

Georgia Poetry Society

The New Byron Herbert Reece Award



**Jericho Brown and Dan Veach
to judge new GPS contests in 2020**

It is a momentous start to a new decade for the Georgia Poetry Society. After many years of GPS running several small annual contests, the board determined early in 2019 that a fresh approach was needed to attract more poets. Following much research, a proposal for significant change to its contests was sent fall 2019 to the Society’s membership for comment.

On November 15, 2019, a new, major competition, the **Byron Herbert Reece Award**, with a single prize of \$1000, was announced as open for submissions. **Jericho Brown** will be this year’s BHR Award judge.

An annual **Georgia Poetry Society Member Contest**, with prizes, was also announced, which this year will be judged by **Dan Veach**.

The General Submission category (no prizes) and the biennial **Charles Dickson Chapbook Contest** will both continue. GPS Youth Contests are due for revision and have not been held this year. Member input on their review is welcomed.

This has been a significant task by the board, having set itself a goal to keep Georgia Poetry Society’s anthology fresh and relevant as the organization moves into its fifth decade. Special thanks are owed to Miriam Jacobs, Trish Percival, and Andrea Jurjević, who spearheaded the project, and to many others, including current and former board members and GPS contest chairs, who provided invaluable advice.

More information, with a link to the Contests page on the GPS website, can be found on page 9 of this newsletter.

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2020 Officers

Steven Shields, President
Alyson Shields, V. President
Ann Gillespie, Secretary
Lyn Hopper, Treasurer

2020 Board

Kristin Gorell
Edward Hall
Andrea Jurjevic
John Ottley
Ann Willis

**GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY
WINTER QUARTERLY MEETING**

**Decatur-Dekalb County Library
215 Sycamore Street, Decatur, GA 30030**

January 25, 2020

AGENDA

Meeting will be held in the Auditorium

- 10:00 Registration and Members' "Book Fair" (see below)
Complimentary coffee and cookies will be available
- 10:20 President's Welcome and Announcements; Installation of new board members.
- 10:40 Open Mic for GPS Members (Sign up at the Registration Desk)
- 11:00 **Jericho Brown Workshop and Reading**
- 11:45 Break and Book Signing by Jericho Brown
- *A Cappella Books will be on site to sell books by Jericho Brown.
Please support our featured speaker by purchasing his books.**
- 12:15 Lunch Break (see below)
- 1:15 **Reading by Members of the Side Door Poets**
- 2:15 Break
- 2:30 Open Mic for Members (Sign up at the Registration Desk)
- 3:00 Closing Announcements and Adjournment

BOOK FAIR: DISPLAY & SWAP ONLY

Though Decatur Library rules allow A Capella Books as a third party to sell at an event, GPS and its members are not permitted to sell their books on the premises. However, members may display their books, swap books with other attendees, or arrange to sell copies at another location.

LUNCH ARRANGEMENTS

Attendees have a wide choice of cafes and restaurants within a 5-minute walk of the library. Those who prefer to bring a sack lunch are welcome to do so but must eat outside the library. No lunches allowed inside the building.



Featured main reader **Jericho Brown** is the recipient of a Whiting Writers' Award and fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Brown's first book, *Please* (2008), won the American Book Award. His second book, *The New Testament* (2014), won the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award and was named one of the best of the year by Library Journal, Coldfront, and the Academy of American Poets. He is also the author of the collection *The Tradition* (2019), which was long listed for the 2019 National Book Award. His poems have appeared in BuzzFeed, The Nation, The New York Times, The New Yorker, The New Republic, Time, and The Pushcart Prize Anthology, and several volumes of The Best American Poetry anthologies. He is an associate professor and the director of the Creative Writing Program at Emory University in Atlanta. <https://blueflowerarts.com/artist/jericho-brown/>

Featured poetry group readers at the January meeting are the **Side Door Poets**. The poets who will read at the 2020 Winter Quarterly Meeting will include as many of the following Side Door Poets as available on January 25, 2020. They will divide approximately an hour among them: Karen Paul Holmes, Diana Anhalt, Maggie Blake Bailey, Jesse Breite, Ricks Carson, Jennifer Dracos, Rupert Fike, Erin Ganaway, Andrea Jurjevic, Jim Langford, Kathleen Lewis, Sally Mohny, Patricia Percival, Jane Simpson, and Dan Veach. Collectively, these poets have had 23 chapbooks and books published since the Side Doors formed. Please see page 5 of this newsletter for more on the Side Door Poets.



**DIRECTIONS to DECATUR-DEKALB COUNTY LIBRARY
215, Sycamore Street, Decatur, GA 30030**

The Library is in the center of Decatur, on Sycamore Street (one block south of East Ponce de Leon Avenue) between Church Street and N Candler Street.

Free parking for the patrons of the Decatur Library is limited. Note that metered parking in Decatur is limited to two hours, so a parking lot/deck is the best option for our meeting; there are several close to the library. Cost on Saturdays ranges from \$6-\$15. The parking brochure for Decatur, which has a map showing location of lots, with address, fee, and payment method (one or two are exact cash only) can be found at this link:

<https://www.decaturga.com/sites/default/files/fileattachments/visit/page/5671/parkingindecaturbrochure.pdf>

INTRODUCING THE 2020 GPS BOARD

Steven Shields, President: Steven is a former all-night FM disc jockey and present-day college professor of mass communication (MA, Journalism, Ball State University; PhD, Mass Communication, University of Wisconsin). He is the author of *Creation Story* (Brick Road Poetry Press, 2019) and *Daimonion Sonata* (Birch Brook Press, 2005). He is Past President of the Georgia Poetry Society and has served on its Board several times.

Alyson Shields, Vice President: Alyson is a Midwestern daisy replanted below the Mason-Dixon Line. During the day, she writes and reads the news for all the flowers in the Piedmont. At night, she blooms creatively with the help of a blue pen and to the delight of her rescue pets. While her journalistic works have created a garden of facts and stories, her creative works are just beginning to bud publicly.

Lyn Hopper, Treasurer (continuing): Lyn Hopper grew up on the Georgia coast and lives in the mountains near Dahlonega with her husband of 43 years and a spirited cat. After a 30-year career in public library leadership, she is enjoying part-time work as an office manager for an environmental nonprofit, Georgia ForestWatch. Her books, *The Hum in Every Blossom*, and a daybook of haiku, *Some Days Are Like That*, are both available at Amazon.com.

Ann Gillespie, Secretary (continuing): Ann G. has enjoyed being a GPS member for at least 10 years. She has served as vice-president once and as secretary twice. She is a retired teacher who lives in White County.

Kristin Gorell (continuing): MA, History, Stanford; MFA, Painting and Performance, Georgia State. Kristin explores the fullest expression of any given idea through a variety of media: writing, painting, drawing, several types of live theater, and film. Her writing includes stage- and screenplays as well as her ongoing love, poetry. She has received awards for drawing (Juror's choice, Phyllis Rosenzweig, Hirshhorn Museum), and best screenplay (script doctor, Ghent Film Festival, Belgium), and is a Sundance Film Labs Fellow.

Edward Hall (continuing): E. A. Hall's poetry has appeared in *Eyedrum Periodically* and *Catalyst*. Hall's current project, inspired by a bad dream, involves concrete "pomes" that address "impossible colors." Hall lives and works in Atlanta on a tiny Georgia emdash farm. In his guise as Edward Austin Hall, he looks forward to releasing his first novel sometime in 2020.

Andrea Jurjević (continuing): Andrea is the author of *Small Crimes*, winner of the 2015 Philip Levine Poetry Prize, and a translator whose book-length translations from Croatian include *Mamasafari* (Diálogos Press, 2018) and *Dead Letter Office* (The Word Works, 2020). She teaches at Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia.

John Ottley, Jr.: Education: Davidson College (AB), Columbia University (MS), Army Command and General Staff College, and Army War College. Awards: first place, Byron Herbert Reece Contest (x4), Master Army Aviator Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, SAO Distinguished Service. Poetry Activities: Judged 42 poetry contests; published 3 poetry books, 2 non-poetry books, and was editor and publisher, *Midwest Poetry Review*, 5 years. Leadership: GPS president and treasurer. NFSPS treasurer five years. Cover story: *Aviation History*, September 2014. History lectures: 5.

Ann Willis: MA, English, UW-Milwaukee. Ann W. lives with her husband and their adopted greyhound in Habersham County. Retired from careers in marketing and education, she now volunteers in many areas, including serving on boards for SNCA (cultural center) and for the Alliance for African American Music in Northeast Georgia. She also edits books, plays, and newsletters, writes publicity pieces, helps organize events, and in between writes poetry for pleasure.

THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you to our outgoing Board President, Miriam Jacobs, Board Vice President, Trish Percival, and to departing Board Members Michael Diebert (Past President) and Erica Gerald Mason, for your dedication and giving of so much time and talent in support of the Georgia Poetry Society and its membership.

The Side Door Poets: GPS New Writing Group Membership Initiative

The Side Door Poets have recently taken advantage of the **Georgia Poetry Society's new program granting discounted membership fees to writing groups of 10 persons or more who all join.** Writing group members utilizing this new program may also request to be a **featured group at a Quarterly Meeting**, particularly if they want to help organize a meeting in their hometown.

Featured reading group at the January 2020 quarterly meeting, The Side Door Poets is a poetry critique/support group started and administered by Karen Paul Holmes. Since 2009 they have been meeting once a month to share and discuss each other's work. Several original members met through the community workshops hosted by Poetry@Tech, a program started by Thomas Lux when he became the Bourne Chair of Poetry at Georgia Tech. The group has grown and changed members over the years but maintains a steady membership of about 20 poets.

The poets who will read at the 2020 Winter Quarterly Meeting will include as many of the following Side Door Poets as available on January 25, 2020. They will divide approximately an hour among them: Karen Paul Holmes, Diana Anhalt, Maggie Blake Bailey, Jesse Breite, Ricks Carson, Jennifer Dracos, Rupert Fike, Erin Ganaway, Andrea Jurjevic, Jim Langford, Kathleen Lewis, Sally Mohny, Patricia Percival, Jane Simpson, and Dan Veach. Collectively, these poets have had 23 chapbooks and books published since the Side Doors formed.

The Side Doors are a very diverse group. Like founder Holmes, many had or still have careers in other fields. Several teach English or creative writing or have retired from doing so or editing. Side Door Poets have been published in a wide array of journals and won recognition for their work. Jurjevic has won the Robinson Jeffers Tor House prize and her book, *Small Crimes*, was awarded the Philip Levine Prize for Poetry. Ganaway and Mohny both won Texas Review Breakthrough Prizes, for Georgia and North Carolina, respectively. The group boasts three Georgia Author of the Year for Poetry recipients, Jurjevic, Veach and Simpson. Fike's second poetry collection, *Hello the House*, won the Haas Poetry Prize from Snake Nation Press and was named one of the "Books All Georgians Should Read, 2018" by The Georgia Center for the Book. Several Side Doors have been nominated for Pushcart Awards, and Holmes has had poems featured by Garrison Keillor and Tracy K. Smith on their podcasts. Both Veach and Jurjevic have published English translations of poets writing in other languages.

The GPS hopes this new membership initiative will both grow its membership and promote the work of groups around the state. **If your group is interested in a group membership, please contact any of the Officers or Board Members for more information.**

GPS Member News

Lucinda Clark's "Poetry Matters" project was featured on *Inside Scoop Live* in September 2019. Check out the link for her interview. <https://insidescooplive.com/2019/09/16/lucinda-clark-founder-of-the-poetry-matters-project/>

Karen Paul Holmes' poem "Rental Cottage, Maine" from her book *No Such Thing as Distance* (Terrapin Books, 2018) was read by Garrison Keillor on *The Writer's Almanac* on October 16, 2019. <http://www.garrisonkeillor.com/radio/twa-the-writers-almanac-for-october-16-2019/>

Miriam C. Jacobs' poem "Winter" has won an award from *Plainsongs*. It will be published with a short critical essay written by a member of the magazine's reading board in the Jan 2020 issue.

In the News: The Healing Power of Poetry?

If, as William Congreve wrote, music has charms to soothe a savage beast, poetry apparently can calm the beasts of illness which savage our bodies. An article in the December 2, 2019 *Wall Street Journal* states that physicians are using poetry to perk up the seriously ill.

Dr. Joshua Hauser's patient, a 68-year-old former Marine at the Jesse Brown VA Hospital in Chicago, asked to be read *Invictus* by William Ernest Henley. When Hauser read the immortal line "I am the master of my fate," his patient replied: "Yes. I'm, not gonna roll up in no ball and cry because I've got cancer. I'm tired but it's not the kind of tired where I'm giving up."

The *Journal* reports that physicians are interviewing patients after poetry readings to determine whether their quality of life and relationships with their doctors have improved. Dr. Hauser said he thought that poetry caused his patients to reflect on their illnesses in ways that direct questioning might not.

At Huntsman Cancer Institute in Salt Lake City, cancer patients can dictate poetry while receiving chemotherapy—a teaspoon of honey making the poison go down, if you will. In Boston, Dr. Rafael Campo, who edits the poetry section of the *Journal of the AMA*, is quoted as saying, "We don't always have a cure in medicine, but poetry actually can heal in a broader sense."

At a children's cancer center in Akron, OH, a "narrative medicine coordinator" averred that poetry workshops enable patients, their families, and staff to "see themselves in a poem." One patient remarked that he "realized the healing process of poetry" and affirmed that it helped him find his way in life—even in times of darkness.

According to the article, reading poetry to patients also may help relieve doctor burnout.

Spotted in the *WSJ* and summarized by John Ottley Jr., December 2019

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE POETRY SOCIETIES
ANNUAL CONVENTION, KANSAS CITY, MO, JUNE 11-14, 2020

Poetry Events Around Georgia

Art Amok Poetry Slam, Tuesday January 7, 8:30pm-11pm. Monthly on second Tuesday. Red Light Cafe, 553-1 Amsterdam Avenue Northeast, Atlanta. \$10.

UGA Poetry Readings at Ciné: Thursday, January 16, Tim Seibles; **Wednesday, January 29,** Chelsea Dingman; **Tuesday, February 4,** Julie Carr; **Friday, February 14,** Jenny Xie; **Tuesday, April 7,** Brenda Hillman. Readings start 7pm. Ciné, 234 W Hancock Ave, Athens, GA 30601.

Poetry@Tech: Georgia Poets Event, **Thursday, January 30** with Chelsea Dingman, Karen Head, Collin Kelley; Spring Immigrant/Refugee Poetry Reading, **Thursday, February 20** with Kwame Dawes, Javier Zamora, Dunya Mikhail, Mahtem Shiferraw. All events start **7:30pm at Kress Auditorium,** Renewable Bioproducts Institute at Georgia Tech.

Avid Poetry Series, Friday, January 31, 6:30pm. Sandra Meek and Zack Anderson. Avid Bookshop, 1662 S. Lumpkin St, Athens, GA 30606

GA Poetry Circuit. February 3-7, 2020. David Baker (north circuit): five locations including Brenau University, Columbus State University, and Berry College. Carmen Giménez Smith (south circuit): Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Thomas University, Valdosta State University, Georgia Southern University, and Savannah State University. Information at <https://www.berry.edu/gpc/gpi>. Click on GPC Schedule.

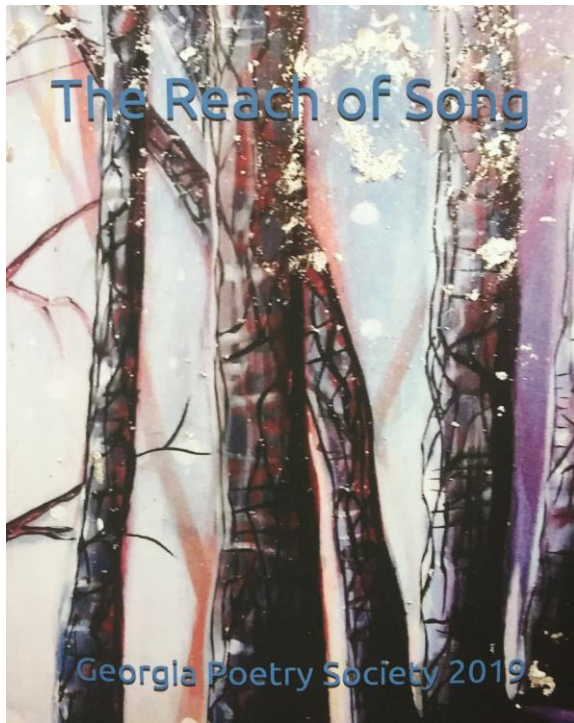
Poetry Reading at Callanwolde. Thursday, January 9, Open Poetry Reading: first ten poets to sign up in advance by emailing ruth.windham@gmail.com may read for up to 5 minutes. **Thursday, February 13,** featuring Steven Shields and Diana Anhalt. **Thursday, March 12,** featuring Tara Bray and William Nutter. Library of the Historic Candler Mansion of the Callanwolde Fine Arts Center, 980 Briarcliff Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30306. Starts 7:30pm. Free admission—donations accepted.

Joy Harjo, Poet Laureate. Wednesday, February 19. Middle Georgia State University, Macon GA. <https://www.joyharjo.com/middle-georgia-state-university>

Carson McCullers Literary Festival, Columbus State University: Friday, February 21 & Saturday, February 22. United States Poet Laureate Joy Harjo, reception, reading, book-signing, **Friday, February 21, 6:30pm,** and Master class on **February 22.** Sandra Meek, **February 22,** Reader and Workshop Leader.

Steamify Winners: Spoken Word Performance Event provisionally planned for **March 21.** Organized by Poetry Matters, sponsored by Augusta University. Morris Museum of Art, 1 10th St, Augusta, GA 30901. Details: <https://www.facebook.com/poetrymattersproject>.

NOW AVAILABLE: *THE REACH OF SONG 2019*



The 2019 anthology of the Georgia Poetry Society includes 2018 contest-winning poems, 2019 selected member poems, and previously unpublished 2015 contest winners in the adult and youth categories.

Don't miss out on ordering a copy!

Book order forms are available through the GPS website's *The Reach of Song* page to print out, complete and send to Lyn Hopper with your payment.

<http://georgiapoetrysociety.org/books/>

Or you can pick up a form at our quarterly meetings.

For contests and general submission opportunities for *The Reach of Song 2020*, see page 9 in this newsletter! *Tempus fugit.*

**Our Sincere Thanks to
rEN: Cover Artist for *The Reach of Song 2019***



A feverish passion for underlying form has always been the engine driving artist **rEN**'s (Ralph Dillard's) work. The Germantown section of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is where he began his professional career. With more than 2,800 murals, Philly boasts the greatest number of large-scale public paintings of any city in the world. Living and interacting with the people of this community during some of his most impressionable years heavily impacted the style he is known for today. Using a wide variety of rich colors in the oil medium, **rEN** aims to give viewers a glimpse into the world he sees behind his eyes. The focus of his work has always been to communicate ideas that challenge people to be curious about their own internal nature. He hopes people will see themselves in his works. "They are as much about you as they are about me," he says.

**GPS CONTESTS AND GENERAL SUBMISSIONS NOW OPEN
DEADLINE FEBRUARY 1, 2020**

The Georgia Poetry Society is conducting three contests this winter, 2019–2020:

Byron Herbert Reece Award, prize **\$1,000**

Georgia Poetry Society Member Contest, prizes **\$100, \$75, and \$25**

Charles Dickson Chapbook Contest 2019 (biennial contest), prize **\$250.00, book publication, and 25 copies of the printed book.**

Winning poems from the two annual contests will be published in *The Reach of Song 2020*.

We are also accepting **general submissions** from GPS members and nonmembers for *The Reach of Song 2020*.

For full submission guidelines, visit <http://georgiapoetrysociety.org/contests/>

For the year 2019–2020, Board Member Andrea Jurjević is the Chair of the Contest Committee. If you are a current member and would be willing to volunteer for the committee, please contact Andrea: andreaJurjevic9@gmail.com

**DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR
GPS MEMBERSHIP!**

- Pay by check or cash at a quarterly meeting or
- Download a membership form from our website and mail it with your check to the GPS Treasurer per the instructions provided or
- Pay using PayPal online (there is an additional service fee) at the link on the GPS website's Membership page

<http://georgiapoetrysociety.org/membership/>

2020 QUARTERLY MEETING DATES

January 25; April 25; July 25; October 24

Please note that dates are subject to venue availability.

Watch the GPS website for information:
<http://georgiapoetrysociety.org>

**NFSPS SPRING CONTESTS
Deadline March 15, 2020**

The NFSPS conducts numerous poetry contests in the spring of each year.

For details, go to:

https://www.nfsps.com/poetry_contests.htm

**GPS SPRING NEWSLETTER
Your input makes a difference!
Deadline: March 12, 2020**

Do **you** have any Member News, Georgia Poetry Event News, or anything else interesting to share with fellow members?

April is Poetry Month: let us know if you have an event planned or want to share a creative idea of how to encourage poetry in our communities.

Please email Ann Willis, Newsletter Editor, at ann.c.willis@outlook.com.