

# THE GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

SERVING GEORGIA'S POETS SINCE 1979

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 3

AUTUMN 2005

## OFFICER CHANGES AT GPS

GPS President Steven Shields announces two changes to the GPS officer group, pending Board approval.

Robert M. Giannetti has been appointed to the position of Vice President of GPS.

Sally Kaplan has been

appointed to the position of GPS Secretary. Parliamentarian.

Other appointments include:

Larry Hand, who has agreed to serve as a member of the Board of Directors.

Emery Campbell, who has been appointed GPS

Howard McHenry, who has agreed to Chair the Membership Committee.

GPS continues to search for a qualified person to maintain the website and another to edit the newsletter. Contact Steven Shields if interested.

### Please Join Us for the 107th Quarterly Meeting

Saturday 10/15/2005 in Rabun Gap, Georgia

*Details on Page 3*

## GPS OPEN MIC MOVES TO TALL TALES

After a two-year run at the Barnes & Noble bookstore on the Georgia Tech campus, GPS has moved to a new location and date for its open mic series.

GPS has been invited to hold its monthly series at Tall Tales Book Shop in the Toco Hills Shopping Center, near the Emory campus.

Readings will now be the third Friday of each month, rather than the first Friday.

The debut event, held September 16, was attended

by about a dozen interested poets.

The featured reader was Emery Campbell, who read from his recent book "This Gardener's Impossible Dream."

GPS President Steven Shields hosted. In subsequent months, hosting and coordination of the monthly reading series will be done by Emery Campbell.

The change of locale was in response to concerns of various GPS members who felt unsafe in the downtown

area after nightfall and who found parking there was expensive.

The next reading is Friday, October 21 and features Steven Shields. Shields will be reading new work and selections from his book *Daimonion Sonata*.

John Ottley will be featured on November 18.

Readings begin at 7:30 PM. Sign-up starts at 7:00 PM.

Tall Tales is located at 2105 La Vista Road.

## NOTES OF INTEREST:

- *The GPS snail-mail address is:*  
**P.O. Box 147  
Duluth, GA 30096**
- *GPS has moved its website to a new address: It is [www.georgiapoetrysociety.Org](http://www.georgiapoetrysociety.Org) (NOT .com).*
- *Editor Cleo Creech continues to work on the 2003-04 volume of *The Reach of Song*. Robert Lynn has been selected to edit the 2005 volume.*
- *Remember to enter the GPS "Laureates of the Future" competition (deadline November 15) and the GPS Chapbook contest (deadline October 15). Details on the website.*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

MILDRED GREAR 2

GAIL PECK 2

106TH MEETING 3

PREZ SEZ 4

## GREEAR, PECK TO PRESENT AT 107TH GPS QUARTERLY MEETING

GPS President Steven Shields is pleased to announce that the 107th Quarterly Meeting will feature two prominent and well-respected poets.

Longtime GPS member Mildred Greear will be featured during the morning session. North Carolina poet Gail Peck will be featured in the afternoon session.

Mildred Greear, whose work has appeared in poetry journals at the regional, national and international level, is the author of the *A Species of Ruin* and *At the Edge*.

Her chapbooks have won the Georgia Poetry Society's Charles B. Dickson chapbook competition. She also has received the GPS "Poet in the Schools Award."

Both Mildred and her husband Dr. Philip Greear were close friends of Georgia poet Byron Herbert Reece, in whose honor the GPS conducts an annual contest. Her presentation will focus on some aspects of Reece's

work, and will relate one of Reece's last poems to a more recent poem by Dr. John Stone, prominent Atlanta poet and cardiologist.

Mildred Greear will also read from her own work.

The afternoon session of the Quarterly Meeting will feature Gail Peck of Charlotte, North Carolina.

She is a graduate of the MFA program for writers at Warren Wilson College, and

has published four books of poetry: *New River*, *Drop Zone*, *Foreshadow*, and *Thirst*.

*Thirst* is her fourth and most recent book, and will be the featured selection for her presentation. It was published in 2004 by Main Street Rag Press.

A lecturer and workshop leader on various topics relating to the craft of writing, Gail Peck recently appeared at the Hudson Valley Writ-

ers' Center and at Central Piedmont Community College.

When asked how she came to be a poet, Peck commented:

"I am a poet because all of my life I have loved words and how you link them together to form either sentences or lines of poetry.

"This love of writing stems, of course, from my desire to read the works of others. The fact that I, too, can arrange words on a page and create some emotion or insight for a reader has inspired me to continue to be a writer and to do the hard work it requires."

Those interested in learning more about Gail Peck and her work may enjoy browsing her website, which is [www. Gailpeck.org](http://www.Gailpeck.org).

Books will be available for sale following both presentations.



Mildred Greear



Gail Peck

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS TO *THE REACH OF SONG*, 2005

Robert L. Lynn, Editor, is accepting submissions from members of the Georgia Poetry Society for the next volume of *The Reach of Song*, GPS' annual anthology. The volume, featuring contest winners from the 2005 year, will be available in late spring 2006.

Please submit up to three poems for consideration **no later than January 15, 2006**. Include two clean typed copies of each work, one copy with your name and address. Entries (1) must be 32 lines or less in length, (2) must not have been published in *The Reach of Song*, and (3) may be of any subject or form. The anthology committee will choose the top 25 works based on an average of committee scores of works submitted. Those receiving highest marks will qualify for awards given by GPS *in memoriam*.

The Georgia Poetry Society strongly encourages all members to submit works for inclusion into *The Reach of Song*, although membership does not guarantee inclusion

Send manuscripts to: *The Reach of Song*, c/o Robert L. Lynn, Editor, P.O. Box 147, Duluth, GA 30096.

## 107TH QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA

Saturday, October 15, 2005

Hambidge Center for Creative Arts and Sciences

Bettys Creek Road, Rabun Gap, Georgia 30040-2705

09:30 - 10:00 AM	Registration, coffee, pastries, and sign up for member readings
10:00 - 10:05	Welcome by President Steven Shields
10:05 - 10:45	Member readings
10:45 - 11:00	<b>BREAK</b>
11:00 - 11:30	<b>FEATURED POET MILDRED GREEAR</b>
11:30 - 11:45	Book signing and reception for Mildred Greear
11:45 - 01:00 PM	Lunch (on your own)
01:00 - 01:15	Contest results, Announcements
01:15 - 02:00	<b>FEATURED POET GAIL PECK</b>
02:00 - 02:15	<b>BREAK</b> ; Book signing and reception for Gail Peck
02:15 - 03:00	<b>WORKSHOP (Steven Shields)</b>
03:00 - 03:05	Closing thoughts from President and adjournment.
03:15 - 04:00	<b>BOARD MEETING</b>

Travel time to Hambidge from north Atlanta is approximately two hours.

- DIRECTIONS:**
1. From Atlanta, take I-85 N to I-985 N (exit 113).
  2. Merge onto GA-365 N (for 52 miles)
  3. Continue onto US-23 N/US-441 N/GA-15 N (for 30 miles)
  4. Continue through Dillard, GA to Rabun Gap. Bettys Creek Road will be on your LEFT. Travel about 3 miles to Hambidge, on the right.

**PARKING:** Parking is available on-site.

## THE PREZ SEZ...

I spent some time this morning idly comparing one's efforts in poetry to the rooms of a house. Call it one's "Poetry House."

I confess I was thinking of my own poems as I did so. That said, you may know by now that I often work in forms, that most of my work is sawed and shaped for a good long while until the craftsmanship is as perfect as I can possibly make it.

Such work is somewhat like turning out a table leg in a garage workshop. The dust and stuff are flying everywhere. Eventually, an object of beauty emerges from the mess.

So my work is often in my "garage workshop." But there are other rooms in my own Poetry House, some of which are only occasionally explored. Maybe a broader kind of poet would emerge by doing more looking around.



Steven Shields

For example, maybe there are poets hanging around in the kitchen and at the dining room table of your Poetry House whom you seldom join. They always seem to be laughing at something, and having a very good time, but because they're not writing anything, maybe you think they're wasting their time. And that you'd waste yours by joining them.

Or maybe there's an attic you seldom go up to, for fear of what might or might not be there. Same for the basement, that dark, dank lair of the unimaginable.

Or maybe the bedroom of your Poetry House, that *sanc-tum sanctorum* of the intimate, is simply off-limits to you. Maybe you're afraid to open the bathroom door for fear of finding Charles Bukowski in it. And to go into that room would make you Not A Very Nice Poet At All.

More and more, as I go further down my own path, it seems to me that there is a kind of quantum leap that occurs from the level of mere proficiency, of mastery of craft, into genuine poetry, something of the heart and soul that resonates with readers and remains in the air of their thought long after the book is put aside.

I'm convinced by now that anyone can be taught to write a competent sonnet. I'm convinced that various feelings can be placed in the cra-

dle of metrical rhythm and set gently to rocking. One can even be accomplished enough to win various competitions, or to have a book or chap-book put out.

But these are just that: Accomplishments. They may or may not be *poetry* at all.

How do you make that quantum leap from verse to poetry, then; from technical achievement to *vision*?

I think one way you could start would be to ask why your poems do not roam as freely around your Poetry House as you do around your own physical locale. I doubt if you have shut-off rooms in your home, rooms you never go into. But reading people's work sometimes feels like it's coming out of only one room. In my own case, it's something out of the garage workshop. Maybe I need to go upstairs to my son's bedroom and look around and write about that for a while, observe the mess in my teen-aged daughter's room across the hall and write about that for a while, see the bedroom and consider that intimacy is a kind of sharing and that the sharing can be done publicly in tasteful ways without it degenerating into something at which audiences squirm or snicker. Maybe I need to get out the dream diary and keep track of the invisible movements of whatever seems to be lurking in my basement. Maybe I should go back to my journaling and get off my blog

## STEVEN SHIELDS

for a while and reformulate my thinking, the thinking that resides in my upstairs office.

Or maybe one needs to circulate, to attend GPS quarterly meetings, even in spite of the high price of gas and the need to pack a lunch and the dread of maybe having to talk to old so-and-so, and a million other show-stoppers.

Maybe one needs to read work in public to get a feel for what works with an audience and what falls flat.

Maybe one needs to go to the mailbox at one's Poetry House and stick some submissions in the mailbox and then to get back to work while waiting for their return.

My point is simply this: There are many facets to the poet's life, and it seems to be easy to fall into a rut sometimes. You tend to keep repeating what works until it no longer does. Maybe that's why some jokes never go out of fashion, or why people continue to write poems entitled "Hooray for the Red, White and Blue."

But I think the successful poet sometimes leaves the Naugahyde and wanders elsewhere in their own house. In fact, success demands it. Doing that makes for more versatile work, which in turn is where you see the beginnings of the poems you are meant to discover.

This week, open a door.

THE GEORGIA POETRY  
SOCIETY

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**JOIN THE GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY!**

GPS membership dues are currently \$20 annually, payable in July (\$35 for families, \$10 for students with ID). Life memberships are \$300, and include a copy of the annual anthology *The Reach of Song*. Detach this form, mail check or money order to The Georgia Poetry Society, PO Box 28337, Atlanta GA 30358.

Please check: This is a  **New Membership**  **Renewal**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work)  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_  
WEBSITE \_\_\_\_\_  
OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

**WE NEED YOUR HELP! PLEASE CHECK ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR VOLUNTEER SUPPORT:**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program Planning Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Editorial Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Poetry in the Schools Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Committee       | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity           | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative / Management   |