

Chaparral updrafts

from the
California Federation
of Chaparral Poets, Inc.

serving California poets for over 60 years

Volume 65, No. 3 • April, 2004

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SF Poetry Center celebrates 50 years

by Heidi Benson, Chronicle Staff Writer

Within its walls are the sounds of Auden, Ginsberg and Walker. Their words still echo at the Poetry Center, 50 years after its birth.

There are at least two versions of the Poetry Center's creation myth, and both involve Dylan Thomas.

In the most oft-told tale, the seed was planted by the wild Welshman on a 1951 visit hosted by San Francisco State Professor Ruth Witt-Diamant.

Reportedly the poet declaimed, "There's a lot of nasty ideas you poets out here have. You should have a poetry center."

In another version, the story starts in Wales. As Mark Linenthal, director of the Poetry Center from 1966-72, recalls it, "Ruth was visiting Thomas, and he was drunk most of the time at the bar."

Apparently, this left her plenty of time for contemplation.

"She was wondering what she should do for poetry in San Francisco when she got back, so she gath-

The Library of America launches classic poetry series

In April 2003, The Library of America began a new and important undertaking: a series presenting the most significant American poetry, selected and introduced by today's most discerning poets and critics. Elegantly designed and textually authoritative, the American Poets Project makes available the full range of the American poetic accomplishment in compact and affordable editions. The series features volumes devoted to single poets—Walt Whitman, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Edgar Allan Poe among them—as well as anthologies exploring particular themes, genres, and eras, ranging from light verse to American poetry inspired by World War II.

To purchase a volume, view its table of contents, or read excerpts and reviews, visit the catalog section of this website.

<<http://www.americanpoetsproject.org/>>

Now available:

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Karl Shapiro Walt Whitman

Edgar Allan Poe Yvor Winters

Poets of WW II American Wits

ered ideas from all the locals about what a poetry center should be," Linenthal says.

The tenacious Witt-Diamant gained the institution's support and founded the Poetry Center in 1954 — that everyone agrees on.

And the author of "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night," who died in '53 at just 39, has a permanent place in the legend.

But since those events weren't recorded, the definitive story will never be known.

In a clear case of poetic justice, the center — now called the Poetry Center & American Poetry Archives at San Francisco State University — has become one of the most important repositories of poetry recordings in the nation.

That feat was ripe for celebration in February, as

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Convention '04 almost here

There is still time to make your reservations for this year's Convention, which will be held at the Convention in the Ontario Airport Marriott April 30 – May 2. Contact Ursula Gibson to make the convention registration. Lodging is limited, but try **Best Value Inn & Suites**, 2425 S. Archibald, Ontario, CA 91761. Phone: 909-923-2728; Fax: 909-947-0022.

Developed around the theme of *Flight*, an exciting and enjoyable program of events awaits us. Those who have attended past conventions can attest to the enthusiasm that envelops participants as they have opportunities to meet and share with other poets from throughout the state. Newcomers are encouraged to bring their notebooks, binders, journals — wherever they keep their treasured compositions — so that they will be prepared to read from their own work as they attend the nightly read-arounds throughout the weekend.

The Registration Table will open at 3 pm on Fri-

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Please send news and information items to the editor one month in advance of intended publication date.

For questions involving membership, either new or renewal, please contact the treasurer.

Be sure to visit our new web site:

<http://www.ChaparralPoets.org>

Read any Good Poems lately?

Poetry magazine reviews pro and con on Garrison Keillor book

It's been a long time since I have read two articles discussing the same topic that were so diametrically opposed. The current issue of *Poetry* magazine features just such a situation.

Dana Giola's opening paragraph in "Title Tells All" seemed to sum up my own preconceived expectations.

When I first saw Garrison Keillor's anthology, *Good Poems*, I was prepared to treat it with mild condescension. The title struck me as a little too coy, and my first glance through its topically arranged pages noticed mostly the sundry quality of its contents. "Title tells all," I thought, as the movie commentators in TV Guide used to say, when forced to describe films like *Teen Cheerleader Murders* or *Godzilla vs. the Smog Monster*. Keillor is a deft and original entertainer with a genu-

ine literary gift, especially for a brand of satire so decorous and gentle that it blurs into nostalgic romance, but he is not a writer given to the lyric extremes of powerful emotion so often essential to poetry. I assumed that most of the poems in *Good Poems* would, indeed, be good poems, but probably not good enough to make the book a necessary addition to the already overcrowded field of anthologies.

Yet when I looked at the review by August Kleinzahler, in "No Antonin Artaud with the Flapjacks, Please", I quickly sensed a cynical aversion to all things Garrison Keillor. His second paragraph is a blistering plethora of condescending references:

Now, had Keillor not "strayed off the reservation" and kept to his *Prairie Home Companion* show with its Norwegian bachelor farmers and Lutheran bake sales (a sort of *Spoon River Anthology* as presented by the Hallmark Hall of Fame), comfort food for the philistines, a contemporary, bittersweet equivalent to the Lawrence Welk Show of years past, I'd have left him alone. But the indefatigable and determined purveyor of homespun wisdom has wandered into the realm of fire, and for his trespass must be burned.

I must confess that I recoil somewhat against the harshness of Mr. Kleinzahler's criticism. I chose to read Mr. Giola's review first. He quotes from Ezra Pound — who is not included in the book:

... these lines from Pound's magnificent and mostly forgotten "Homage to Sextus Propertius" came to mind in considering the virtues of Keillor's approach. After complaining about the bloated literature of his late Imperial age, Pound's Roman persona asks not for epic grandeur:

But for something to read in normal circumstances?

For a few pages brought down from the forked hill unsullied?

I ask a wreath which will not crush my head.

Keillor is quite conscious and deliberate in his intention to compile a book "to read in normal circumstances." *Good Poems*, he announces in his characteristically

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Convention program detailed

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day, April 30, and an afternoon audience-participation program will be offered on the topic, *Favorite Poems Written by Other Poets*. For this activity, members are asked to bring books or other printed copies of poems by other authors that they would like to share.

The official opening is scheduled for 7 pm, with a greeting from local city officials, followed by anecdotes of past CFCP activities to challenge the historians among us, concluded naturally by the ever-popular read-arounds. Convention Chair Marjorie Voigt has her eye on a lovely spot on the third floor above the lobby, where there is plenty of room, a variety of types of seating, pleasant lighting, and an open atmosphere.

Saturday will begin with *Meet the Authors* in the book room, with sessions across the hall in one of the large ballroom salons, while upstairs a day-long Youth Poetry Festival will be underway.

The Poets' Luncheon will be held in the 3-story Atrium of the Lobby, concluded with a program of piano music by Dr. Henry Sheng. Further sessions will be presented in the afternoon and evening, followed, of course, by a read-around.

Main sessions will include *Everett Ruess: Poet, Artist, Adventurer; Poetry on the Web, It Only Hurts When I Laugh*; a two-part session on *Sonnets*; a slide and prose poem commentary; and a two-person *Poetic Dialog*.

The Annual Board Meeting will open the Sunday program, followed by a morning seminar. Winners in the Annual Contest will be presented beginning at 1 pm, and the Golden Pegasus Banquet will begin at 7 pm. Dr. Timothy Steele, UCLA professor and poet, and leader of the New Formalist Movement, will be the guest speaker. Truly committed participants will no doubt stay for one more session of read-arounds. In past years this informal session has sometimes been known to run into the wee hours.

Among those slated to present during the weekend are Pegasus Buchanan, Lee Collins, Dr. Jack Fulbeck, Ursula Gibson, Mary and Wil Hurley, Elaine Lazzeroni, Marie Searles, Anna Mae Johnson Terrell, Keith Van Vliet, and Richard Thielo.

Poets are encouraged to bring copies of their recent publications and place them for sale in the book room. Anyone needing a space reserved in the book room needs to contact Convention Chair Marjorie Voigt in advance to make the appropriate arrangements.

AAC starts National Poetry Month with a daily dose of *Almanac*

The Academy of American Poets began its year-long observation of things poetic on April 1, the first day of National Poetry Month, with its *National Poetry Almanac*.

Through its informative and entertaining daily entries, the *National Poetry Almanac* will provide a starting place for you to learn more about poetry.

Here are the topics for the first 22 days of April:

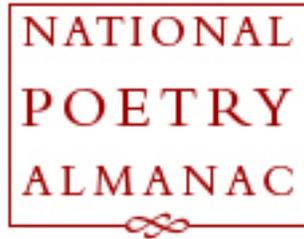
- April 1: Read a book of poetry
- April 2: Memorize a poem
- April 3: Revisit a poem you loved when you were young, then give a poem you didn't like another try
- April 4: Put some poetry in an unexpected place
- April 5: Bring a poem to your place of worship
- April 6: Attend a poetry reading
- April 7: Play Exquisite Corpse
- April 8: Read a poem at an open mic
- April 9: Show your support of literary organizations
- April 10: Google a poem
- April 11: Hear a Poem
- April 12: Participate in Young People's Poetry Week (April 12-18)
- April 13: Subscribe to a literary magazine
- April 14: Put a poem in a letter or make your own poetry greeting cards
- April 15: April is the cruelest month (especially on Tax Day)
- April 16: Take a poem out to lunch or put a poem in your lunchbox
- April 17: Get out the sidewalk chalk and commit a poem to pavement
- April 18: Read or recite a poem to family and friends
- April 19: Organize a poetry reading in your area
- April 20: Promote public support for poetry.
- April 21: Start a poetry reading group
- April 22: Read some literary criticism

...and here is the complete entry for April 15:

April 15: April is the cruelest month (especially on Tax Day)

"April is the cruelest month . . ." begins the first line of *The*

Waste Land, the signature modernist poem by T.S. Eliot. The 15th of April could easily be named the cruelest day of April, as today is the annual deadline for Americans to mail their tax returns, and checks, to the Internal Revenue Service. To mark National Poetry Month on past tax days, the Academy of American Poets and the American Poetry & Literacy Project distributed thousands of free copies of *The Waste Land* at selected post offices across the country to taxpayers rushing to make the deadline.



Eliot's poem, a landmark of twentieth century poetry, was published in 1922 to a fire-storm of reviews—some praising the work for capturing the confusion of the "modern" age following World War I and some cursing its difficult, discontinuous voice. The poem's disconnectedness is clearly deliberate, but Eliot supplied guideposts for the reader in his extensive notes that accompanied the long poem (434 lines). A clue from Eliot about the poem was embodied in its original title, which was "He do the Police in Different Voices." The advice Ezra Pound gave, while making numerous deletions and editorial changes to the body of the poem, was to use instead "The Waste Land" as the title.

Words and images in the first line and elsewhere in *The Waste Land* echo Walt Whitman's great poem, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." Whitman's poem commemorates the death of Abraham Lincoln, who was assassinated while lilacs were in bloom. *The Waste Land* also contains numerous allusions to the Holy Grail legend. Images of death and rebirth repeat throughout the poem, leading poets and critics to a continuing debate about whether this is a poem of despair or of salvation.

Congratulations—you've been celebrating National Poetry Month for two weeks now! Take today off and finish up your taxes by midnight.

You can find the Almanac at <http://www.poets.org/almanac/>

At the web site there is a note requesting help from the public, so here's our chance. What do we want the rest of the country to know about California in terms of Poetic Landmarks?

Suggest a Poetry Landmark

In August, we'll be featuring a list of Poetry Landmarks across America on our *National Poetry Almanac*, but we need your help to do so! If you know of a great poetry landmark in your area, please email a brief description of the location to npm@poets.org and we'll consider it for our list.

Try 'Poem-A-Day' to add interest, variety to your e-mail

Here's a little note that came across our desk a few days ago. It might be worth checking out.

Want to get a famous poem in your inbox everyday? For free?

Subscribe to Poem-A-Day

"From Walt Whitman to Carolyn Forché, we send a poem by exceptional poets (with

brief bio and commentary) to your e-mail in-box daily Monday through Friday."

DayTips.com <http://www.daytips.com/?cxc=73110> provides a variety of free daily e-zines — FREE STUFF — in your email in box Monday through Friday. Among them is Poem-a-Day.

Set your browser to the above link, then

select "Poem-A-Day". [Just be careful that none of the other options are selected, unless you really want all of those things, too!]

We all have time to read one poem. And most of us would like to read more of the greats, and know about their lives. Interested? Give it a try. If you find the poems provided are not to your liking, you can always cancel.

'Good Poems' debated in reviews

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wry but also surprisingly (and pleasingly) pointed introduction, is "simply a book of poems that got read over the radio on a daily five-minute show called *The Writer's Almanac*, poems that somehow stuck with me and with some of the listeners." He goes on to specify his editorial criterion: "stickiness, memorability, is one sign of a good poem"...

So, then, it would seem that one intention in selecting the particular poems that make up this collection is the ease with which listeners and readers remember them. Giola continues:

...memorability is a governing aesthetic that Horace, Dante, and Milton would have understood, though one does not hear it mentioned much today in graduate schools. Our age has more sophisticated notions of poetic merit. Yet isn't there something quite primitive, indeed primal, about the poetic art that links it unbreakably to the power of memorable language?...

It is, I think, this essential difference in understanding the purpose of the book which sets apart the two reviews so completely. Giola finds that many of the poems included are delightful, some of which he recalls from his own childhood, while Kleinzahler scorns the book as being somehow not literary enough. Giola observes:

...For all its disarming rhetoric of homely common-sense, Keillor's introduction displays more critical acumen and editorial courage than one usually finds prefacing an anthology. In some curious way Keillor's piece is closer to the brash and playful style of a Futurist manifesto or early Modernist polemic ... than the down-home comfort prose of "Letters from Lake Wobegon."...

By this point, I was ready to purchase a copy for myself. I wanted to know what it was that Giola appreciated and Kleinzahler disliked, since I had always found Keillor's "Letters" an intriguing mix of wit and nostalgia, with perhaps a bit of caprice thrown in.

Giola continues:

In *Good Poems* Keillor suggests that

what makes a poem good depends both on what one intends to use it for and who intends to use it. If one wants a poem for English majors to analyze in a seminar room, certain qualities are likely to be prized — complexity, density, ambivalence. But if one intends poems to reach a general audience in the ordinary business of their day, then other qualities are primary — such as expressive power, music, and memorability.

Memorability is the core of Keillor's aesthetic, but significantly, he does not invoke the traditional mnemonic powers of rhyme and meter. On the contrary, he has a decided preference for the plainspoken free verse of writers like Raymond Carver, William Stafford, and Robert Bly. If not verbal music, then what makes language stick

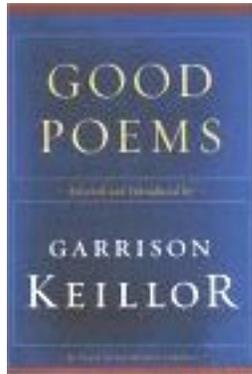
in the mind? Not surprisingly for such a noted raconteur, Keillor locates memorability in storytelling. "What makes a poem memorable is its narrative line," he asserts. "A story is easier to remember than a puzzle."

Giola concludes:

... what impresses me most about *Good Poems* is the intelligent inclusion of neglected writers. How nice in a book that includes Gerard Manley Hopkins, Emily Dickinson, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to find Gerald Locklin, Kay Ryan, Vassar Miller, Tom Disch, Edward Field, Anne Porter, Robert Phillips, and Joseph Stroud.

And even Kleinzahler admits

Actually, *Good Poems* isn't as bad as one might think the range of the selections suggests more variety than the show customarily offers, and there's a healthy dollop of Anonymous, Shakespeare, Dickinson, Burns, Whitman, *et al.* There are surprising and delightful choices I would never have credited Keillor in making ... like Anne Porter, an excellent and little-known poet. And the volume contains enlightened selections of the work of well-known contemporaries [such as] C. K. Williams. Of course, on balance, it's a rotten collection I wouldn't recommend to anyone, but it's not so bad as it might have been.



The Online Poetry Classroom (OPC) Project

A program of the Academy of American Poets

OPC provides both professional development for high school Language Arts teachers and a virtual teaching community enabling teachers across the country to access free poetry resources online, including innovative, classroom-tested curricula. Among its current offerings are the following:

OPC Workshops

The workshops are designed to expand teachers' knowledge of poetry, curriculum development, and education technologies. During the workshops teachers work in collaboration with a poet, a curricular advisor, and each other to begin developing new strategies for teaching poetry.

National Poetry Map

Locate poetry resources in your area by using the National Poetry Map, which offers state-by-state listings of poets, journals, poetry organizations, reading series, literary festivals, creative writing programs, and much more.

Teacher Resource Center

Search hundreds of relevant links in our Teacher Resource Center, including information about writers in the schools programs, sites created by teachers, listservs, state & district teaching standards, and more.

OPC Newsletter

Subscribe to the free monthly e-mail newsletter, *Online Poetry Classroom Bulletin*, to read updates on the program and learn more about the website's features.

Teacher Forums

The OPC Teacher Forums provide a space for teachers to share ideas and seek help from colleagues. The Forums are intended for the use of English and Language Arts teachers (or those studying to become teachers). First time users must register. Join the conversation!

Curriculum Units & Lesson Plans

Use OPC curriculum units in your classroom. The OPC website currently offers 17 curriculum units created by secondary school teachers participating in the first and second years of the OPC program. Each curriculum unit is classroom-tested.

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Poetry Center in San Francisco now a 50-year-old institution

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the center marked its 50th anniversary — at a time when preservation of these pieces of history is urgent.

Festivities begin with a benefit event Saturday night featuring Adrienne Rich, Ishmael Reed, Michael McClure, Robin Blaser and Etel Adnan, plus “rare voices from the American Poetry Archives collection.”

There was a time not so long ago when space was so tight that the collection — stored between a boiler room and a photo lab — was nearly thrown out. The university came to the rescue: In 1995, a new Humanities building included climate-controlled rooms for the tapes.

The collection represents the evolution of magnetic tape from the '50s on — not a pretty history, since manufacturers were experimenting with new, often failed, technologies.

By the time the collection was moved to its new home, some tapes were disintegrating and many were too brittle to play without damaging them. A 1998 NEA grant provided two new computers to speed the process of digitizing the tapes, but progress is slow.

The three-person staff includes business manager Elise Ficarra. There's director Steve Dickison — who develops all the programming and teaches a course based on each year's season of visiting poets (this year's 15-week season includes 18 poetry programs). And there's tech-whiz Jiri Veskrna, whose job as videographer and archives manager is funded for just two-thirds time.

Poetry on tape? Priceless.

One of the “rare voices” from the Poetry Archives collection is that of Theodore Roethke, who gave the inaugural reading at the Poetry Center in February 1954.

“Very soon after, he got the Pulitzer Prize, and Ruth thought, ‘We must be doing something right,’” Linenthal recalls.

That reading wasn't tape recorded, but — as Dickison surmises — it's likely that Kenneth Rexroth, the poet who helped found KPFA-FM, lured Roethke into the studio at the radio station. The clue: Roethke reading the same poems from that event is audiotape #1 — the very first — in the Poetry Center archives.

After the success of Roethke's reading, Witt-Diamant launched a whole series of high-profile readings at SFMOMA to raise money for the center. Over the years, William Carlos Williams, Allen Tate and Kenneth Patchen ap-

peared. But the first one featured W.H. Auden.

From the start, the center sparked a certain kismet, and San Francisco poet McClure got a taste of it when he was a student at State.

One of his instructors was poet Robert Duncan (the influential assistant director who attracted visits by luminaries like Robert Lowell and Denise Levertov); another was Witt-

“American poetry was exploding with energy by the late '50s. And it was in or around the Poetry Center that the poets of the San Francisco Renaissance mingled with the Black Mountain poets, and where the Beats met the New York School.”

Diamant, who invited McClure to a post-reading fête for Auden (who actually helped fund the center by returning his \$200 honorarium).

“There were mostly academics and professors at that party,” McClure recalls. “But there was another young man leaning up against the wall — we were the wallflowers. It was Allen Ginsberg.”

Since Ginsberg had met Auden before, he introduced the great man to McClure, who recalls, “It was more interesting to meet Allen and talk about his visions of William Blake. We made an appointment to meet for coffee, and he showed me Kerouac's letters from Mexico City.”

American poetry was exploding with energy by the late '50s. And it was in or around the Poetry Center that the poets of the San Francisco Renaissance mingled with the Black Mountain poets, and where the Beats met the New York School.

Now, it is here in these archives that you can see Frank O'Hara — of the latter school — caught on film in his dinky New York apartment. A cat nuzzles the typewriter as the poet puffs endless cigarettes, issues pronouncements (“You don't need to eat croissants to understand French poetry”) and reads poems including “Ave Maria,” which starts with a bang: “Mothers of America, let your kids go to the movies!”

It's here you can see Ginsberg, filmed in the basement of City Lights in 1965, reading a poem that begins “I was arrested thrice in Prague,” greeting a semi-coherent Neal Cassady and demonstrating Tibetan hymns to the unborn Buddha with which he starts every

day. “I sing for 20 minutes. It's like prayer.”

Here, you can listen to Marianne Moore reading a poem called “Light Is Speech” in 1957, as she tests various wordings: “I'm re-writing this as I read it.”

And it's here you can see Alice Walker as a very young woman, discussing Zora Neale Hurston before the great African American writer's work was republished by Turtle Island Press.

This stuff is priceless, not just to fans of literature but to scholars who rely on the Poetry Archives to round out their understanding of an artist's work.

Looking forward

Today, the Poetry Center is funded through the Creative Writing Department and has an annual budget of \$200,000.

“We're not really flush with money,” says poet Maxine Chernoff, chair of the Creative Writing Department.

“But the Poetry Center is where people want to read. Poets often stop here on their way through the U.S. if they're visiting from other countries.”

Students benefit from this constant activity — not only with writers in the community, but from all over the globe.

“From the beginning, the Poetry Center continued the internationalization of San Francisco as a major literary center,” McClure says. And diverse voices continue to be heard in the center's latest incarnation.

Chernoff gives Dickison gets credit for his eclectic programming, saying, “I recently saw an Israeli poet, a Russian poet and an evening of Afghan poetry.”

Every director of the Poetry Center has left their own mark — from James Schevill, Ishmael Reed, Jewelle Gomez and Stan Rice to Frances Mayes, Kathleen Fraser and Robert Gluck.

Shevill, who followed Witt-Diamant, started the Poetry in the Schools Project, which has since become an independent entity. “That went all the way back to the beginnings of the Poetry Center,” recalls Linenthal, assistant director at the time. “Ruth's idea was that the function of the Poetry Center was to create an audience for poetry, and if it was going to be successful, you'd better begin with kids.”

Poet Al Young has written and narrated videos for the center, read his own work often there,

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SF Poetry Center sets plans for future

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and so, has known several of its directors, including Mayes (of "Under the Tuscan Sun" fame) and Rosemary Catacalos.

"Rosa was the most outreaching of all — she did not go for literary snobbism," Young says, noting that not since the 19th century has poetry enjoyed such popularity as it has today.

"Academic poets should be glad that young people are getting out from in front of the TV and getting involved in poetry," Young adds with a laugh. "It may lead them back to their work."

Gomez, director from 1996-99, aimed to bridge that gap. "I decided that I should be as inclusive as possible," she says. Her programming included playwright Brian Freeman (founder of PoMo AfroHomo) and Japanese American poets, including Janice Mirikitani, who read from their memoirs of internment.

"The students were just amazed," she says, as they were when she brought in Sekou Sundiata, a member of the Last Poets, a group that was recording poetry in the '60s.

"Last Poets were the beginning of the spoken-word movement — and they were very political, energetic and musical," Gomez says.

"The students loved hearing him talk about the history of spoken-word and perform it so magnificently."

As the center gears up for its next 50 years, everyone hopes for financial stability — that is, more funding for salaries and for preservation.

It's an incredible asset to be part of the university, but as Frances Phillips, director from 1985-88, notes, it can make it harder to raise money.

"Poetry is a part of the art world that has never gathered rich collectors," Phillips says. "It's not like buying paintings, where the physical object is really accessible — which is one of the things I love about it.

"Famous poets can get pretty famous, but they never get a movie deal."

Gomez dreams of the center bringing poetry into different communities.

"I'm a bookmobile baby," Gomez says, "and I would love to see events in the Mission, Bayview, the Fillmore, the Sunset. There's value in taking stuff out into the neighborhoods."

And Young speaks for multitudes, when he wishes for the increased support that will allow for continuity or — heavens — progress:

"I hope the Poetry Center keeps its foot in the wide community of poetry, while maintaining its role as an institute that teaches and records the history of poetry in America."

To learn more about the Poetry Center, visit <www.sfsu.edu/~poetry>.

Online Poetry Classroom

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How To Teach Poetry

This section contains tools designed to help teachers incorporate poetry into high school classrooms. These resources, chosen and created by OPC staff and participating teachers, include classroom-tested curricula; essays on teaching and reading poetry; ideas and tips for introducing students to poetry; links to recommended education, technology, and poetry sites; and links to information about English and Language Arts standards around the country.

What To Teach

This section collects materials designed for and by English and Language Arts teachers for use in high school classrooms. Intended to give teachers a context in which to present poetry to their students, these resources include a list of poems taught successfully by other teachers, thematic and historical exhibits on poetry, a clickable map of America, a timeline of significant poetic events, and a compilation of audio and video resources for teachers. Includes a list of 341 poems which teachers have successfully taught in high school classrooms.

To learn more about the OPC, visit <www.onlinepoetryclassroom.org>.

By-Laws revision proposal explained; ballot included

Clip this ballot, mark your vote, and mail or bring to the Convention.

**By-Laws
Revision
Ballot**

I approve the proposed change to the By-Laws.

I oppose the proposed change to the By-Laws.

It was brought to our attention that the following notice, which was included in the February issue, was omitted in the March issue, and it did not include a form on which to vote either in favor or opposed. We are including it in this issue and urge you to act immediately if you want your vote to be counted.

At the Board Meeting in January the By-Laws Review Committee brought its first suggestions to the Board for consideration. The board voted to accept the recommendations, and they are presented here for your approval.

Rationale:

Due to the increasingly 'global' nature of our membership, the current membership guidelines have become unnecessarily restrictive. We currently have numerous members who live outside of California, and many non-residents enter (and win) our monthly and annual contests. A simple change to the wording of Article III, Section 1(a) will eliminate the confusing and somewhat contradictory conditions for membership currently in place. The revised text is printed below for your examination. The strike-through portion would be eliminated, leaving the remainder of the passage as it is.

1(a) ~~Regular membership in CFCP is limited to California residents and members of recognized out-of-state Chapters.~~ Any person supporting the purposes of CFCP may become a member. Writing or publication of poetry is encouraged, but is not a requirement for membership. Out-of-state residents may belong to a recognized ~~out-of-state~~ Chapter or become Members-at-large. All members (except spouses living at the same address) are entitled to receive the Newsletter and all supplementary CFCP publications, and all members may enter CFCP Annual Contests free of charge, with the exception of the California-Poets-only category.

Changes to the by-laws require a vote by the membership, so this is your final opportunity to vote on this issue. Your vote may be mailed to Jeremy Shuman at: 2521 Meadow Rue Drive, Modesto, CA 95355, or bring it with you to the Convention

A handy info-page

Here is the page you'll want to have handy when people ask how to join CFCP, or for your own double-checking of the monthly contest categories and rules. Both items are contained in a convenient reference source: one that can be photocopied and given to prospective new members or pinned on the bulletin board above your desk.

And be sure to send in your poems to the monthly contest... it's where many of us first see our names in print! The price is so minimal you can hardly afford to pass up the chance. Notice that many of the categories are open-ended enough to accept almost any type or style or subject. Look through that collection you've been holding back and see if you have something to enter.

Also, the membership year has just begun, meaning that new members can join for all of 2004! Please think in terms of making a copy and giving this handy form to an interested friend or acquaintance. It can be completed and returned (along with a check) to your chapter treasurer, who will then send it in to the state.

Make a few copies of this page to carry with you and hand them to your friends and acquaintances. Leave a few copies at your library or on the bulletin board at the local college or university. Let's all recruit a few new members. Get the word out!

CFCP, Inc. Monthly Contests

Except where otherwise indicated, poems are limited to 28 lines

RULES

- JANUARY** — Free Verse
- FEBRUARY** — Poet's Choice
- MARCH** — Any Subject, Any Style
- APRIL** — Light or Humorous Verse
- MAY** — Poet's Choice
- JUNE** — Children, Pets or Places
- JULY** — *no contest*
- AUGUST** — Poet's Choice
- SEPTEMBER** — Any Subject, Any Style
- OCTOBER** — Any Poem 24 Lines or Fewer
- NOVEMBER** — Nature (any style)
- DECEMBER** — *no contest*

Contests are open to all poets in the United States and Canada. Each poem submitted must be typewritten on standard size paper with the contest month in the upper right-hand corner. Send ONE COPY of each poem with author's name and address in the upper left-hand corner of the reverse side. Address labels are acceptable. Multiple entries are especially welcome.

Only UNPUBLISHED POEMS and poems not previously awarded a money prize are eligible. A fee of one dollar (\$1.00) must accompany entry for each poem submitted. Send cash or make checks to CFCP, Inc. DEADLINE is the last day of the contest month. Envelope must be postmarked no later than 12 midnight of that day. *Print contest month on outside of mailing envelope.*

NOTE: *In any month wherein insufficient entries are received, those poems which were submitted will be held over and judged with the entries for the following month.*

1st prize: \$25.00 2nd prize: \$15.00 3rd prize: \$10.00

Poems will be returned only if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Allow one month after closing date of contest before sending poems elsewhere. Winning poems will be printed in the Chaparral Newsletter.

**CALIFORNIA
FEDERATION
OF CHAPARRAL
POETS, INC.**

➔ Pegasus Buchanan
mail contest Monthly Contest Editor, CFCP, Inc.
entries to 1422 Ashland Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711



YES!

I definitely want to be a member of the
California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc. for the year 2004.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (____) _____ FAX (____) _____

E-MAIL _____

Your membership includes all issues of the newsletter; Updrafts, free entry in the Annual Contest, Monthly Contest information, and Membership Roster every 2 years during the membership period. All memberships renew between 8/1 and 12/31 yearly. Persons joining between February 1 and July 31 will use the pro-rated formula. New memberships received between August 1 and December 31 will be extended for the following full year.

*** Those who desire to continue membership with a chapter, please remit dues to your local chapter treasurer.**

How to Become a Member

check the appropriate item:

- _____ Membership Annual/Renewal \$15⁰⁰
- _____ New Member (February 1 to April 30) \$12⁰⁰
- _____ New Member (May 1 to July 31) \$7⁵⁰
- _____ Spouse (1/2 regular member) \$7⁵⁰, \$6⁰⁰, or \$3⁷⁵
- _____ Junior (under 21; show proof of age) \$3⁰⁰
- _____ Donation (specify amount)

_____ I am interested in joining a Chapter in my area (name of Chapter) _____

_____ I wish to join as a Member-at-Large.

_____ We wish to form a Chapter of our own (5 or more Regular Members are required to form a new Chapter) to be called _____

Members-at-Large: Clip this form and mail along with a check or money order **made payable to CFCP, Inc.** to:
Frances Yordan, Members-at-Large Chairman, 2575 W. San Jose Avenue, Fresno, CA 93711-2733.

All Others: Send this form along with a check or money order **made payable to CFCP, Inc.** to:
CFCP Treasurer, P.O. Box 806, Tujunga, CA 91043-0806.

National Contest announced by POV

The Poets of the Vineyard have announced their annual National Poetry Contest for 2004, with over \$500 in prizes. Postmark deadline is April 30, 2004.

Categories include:

- A: Forms or Rhyme and Meter** (no free verse nor random rhyme). If a formal form is used, specify in upper right corner.
- B. Long Free Verse**, up to 32 lines.
- C: Poems that Tell a Story**, up to 32 lines.
- D. Short Poems** (haiku, senryu, tanka, triolet, cinquain, free verse, etc.) up to 10 lines.
- E. Theme on Vineyards or Grapes**, up to 32 lines.

One Grand Prize of \$75 will be awarded. Each category will offer prizes in the following amounts: First Prize, \$50, Second Prize, \$25, third Prize, \$15, plus three Honorable Mention Certificates.

Send two copies of each poem typed on white 8 1/2 x 11 paper. In the upper right of each sheet, write the category letter and name. On one copy, write no other identification. On the second copy, in the upper left, write your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and "member" or "non-member."

Send only one poem per page, and no hand-written poems. Line limits do not include titles or stanza breaks. No limit on number of entries, but each poem may be entered in only one category.

Controversial topics are encouraged, but offensive content and language does not win this contest. All poems must be suitable for a general audience. Entry fees for non-members are \$4 per poem, or 3 poems for \$10. For members of POV, the fees are \$3 per poem, or 5 poems for \$10. Annual membership in POV is \$12. Make all checks and money orders payable to Poets of the Vineyard.

Mail all poems and fees in one envelope to: **Contest Chair, Kay Renz, 2541 Casey Drive, Santa Rosa, CA 95403**. No poems will be returned.

In past years, CFCP members have often been among the prizewinners.

An evening with Bay Area Poets Laureate

Bay area poets laureate spent "a lively evening of examination of creative acts and processes" in Alameda on Monday, April 19, where they discussed topics such as the state of the art of poetry in their communities, how having a poet laureate can affect an area, and the meaning being in this position can have in a poet's life.

Among those scheduled to be in attendance were debbie loyd, poet laureate of Modesto, Kirk Ridgeway, current poet laureate of Pleasanton, Charlene Villella, first poet laureate of Pleasanton and tri-valley poet laureate, Dorothy Hansen, poet laureate of Napa County. The poets laureate of San Francisco and Sacramento were also invited, as were students from the local schools who had been chosen "poet laureate for the day" from their classes.

The event was hosted by the Alameda City Arts Council and Mary Rudge, Alameda's poet laureate and president of the Alameda Island Poets chapter of the California Federation of Chaparral Poets. Members of the chapter served as the welcoming committee.

Convention Information
Online Poetry Classroom launched
Proposal for By-Laws Revision
National Poetry Almanac
• **Inside: SF Poetry Center's 50th**

Volume 65, No. 3, April 2004
Chaparral Updrafts
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Chaparral Updrafts (ISSN 1543-5903) Published monthly except January, June and August by the California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc. at 2521 Meadow Rue Drive, Modesto, CA 95355-3910. Subscription price of \$3.60 is included in annual dues. Periodical postage rates paid at Modesto, CA.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc., 2521 Meadow Rue Drive, Modesto, CA, 95355-3910.

