commensurate with what in-state members pay. We also voted to move to one festival per year in the Spring and for board members only to meet in the fall to keep in touch and to discuss any issues that need attention. Central Branch will join the rotation for hosting our two-day Spring Festival. South Branch will host in 2015 with Central Branch hosting in 2016. A vote to go to officer terms of one year failed, so the two year term does remain in place; but officers will have an opportunity to reassess their individual situations after a one year time period. MPS also agreed to continue underwriting the student contests. We will continue to do an annual journal with *Fledglings*, our student publication, being incorporated into the journal instead of being a separate entity.

Following our business meeting, Emory Jones, Brenda Finnegan and Michael Shelton offered us the benefits of their well-honed skills in a poetry critique session of several poems that had been submitted by members. Dierdre continued with awards along with adding her insightful comments. Our 2014 Poet of the Year, Wynne Huddleston, was featured and read several selections from her chapbook, *From the Depths of Red Bluff*. A time of brisk book sales followed before our room was reset to accommodate a lovely catered buffet dinner which Michael had arranged. Our guest speaker, Abigail Voller, from Mississippi State University joined us and then spoke after dinner, sharing with us her insights into poetry and writing.

Sunday's activities included a brief worship service by Dr. Emory Jones, continuation of poetry awards and Brenda Finnegan installed our new slate of officers. Weather on Sunday became less than pleasant and we were pleased to finish ahead of schedule so members could be on their way home as early as possible. Though few in number, we all had a good time and are grateful to Michael and his North Branch colleagues for a job well done.

### ***Wynne Huddleston - 2014 Poet of the Year presents her chapbook From the Depths of Red Bluff***

***From the Depths of Red Bluff celebrates the Magic of Mississippi with blues and muscadines and faith. These poems warm and cool with the simple beauty of a wrap around porch, where Wynne Huddleston sings of pain and acceptance and invites us to "go inside/ and see."--Irene Latham.***

Available at Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/dp/0984048324/> or order from Wynne for \$12 including shipping at [100tpcmis@gmail.com](mailto:100tpcmis@gmail.com)

## ***Notice to Branch Presidents***

Jeanne Kelly has kindly agreed to continue chairing our Poet of the Year program. She, along with our two most recent POY recipients, Wynne Huddleston and Patricia Butkovich, will work together to select a judge. Each branch is asked to select up to two members for consideration for Poet of the Year. Those being considered should have been actively involved MPS members for at least three years, have been published in MPS journals and/or other publications and have a history of service to the MPS community. Jeanne will mail applications directly to the selectees. Selections should be made no later than June of 2014 so that selectees will have ample time to put together the required packet and submit it to Jeanne by a postmark date of not later than September 30, 2014. Packets will be judged and selection announced via the website in October with the new POY's chapbook to be unveiled in April of 2015.

## **HELP NEEDED!**

Sheila Grieco, South Branch, has been appointed as our new Contest Coordinator and Emory D. Jones has agreed to continue as Historian. However, at this time we are sorely in need of a new Scrapbook keeper to bring our scrapbooks up-to-date. There is no need to be particularly fancy, but we do need a volunteer or several volunteers to gather and keep this vital information that chronicles our past festivals and other gatherings. Please email me or phone me if you are willing to provide this important service for us. We will be most grateful.

## ***Manningham Trust Student Poetry Contest***

This year we received a certificate for our participation in the Manningham competition. To continue and improve Mississippi's participation, Jeanne Kelly, along with Tommy and Debbie Little, have agreed to serve as a committee to compile and submit our poetry entries for this important contest. The competition is open to all USA students in grades 6-12. Public, private, and homeschools are eligible for entry by individual NFSPS member states. There are two divisions: Grade 6-8 (Junior Division) and Grades 9-12 (Senior Division). Each state may submit up to ten (10) top poems in each division. Poems may have been printed and/or have won previous awards. **Those who would like to contribute to a prize for the Manningham competition, please let Jeanne know by email or post by August 15.** The committee will set the prize amounts when they know how much money they have. Contact Jeanne at [jskelly04@gmail.com](mailto:jskelly04@gmail.com) or by mail at 315 Church St., Madison, MS 39110. It is up to us to encourage Mississippi's young people to learn to love poetry as we do. Please encourage students to participate with your financial support for the Manningham competition.