

THE GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

SERVING GEORGIA'S POETS SINCE 1979

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 4

WINTER 2005-06

Our 108th Quarterly Meeting Our upcoming Quarterly Meeting will be held on January 21, 2006 on the campus of Emory University, Atlanta. Our featured presenter is Dr. John Stone, well-known Atlanta poet and eminent cardiologist. Our afternoon featured reader is Atlanta poet Jenny Sadre-Orafai. We'll also have a workshop conducted by Kristina Simms. The day's schedule is on the reverse. Our thanks to GPS member Jacquie Aly for securing the meeting room for us!

Wine and cheese reception The Georgia Poetry Society has been invited to a brief presentation by the Emory University Manuscript and Rare Book Library (MARBL), housed just across the quad from Candler Library where we're meeting. The presentation by curator Steve Ennis will be followed by a wine and cheese reception for us. Emory is fortunate (thanks to Steve Ennis) to have the papers of many famous poets in their collection: Ted Hughes, England's poet laureate and husband of the late Sylvia Plath; Seamus Heaney and other prominent Irish poets; and many others. Please plan your day so that you can remain with us and be part of this terrific program!

The Reach of Song 2003-04 GPS President Steven Shields announces the publication of the Georgia Poetry Society's annual anthology publication *The Reach of Song*. This is a double-issue volume, and includes GPS member poems (competitively selected) and contest award-winning poems spanning the 2003 and 2004 competition years. The next issue, covering the 2005 competition year, is expected to be published by editor Robert L. Lynn in mid-2006. Copies of the 2003-04 volume will be available at the upcoming Quarterly Meeting. There are only 50 copies remaining of the original press run.

Submissions Are Now Open for "The Reach of Song 2005" Member submissions are now being accepted for the 2005 volume of the Georgia Poetry Society's annual anthology of member and prize-winning poems, *The Reach of Song*. Submissions may **only** be made by members of GPS or by winners of our competitions. Submissions for the members-only section of the anthology are now being accepted by editor Robert L. Lynn. The deadline for submissions is February 15, 2006. Send no more than three poems for consideration to: Robert L. Lynn, Editor; *The Reach of Song*; PO Box 147, Duluth, GA 30096. Submission does not guarantee acceptance.

Our Next Monthly Open Mic is Friday, January 20 Please join us on Friday, January 20, 2006 at 7:30 PM at Tall Tales Book Shop for our monthly reading, featuring Atlanta poet Jenny Sadre-Orafai, who reads from her chapbook *Weed Over Flower*. Emery Campbell hosts. Sign-up for the open mic begins at 7:00 PM; reading begins at 7:30 PM. Our February reader will be prominent Atlanta poet Lee Passarella.

Announcing the 2006 GPS Contest Schedule GPS is pleased to announce its 2006 contest schedule. Browse the Contests page on the GPS website for full details. The website address is www.GeorgiaPoetrySociety.org.

Newsletter Editor Sought GPS is seeking a Newsletter Editor, preferably someone with prior experience in composing same. Interested applicants should contact President Steven Shields by email at this address: Mail@GeorgiaPoetrySociety.org.

108TH QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA

Saturday, January 21, 2006
Emory University, Candler Library 114
Atlanta, Georgia

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 08:00 - 09:15 AM | BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING |
| 09:30 - 10:00 | 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 | BREAK |
| 11:00 - 11:30 | FEATURED POET: Dr. JOHN STONE |
| 11:30 - 11:45 | Book signing and reception for Dr. Stone |
| 11:45 - 01:00 PM | Lunch |
| 01:00 - 01:15 | Contest results, Announcements |
| 01:15 - 02:00 | FEATURED POET: JENNYSADRE-ORAFAI |
| 02:00 - 02:15 | BREAK; Book signing and reception for Jenny Sadre-Orafai |
| 02:15 - 03:00 | WORKSHOP:KRISTINA SIMMS, "Poems All Around Us" |
| 03:00 - 03:15 | Closing thoughts from President. |
| 03:30 - 05:00 | RECEPTION: Steve Ennis, Emory University MARBL Collection |

SADRE-ORAFAI, SIMMS HIGHLIGHT 108TH GPS QUARTERLY MEETING

GPS President Steven Shields is pleased to announce that the 108th Quarterly Meeting will feature Atlanta poet Jenny Sadre-Orafai, and a workshop led by one of GPS' newest members, Kristina Simms.



Sadre-Orafai

Tina Simms

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 February 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.

THE PREZ SEZ...

Like many of you, I find the month named for the Roman god Janus a time of looking back and looking forward, of introspection, of a certain winter-time hunkering down in search of new poems.

My 2005 was special in part because of the release of my debut effort, *Daimonion Sonata*. My wife Janet and I saw our first child off to college. The family and I took a first visit to France, Germany, and the Netherlands. A younger brother adopted a daughter. New work was published, work I think is finally turning some sort of corner in terms of its style and quality, its gravitas.

And the year included a fair amount of activity on behalf of the Georgia Poetry Society. If you want proof positive that the Almighty has a sense of humor, you would have to understand how dramatic a shift occurred in 2005 in



Steven Shields

my thinking about "service" from the days when I was a struggling young college professor to where I am today.

In the university, your annual performance typically is evaluated on teaching, research and service. I was always rated "excellent" on those first two. When it came to service, which included committee work and time spent working with professional associations, my perspective wasn't just "no," but "hell, no." I thought if there was a bigger waste of time in the world than committee work, I couldn't imagine what it could possibly be.

This is to observe a gentle irony, then, in my being selected as your President. And true to form, I began my term with every intention of delegating most of the "real" work to "somebody else."

The only problem was that I soon found out that there wasn't "somebody else" or, if there was, "somebody else" would soon vanish for one reason or another and leave me responsible for yet another task on what has become an ever-expanding list of things I do.

And so I have become not only your President, but also your acting Vice President by doing the program planning and website, your membership chair, your newsletter editor, contest coordinator, acting editor of the most recent edition of *The Reach of*

Song, the guy who picks up and distributes the mail at the post office, and the guy who makes miserable coffee at the quarterly meetings.

Now, here's the kicker: It would be easy to lament this on any of several fronts. Instead, I have seen this as a wonderful opportunity to be of service to you all, and I want to express my appreciation to you for allowing me to do so.

I like to think I finally discovered something valuable during all this: Call it "the joy of service."

What I think stops people from discovering this joy more quickly is that it is a counter-intuitive thing: Like people who never save a dime because they put savings last after all the bills are paid, you have to pay yourself first. Or, to be more Biblical about it, whoever loses their life will find it.

What I'm talking about is your priorities, both in service to your own poems and to your affiliation with the Georgia Poetry Society. I understand what it is to work for a living, to be *busy*. But I also know now that no poems are going to be written unless I schedule my writing time every day and stay in it, undistracted. It is a priority now for me to write my poems, to be of service to the messages they convey.

Similarly, it is a priority to ensure that the vital functions

STEVEN SHIELDS

of the Georgia Poetry Society are maintained, improved upon, and set in forward motion, not because I expect anything in return for it but because I believe the Georgia Poetry Society is a worthy organization with a valuable role to play.

And by not expecting a return, I am here to tell you that I have been overwhelmed with dividends many times over. I've met some wonderful poets, gained valuable insights into issues affecting my own work, found appreciative and supportive friends. In short, I have been blessed.

As you know, 2006 marks the end of my term as President mid-year. Even now, I am preparing the groundwork for the next Board and officer group to ensure as smooth a transition as possible.

Part of that groundwork involves my challenge to you, especially you, whoever you are, who may have been hearing my calls to service for the past two years and saying, as I once did, not "no" but "hell, no." You are exactly the people I am looking for now.

Of course, I'd rather hear a "yes." But even in your "no," I see something for you that you yourself might not see yet. I invite you to discover what it is for yourself. The leadership of the Georgia Poetry Society needs you for the 2006-07 year.

Say no, won't you?

THE GEORGIA POETRY
SOCIETY

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Georgia Poetry Society Newsletter

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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 |