

Magnolia Muse

The Mississippi Poetry Society Newsletter

February 2016

Spring Contest: For those poets who are waiting until the last minute, this is your reminder that our contest coordinator, Sheila Grieco, will be receiving contest entries until the deadline of **March 15th**. Please note that this is a **date received deadline**, not a postmark deadline. Entries received after that date will be ineligible for judging. Sheila's address is: 105 Linnett Dr., Ocean Springs, MS 39564.

Spring Festival: Our annual Spring Festival is quickly approaching. Central Branch president Dierdre Payne advises that they are looking forward to hosting a weekend of good poetry among good friends on April 23-24 at Cabot Lodge Jackson North in Ridgeland, MS. Reservations can be made by contacting Cabot Lodge at 601-957-0757 or toll free at 1-800-342-2268 and mentioning the Mississippi Poetry Society. Rates are \$104.00 per night.

Festival registration will be Saturday from 9:00-10:00 AM and the fee will be \$35.00 for the full festival, \$25.00 for Saturday only. We are delighted to have MPS member Patricia Neely-Dorsey as our dinner speaker this year. A much sought-after poet and speaker, "Mississippi's Official Goodwill Ambassador" has published two poetry books that celebrate the south and things southern: *Reflections of a Mississippi Magnolia* and *My Magnolia Memories and Musings*.

MPS Business: Our MPS business meeting will include voting to continue participation in the NFSPS contest and, if so, what kind of poem we would like to represent us. We currently sponsor a sonnet with a total prize of \$75 (\$35, \$25, \$15). Also up for discussion will be our website and how that will continue to be managed. Mr. Davies will post the winner's list following our festival, but after that the website responsibilities will need to pass to an individual of your choice or you may continue to use Mr. Davies, but he will charge for his services, which he has graciously donated for the past three years. Our nominating committee of Brenda Finnegan, DeSha Montgomery and Emory Jones will present a slate of officers for consideration and other MPS business will be discussed as needed.

NFSPS Convention: Last year the NFSPS board authorized the establishment of fellowships to facilitate convention attendance by active members whose financial circumstances prevent them from attending. A Convention Fellowship Committee was established and since then the CFC has agreed that funds for the fellowships should derive principally from the NFSPS portion of any convention profits, with additional money to be drawn from the general fund, as needed. For this first year, three fellowships of \$300 each will be offered. We hope that both the amount and the number of fellowships can increase over subsequent years. To identify deserving candidates for the fellowships, the CFC is seeking nominations from state society presidents and members of the NFSPS boards (except members of the CFC). I am asked to nominate one person who would make excellent use of the opportunity to attend a convention (contributing to the convention itself and bringing back information and ideas to the state society) but cannot currently afford to attend. This person may have attended one or more past conventions or may never have attended any. The three fellowships will be offered on a first come, first served basis. As soon as three nominees have accepted fellowships, the nominations will be closed. The 2016 NFSPS Convention will be held June 9-13 at the Oak Ridge Hotel and Conference Center, located about 30 minutes from downtown Minneapolis and the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport. If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact me at my email of judydavies@cableone.net so your name may be considered for nomination.

Final Notes: As this is my final newsletter before the gavel passes to my successor, please let me take this opportunity to thank you for your support and friendship during my tenure as your president. Special thanks to my fellow officers: Michael Shelton, Dorothy Wiman, Patty Butkovich, and to those appointees who stepped in to help with the work of keeping our society running smoothly. Brenda Finnegan, our Awards Chairman and my mentor; Sheila Grieco, our Contest Coordinator; Emory Jones, our Historian and Scrapbook Keeper; my husband, Ken, our Webmaster; and Jeanne Kelly, Dierdre Payne and Ann Carolyn Cates, to whom I could always turn when I had questions. If I have missed anyone, please forgive my oversight. I appreciate each of you.

This has been both a challenging and gratifying two years. I hope that while enjoying each other's fellowship we have made progress as a society in approaching those things that needed attention, made changes when appropriate, and that we have grown into a stronger, more cohesive society as a result. MPS has numerous gifted poets and I would encourage each of you to continue to share your poetry with each other, with your community, and with the world. Mississippi has a vibrant literary history and literary voice. It continues to grow a little through each of you.

Judy Davies
President

Poetry is plucking at the heartstrings, and making music with them.
...Dennis Gabor