

Chaparral updrafts

from the
California Federation
of Chaparral Poets, Inc.

serving California poets for over 60 years

Volume 64, No. 1 • February, 2003

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Getting in touch with our past

During the past six years, CFCP, Inc. has been working very hard to establish a set of archives that would be a valuable resource for future research. Past President Katharine Wilson, along with Joy Haas and others, has devoted much time and energy to that endeavor, and was instrumental in placing a rather large number of CFCP publications with the State Librarian for the archives there. However, it has also become apparent that many vital documents are still missing. On a number of occasions a call for contributions has been placed in the newsletter, with only partial success.

The urgency of this problem was recently again brought to our attention when I received a telephone call from a friendly voice in Tampa, Florida, a man by the name of Lange Winckler, who was seeking a booklet of the winning poems for the youth contest of 1963.

He had tracked me down by a long and circuitous route, involving calls to some members in the San Bernardino chapter whose contacts he found on the Internet.

He was, he said, a winner in that contest, he thought that the booklet was entitled "Wings of Pegasus," and his brother had won the same contest the following year. He had already contacted the California State Library, where an archivist was attempting to help

'Western Heritage' theme for Convention

The 2003 CFCP Convention will be held April 25–27 at the Ramada Inn, Modesto. Included in this issue are registration forms for both the hotel and the convention itself.

With Registration from 3 to 5 pm on Friday afternoon, guests will be feted at a Welcome Reception Buffet from 5 to 7. The Opening Program will begin at 7 pm with introductions and a welcome by a city representative.

Opportunity for Read-Arounds will conclude the evening.

Events begin on Saturday at 9:15 am with options to attend sessions on topics ranging from on-line poetry to slam poetry, haiku to limericks, the California Quarterly to teaching poetry to young people.

The Poets Luncheon will provide an opportunity to get "close-up and personal" with one of the various presenters of the day: one or two will be seated at each table, so that participants will be able to ask

continued on page three: 'Detailed'

him, but had not been able to locate a 1963 or 1964 booklet, although a 1965 copy was available.

I took notes, while my mind raced. Here was someone who had been —briefly— a youth participant in our organization 40 years ago! What had that opportunity done for him I wondered. Following an exchange of e-mail addresses and a few more minutes of conversation, we said goodbye, but I was soon composing a letter full of questions and suggestions for him, regarding this reaching back into a prior time. He very graciously replied, helping me to piece together the story of his search, and crystallizing in my consciousness how swiftly time alters what we think will remain forever unchanged.

The older of the two boys, Lange transferred to Santa Ana Valley High School in the middle of his

continued on page two: 'Story'

CFCP has a new web site!

Members are invited to begin visiting — and mentioning to their friends — our new web site, which is located at www.ChaparralPoets.org. There, you will be able to access PDF copies of the newsletters, information regarding conventions, membership applications, and much more. The first few pages are already there, but it is intended to expand in the months ahead, so keep coming back!

Establishing this web site signals that we are finally ready to begin sending the newsletter by e-mail to as many as can receive it in that way. If you haven't yet given us your e-mail address, please contact membership chair Jeremy Shuman at <jeremys@myrealbox.com> and let him know what it is.

Story of one man's search points up need for archives

continued from page one

sophomore year when his family relocated from Louisville, Kentucky to southern California. They boys had been attending an all-male Catholic school, where students were

required to wear a coat and tie and most of them carried their books and lunches in a briefcase. The surfer mentality was a severe cultural shock, to say the least.

His junior English teacher, Mrs. Carol Kuiper, only a few years older than her students, was the one in whose class he had received a "homework assignment of writing an entry for what I recall was the 'Pegasus Club' poetry contest.... The Vietnam War was then beginning to expand, and the idea of young men I knew — or me — going to die in that war seemed foolish and unjustified. I penned a short piece about the war's dead arriving in the halls of judgement: 'Hush! God, we are here' was the last line."

Classmates in the Class of 1964 thought he'd probably end up a newspaper editor, which he did. He has also been a magazine editor, helped produce and co-host a radio talk show, aided in the development and production of his mother's nationally-syndicated news insert program (The Senior Report with Doris Winkler), written "three exceptionally obscure commissioned books," and has put out pitches to book agents for a variety of other "interesting but odd volumes." He has spent quite a few years in advertising and public relations, becoming "exceptionally adept at weasel-wording, spinning, and gilding the lily."

"And," he said, "I do essay a bit of verse occasionally but most assuredly not for public consumption."

He concluded by repeating that "I most surely do hope to find out just **what** contest my brother and I entered, just what kinds of "winners" we were, and get a copy of the immortal product of our naive and sparkling minds."

But such was not to be. The California State Library called to tell him they checked the lists of winners in 1963 and did **not** find his name, although they seemed not to find much of anything else from CFCP in that time period, either. His next thought was that maybe either he and his brother had won a contest sponsored by someone else, their victories were not state-wide honors but some local version of it, or he had got the years wrong.

So he decided to call his old high school, hoping to locate in old student records just what organization had delivered which

awards to his brother and him. Today Santa Ana Valley High School is simply known as "Valley," and getting to speak to someone who could help him turned out to be a task.

"The line was picked up by one of the students at school, working in the office. He put me on hold and I think went away. I called back. This time another student connected me with one of the school counselors, Lenore. I thought to ask her about Poe and 'The Raven,' checked myself, thought next about Beethoven's 'Leonora Overture' and again thought twice, then simply explained the mission. I'm a graduate of 40 years ago, won this contest, need the information, what are my chances? ... And by the way, were you even born when this took place?"

"Nice woman. Nope, much younger than that, nope, no info at the school, all those dusty records are now elsewhere, here's the number and I'll transfer you — and then she asked, 'So, did you want to know if I was named for the woman in the Poe poem?' A sheepish yes followed and she laughed: 'No, it's my grandmother's name.'

"A far more disinterested, rather bored-sounding archivist at the school district's annex offices simply told me, 'We only saved on microfilm what the law required, reports cards and immunization records.' She sounded defensive and angry about being asked anything and I gave up that search as a poor job. ... No joy, alas."

At this point, J. Lange Winckler, employed as a full-time professional historian for Odyssey Marine Explorations, a company that specializes in recovering shipwrecks dating as far back as the 16th Century, has abandoned his search. He was glad to have shared his 'odyssey' with me, he said, "even though it turns out to be a disappointment because whatever my brother and I did for a poetry contest wasn't **your** group's contest."

Or was it? How will we ever know? Without a set of archives of our own, I was in no position to be able to help him. I couldn't even verify that the archivist at the State Library had searched in the right place.

We **need** those early documents! Please look through your boxes and stacks and files in the attic or garage and see whether you have anything that might be of value to the archives of CFCP, Inc. We're counting on your help!

Chaparral updrafts

Editor & Publisher James Shuman

2521 Meadow Rue Drive
Modesto, CA 95355-3910
209-523-6954 FAX 209-521-8778

Treasurer Ursula T. Gibson

P O Box 806, Tujunga, CA 91043
818-353-7174

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>

Slate of officers proposed for '04 – '05

At the CFCP, Inc. Board Meeting on January 25, 2003, held at the Doubletree Hotel in Ontario, the Board approved the report of the Nominating Committee. The slate of nominations is as follows:

- president* James Shuman
- first vice president* Jeremy Shuman
- second vice president* Katharine Wilson
- third vice president* Pegasus Buchanan
- fourth vice president* Eric Donald
- treasurer* Ursula T. Gibson
- recording secretary* Lee Collins
- corresponding secretary* .. Dorothy Marshall
- member at large chair* Francis Yordan

If you feel to nominate someone else for any of these offices, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee **no later than March 10** with the name(s). Also, make certain that person has agreed to accept the nomination. The Nominating Committee consists of C. Joy Haas (408) 243-2035, Jim Gibson (818) 353-7174, and Veryl Thompson (209) 529-5828.

Monthly Contest Winners

Winter Playground

Cold creeps through space, sun shimmers the snow, and silence flaunts her dominance. Soon doll-filled carriages, wheeled by laughing children dash

through the open gate. Sounds break a cold that cuts pudgy noses and chubby cheeks. Sun melts on faces, then streams down, shadowing

fur-lined boots that wreck the pristine white. While dolls gape, their mamas climb winter's bare trees; daring height, they scale higher and higher.

Soon feet find the ground and march up and down, trooping around tall, gray marble. They pause, then read: Beloved Angel Amy. Born:

1801 Died 1807.

They sigh, then leave this tall, winged-elegance, their favorite, and charge ahead. They stop, snowball the snow away from a slab of marble and eat their lunch on the cold words:

Robert (Roving) Orland with dates of his birth and death. After a crushed snow drink, their cold feet, and colder wet gloved hands heed the

beckoning warmth of home. And stoic dolls lead thumping hearts away. Only mute tombstones remain, shadows on white under a

smooth, blue sky. Deep in earth's dark, aged spirits rejoice to feel their youth living again—running and playing and laughing once more.

—V. Ione Murchison, Elk Grove
First Prize, November

Sunflower

Golden emperor of my garden with a thousand eyes and robe of green,

your yellow head flames with orange, rises proudly

to honor the sun. Your shadow swallows small flowers and weeds,

the lesser subjects of your earthy domain, until

you must surrender the scepter, bow your head and give your eyes to birds.

—Betty Temple, Albuquerque, NM
Second Prize, November

Fallen Willow

The slender grace of you your sensuous singularity long fingers of leaf drapery

will haunt this place where you stood leaning toward the stout maple,

whose strong limbs now hold you, beautiful in death, your shroud of green leaves trailing on the ground.

—Norma Kohout, Sacramento
Third Prize, November

Detailed schedule of Convention program announced

continued from page one

questions, gather more ideas, and pick up another suggestion or two. The afternoon will include more fun workshops, including a Poetry Primer for beginners and young people, and concluding with the Junior-Senior Awards presentations and readings. The Children's Poetry Fair will continue throughout the day in the lobby.

After dinner on your own, the evening will offer an editors' round table, featuring editors of five different poetry magazines, followed by a workshop on how to master — and enjoy — French forms. Of course, another Read-Around will conclude the evening.

The annual membership meeting will be-

gin at 9:15 Sunday morning, followed by a playful workshop on short forms.

A performance by a local group of poets, The Licensed Fools, will begin the afternoon, followed by the Adult Contest Awards and readings.

A no-host reception and silent auction from 6:30 to 7 pm will lead into the Golden Pegasus Banquet from 7 to 9:30 pm. Guest speaker for this event will be Susan Wooldridge, author of the highly-acclaimed *Poem Crazy*.

Still have poems to share? Still have energy left? One of the "unofficial" events of almost every convention is the read-around on Sunday evening. This one often occurs in the guests' rooms, and with the suites laid

out as they are, it's almost certain to occur again this year!

New Roster Booklets nearly ready for mailing

Roster and By-Laws chairman Jeremy Shuman reports that the updated booklet is very nearly ready to go to the printer, with just a few more names, addresses, and affiliations to double-check. It should be available for distribution prior to Convention 2003. An appropriate number of copies will be sent to each chapter president or contact person for local distribution. Members at large will receive their copies in the mail.

Additional copies will be available for purchase at the Convention.

Ramada Inn set to welcome Chaparral Convention-goers

Extending a hearty Central Valley welcome, the Ramada Inn, Modesto, located at 2001 W. Orangeburg Avenue, has offered a flat room rate for the Convention, but requested that the host chapter take care of the preregistration details and payments.

Thus, each room reserved through Poets of the San Joaquin — **not the hotel directly** — will be billed at the rate of \$67.58 per night, including all taxes (you are personally responsible, of course, for incidentals). That means you can tell us how many will be in your rooming group, any special needs you have (are stairs a problem? you may prefer to stay upstairs, where the meeting rooms are located; do you prefer smoking or non-smoking? etc.), and we will do the best we can to accommodate you.

Most of the “double” rooms include two queen beds; most of the “executive” rooms include one king-size bed. The suites also include a sofa that opens into a double bed. Rooms also include a wet bar, refrigerator, coffee maker, microwave, daily newspaper, and fresh flowers from the rose garden.

Other amenities include:

- 24-hour Front Desk
- Outdoor Heated Pool
- Sunning Deck and Public BBQ area

- Adjacent shops/commercial services
- Color television with Cable
- In-Room Movies
- Complimentary Continental Breakfast
- Free local telephone calls
- AM/FM alarm clock
- In-room safes
- Handicapped rooms/facilities
- Laundry/valet services
- RV or truck parking
- Pets allowed
- Baby-sitting/child services

Shopping centers, banks, health clubs, theaters, office supply stores, and churches are conveniently located, some within walking distance. There is a wide range of food service establishments, from coffee shops and fast food outlets to full-service restaurants, many located within a mile or less of the hotel. A new Mexican Restaurant is opening just two doors down the street; a Krispy Kreme donut shop is another block away; steak houses, Italian, Chinese, and salad specialty houses are within a few minutes’ drive.

The local chapter will have addresses and telephone numbers for many of these locations, and will assist you in finding them.

Reservations must be **received** by PSJ by April 1, 2003. But because we want to help

you to secure the room that is best for you, please do send in your reservation as soon as possible, since special requests will be taken on a first-come basis. **Note that the mailing address for your hotel reservation is not the hotel!** It is

Reservation
Poets of the San Joaquin
PO Box 1161
Modesto, CA 95353-1161.

Contest for 2002 photography

Now is the time to be thinking about those snapshots and photographs you took at last year’s Convention— or maybe something from a special local chapter event. Do you have one or more that are memorable and worth sharing with the rest of us? Get them ready, add a clever caption to go with each one, and send them to this year’s Photography Chairman, Claudia Cobleigh. Her address is 1270 Chadwick Court, Modesto, CA 95350.

Categories will include Most Artistic, Best Story Quality, and Funniest. There is no limit to the number of entries, and no fee. Entries must be **received** by April 12. Be sure to include your name on the back of each photo (an address label works nicely for this).

Protest against the war grows rapidly among poets

Should poetry be political? Should poets take sides in current controversies? Should they speak out against the war?

These questions never seemed to have been the center of public inquiry until recently, when what First Lady Laura Bush had planned as a celebration of American poetry at the White House became instead a worldwide poetic protest against the possible war in Iraq.

Her “Poetry and the American Voice” symposium, set for February 12, was canceled after several prominent poets declined her invitation. The White House apparently feared the event would become less a literary activity than a political forum.

A new web site, www.poetsagainstthewar.org, was established, and drew heavy response (more than 9000 contributions have been printed online, with hundreds more still to be prepared for posting, many from well-known poets). The “movement” quickly took on a life of its own, with over 150 events

scheduled not only across the US, but in several foreign countries as well, held on February 12 and ensuing days and weeks, instead of the White House event.

On Monday, February 17 a group calling itself *Poets Against the War* purchased a 1/4 page ad on the Op Ed page of the National Edition of the *New York Times*. Among the signers of that ad were many well-known names.

The ad read, in part:

“Over the past two weeks, more than 8,000 poets have submitted poems or personal statements to register their opposition to this war. In doing so, they honor a long and rich tradition of thoughtful and moral opposition by poets and other artists to senseless and murderous policies, including those of our own government. At no time in history have so many poets spoken in such a large chorus.

“We call upon the Bush administration to halt its headlong rush toward war, to heed

the voices of the people of the world, and to seek peaceful means of resolving conflicts in company with the world community.”

After Mrs. Bush, who has hosted several other literary events at the White house, postponed the symposium in late January, her office issued a statement: “While Mrs. Bush understands the right of all Americans to express their political views, this event was designed to celebrate poetry.” It has not been rescheduled.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* carried a lengthy article with quotes from area poets and a list of several locations where poetry readings would occur. In its interview with Sam Hamill, who initiated the web site, he said he had expected perhaps 50 responses, but instead received more than 5000 in two weeks. “It was never my intention to close down her poetry tea party,” he said, “but I had to make a statement. There isn’t just a war being planned against Iraq, there’s a war going on against the Constitution.”

A handy info-page

We get frequent queries as to how to join CFCP, or for a listing of the monthly contest categories and rules. In this issue of *Updrafts* we have included both of them on the same page, which provides a convenient reference source as well as one that can be photocopied and given to prospective new members.

Send in your poems to the monthly contest... it's where many of us first see our names in print! and the price is so minimal you can hardly afford to pass up the chance. Notice that many of the categories this year 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 entered the first step of the pro-rated formula, meaning that from now through April new members can join for just \$12. 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. 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
- JULY** — *no contest*
- JUNE** — Children, Pets or Places
- 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 2003.

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. 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 \$15.00
- _____ New Member (February 1 to April 30) \$12.00
- _____ New Member (May 1 to July 31) ~~\$7.00~~
- _____ Spouse (1/2 regular member) ~~\$7.00~~, \$6, or \$3.00
- _____ Junior (under 21; show proof of age) \$3.00
- _____ Donation (specify amount)

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

_____ 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 _____

New Members: 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.

Youth Outreach takes a new direction

by *Jeremy Shuman*

For the last few years it has been painfully obvious that CFCP, Inc. is facing a membership crisis. The recent losses of Roscoe Fortson and Vicki Lavorini only makes the issue more clear — we must actively recruit new and younger members if we are to survive. But how?

What can we offer the youth of today to interest them in joining our organization? The Executive Board took a healthy first step last April by extending a free 18-month membership to the winners of the Junior-Senior contest. Now it is up to each of us to nurture those young people, to include them in the activities of our local chapters, to encourage them as poets to continue to write and improve.

There are bright spots around the state where youth are being encouraged to write and where they are receiving the support and feedback that is so necessary to a developing poet. Alameda Island poets conduct an annual Haiku contest, which includes both student and adult divisions. Poets of the San Joaquin also sponsor a contest for youth, and

have recently begun a series of workshops aimed at young writers. The City of Modesto sponsors another fine contest which includes a youth division, through its Poets Corner committee.

However, despite the great things being done in these and a few other areas, the state's young writers as a whole are not being well supported.

Recent discussions on this topic between Board members and within the publications committee have sparked an idea that is currently being evaluated. Under consideration at this time is the development of a teaching curriculum, perhaps at three levels of mastery, which could be used both for classroom instruction throughout the state and as the basis for a workshop series conducted by CFCP, Inc. Any members who have suggestions for either the content or the format of such a program are asked to contact Publications Committee chair James Shuman as soon as possible. Of special interest are youth members and those with classroom teaching experience. We hope to have at least a first-stage working draft ready for trial next fall.

Newsletter gets a makeover

You have probably recognized that this issue of the Chaparral newsletter looks a little different. At the January Board meeting, the Board approved a change in the name from *Chaparral Newsletter* to *Chaparral Updrafts* — and suggested several other modifications as well.

Most notable is the change in format. Gone is the old “legal” size page, which one member characterized as a hold-over “from the days of typewriters and mimeograph machines.” In its place is a new “ledger” size, folded into the more commonly seen newsmagazine style. Because some “print space” is lost by making this transition, the *Updrafts* will frequently become larger than just four pages — often six or eight.

You are likely to see more news articles about and of interest to poets in general, even though the subject may not be a member of CFCP, Inc.

You are likely to see articles of interest to our young poets and beginners as well as information on contests and workshops at various locations around the state.

And, for the first few months, you are likely to see differences in design and layout ideas until we get settled into this new format.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

• *Dates: April 25 – 27 in Modesto*
• *Inside: Convention Information and full Registration Materials*

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Chaparral Updrafts

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