



Chaparral updrafts

from the
California Federation
of Chaparral Poets, Inc.

serving California poets for over 60 years

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Franz Wright wins Pulitzer Prize for Poetry

Franz Wright won the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry for his fifteenth book, *Walking to Martha's Vineyard* (Knopf). Also nominated were Henri Cole for *Middle Earth* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) and Heather McHugh for *Eyeshot* (Wesleyan University Press).

Wright's previous collection, *The Beforelife*, also published by Knopf, was a finalist for the Pulitzer in 2002.

Franz Wright, winner of this year's Pulitzer Prize for poetry, is the son of a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet. The late James Wright, who died in 1980, won the award in 1972. The Prize, for a distinguished volume of original verse by an American author, includes a ten thousand dollar award.

In this radiant new collection, Franz Wright shares his regard for life in all its forms and his belief in the promise of blessing and renewal. As he watches the "Resurrection of the little apple tree outside / my window," he shakes off his fear of mortality, concluding "what death . . . There is only / mine / or yours, / but the world / will be filled with the living." In prayerlike poems he invokes the one "who spoke the world / into being" and celebrates a dazzling universe-snowflakes descending at nightfall, the intense yellow petals of the September sunflower, the planet adrift in a blizzard of stars, the simple mystery of loving other people. As Wright overcomes a natural tendency toward loneliness and isolation, he gives voice to his hope for "the only animal that commits suicide," and, to our deep pleasure, he arrives at a place of gratitude that is grounded in the earth and its moods. (*From the book jacket*)

Franz Wright was born in Vienna in 1953 but grew up in the Northwest, the Midwest, and northern Cali-

A fond 'thank you' for many years of devoted service

For several months, our long-time Monthly Contest Chair, Pegasus Buchanan, has indicated a desire to be relieved of the duties connected with the job. After her years of faithful service, many of us have trouble remembering a time when she *wasn't* the Monthly Contest Chair! Over the years this contest has provided opportunities for both members and friends to hone their writing skills with a wide range of forms, styles, and topics. We have had sonnet contests, French form contests, Asian form contests, and numerous topical suggestions. Through it all, those

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fornia. His most recent collections of poetry include *The Beforelife* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), *Ill Lit: New and Selected Poems* (1998), *Rorschach Test* (1995), *The Night World and the Word Night* (1993), and *Midnight Postscript* (1993). He has also translated poems by René Char, Erica Pedretti, and Rainer Maria Rilke, as well as having published numerous chapbooks. He has been the recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts grants, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Whiting

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Poetry Education Summit discusses outreach programs

The recent Convention produced a considerable amount of discussion regarding CFCP's community outreach, especially its programs designed to assist young people. It was generally felt that the efforts currently being made, while laudatory, are insufficient and inadequate, and urgent requests were made for a much broader and deeper program. Not only are the current efforts seen by many as insignificant, they are also felt to be unsatisfactory if we are to maintain the health of this organization as a vitally contributing poetry organization.

Consequently, a Poetry Education Summit was scheduled for Saturday, July 10 at the Stanislaus County Office of Education in Modesto. This Summit was envisioned as perhaps the first in a series of day-long discussions to develop a program proposal for future implementation. The results of this meeting will be presented to the CFCP Board at its meeting on July 24.

A second Summit is tentatively planned for southern California later in the summer or perhaps early in the fall. If you or a friend or colleague, even a non-CFCP member, would like to attend this meeting, please make plans to join us, and let us know of your interest.

Ideas that have already been suggested include of-

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Chaparral updrafts

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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>

Poetry Summit meets

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fering a continuing education program for which teachers could earn CE credit, and expanding the web site to include a section for teachers and students. We remain open to discussion of these and many other ideas, so do whatever research you wish in advance, and be prepared with facts, figures, and suggestions.

It is hoped that we can have at least the early stages of a program in place as part of the 2005 Convention.

The agenda for the day:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 9:30 – 10:00 am | Meet and get acquainted |
| 10:00 – 10:50 am | Identifying areas of need |
| 11:00 – 11:50 am | Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of CFCP's ability to provide educational assistance |
| 12:00 – 1:00 pm | Lunch, R & R |
| 1:00 – 1:50 pm | Deciding on a set of plans |
| 2:00 – 3:20 pm | Breakout sessions to develop the details of each plan |
| 3:30 – 4:00 pm | Sharing results, preparing for Board presentation |

We really need good representation from throughout the state! Anyone who has an interest in helping to develop possible areas of outreach is urged to contact president James Shuman at 209-523-6954 to make certain you are included at future meetings.

Pulitzer Prize for Poetry to Franz Wright

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Fellowship, and the PEN/Voelcker Prize, among other honors. He works at the Edinburg Center for Mental Health and the Center for Grieving Children and Teenagers and lives in Waltham, Massachusetts, with his wife Elizabeth.

An interview with Wright in *The New Yorker* in July, 2001 followed publication of *The Beforelife*, and attention began to focus on his current work as it was associated with his personal battles with depression, alcoholism and drug abuse. Wright feels strongly that his experience and the poems that came out of it can help others who feel isolated and alone in their illness. He has found that being able to walk in a natural setting, as he does at Waltham, helps thoughts and ideas come to him, which he later writes down as fragments in a notebook. This practice of daily writing, he says, began as a teenager, when he sent some of his first poetic efforts to his father, and

“The first letter he wrote to me about this started with the phrase ‘I’ll be damned. You’re a poet. Welcome to hell.’ Then he made a suggestion: Try, no matter what—no matter what sort of maelstrom of distraction you find yourself in at any given time—try to write one single clear line in a notebook every day. If you manage to do that, over time, when a certain mood of inspiration does come to you, when you’re feeling happy and things are going well, and you want to write, you have this store of material, and it’s as if the lines start to bond together, or something starts to crystallize around a particular line. In fact, I love the fragments so much that I really don’t, for a long time, even want to make a complete poem out of them.”

Wright says that in September 1999 he had a spiritual experience which he has characterized in several different ways (“I was just sitting here at my desk, and something flowed over me.”), but which resulted in his becoming a member of the Catholic church. Hints of that new spiritual perspective were included in *The Beforelife*, but are much sharper and clearer in *Walking to Martha’s Vineyard*.

Reviewer John Freeman says “Wright’s poems sound like a man talking to himself, wrestling with the big issues — faith, love, death and the beyond. We lean in close, inhale their potent fragrance of intimacy, and are hooked.” He continues, “A typical Wright

poem hangs on the page like fingerprints on a window frosted by winter. The tiny amount of space it assumes brings out graceful nuances and conveys the chill of the author’s mournful quietude.”

“Wright nearly always rewards us for our nosiness. Within two or three poems, a narrative of one man’s struggle with death takes shape. *On Earth* crystallizes Wright’s conundrum perfectly:

*How does one go
about dying?*

*Who on earth is going to teach me —
The world
is filled with people
who have never died.*

“Still, Wright presses onward, entering the underworld and the spiritual in the every day, trying to break down the barriers between living and the afterlife.

“Indeed, there are tints of Emerson’s concept of the Oversoul here — the invisible seeing-eye that both was the world and observed it. In *Weekend in the Underworld* Wright asks his spirit where it lies. ‘Everywhere,’ it responds. ‘I’m everywhere.’

“Occasionally, Wright’s longing for transubstantiation gets the better of him, and his lines come out pantheistic: ‘no one is a stranger,’ he writes at the end of *Promise*, ‘this whole world is your home.’

“This collection is the work of a man enraptured by discovery — but ever mindful of his own impermanence. It is a terrible position to be in; since the moment Wright becomes aware of the world’s beauty, he must let it go.

“The beautiful title poem echoes Matthew Arnold’s great *Dover Beach*, only the confrontation with mortality is muted now, almost sepia-toned. As ‘wave after wave’ roll in, Wright notes how ‘the ocean smells like lilacs in late August.’ And it will continue to — Wright sadly suggests — long after he’s gone.”

Jurors for the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry were:

Mary Karr, author and professor of literature and creative writing, Syracuse University (Chair)

Donald Hall, poet, Wilmot, NH

Rachel Hadas, professor of English, Rutgers University, Newark, NJ

Monthly Contest Winners

Doc Goodwill

came to the home of
Aunt Bess whose illness grew chronic.
Uncle Ned pacing the hallway
wonders, "Could it be bubonic?"

"Give me a corkscrew," doc demands.
Worried yet puzzled Ned complies.
"Hand me a screwdriver," pleads doc.
Although more upset Ned abides.

Again a medical request,
"Quick, find a chisel and hammer."
Ned, sweaty-faced and short of breath
panics and begins to stammer.

"Wha-what is wro-wrong with my wife?"
Embarrassed, doc begins to lag.
"I'm not sure yet, Ned," he replies,
"I'm trying to open my bag."

—David A. LaPierre, Cottonwood, CA
First Place, April

Missed

Everyone that she met yelled, "Hey, Clare,
We missed you at last night's affair."
She could have been flattered
But her ego was shattered
Because, truth to tell, she was there.

—Norma K. Green, Fairfield, CA
Second Place, April

On Learning the Latin Motion

All the dances that end in "a"
(rumba, samba, cha-cha-cha)
threaten to leave you pained and lame
because your joints say "nah-nah-nah."

You flex your knee and flip your hip
but that's not how to do it,
you wiggle, squiggle, shake and twist
but know damn well you blew it.

For years and years you persevere,
your footsteps numbering millions,
hoping to gain the nimble rear
of Cubans or Brazilians.

Ah, Latin dancing is quite tough
because of one great hurdle:
you must resemble Donald Duck
and lock your pelvic girdle!

—William Preston, Walworth, NY
Third Place, April

Poets of the Vineyard announce winners in national contest

Winners in the national contest sponsored by Poets of the Vineyard have recently been announced, and they include several CFCP members. This contest was not without a few problems, most notable of which was that the long-time Contest Chair passed away quite suddenly during the contest. Even so, PoV was able to bring its annual contest to a successful conclusion.

Among CFCP member winners were:

Maxine C. Williams, Sebastopol, *Michaelmas Cay*, *Great Barrier Reef*, first prize in Category B, Long Free Verse; and *Garden Alchemy*, second honorable mention in Category B.

Rick Thielo, Upland, *The Grain Train Accident*, second prize in Category C, Poems That Tell a Story; *Anna's Hummingbird* (*Calypste anna*),

third prize in Category B; *Concord Grapes*, first honorable mention in Category E, Theme on Vineyards, Grapes; and *The Unburied*, second honorable mention in Category C.

Claire J. Baker, San Pablo, *Mod Madonna*, third prize in Category D, Short Poems; *Retreat at Bishop's Ranch* (*first morning*), third prize in Category E; and *Cloud Lake, for Michael*, (sonnet) third honorable mention in Category A, Forms or Rhyme and Meter.

Susan Coons, *Remembering Our Time Along Old Black Bart Trail*, (blank verse) second honorable mention in Category A.

K C Tanner, *Reveille to Revelry*, second honorable mention in Category E.

Katharine Wilson, *Summer*, an acrostic, third

honorable mention in Category D.

Congratulations to each of these members and all others who entered this national contest. Other winners were from New York, Arkansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Connecticut, Florida, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

Poets of the Vineyard is preparing its annual Anthology, which will include all the winning poems for which they have received publication permission. Price will be \$10 each, plus \$2 each for shipping and handling. Contact Judy Cheung, POV president, if you would like a copy. Her address is 704 Brigham Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

Watch for announcements regarding next year's contest.

Monthly Contest Winners

Forward

The horseman gallops
close behind
gaining, as I go.
My harpies shriek
Late start, late start

and I...
I know, I know.

But looking forward,
gravel kicked
along the road I take,
exhilarated, heady fuel
motor too engaged to brake,
note not nor dread
the muffled beat,
feel almost disconnected
from that rider who
one day must
catch me, as expected.

—Pearl S. Selinsky, Sacramento, CA
First Place, May

Elder Statesman

Heavy as stone, I lower myself into the tub.
In water my body floats free of itself,
weightless and independent, my four year
old daughter flies in, dancing a little, chatters
about her new library card as she pees.
My naked body only landscape to her,
like towels or the bathscale.

We are still in the innocent tribal stage.
Decency doesn't count yet, although it will not be long
before I make her wait, the way I made her sister wait
when she pounded on the bathroom door.

Awareness will bloom in her eyes like small explosions.
We will cross over into separate countries,
carefully preserving protocol.

—Rick Thielo, Upland, CA
Second Place, May

Agnieszka

Holly branches
scratch my window
with your name.
How do they know?

I remember you
whispering "I love you,
Bambino" in my good ear
when I was still

your favorite American
zbereznik. I guess
you've forgotten
writing.

"You already know
what do I think
how you wasted
your life."

I cannot cut
the holly back.
This time of year
a hundred birds shelter there,

there in the holly
scratching my window
with your name:
Ah, Agnieszka.

—Timothy Russell, Toronto, OH
Third Place, May

Monthly Contest Chair steps down but traditions of the Contest will continue

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cheerful notes of congratulations from Pegasus were eagerly anticipated, and when they arrived, greatly treasured. Frankly, we were loathe to let her go!

But Pegasus insisted that her own health was demanding she begin taking a more leisurely pace to her poetic activities, and we have reluctantly agreed to grant her request. The search for someone to replace her went in numerous directions, but ended almost in my own backyard, when Cleo Griffith — a frequent winner of the contest — stepped

forward and volunteered to take on the task. So, beginning with the August contest, please be aware that you will need to send your entries to a different address. We have revised the Monthly Contest page to reflect that change. *Don't refer to a back issue!*

We assure you that the traditions and integrity of the contest established by Pegasus will be continued. Judges will be recruited from outside CFCP, but will be individuals who have a reputation as established poets and critics. As has been the custom you are encouraged to include a personal note to the

Monthly Contest Chair, remarking on what you have especially enjoyed, and suggesting possible categories for the future (Just remember that in order to be considered, the category should be one that others beside yourself would wish to enter!). And since the August contest is 'Poet's Choice,' we should see some really great entries!

And now, Pegasus, after all these years, **you** are invited to enter the Monthly Contest! Thank you for all the efforts you have contributed, and we look forward to seeing more of your own writing!

Just a few changes

This 'revised version' is still the page to keep 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 that can be copied and given to prospective new members or pinned on the bulletin board above your desk.

The monthly contest has been a fixture of the newsletter for many years. With a new category every month, there are 30 chances a year to win recognition. But, of course, it *is* necessary to actually send your poems in to the Contest Chair! So keep them coming, but do notice that there's a change of address — **be sure to use this new one!**

Also, the membership year will soon move into its final phase, meaning that as of August 1, new members can join for 17 months (through December, 2005)! 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.**

➔ Cleo Griffith
mail contest Monthly Contest Chair, CFCP, Inc.
entries to 4409 Diamond Court
Salida, CA 95368-9632
<cleor36@yahoo.com>



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.

Important Board Meeting is set for July 24 in Oakland

It will soon be time for the next CFCP, Inc. Board Meeting, which has been set for July 24 at the Holiday Inn Oakland Airport Hotel, 500 Hegenberger Road, Oakland, 94621. The telephone number is 1 510-552-5311.

All state officers, committee chairs, and chapter presidents are urged to attend, since they are considered voting members and their input is needed in planning events for the future. In addition, all CFCP members are welcome to attend, especially members of local area chapters.

Elaine Lazzeroni feted

Dr. Jack Fulbeck and Rick Thielo arranged a surprise tribute for Elaine Lazzeroni on June 5 at the home of Dawn and Rick Thielo in Upland. Twenty-eight people attended including her husband, Ivo, daughter and son in-law, granddaughter and husband and four great grandchildren. Dr. Fulbeck conducted the program and read a couple of Elaine's poems and one he had written in her honor. Others participating were Keith Van Vliet, Lorre Dormer, Ernestine Emrick and Rick Thielo. A potluck dinner was served. She was presented a decorated cake and a vase of flowers.

Plan to meet at 11:30 am in Coliseum 3 for a luncheon/working meeting.

The menu has been pre-selected to provide a mixed greens salad, iced tea, and freshly baked cookies. Please select one of the following entrees:

Club sandwich, Roasted Chicken Wrap, Oakland Beef Sandwich, Southwestern Chicken Sandwich, or Vegetarian Wrap.

All options are the same price, which is \$15.95, plus 19% service charge and 8.25% sales tax. The total is \$20.30 per person.

NOTE: Please RSVP to President James Shuman at 209-523-6954 no later than July 21 so that we can reserve the lunch for you that you prefer.

The Holiday Inn Oakland Airport Hotel has spacious meeting areas for the 2005 convention, and the Standing Committee on Convention Planning has worked hard to find an appropriate location and begin developing ideas and plans. Committee Chair Katharine Wilson is anxious for the Board to review the contract proposal and give the hotel a good looking-over so that we will know what the facilities are like that we will probably be using.

We will also be soliciting volunteers for the Convention Committee and developing a strategy to provide some guidance on ideas and specific proposals as they move forward with their planning. In addition, there are a number of other pending issues for the Board to consider.

The Holiday Inn is near the Oakland Airport, and provides shuttle service for those who might wish to fly in to the meeting (phone 1-510-562-5311). For those coming from the north and west, take the I-80 toward Oakland. Take the I-580 E for 0.2 mile and merge onto the I-880 S toward Alameda/San Jose. Travel about 9.5 miles and take the Hegenberger Road exit toward Oakland Airport/Coliseum approximately 0.3 miles. Turn left onto Hegenberger Road for 0.1 mile and enter the parking lot.

Those coming from the south and east should take the I-580 toward Oakland; then take the I-238 N toward I-880 for 2.3 miles. Merge onto I-880 N and travel 4.6 miles to the Hegenberger Road exit. Turn left onto Edes Avenue for 0.3 miles; then turn left onto Hegenberger Road for 0.3 miles. Make a U-turn onto Hegenberger Road, and travel 0.1 mile to the entrance at 500 Hegenberger Road.

• **Inside:**
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Board Meeting July 24

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