

Welcome to a new year in poetry with KSPS! The KSPS Board is hard at work reviewing and renewing the KSPS image, structure and activities. Members can anticipate an exciting annual meeting, *Pegasus* available in both paper and on-line form, a new contest for adult poets, and more frequent communications throughout the year.

But first, a shout out to Tina Parker for her service as President in 2018 and for a very successful annual meeting in Berea last October, and to Pam Hirschler, a past president of KSPS, who designed and sustained our website for many years. Thanks to both of you.

KSPS Board members and committee chairs – 2019

President – Tasha Cotter
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Secretary – Christopher McCurry
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Pegasus Editor – Becky Lindsay
Adult Contest Chair – Shelda Hale
Student Contest Chair – Kelly Vance
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The **2019 Annual Meeting** will be held October 4-6 in Lexington at the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning. Poet Hannah Drake from Louisville will be the keynote speaker. Drake, author of six books of poetry and two novels, is a community activist and blogger who writes on issues of social justice, feminism and race. She was selected for the inaugural class of Hadley Creatives, a program funded by the George and Mary Alice Hadley Fund “as a way to nurture creative professionals and support a thriving arts community throughout Louisville.” Drake’s essays and commentaries have been featured in national magazines and on TV and radio platforms. She has worked on a project with The Louisville Ballet and has exhibited in various venues including in the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft. Her poem *Spaces* appeared in a national art exhibit about health equity sponsored by the National Academy of Medicine. Mark your calendars! Information about the schedule, registration

and accommodations, when finalized, will be posted on the KSPS website and in another newsletter.

Speaking of **websites**: Don’t forget to check both the KSPS site and the site of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS) for news of contests, calls for submissions, meetings and other events, as well as for the latest issues of our *Pegasus* and of *Strophes*, the quarterly newsletter of NFSPS. KSPS is found at www.kystatepoetrysociety.org, NFSPS at www.nfsps.com.

The **KSPS 2019 Student Contest** is underway and the deadline for submission has been extended to March 31. The contest, which is open to students in grades three through twelve, in public, private, and homeschool classes, reflects the KSPS commitment to promoting interest in poetry among young people. At our meeting last October, we were privileged to hear Jessica Mansfield, Glasgow Middle School, and Blake Hunley, McNeil Elementary in Bowling Green, read winning poems from the 2018 contest. Full information about rules, prizes and publications for the Student Contest are available on the KSPS Website.

Judges for Student Contest needed – The Contest committee is seeking assistance from KSPS members who would like to be judges for the 2019 submissions. Judges should have some knowledge of poetry, although they do not need to be experts. Judges should be free of any conflict of interest—actual or perceived—with student contestants. For example, judges should recuse themselves from judging categories (grade levels) that contain submissions from friends, students, relatives, etc.

Judges will be asked to read all of the poems submitted for their category and select a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner. Depending upon the number of volunteer judges and number of submissions, judges may be asked to read for more than one category. See attached flier for more information about categories and prizes. Poems will be distributed to judges by April 20, 2019. For questions regarding the Student Contest or if you are a KSPS member willing to help judge the student submissions, please contact Kelly Vance at KSPSPoetry@gmail.com.

The **KSPS 2019 Adult Contest** opens March 1! After two years of disappointment for members, when there

was no contest, we are pleased to launch the 2019 contest with new format and rules and with submissions accepted March 1 through June 30.

One important new feature in the guidelines for 2019 is the requirement that entries must be submitted electronically to kspadultcontest@gmail.com. Many literary contests and journals require electronic submissions, and we think it's time for KSPS to make this change to facilitate the process for everyone as well as to reduce printing and mailing costs. As an added benefit, we note it is also eco-friendly!

Details on the contest rules and guidelines will be published on the KSPS website later this month: www.kentuckystatepoetry.org. We look forward to reading your submission!

New books and chapbooks from KSPS members:

Talking Burley by Sherry Chandler is to be released later this month from Main Street Rag. See <http://mainstreetragbookstore.com/product/talking-burley-sherry-chandler/>.

The Aqua Notebook by Tasha Cotter, released this month by Anaphora Literary Press, is available at <https://www.amazon.com/Aqua-Notebook-Tasha-Cotter/dp/1681144662/ref=sr>.

What Lies Beneath by Pam Hirschler is due to be released in March from Finishing Line Press. See <https://www.facebook.com/finishinglinepress/>.

The Shepherds of Tenth Avenue by Allison Thorpe is now available through Finishing Line Press at <https://www.facebook.com/finishinglinepress/>.

Congratulations to all four of these fine poets!

The 8th Annual Berea Festival of Learnshops will be held July 12 through August 2. The festival features a variety of workshops with “professional artists, writers, musicians, craftspeople and DIY practitioners” that provide participants with opportunities “to learn new skills and nurture creativity.” Tasha Cotter is leading three workshops for poets: *Getting Started with Poetry*, *Literary Publishing*, and *Developing Your Creative Confidence*. The complete schedule and information about registration, which begins in March, can be found at <https://www.visitberea.com/festival-of-learnshops>.

After a brief hiatus in publication, *The Chaffin Journal* is available once more. Lillie Chaffin, Kentucky Poet Laureate 1974-1976, provided funds in her will to enable Eastern Kentucky University to found a literary magazine, which was then named in her honor. Nancy Jensen, Associate Professor of English at ECU, recently assumed editorial responsibility for the journal, and the 2018 issue is the first under her leadership. The 2019 issue is scheduled for release in April or May. *The Chaffin Journal* publishes poetry and short fiction, and the period for submission for the 2020 issue is April 1 through July 15 of this year. Further information is available at <https://english.eku.edu/chaffin-journal>.

A feature story in the February 24 issue of the *Courier-Journal* introduced readers to **Project Uncaged**, an innovative “trauma-informed, arts-based program” that uses poetry to help girls in Louisville’s Youth Detention Services. Sarabande Books and the University of Louisville’s Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky partner in supporting the program under the leadership of its founder, Dr. Tasha Golden, and have overseen publications of two anthologies of participants’ poetry. For more information about the project and publications, or to learn about volunteer opportunities, go to www.tiny.cc/projectuncaged.

About this newsletter: I’ve received many queries from members who are concerned about KSPS and the lack of communication to members. As most of you know, what with increasing postal rates and costs of publication, we’ve experienced funding difficulties that have caused us to rely more and more on access through email. It is my hope that a communication like this, which is being sent snail-mail to members for whom email is not an option, can keep us all apprised of KSPS activities and opportunities. I want to establish a quarterly schedule that corresponds to KSPS’s year, probably January, April, July and September. If you have suggestions for items to include in the next e-letter, please email them to me by April 1st at the address below. Also, don’t forget to consult our website for submission guidelines and send poems to *Pegasus*!

Mary Allen, Membership Chair
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