

A COMMON WEALTH OF POETRY

Newsletter of the Poetry Society of Virginia ♦ March 2021

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

by Terry Cox-Joseph

As we approach spring and the opening of windows, we all hope for the opening of society—that is, that Covid-19 has done its worst, and we can again gather in large groups. Numerous journals, online and printed, have solicited poems about the pandemic, and poetry has proven to be a stellar outlet. Words continue to flow and inspire—because frustration and illness and overcoming adversity are common human denominators. Quite often, philosophy is a matter of common sense. Take the words of Vincent Van Gogh: “Normality is a paved road. It’s a comfortable walk but no flowers grow.” And remember that APRIL IS NATIONAL POETRY MONTH!

As of this writing, I have emailed our Annual (May) Festival presenters to ask whether they would like to present in person at the College of William and Mary. By May, many of us will have been vaccinated or will have had Covid-19 and recovered, but that may not be enough reassurance for us or for Governor Northam. His edicts change every few weeks. I will send out a mass email and also write an update in the newsletter as soon as possible. I am concerned about the effects of postponing the Annual Festival for another year, and I am considering holding it on Zoom. Your opinions are welcome.

It appears that we again have a new, paid webmaster—Steven Dorsey. Yes, as in the son of our talented and hard-working Sharon Dorsey. I am so very grateful for this connection and boost of reliability! I have several items to place on our website and am so excited to keep it all going. One will be our past newsletters. Another will be a place to chat and share poems. Yet another task will be to make it easier to create a new membership and use PayPal for dues.

The search goes on for a full-time treasurer. Our student intern, Julia Horton from CNU, is doing a wonderful job and is going to assist us with taxes and accounting. During our busy contest season, she has been picking up mail (aka checks and contest entries) at the post office and dropping it off at my house, as well as making deposits. What a great help she has been. And what a great help she will be when it comes time to write the winners’ checks after the judges’ decisions have been made!

The 2020 PSV contest winners book, Poetry Virginia, has been published by James Wilson (Wider Perspectives Publishing) and is available on Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/Poetry-Virginia-2020-Society/dp/1952773962/ref=sr_1_1?crid=28UYA9OZ7L463&dchild=1&keywords=poetry+society+of+virginia+2020&qid=1612904386&srefix=poetry+society+%2Caps%2C145&sr=8-1

Thank you, Derek and James, for all of your work on this. I have enjoyed reading the poems and “hearing” the winners’ voices in my head after hearing them on Zoom last month. This publication is not only entertaining but is a useful asset for those who have never entered any of our contests.



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VIRGINIA
COMMISSION
FOR THE



NORTHERN REGION

Greetings from Northern Virginia!

Hope you have enjoyed the beautiful snowy days! I've spent some time photographing birds in the snowy landscape. Hoping to write some accompanying poems soon.

I've enjoyed some online poetry and photography, beginning with Grace Cavalieri's interview and photo show with Dan Murano on The Poet and the Poem: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsSNBRsNuB8>. Recent interviews also include Ocean Vuong, which was exceptional, and Temple Cone, which just came out. I also watched the first in a series of readings that link art and photography sponsored by White Columns. One of the four artists in this video is Justin Allen, my former student from the Center for the Fine and Performing Arts Creative Writing Program at Woodbridge Senior High School. Information about this arts integration project can be found here: <https://whitecolumns.org/?emails=white-columns-never-created-never-destroyed>. And the first of a series of readings can be found here: <https://youtu.be/v4jSpukfGuc>. I also listened to PSV Members, **Susan Notar**, **Sally Zakariyah**, and **Katherine E. Young**, read poetry from *Written in Arlington*. The recording of the event hosted by Sean Murphy and sponsored by 1455 Literary Arts and The Anacostia Swim Club is available here: <https://1455litarts.org/1455-presents-written-in-arlington-a-reading-discussion/?fbclid=IwAR3aale0QWC3RLi4Sf5leVKakhiMY1mobu4I7jvwOIuo6CLJhp-34vgFmzs>

Hope you enjoyed Amanda Gorman's poetry performance at the Inauguration of President Joseph Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris and at the Super Bowl. Amanda was the first Youth Poet Laureate of Los Angeles, and three years later, she became the first U.S. National Youth Poet Laureate. If you are a teacher, many different lesson plan ideas have been floating through social media, including ideas from The Library of Congress, *The New York Times*, and Edutopia. Email me if you have any difficulty finding them: haileycp@gmail.com.

National Poetry Month is only one month away, and the poster advertising the celebration is now available as a PDF or in poster size for teachers and others who order for community viewing. The 2021 poster was designed by twelfth grader Bao Lu from Edward R. Murrow High School in Brooklyn, New York, who was the winner of the 2021 National Poetry Month Poster Contest. Visit the American Academy of Poets' website to obtain a copy: <https://poets.org/national-poetry-month/get-official-poster>.

Virginia Poet Laureate Emerita and PSV Member **Carolyn Kreiter Foronda** joined Off the Bricks! Podcast for the fifth episode. She "discusses the world of Poets Laureate and shares her nature-driven poetry."

Richmond has named a Poet Laureate! Douglas Powell, known as Roscoe Burnems, was selected as Richmond's inaugural poet laureate. More details are available here: https://richmond.com/.../article_d3d3c0b3-d1c4-58b0-a0a4...

Congratulations to **Zeina Azam** who participated in To Palestine With Love, an international reading of poems and a review of artwork by the late Palestinian writer, poet, and artist Najwa Kavar Farah, followed by discussion. Zeina and her friend Sahar Mustafah read English translations of the Arabic poems and provided commentary on them and on the life of the poet. Zeina also provided some historical context on the influences of the poet's life. The Zoom program was recorded, and it is available to you at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/PalestineMuseum.US/videos/1065223230613265>.

Congratulations to **Pia Taavilla-Borsheim**, whose poetry collection, *Above the Birch Lines: Poems*, is forthcoming this summer from Gallaudet University Press.

Congratulations to **Steve Bucher**, whose book of poems, *We Stay a Brief Telling*, just came out in Feb. from Propertius Books.

Congratulations to **Jacqueline Jules**, whose short verse, "Pandemic Harmonies," on how to make music together even during a pandemic, was published on *Your Daily Poem*: http://yourdaily poem.com/listpoem.jsp?poem_id=3589. She also has two poems up at ONE ART: <https://oneartpoetry.com/.../two-poems-by-jacqueline-jules/>. "Radioactivity" was inspired by the life of Marie Curie, and "The Wholeness of a Broken Heart" was inspired by a quote by Rabbi Menachem Mendel.

Joann Lord Koff was a Visual Arts Finalist for her black and white photograph *Moonlit* at the ART4US CounterCurrent International Juried Art Show for 2021 at Gallery B in Bethesda, Md., during the month of Feb. See advertisement at <https://www.facebook.com/coop4creativity/photos/a.106713127947983/135287418423887>.

Congratulations to **Rebecca K. Leet**, who has three poems recently selected for publication. "The Year 2020" will appear in the fall issue of *The Poeming Pigeon* and "Statue in the Shallows" in the *Bourgeon Poetry Anthology*. "Luxurious Fear" was published in Feb. in *The New Verse News*.

Northern Region *continued* _____

Congratulations to **Sally Zakariya** whose poem "A New Day" is the first poem in the January 2021 issue of *Burningword Literary Journal*: <https://www.magcloud.com/.../ef7b33f7c0b84e7e82e792ed7ceb...> Sally's poem "Loose Thread" was also published in a "gently delayed" Fall 2020 issue of *Poetry Quarterly* published by Prolific Press.

POETRY EVENTS

March 1, 7:30 pm. Cafe Muse presents poets Jane Clarke and Teri Ellen Cross Davis. The chatroom opens at 7pm EST and features guitar music, played by Michael C. Davis, set to a slideshow by Henry Crawford. The poetry reading begins at 7:30 pm EST. Registration is free but required to get the Zoom link for the event: <https://sites.google.com/view/cafe-muse-events/home>

March 11, 7 pm. Readings on the Pike, featuring Eman Quotah, Jan Stinchcomb, Khalisa Rae, Laponda Kersey, Meghan Sterling, MEH (Matthew Henry), Norah Vawter, Rachel Mans McKenny, and Robin Rosen Chang. Zoom link posted the week of the event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1776162632557450>

March 12 and 26, Spilled Ink on Zoom, hosted by John Dutton. Details at <https://www.spilledinkva.com/events>.

March 13, 2 pm. Poets Anonymous. Open poetry reading via Zoom. Details are on Meetup, under Poets Anonymous or via email at poetsanonffx@gmail.com.

March 28, 5:30 pm. Reston Readings, featuring authors from the Dec.2020 issue of Maryland Literary Review. Via Zoom: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/232505597093213>.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION _____

DAVID ANTHONY SAM, VP

We still meet monthly via Zoom on the third Saturday at 2 p.m. and include members from the NW region in the invitation.

Member news: **Elizabeth Spencer Spragins'** poetry collection *Waltzing with Water: Tempus in Verse* has just been published by Shanti Arts, and **David Anthony Sam** had poetry accepted by *Voices on the Wind and Artemis Journal*.

NORTHWEST REGION _____

POSITION VACANT

EASTERN REGION _____

KATHLEEN DECKER, VP

The Poetry Guild of Williamsburg continues its bi-weekly poetry sessions by email chain, and no date has yet been set for resumption of in-person meetings. With hopes of widespread vaccination, we plan to resume as soon as it is permissible!

A book Launch for *Postscript to War* was held on Jan. 22, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. It was both live-streamed on The Muse website and on Facebook. The Muse link is the-muse.org/event/bill-glose-book-launch-and-reading/ and the FaceBook link, www.facebook.com/events/118888836679007/. You can view **Bill Glose's** moving reading at either link. This event was sponsored by The Muse Writing Center to launch on Facebook Live Bill's new book, *Postscript to War*. The book won the 2020 Main Street Rag Poetry Book Contest. Uniting my own combat experience with those of other veterans, I find that these poems peel away the scab of memory to reveal the raw and tender emotions that lie within. You can contact Bill Glose at billglose@cox.net.

Edward W. Lull, PSV Past President (and many other offices in PSV), has just come out with his new book, as well: *My Game of Life* (High Tide Publications). It is available in hard-cover edition from Amazon, or you can contact Ed for further details at EWLull@Verizon.net.

Congratulations to our talented poets, and thank you for sharing your diverse views of the world!

SOUTHEAST REGION

KINDRA MCDONALD, VP

I hope this finds you warm and healthy as the days grow longer and the signs of Virginia's coming spring are visible even in the cold nights.

On Feb.13 the SE region held their first virtual event, Let us Count the Ways: An Evening of Love Poems, featuring Hampton Roads poets **Bob Arthur**, **Madeline Garcia**, **Gabriela Igloria** and **Nathan Richardson**. Thank you to all of our members who participated and made the evening so memorable.

The Muse Writers Center in Norfolk has many class offerings for its spring session, including specialized poetry seminars. I am teaching a class on the persona poem which begins March 21. Find more info on classes and events at the-muse.org.

The Venue on 35th continues to provide open mic opportunities every Monday night through Zoom. Find them on social media @thevenueon35th.

Finally, we continue to collect poems honoring our late PSV president, **Jeff Hewitt**, for an anthology. Please send your poems and tributes for Jeff to the following email: wearevastanthology@gmail.com.

As we gear up for National Poetry Month, consider participating in a poem a day challenge. I will be doing my usual commitment with prompts at napowrimo.net.

Keep writing, keep making the world more beautiful with your words!

CENTRAL REGION

JOANNA LEE, VP

Greetings from the Central Region!

We've eased virtually into a new year of poetry events, continuing, for example, with Charlottesville-based fourth Wednesday Zoom open mics featuring performers from across the world and first Thursday Poetry & Jazz nights hailing from Richmond on Google Meet.

Online critiques and small group social events are also a mainstay of the local poetry community, though plans are already being laid here in Richmond and elsewhere for outdoor, in-person events later in the spring.

Quarantine has been good for writing, though, with manuscripts forthcoming or recently published by current/former Central Region members **Debbie Collins** (Richmond), **Nan Ottenritter** (Richmond), **Michele Riedel** (Richmond), and **William Vollrath** (Charlottesville).

If you have good publication news you'd like me to share, please get in touch! Likewise, if you'd like to be connected to any of the virtual events above.

Be well and stay writing.

WESTERN REGION

JERI ROGERS, VP

No report.

ARTICLE

And So I Wrote a Poem

by Bill Glose

(This article first appeared in *Narrative Magazine*.)

On the eve of the Iraq invasion, I did the same as every other paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division. Cleaned my weapon and checked my ammo. Updated my last will and testament. Folded farewell letters to my girlfriend and to my mom and dad in a cargo pocket. Being in the company of hard men, I also feigned nonchalance, hoping to hide the soft fears at my core. It wasn't just that I was afraid of dying; I was afraid of not dying well. Worse: of behaving like a coward. No one knows how he will act in battle until the whip-crack of bullets snaps the air above him and he either cowers or fires back.

Forming up with my platoon during the pre-attack bombardment, I mimicked my comrades' stone faces. We acted as if we knew what was coming and were certain we could handle it. We were wrong.

All those movies where characters clutched their bellies and toppled over did little to prepare me for the many ways a body tears apart. Imagine knocking a glass pitcher from a table then watching it shatter on the floor. A body explodes the same way, except its pieces aren't as neat. A body is mostly liquid, stitched together with sinew and wrapped around bone, as resistant to the insult of steel as a pile of leaves to stiff wind.

We'd rehearsed invading bunkers over dimpled plains of sand and rocks too small to provide cover, breach team kneeling to snip wire as if praying that mist from smoke grenades would be enough concealment. When our trucks finally rumbled north toward Basra in a column of dust, we leaned into the brown clouds as Blackhawks with red crosses on their doors raced back from the Euphrates Valley.

Dismounted, we plunged into occupied territory in wedged formations, hearts in our throats, never knowing what each kicked-down door or sudden corner might reveal. Only a split second to decide whether a rail-thin man in rags was attacking or surrendering, whether to pull the trigger or let him live.

Most Iraqis were eager to lay down their arms. Farmers and shopkeepers conscripted into service, they wanted nothing more than to return to families and live in peace. Even if the price was mutiny. In one bomb crater, we found three Regimental Guard officers lying face down with bullet holes between shoulder blades, exit wounds wide as open mouths.

Coming home from landscapes littered with ruined bodies, each soldier reintegrated into society in his own way. I took after my father, a Vietnam vet who never spoke about his war. Stoicism was his fortress. It became mine too.

In Fayetteville, my platoonmates and I blew our combat pay on new cars and strip clubs. We drank and fought with civilians over anything. What we didn't do was talk about what we'd seen and done.

Silence served as a tolerable stopgap when action ruled my world. But once I left the Army, I had too much free time to think. The dead would visit my dreams and sometimes stalk through my day. I'd never let on about the ghosts, but each night I'd wonder if shadows would take shape in the corners of my room and start whispering.

I'd seen reports about the scores of veteran suicides—22 per day. I hadn't considered taking my own life, but some dark vortex had me in its grip. My choices were simple: I could follow the lessons of my silent father or try something different. And so I wrote a poem.

At first, I focused on tiny moments of little consequence—soldiers breaking down weapons and cleaning latrines, stuffing pictures of girlfriends in the webbing of Kevlar helmets, trading MREs with Bedouins for rides on their camels. I wrote about the quiet camaraderie of paratroopers huddled together with rifles on their laps. I wrote about the desert's rock-strewn plains, as foreign to us as the dark side of the moon. I wrote about a shrieking blare one night that sent us scrambling for our protective masks, only for the Nuclear-Biological-Chemical team to discover a goat had peed on the air-sampler alarm.

One poem led to another, which led to another. From those mundane moments I inched toward memories freighted with remorse. I wrote about the husks of bodies in back-splintered bunkers and wounded soldiers crying in medevac helicopters. I wrote about ripping patches from the sleeves of dead men and carrying them home as trophies. I wrote about the children we searched at gunpoint, the resignation in their eyes, the certitude that we would execute them. My poems seldom provided me with answers, but just pondering the questions was enough. I rummaged through those things I'd bottled-up inside—my fear, my guilt, my shame—and found the exploration cathartic. Each new poem was like picking away a scab. It hurt, yes, but each time I ripped it off, the scab shrunk, the pain diminished, and the skin beneath grew healthier.

ARTICLE *continued* —————

For years, I shoved my scribbled work into drawers. Sometimes I'd revisit poems and, still mired in confusion, would cut into them with the scalpel of my red pen. I didn't hold onto them because I was seeking perfection; I was simply too scared to let them out in the world. It had been hard enough to write about my experiences; exposing them to the public seemed impossible. If people glimpsed my inner thoughts and knew what violence I was capable of, surely they would think me a monster.

I started attending open mics at bookstores and coffee shops. I first came to listen, to see what other people were doing with their words, and to figure out how mine stacked up. The lineup was a hodgepodge of homilies, rants, and silly cat poems. But whenever someone shared a painful parcel of their personal geography—rapes, addictions, disease, dementia—the crowd's support was overwhelming. The universal response was one of empathy.

After several months, I worked up the courage to share one of my war poems. My voice quavered as I read my work, the page trembling in my hands. A skewer of raw emotion stabbed through me and I nearly broke down crying, shocking myself more than anyone else. I'd roared my anger in public before, but never wept.

I'd always imagined people reacting to my poems with the wrinkled nose and snarled lip of disgust or else the raised-and-tightened lip-corner of contempt. But my dread had been unfounded. No one recoiled in horror. When I finished, the audience thundered their applause. Later that night, a few people offered thanks and shared stories of sons and daughters in similar situations. The relief I felt in knowing I wasn't alone, that I wasn't viewed as some alien abomination, was immeasurable.

Trauma invades everyone's lives, soldiers and civilians alike. These people, I learned, had their own troubled backstories, their own apprehensions. Each was also seeking acceptance from the group. And one by one, as we spoke into the mic, we faced up to our damaged histories and liberated ourselves from their dominion.

Far too long I'd fretted over my past, allowing it to rule my present. But no more. I began to submit my poems to journals and found acceptance on a wider scale. In 2013, FutureCycle Press published a collection of my war poems titled *Half a Man*. For the cover picture, they used a picture of me in Iraq, young, grim-faced, and holding an AK-47. I wish I could go back in time and tell that kid that nothing troublesome ever gets better by ignoring it. "Do your job," I'd say. "And when your job is over, open your mouth and speak. Talking is not a sin."

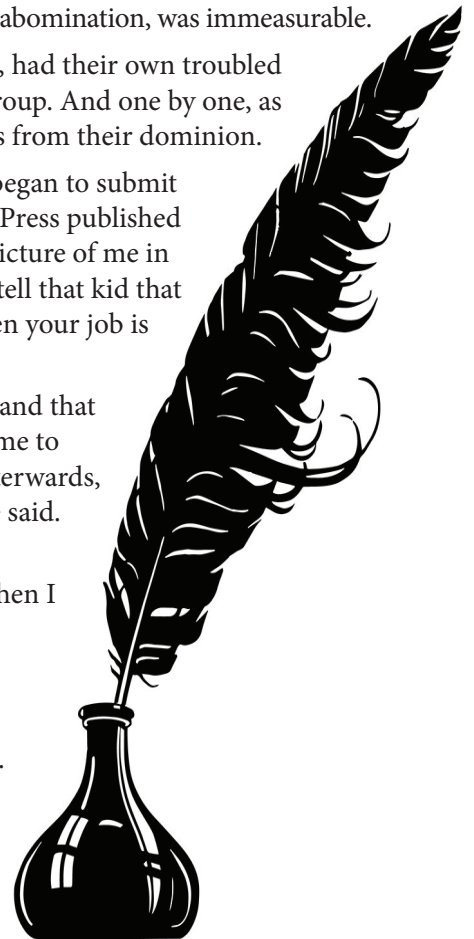
What I've discovered in writing about my war is that words have the power to heal, and that healing can be shared. An instructor at Thomas Nelson Community College asked me to speak to her English class about my experiences and to read some of my poems. Afterwards, one of the students, an Iraq veteran, approached me visibly shaken. "Thank you," he said. "That's just what I wanted to say. But I didn't know how to say it."

We did the man-hug thing, handshake transitioning to a brief but fierce embrace. Then I asked if he was putting his own war experiences to paper in this class.

He shook his head. "But I'm going to."

"Good. I don't know what's going on in there," I said, nodding toward him while tapping my temple, "but however heavy it feels, it'll be weightless once you let it out. Own your history. Don't let your history own you."

As we walked out together, I felt a kinship I hadn't felt since being a soldier. Like I was still fighting for the man next to me. And our words could make us whole.



NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS: Please send articles, announcements, and poetry to share with your fellow PSV members. Your work may be unpublished or previously published, but if necessary, don't forget to include an acknowledgement. Remember to include a brief bio for the Contributors' page, and keep work political and family friendly. Please send to janhoffpoetry@gmail.com. The deadline for the May newsletter is April 15. Please note that it's a tremendous challenge when everyone waits until the deadline, so the sooner you can send me something, the better.

Thanks so much.

~Jan Hoffman

The 6th Annual **Little River Poetry Festival**

June 4-6, 2021 (Friday - Sunday)

Floyd, Virginia

Featuring:
Poetry Readings
Open Mics
Workshops
Writing Excursions

Contact:
757-622-8721
Jack Callan &
Judith Stevens

Cost: \$15 per day
Drop-ins Welcome

www.littleriverpoetryfest.com and



POEMS

Day One Mass Vaccination

by Eric Forsbergh

You go to war with the army you've got. ~Donald Rumsfeld

Eternal words to stoke determination? At least, with quiet poise,

December's trees still perform their landscape dance with clouds and hills.

No gout of smoke. No charred wreckage melted to the pavement.

Because it battles mouth to mouth, like the door-to-door of crowded neighborhoods,

we spread our ranks, masked off inside the vast carcass of a warehouse, vented,

cold. Wearing winter, shifting foot to foot, we're squads scraped up in weeks

to greet one tsunami: everyone anyone has ever known. The mere globe. Dose

by dose, a half-milliliter at a time. Nurses work in winter coats and woolen hats,

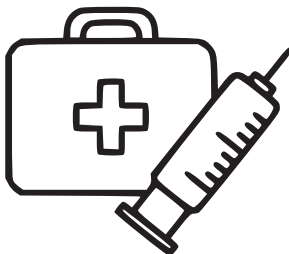
blue hands in rubber gloves. Runners cradle ampule boxes, precious ammunition.

A thousand matters to address the first week, a director says. Digital thermometers won't work in temperatures like this. And we three dozen? Shuttling through the empty hangar of a warehouse like something from a tale of spies.

And who's the captured agent tied up to a chair pleading that he doesn't know

the whole of it? Contingent truth. We wring it without mercy, constantly

adjusting in a klieg-lit space where not all facts are fully understood



Faith in the weather

by Joanna Lee

--for J & J

The bright yellow of the Dollar General blares on the corner,

its steel grey roll-down doors sealed tight against the cold.

Men still wait at the bus stop beside where the black rail fence

has been fixed yet again. A matching canary shopping cart

sits forlorn in a corner nearest the alley.

From here, you can't see any of it, only hear the bus as it comes to a stop,

see its lights pass as it rolls away, hear the recorded message

of its next destination sung out from the speakers

in a voice not quite human. From here, there is only a view

of rooftops and siren-echoes, the fluorescence

of two streetlights silhouetting the night.

From here, you can watch the moon melt

into their refractions and wait for the snow to work

its strange white-erase magic, softening the chill of the grief

with which god has touched so many.

The hours pass quiet. The bus is gone; the moon, disappeared. The sky hangs empty

and undecipherable, yet unbearably heavy.

Some signal tower blinks red in the backdrop,

as if to say, *Yes, I am out here. Yes, you are not alone.*

APRIL IS National Poetry Month!!!

*The PSV Annual Poetry Festival held each May could be via Zoom this year,
so pay particular attention to the May 1st newsletter!*

COVID RELIEF FOR ARTISTS

Congress is crafting major COVID-19 federal assistance legislation, including the extension of pandemic unemployment, new direct stimulus checks, additional PPP funds, SVO grants, and Targeted EIDL Advances. Now is the time for you, as an arts advocate, to weigh in with your members of Congress to ask for more economic relief for the arts!

The unexpected loss of revenue and employment from the pandemic are disproportionately damaging arts organizations and individual livelihoods. In order for artists and audiences to gather together safely again, many key forms of federal support are essential.

Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund have joined a coalition of national arts service organizations that have developed a thoughtful and unified statement of our **COVID-19 Requests**, urging legislators to fund specific economic relief programs for the arts, ranging from SBA and NEA funding to health care coverage and education. We know the arts will unify our country and we need to support artists and arts groups to survive this pandemic.

We have set up an easy way to make your voice heard with your members of Congress as they make these policy decisions. Take two minutes now to be an advocate!

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Forgivable Loans

If you're still considering applying for either a First or Second Draw Paycheck Protection Program Loan, there are still funds available, but it's going quickly. **SBA reports** that more than 1.29 million loans have already been approved, totaling \$100.9 billion. Please remember that you do NOT need to submit your Forgiveness Application for last year's PPP before you apply for a Second Draw this year. However, you do need to certify that you used the funds properly and that you incurred a reduction in gross receipts of at least 25% in any one quarter's comparison between 2019 and 2020. *Do not apply for a PPP if you plan to apply for a Shuttered Venue Operators Grant.*

- Form 2483- First Draw Borrower Application **and** Top-line Overview
- Form 2483-SD – Second Draw Borrower Application **and** Top-line Overview

Future Legislation: Congress recommends appropriating an additional \$7.25 billion in PPP funding in current legislation.

Nina Ozlu Tunceli

Executive Director of ArtsVotes

ArtsUSA.org

Jack Callan and Friends announces our 2020 Ensemble Performances, a little late, but right on time, like a vaccination. Our theme for 2020, yes, 2020, is "Courage: To Speak the Truth." Our poets from around the state are **Gina Woodfin, Katherine Chantal, Coral Kendall, and Judith Stevens**. Their poems, written across the past year, are both diverse and poignant.

Performances are planned in the warmth of Spring, outdoors, with masks and social distancing at The Fairmount Five Readings, Norfolk, and for Saturday, June 5, at The Little River Poetry Festival in Floyd, Virginia (see insert). We hope to schedule a third performance at Norfolk's Chrysler Museum when our Open Mic resumes. As in past performances, there will be musical accompaniment.

As the pandemic thrives, we will fine tune our production, and when it is safe, poetry may be our salvation. For information, contact Jack Callan at (757) 622-8721 or email knuckleheadpoet@yahoo.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VENUES

* **Busboys & Poets** on Instagram @busboysandpoets (ask about other formats, has been done on Zoom, too.) Every Mon. Weds and Fri., (usually \$5.) www.busboysandpoets.com. 8-10 PM

* **Venue on 35th Monday Night Open Mic** Mar. 1 virtual for now. Contact Jorge Mendez or James Cooper on Facebook for Zoom info. 7:30

* **CIPHER** Tuesdays Tuesday nights at 8/8:30 Please contact Quinton Jennings-Sherman on Facebook. He also goes by Q5 at #Q5TV. May involve a \$5 donation. Mar.2, 8pm

* Richmond's **Poetry Social Hour**: Contact Joanna Lee to see if they are virtual and find out how to get your spot at joanna@rivercitypoets.com, Typically Monday afternoons...

* Richmond's **Jazz and Wine Tasting** may go virtual+IRL depending on the situation and the host restaurant (C'est la Vin, 17th St.). Contact the hostess with the mostess, joanna@rivercitypoets.com The next one will be Mar. 4, 2021.

* Richmond also has a **poetry writing/critique group** almost every Monday at 6:30 that is virtual until such time as their cafe homes open up... also write Joanna at joanna@rivercitypoets.com for that information.

* **All the Feels** open mic through Google Meet for all the lovers and the loners out there! Associated with Richmond's Blue Bee. If you want to get on the mic contact the hostess joanna@rivercitypoets.com and plan on 4-5 minutes of material.

Link to event:

<https://sable.madmimi.com/c/3946?id=38787.3937.1.974ddc9d27152feccd96c9b8f3e2fd28>

* **Charlottesville Open Mic (Over the Bridge?)** takes place on the 4th Weds. each month. Contact Patsy Asuncion for exact time and for the way in.

* See links for dates, 6:30 pm. **Spilled Ink East & West** Virtual reading hosted by John Dutton. Check Facebook at Spilled Ink (Virginia). Spilled Ink East takes place the 2nd Friday of each month, and Spilled Ink West takes place the 4th Friday of each month.

Data: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SpilledInkVA>

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81108116410?pwd=M3Rac2JobGM5NTJwY2p0dFNGQW55Zz09> Meeting ID: 811 0811 6410, Passcode: 87613

REAL LIVE HUMAN EVENTS

Let's see how things are going for possible IRL events in **March at Word4Word**, Richmond Brewery events and Cafe ZaTa.

Jack Callan's House, Feb. 27 (4th Sat. until warm weather) Poetry Salon 10AM-12PM
2931 Somme Ave., Norfolk. Enter backyard through left-side gate, *mask/gloves required*
757-622-8721

Persnickety Crane Café might do a curated reading, so contact them to find out for sure.
209 Village Ave., Suite C, York Co. 23693 (757) 775-2975

Plans are developing for the Venue on 35th St's **Annual PoetFest** to be held virtually. Instead of one day in April, it will be every Saturday. Instead of 12 hours, it will involve 1-2 events broadcast in the evening between 1.5 and 3 hours. Check Venue on 35th and FB sites.

MEMBER NEWS

Sharon Canfield Dorsey was awarded 3rd Place, Poetry, for her poem, "Lest We Forget," and 1st Place, Non-Fiction for her essay, "Closet Closure," in the Chesapeake Bay Writers Golden Nib Annual Contest. She was also awarded 3rd Place for her essay, "Well-Behaved Women Rarely Make History," in the Annual Letters Competition by the National League of American Pen Women, Inc. Sharon's new poetry/art book, *Walk With Me*, published by High Tide Publications, debuted on Amazon and Barnes and Noble in Dec. She invites you to visit her new website, sharoncanfielddorsey.com, to see this unique, beautiful book and also to read over a hundred blogs—both essays and poetry.

MEMBER NEWS *continued*

Bill Glose says, “Guess who just got a book deal? St. Martin’s Press will be publishing my book, *All the Ruined Men*. Been working on this one for years. So, so happy.” In addition, the essay that includes his speaking to Jan Hoffman’s class of creative writing students (see earlier article in this issue) was just published by *Narrative Magazine*. Here’s the link: Thomas Nelson Community College by Bill Glose | Narrative Magazine

Janice Hoffman’s chapbook, *Azaleas in October* (poems and an essay written after the death of her son to suicide), was released in Feb. by High Tide Publications. She also had four poems appear in *Poets’ Domain* #34: “Purpose,” “Magic,” “Covenant Dawn,” and “Not My First Rodeo.” On Friday, Apr. 23, she will be featured at the Williamsburg Public Library, presenting a writers’ workshop and sharing her poetry via Zoom. Jan’s new website is jan-hoffman.com.

JoAnn Lord Koff was a finalist for her B&W photo *Moonlit* in the ART4US CounterCurrent International Juried Art Show at Gallery B in Bethesda. The show ran from Feb. 2-28, 2021.

Kindra McDonald has exciting news! She won the 2020 Award for Poetry from Haunted Waters Press. Her poem can be found in their latest issue of *From the Depths*.

Joan Mazza has four poems in the current issue of *Tigershark* e-zine #28, which can be downloaded. <https://tigersharkpublishing.wordpress.com/home/issues-of-tigershark-ezine/>

Her poem “Ghazal for Closed Beaches” is published in *Mizmor Anthology 2020*, and she has poems forthcoming in *EyeFlash Poetry* and *The Literary Nest*.

Suzanne Underwood Rhodes announces the release of *Flying Yellow: New and Selected Poems* (Paraclete Press). A review explains: “Rhodes ventures into what she calls ‘the good dark stuff’ of experience—good because the dark is where Christ went, willingly, to take it captive. Whether probing the meaning of her own personal traumas or those of historical figures like Mary Rowlandson and Dorothy Bradford, . . . she brings the reader alongside in each surprising encounter to see the possibilities of light.” Contact her via suzanneunderwoodrhodes.com.

Trisha Tetlow celebrates the release of her latest book, *How Southern Is That?* (published by Xlibris). This collection expresses the exciting facts, history, architecture, poems, short stories, cinema, scandal, food, and sense of wonder that the South offers. Formerly from Virginia, Trisha served as an educator in southern Maryland and raised hay and horses on her 70-acre farm. She currently resides in Henrico, Virginia, with her husband, and she is an active member of PSV. Her book is available at Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

CONTRIBUTORS

Eric Forsbergh’s “Day One of Mass Vaccination” depicts the beginning day of mass vaccination for the coronavirus. He was a volunteer worker the first day in Loudoun County. Eric submitted this poem because it is extremely timely and depicts the struggle to get it right even with incomplete information. He was eager to get the vaccine himself, for he trusts it, for sure.

Bill Glose is an award-winning writer of several books and hundreds of articles whose honors include the F. Scott Fitzgerald Short Story Award. He is PSV’s current president *pro tempore* and appears frequently as a featured speaker. His article “And So I Wrote a Poem” first appeared in *Narrative Magazine*. (Editor’s note: My class hung on to every word Bill uttered. He truly touched their hearts and inspired them to write.)

Joanna Lee’s work has been published or is forthcoming in *Rattle*, *Fourth River*, *Driftwood*, and elsewhere, and has been nominated for both Best of the Net and Pushcart prizes. She is a co-editor of the anthology *Lingering in the Margins* (Chop Suey Books, 2019), and founder of the Richmond community River City Poets.

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