

**Executive Board
2026**

President

Shonda Buchanan
shondabuchanan@gmail.com

Vice President

Debra Belcher
debgal56@gmail.com

Treasurer

Susan Herman
(231) 429-2443
treasurer.psm@gmail.com

Recording Secretary

Elizabeth Kerlikowske
mme642@aol.com

**Membership
Coordinator**

Tasha Webber
membership.psm@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Phillip Sterling
(616) 897-4258
sterlinp@ferris.edu

Webmaster

David Jibson
davidkjibson@gmail.com

Peninsula Poets Editor

Melanie Dunbar
psm.springeditor@aol.com

Contest Coordinator

David James
psmppcontest@gmail.com

Historian

Susan Herman
treasurer.psm@gmail.com

Parliamentarian

Jerry Lang
jerry.lang61@comcast.net

Advisory Member 2026

David James
jamesfam3@charter.net

Honorary Chancellor
Patricia Barnes

Poetry Society of Michigan



"Encouraging Poets Since 1935"

June 2026

President's Message

Dear Valued Members,

What an honor it is to be at the helm of such an incredible organization with a rich 90-year history in the great State of Michigan. I was born and raised in Kalamazoo and since 6 years old, I have loved, read and written poetry.

As President of the Poetry Society of Michigan, I intend to champion inclusivity, expand membership and youth outreach, and deepen statewide visibility of our organization through collaborations and partnerships, and aim to create even more opportunities for our members and poetry lovers. My vision is to celebrate our literary heritage while ensuring the organization thrives as a vibrant, accessible hub for all Michigan poets and writers. With the help of our hardworking Board and guidance from our amazing past president, **David James**, I hope to work on the following initiatives during my tenure to elevate our poetic community.

1. Inclusivity/Membership

Historically, the society's exciting statewide meetings happen in central hubs twice a year. However, to foster grassroots engagement year-round, I want to establish a Regional Awareness Program. This initiative will ask seasoned PSM members and local workshop leaders to pair up with emerging and marginalized writers

across both peninsulas. Whether you are in Detroit, Grand Rapids, or the Upper Peninsula, we want all poetry lovers to have access to advice, craft development and publishing advice. By decentralizing our resources, we can bring the magic of the critique circle directly to local libraries, independent bookstores, and community centers, empowering fresh voices and building stronger neighborhood networks.

2. Expanding Youth Initiatives – Adopt-a-High School/Student

Poetry in Michigan is evolving, and our organization needs to reflect that vibrancy and diversity. In addition to our National Federation of State Poetry Societies collaboration, nonprofits and state agencies like the Michigan Humanities and the Michigan Arts Council, I want to partner PSM with high schools and students, and local educators to create a dedicated High School and Collegiate Poetry Initiative. By offering accessible networks, workshops, internships and meaningful prize categories for students, we can inspire the next generation of Great Lakes lyricists.

[continued, page 2]

President's Message [continued from page 1]

3. Digitizing and Amplifying Member Voices

While we already publish incredible work in *Peninsula Poets* and our periodic anthologies and newsletter, I want to secure funding and volunteer resources to update and digitize our social media and archives, and build a robust, interactive online website for our members. This platform could host virtual readings, feature author spotlights, and create an accessible database of member publications. It will serve as a digital calling card for Michigan's talent, allowing our voices to resonate regionally and nationally, ensuring that our 90 years of literary tradition remain vibrant for future decades.

I entreat you to help shape this vision. Send me your thoughts at shondabuchanan@gmail.com:

What specific **areas of Michigan** do you feel lack poetry resources or our presence?

Are you more interested in **traditional forms** or **spoken word/slam**?

What kind of **events or workshops** would you attend if offered?

Please let me know how we can best grow the society together. Let's inspire each other as poets, and cultivate the next generation of Michigan poets!

In poetic gratitude,
Shonda Buchanan

Tanka

Magical summer
Comes alive with the sunrise
Believe dreams come true
Open your heart to the world
You can make a difference...

Mary Ann Bozenski

And from the Past President:

It's been a wonderful four years as president of PSM, and I have **Elizabeth Kerlikowske** to thank for urging me to run for office. I've met passionate writers from around the state and had the joy of working with a dedicated Board.

And we've accomplished a lot! We have increased membership, built a healthy financial situation, moved the organization to online payments, created a lifetime membership, and enhanced our fall contest prize offerings. We also hosted engaging conferences and printed handsome literary magazines! I am stepping down with confidence in the new leadership of **Shonda Buchanan** as president. She will undoubtedly bring vibrant life and energy to PSM.

My final advice? Get involved! This is a volunteer organization and we must groom new people to work on our website and publications, in particular. **For example, we need an editor for the fall *Peninsula Poets* and a new editor for the newsletter.** Raise your hand and contact **Shonda** or vice president **Deb Belcher** or any of the Board members to volunteer and help out. Remember, you, the members, are the life-blood of PSM. As the great Oscar Wilde said, "The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention."

Be kind to each other. Say yes. Volunteer. And keep writing...

David James

Copyright © 2026 All rights reserved.

The editor would like to gratefully acknowledge the poets whose original work appears in this *Newsletter*. Copyright is retained by them. Permission to further reproduce or distribute these poems in any form, print or online, must be obtained from the authors.

Executive Board 2026: At Your Service

Born and raised in Kalamazoo, **President Shonda Buchanan** is an award winning educator and author of three collections of poetry, two poetry anthologies and a memoir. Her most recent collection of poems, *The Lost Songs of Nina Simone*, won the 2026 Best Poetry Book for the Black Librarians of the American Library Association, while her memoir, *Black Indian*, won the 2020 Next Generation Award for Memoir and was chosen by PBS NewsHour as a “Top 20 books to read” to learn about institutional racism. As a follow-up to first book of poems, *Who's Afraid of Black Indians?* Shonda is working on a second poetry collection that explores growing up in Kalamazoo. Her forthcoming collection of essays, *Children of the Mixed Blood Trail*, examines the hidden tapestry of the Free People of Color migration from the Southeast to the Midwest. You can learn more about Shonda and follow her activities at shondabuchanan.com.

Vice President Debra Belcher has truly loved being involved with PSM for the past eight years, especially during her tenure as Membership Coordinator and as an editor of *Peninsula Poets*. Since retiring in 2014, she's been able to explore many passions. In addition to poetry, she's joyfully busy with painting, quilting, stained glass, and woodworking.

Treasurer Susan Herman splits her time between her hometown of Cadillac and her husband's city by the bay, Traverse City. Recently retired from Alro Steel, Susan now appreciates having more time to devote to PSM. She has served PSM as Treasurer since 2015 and, in 2025, **assumed the role of Historian** following the retirement of beloved longtime Historian **Inge Logenburg Kyler**. Susan's love for PSM runs deep through her grandfather, founding member Dr. Clifford Allen. She enjoys writing poetry, watercolor painting, photography, rock hunting, reading, and spending time with family.

President emeritus **Elizabeth Kerlikowske** has agreed to assume the role of **Recording Secretary** because she just can't seem to get away from poets and poetry. Renown in the Kalamazoo area for her literary advocacy and leadership, she has been an invaluable member of PSM for many years.

Tasha Webber of McBain, joins PSM as our **Membership Coordinator**. She works full time as Dietary Manager at Autumnwood Nursing Home and enjoys a busy family life with her three daughters, two stepchildren, and a lively assortment of pets. A budding poet, plant enthusiast, and lover of camping, gardening, and crafting, Tasha is also the niece of our Treasurer/Historian, **Susan Herman** and the great-granddaughter of PSM founding member Dr. Clifford Allen

Webmaster David Jibson lives in Ann Arbor where he coordinates events for The Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle. He is the managing editor of 3rd Wednesday, a quarterly journal of literary arts. In his writing, he says he is drawn to spaces where documentation thins out and landscapes hold traces of something no longer visible. Find and follow his work at davidkjibson.com.

Everything you might want to know about **Newsletter Editor Phillip Sterling's** literary background and achievements, let alone his personal foibles and transgressions, can be found in *Lessons in Geography: The Education of a Michigan Poet* (Cornerstone Press, 2024).

Peninsula Poets (Spring) and *Five-year Anthology* **Editor Melanie Dunbar** tends flowers for a living. In her spare time, she likes to coax poems into books. Her poetry can be found in *MacQueen's Quintery*, *Sweet: A Literary Confection*, and *Gargoyle*, among other places. She lives in southwest Michigan with her family and a fine assortment of barn cats.

No introduction is necessary for former President **David James**, who remains on the Board as an Advisory Member for 2026. He has also graciously assumed the role of **Contest Coordinator** for 2026.

Parliamentarian Jerry Lang has served as PSM liaison for Art Talks Back, the annual ekphrastic poetry contest sponsored by the Muskegon Museum of Art. He is the author of *Creation Speaks*, a year-long series of daily devotions based upon close observation of nature and God's First Book of Revelation.

PSM Fall Poetry Conference 2026

Mark your calendars! In celebration of its 90 years, The Poetry Society of Michigan will hold its Annual **Fall Poetry conference** on **Saturday, October 17, 2026**, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Lake Michigan Room at the **Library of Michigan** in Lansing (702 W. Kalamazoo St.). More information and registration details will be available in the September *Newsletter* or watch for updates on Facebook and the website later this summer. poetrysocietyofmichigan.com

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle Monthly Poetry Workshop

Monthly Workshops: On the second Wednesday of the month, CWPC holds an informal poetry workshop on Zoom. All are welcome to present a poem for positive, constructive peer feedback. Please write us at cwpoetrycircle@gmail.com or use the Event Registration menu on the Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle blog to receive the link a few days prior to the workshop.

Focused Workshops: On some fourth Wednesdays of the month, we hold a meeting on Zoom related to each of the Focused Workshop Exercise pages in the drop-down menu on our blog site. They are designed so the material can be read and worked on at one's own pace, even if one does not plan to attend the workshop. Visit the Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle blog to get upcoming dates. Registration is required.

2026 Westminster Art Festival

Several PSM members participated in the 14th annual **Westminster Art Festival**, which has taken place between from April 25 until June 12 at **Westminster Presbyterian Church** in Portage. This annual event is a juried exhibition of art and poetry with an environmental theme, which changes every year. This year's theme was "WHOSE BACKYARD?"

Awards were presented to winners in Poetry and Visual Art during a reception and reading on May 15. **Alison Swan** (poetry) and **Maya James** (visual art) presented the awards:

POETRY

- 1st Prize:** "Remember when water the tip of the iceberg," by **Janice Zerfas**
2nd Prize: "The Hayfield," by **Jane Wheeler**
3rd Prize: "Copper Country," by **Linda Rosenthal**
HM: "The Speck of Matter," by **Marsha Meyer**
HM: "Selected Sacrifice Zones: Copper," by **Ruth Moerdyk**
HM: "What Groundhogs Know," by **Theresa Coty O'Neil**
HM: "Our Backyard Tree: A Haibun," by **Renee Szostek**

ART

- 1st Prize:** *Our Backyard Refuge* by **Bobbe A. Luce**
2nd Prize: *NIMBY* by **Conrad Kaufman**
3rd Prize: *Up in the Air* by **Melody Allen**
HM: *The Socioeconomic Hierarchy of Pollution* by **Cathy Germay**
HM: *Centering* by **Mary Baggerman**
HM: *Creating a Better Community* by **Debra Langford-Franks**
HM: *Specimen Box: Bloodsuckers and Specimen Box: Dreamers* by **Elizabeth Henderson**

Committee Prize: *Too Close for Comfort* by **Gay Walker**

2026 Art Talks Back Ekphrastic Poetry Contest

The **Muskegon Museum of Art**'s annual ekphrastic poetry contest was held between January 29 and March 12, 2026. Poets were invited to submit an original ekphrastic poem based on one of five works of art selected from Museum's permanent collection. This year the Art Talks Back Ekphrastic Poetry Contest at the Muskegon Museum of Art had 76 submissions over all; 24 were high school students from Muskegon county [a record!]

2026 State-wide Winners

1st Place: Julie Essenberg
2nd Place: Joshua Sauvie
3rd Place: Gloria L. Klinger
HM: Melissa Seitz
HM: Katie Kalisz

Muskegon County High School Winners

1st Place: Christian Graves-Orcutt
2nd Place: A'kyla Lewis
3rd Place: Megann Dexter
HM: Aaliyah Jordan
HM: Kaylie Riksen
HM: Kami Ryke

PSM is a contributing sponsor of *Art Talks Back*.

PSM Five-year Anthology Update

The Five-Year Anthology is in production and will be released at the Fall Conference. Thanks to two extremely generous donations, each member of PSM and each contributing member will receive a copy. Issues will be mailed after the conference to those not able to attend. Over 100 members submitted some of the best poems I have read from our membership.

Melanie Dunbar, Editor

Springfed Arts Contest 2026

Poetry Finalists

(Judged by Joy Gaines-Friedler)

1st place: "Incubation," by Melinda LePere
2nd place: "On Being Told Happiness Begins with Knowing What I Want," by Julie Bonner Williams
3rd place: "The Last Time," by Ginny Bentz
HM: "Stone Fruit," by Rhonda Sider Edgington
HM: "Sacrifice," by Kristin Bartley Lenz

Prose Finalists

(Judged by Jane Hamilton)

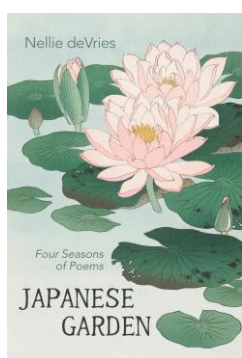
1st place: "The Accordionist," by Shannon Mackie
2nd place: "Breakfast with Ed," by Agata Bledsoe
3rd place: "What a Difference a Dame Makes," by Tim Hefferon
HM: "The Bean Walker's Mile," by Joel Mabus
HM: "What I Left in Nikko," by Cheryl Crabb

There were 34 total contest entrants (18 poets and 16 prose writers).

Winners will read their winning entries on Tuesday, September 29, 2026, 7 p.m. at Unity of Royal Oak, 2500 Crooks Road, Royal Oak, MI 48073. Coffee and cookie kiosk. Free and open to the public.

The Printed Word

Meadowlark Press announces the publication of *Luminescence in Season*, a new collection of poems by **Colleen Alles**. As its title suggests, Alles's poems celebrate the wonders of everyday interactions—a summer wedding, a neighbor's wandering dog, a trip to the public museum to see the carousel in motion—leading the reader from the depths of black moss to the shallow water at the surface where life's true ecstasies can be found. A book launch for *Luminescence in Season* will be held at **Fountain Street Church in Grand Rapids on July 9**. Everyone is welcome. More information can be found at www.ColleenAlles.com.



Wipf and Stock Publishers is pleased to announce the publication of *Japanese Garden: Four Seasons of Poems* by **Nellie deVries**, a collection of poems composed during multiple trips to the **Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park** over the course of a year. Of *Japanese Garden*, **Robert Hudson** writes, “Just noticing the world around us is a deeply spiritual path, and Nellie deVries walks there effortlessly in these delightful haiku-like poems. It is a quiet sanctuary of noticing. Her mastery of *mono no aware*—the art of capturing the beauty of the fleeting moment—is on display in this accessible and inviting volume. The book can be ordered from wipfandstock.com and Bookshop.org (ISBN 979-8-3852-7243-3).

Jan Mordenski's collection of poems, *Blue Prairie of Darkness* was the winner of 2026 chapbook prize in poetry from **Michigan Writers Cooperative Press**, chosen by judge **Linda Nemeč Foster**. Mordenski, a native Detroit native whose poetry has appeared in journals both in the U.S. and abroad, taught poetry writing and folklore studies at Mercy High School for thirty-seven years. In her judge's statement, Foster referred to *Blue Prairie of Darkness* as “indelible and quietly powerful.” For chapbook availability and upcoming readings, contact Mordenski at jemordenski@hotmail.com.

News from Kalamazoo

Friends of Poetry (FOP) is putting on a **Poetry Carnival** at the **Portage District Library** on **June 11** from 5:30-7:30 p.m. for all ages. Poetry Poker, critique, workshop: you name it. Everyone welcome!

Not only that but Friends of Poetry celebrates its **50th birthday June 18th** at the **Kalamazoo Institute for the Arts** on South Street. *Free. Food. Fun.* From 5:30-6, it's about Friends of Poetry, and from 6 on, it's an open mic with activities and a raffle and—did we mention?—food! (If you are a former Celery City winner, we would love to have you read in that first half hour.)

The **Kalamazoo Writers Disorganization** has completed a second successful year. For the summer, meetings will still be on the **first Tuesday at 4 pm at Bell's Brewery**. Members will have a perhaps political reading in July to celebrate the holiday.

AND the **Kalamazoo Poetry Festival** is doing amazing things. Please check their website.

Letter from the PSM Historian

Celebrating 90 years! What a great moment in history for PSM. After such a wonderful Spring Conference in Saginaw, with two great workshops, the launch of our Spring/Members edition of *Peninsula Poets*, election of new Board Members—not to mention cake!—I can hardly wait for our Fall Conference.

And we have so much more in store yet for 2026. Our Fall Contest is just being announced, and we have two books in the works—the Fall/Contest edition of *Peninsula Poets* & our 5-Year Anthology—both of which will be introduced at our Fall Conference in Lansing. It's a very cool time to be a poet in Michigan!

It's also a pleasurable time to be the PSM Historian as well. Recently I enjoyed a lovely visit with former Historian **Inge Logenburg Kyler** at her home in Eaton Rapids. She and her husband Art are preparing to downsize and move closer to their son, and I was there to collect the PSM memorabilia that she has lovingly gathered over her many years. Thank you Inge for your dedication to PSM! I will be going through this collection and sharing with you in the Newsletters to come much of this rich history. Her collection will also be placed in our archives at the **Clarke Historical Library** at CMU for preservation.

Gratefully yours,
Susan Herman

& Other News

Denise Sedman's poem "Diagnosis Cancer" appears in the most recent issue of *New feathers Anthology*, which can be read online: newfeathersanthology.com

Linda Nemeč Foster will be teaching poetry workshops and classes as a featured writer in Scotland this summer. A writing consortium of West Michigan colleges, Scriptoria, has invited Linda to be part of their core faculty in Dundee, Scotland from July 29 to August 3, 2026. For information about Scriptoria, visit their website <http://www.scriptoriaworkshop.org>. Among Linda's other activities were readings at the Allen Ginsberg Poetry Award ceremony in Paterson, NJ and at the AWP Conference in Baltimore, where the initial selection for the Linda Nemeč Foster First Book Award for Poetry (a partnership between Cornerstone Press and Linda to support and promote new poets) was debuted. An interview with Linda by **Anne-Marie Oomen** was featured in the 2026 issue of *Presence*, a poetry journal published by Caldwell University in NJ. Follow all of Linda's many poetry activities at lindanemecfoster.com

Inge Kyler laments that, after eighty years of writing poetry, she's not publishing so much any more, though recently her poetry has won some prizes and appear in anthologies of the **Pennsylvania Poetry Society**, of which she is also an active member. Nevertheless, "poetry and music," she writes, "are the sustaining forces and gifts of life. I can't stop playing my piano, either!"

Strange Accounting Procedures

Looking at Christmas and Hanukkah cards I received this year, arranged in standing formation on the dining room table so I can observe them as I eat my meals alone, there were cards I didn't receive that in past years arrived early. For some, the death of a spouse must have made the thought of sending cards too painful to contemplate. Grief can do that. Others may have become weary, unable to summon thoughts of good cheer in this angry world. Friends of my late wife, now scattered across state and country, may have decided that after her death, only a year or two of card sending was necessary. The balance of non-senders probably said to themselves, "Oh, to hell with it!"

Robert H. Darnton

Gravity's Origin Story*

With the sonic boom She made entering the atmosphere.
Gravity landed with a meteoric fiery THUD,
pulling the seraphs, the demons, the demi-spirits,
semi-truck-sized *Oni*, hungry ghosts,
cycles of death/rebirth/reincarnation/hells/heavens/purgatories
fueling Her descent, a comet's tail of burning dinosaurs and megafauna,
singed Her landing strip.

The universe got tired of all the deity infighting
and yeeted a planet-sized rock into Earth.
Spirit realms needed to fucking. Chill.

Kicking up a cloud of dust,
She blocked out the sun with Her cloud of arrival,
choked the drama and air out of the atmosphere and announced,

"Fuckers, knock off your goddam wars,
see what I did to the DINOSAURS? TRY ME!"

And thus, no one tried Gravity ever again.

Until those weird little raggedy primates on earth
discovered math and metallurgy,
figured out more (or less) controlled combustion
and started stuffing tin rockets full of
bone-sludge blood, set it on fire, and shot up to the atmosphere for kicks.
They slingshot around the
dark side of the moon's asscrack
using Gravity's coattails,
sigh these raggedy homo sapiens crack the math
and use it to be insufferable, little teenage gnats
but Gravity is too busy with the rest of the galaxy.

She's tending the black hole (egg) at the center
incubating it with time, light, sound waves from the BCE era,
plus, the racket from the homosapiens' brain trust
bombarding it with the energy it needs
to begin the Bang again.

Sher Ratnabalasuriar

*Winner of the Traveling Trophy, Spring 2026

News from Saginaw

Creative 360 is holding its 17th Annual Artfest for Michigan residents over 55 years of age. Eligible artists and writers can submit work to be considered. Deadline for written work is June 10; for visual art June 16. The Awards Ceremony will be Friday, June 26. For entry details and info about other Creative 360 activities visit becreative360.org.

A **Spoken Word Workshop** will be held at the **Roethke House** on Friday, June 12, hosted by the Friends of Roethke. For info about that and other upcoming activities this summer: info@friendsofroethke.org.

The June gathering of **River Junction Poets (RJP)** will be held **Saturday, June 27, at 1 p.m. at the Zauel Library meeting room**. Join us!



The **Detroit Poetry Salon** will present **LIGHT & SOUND: An Evening of Poems and Music**, on **Wednesday, June 10, at Kayrod Gallery** (4750 Woodward) starting at 6:30 p.m. Among the distinguished performers is PSM Honorary Chancellor **Patricia Barnes**. Everyone welcome!

Journey

We embrace October and November, our favorite months—jeweled leaves tumbling—like us, past peak. Chickadees & ravens linger while the last songbirds depart.

How we look up & out as milkweed releases her seed-laden parachutes. Like these aspens, swaying & shedding—we are becoming unencumbered.

Let us watch the forest open her windows into the interior of this wild mystery. And let us vow to explore these back trails in our northern woods—singing our love songs into the firmament.

autumnal rhythm
we navigate darker days
crisp chill in the air

golden leaves scuttle & swirl
vectored geese adorn the sky

Ellen Lord

Call for Submissions 2026 PSM Peninsula Poets Contest Edition

READ CAREFULLY AND THOROUGHLY

Only properly formatted, emailed submissions will be accepted.

- Contest dates: **June 15 – August 10, 2026.** Poems and payment *must be received by noon on August 10th.* No exceptions. Late entries will be discarded; late fees retained as a donation to PSM.
- No simultaneous submissions or previously published poems, including on social media.
- One poem per category (up to 10 separate poems), with no poem submitted to multiple categories.
- Line limit: **Category 2, up to 18 lines.** All other categories, no line limit; poems under one page are preferred. No artwork.
- Entry Fees: **\$5 per poem (non-member)**
\$3 per poem (PSM member)
- Michigan residence/PSM membership *not* required.

***NEW* - EMAIL SUBMISSIONS ONLY**

Entries must be an attachment to a email, formatted according to the following guidelines, and sent no later than noon on August 10 to psmpoetrycontest@gmail.com. Guidelines:

- **Subject line:** Last name, 2026 PSM Peninsula Poets Contest. (Ex: “Dickinson, 2026 PSM Peninsula Poets Contest”)
- **Body of email:** include ALL AND ONLY the following: **Poet’s full name and current membership status:** (PSM Member: Yes/No) ; **mailing address, email address, phone number;** AND **list of category(ies) and poem title(s) submitted.**

• **Submit poems in one, single attachment:**

Microsoft Word file, Times New Roman size 12 font, single-spaced (not “exactly”, “multiple”, “1.5” or any other specification). One-inch margins, left-justified; no headers, footers, or formatted/inserted page breaks. Include poems in numerical order by category number; start each category on its own page within the attachment. Each page in the attachment should include **only:** Category number, poem title, and poem, in that order, with no contact information in the attachment. NO PDFs. [Visit “Contests” at poetrysocietyofmichigan.com for examples.]

• **Email submission to:**

psmpoetrycontest@gmail.com.

Members: \$3 *per category*

Non-Members: \$5 *per category*

(If you don’t know your membership status, email **Tasha Webber** at membership.psm@gmail.com to inquire before submitting. Membership must be current as of June 1, 2026, to qualify for member rates.)

***Online payment is strongly preferred** via the PSM website [[poetrysocietyofmichigan.com/Annual Poetry Contest](http://poetrysocietyofmichigan.com/AnnualPoetryContest)]. Upon payment, **Forward your PayPal or Venmo receipt (or a screenshot of it) to David James at: PSMpoetrycontest@gmail.com. Your name should be on the receipt you forward.**

Fees may also be paid by check or money order to:

PSM Poetry Contest 2026

P.O. Box 1035

Cadillac, MI 49601.

Include name, membership status, categories and poem titles with payment; **entry fees must be received no later than August 10.**

Additional Contest info with sample formatted entries can be found at poetrysocietyofmichigan.com and on the Facebook page.

2026 PSM Peninsula Poets Contests

Category 1: Margo LaGattuta Memorial Award

In 2011 **Margo LaGattuta** was posthumously named the first Honorary Chancellor for PSM. The category is sponsored by Polly Opsahl and Friends of Margo. **Any subject**, any form.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 2: Chancellor's Prize

For a poem of **eighteen lines or less, any subject**. *Open to poets who have not yet published a full-length book of poems* (chapbook and self-published full-length books excepted). Sponsored by former Honorary Chancellor Eric Torgersen.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 3: Founder's Prize

The Founder's Prize is sponsored by Susan Herman, in honor and memory of her grandfather Clifford Allen, one of the founding members of the Poetry Society of Michigan, **for a poem "about philately, postage stamps, postcards, the art of letter writing or letter poems."**
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 4: The Barbara Sykes Memorial Humorous Poem

Barbara Sykes loved to write humorous poems. The award is sponsored by her niece, Honorary Chancellor Patricia Barnes, for a **humorous poem in any form**.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 5: George Dila Memorial Prose Poem

George Dila was a beloved award-winning writer of fiction and poetry and the founder of Ludington Visiting Writers. The award is sponsored by Phillip Sterling for a **prose poem, any subject**.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 6: The Jude P. Dunbar Memorial Prize

A poem in any style about **Nature**. The award is sponsored by Melanie Dunbar, in honor and memory of her father.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 7: Overcoming Adversity

A poem in any style about **Overcoming Adversity**. The award is sponsored by Mary Ann Bozenski.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 8: The Faruq Z. Bey Award

For a poem involving **Music**. This award is sponsored by the Detroit Writers Guild (DWG) in honor of the great jazz saxophonist Faruq Z. Bey. Any form.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 9: Loss

A poem in any style about **Loss**. This award is sponsored by George Wylie.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

Category 10: Dr. Lucille E. Thompson Decker Memorial Award

For a poem involving **Women and Science**. The is sponsored by Dr. Kathleen P. Decker on behalf of her mother. Lucille was born in 1927 in Grand Rapids and had a distinguished academic and professional career before retiring as a Senior Associate Editor in the Biochemistry Department at Chemical Abstracts Services.
Prizes: 1st/\$100, 2nd/\$50, 3rd/\$25

POETRY SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN

Business Address:

PSM Treasurer
PO Box 1035
Cadillac, MI 49601

Treasurer.PSM@gmail.com

poetrysocietyofmichigan.com
& FACEBOOK

an affiliate of
The National Federation of State
Poetry Societies
www.nfsps.com

Literary Locals: Writers Welcome

Confirm with Organization before Attending!

Downriver Poets & Playwrights meets regularly on the first Tuesday of the month at Bacon Memorial Library in **Wyandotte** at 6:00 p.m. Contact **Dennis White** at 734-755-5988 or dennis68white@aol.com for more information.

The Grand River Poetry Collective meets regularly at The Lit (61 Sheldon Blvd) in Grand Rapids. For info and monthly activities visit grandriverpoetrycollective.com or their online literary platform theriverlit.com.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle of Ann Arbor meets on 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of each month. All sessions are virtual and accessible through Zoom. Additional info: <https://cwcircle.poetry.blog/>. Email cwcircle@gmail.com for Zoom link.

Rochester Poets' Society meets at the Rochester Hills Public Library, in **Rochester**, from 1-3 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month. For more info Contact **Nancy Stevens** 248-303-2613 or email writings80@yahoo.com.

Marquette Poets Circle meets on first Monday of the month in the Peter White Library Conference Room at 5:30 for workshop, 6:30 for Open Mic. For more info contact **Marty Achatz** at machatz@pwpl.info or 906-226-4322.

River Junction Poets of Saginaw meet regularly throughout the year. For dates and times and other info, visit their Facebook page or email **Christine Rohr** at docxrohr@aol.com

Women are welcome to join **Third Place Poets** the **second Sunday** of every month, **1:00-4:00 p.m.**, in the **Dodge Room of the Commerce Township Public Library** (180 Commerce Road). Email thirdplacepoets@gmail.com for more info.

The **Detroit Poetry Salon** is a bi-weekly ZOOM meeting of poets who have, according to liaison **Nancy Shattuck**, “bonded in Spring Fed [Arts] poetry classes.” You do not need to be a Spring Fed or PSM member to join. Interested poets should contact Nancy for more info at shattucknj@gmail.com.

For information about the many activities and gatherings of **Friends of Poetry—Kalamazoo**, contact **Elizabeth Kerlikowske** (mme642@yahoo.com) or visit their Facebook page.

Ludington Writers meets every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Judith Minty Room (second floor) of the **Ludington Area Center for the Arts**, 107 S. Harrison St., Ludington. All are welcome. Second and Fourth Tuesdays are critiques. For info visit ludingtonwriters.org or call **Nicole Birkett** (231) 742-8550.

The **Southeast Michigan Poetry Meet-up** hosts free workshops on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month beginning at 7 p.m. at **Panera Bread**, 30955 Woodward Ave., in **Royal Oak**, MI. Bring hard copies of your poem to share. RSVP at meetup.com. For more information, call **Carla Dodd** at 248-961-3636.

The **Lansing Poetry Club** generally meets once a month at a different member's house. For more info or to confirm a meeting, visit Facebook or email LPC President **Ruelaine Stokes** (ruestokes@gmail.com) or Board member **Cheryl Caesar** (caesar@msu.edu).