



Chaparral updrafts

from the
California Federation
of Chaparral Poets, Inc.

serving California poets for over 65 years

Volume 68, No. 1 • February, 2007

- President**
James Shuman, PSJ
- First Vice President**
David Lapiere, PCR
- Second Vice President**
Katharine Wilson, RF
- Third Vice President**
Dan Saucedo, Tw
- Fourth Vice President**
Donna Honeycutt, AP
- Treasurer**
Roberta Bearden, PSJ
- Recording Secretary**
Lee Collins, Tw
- Corresponding Secretary**
Dorothy Marshall, Tw
- Members-at-Large Chair**
Frances Yordan, FG
- Monthly Contest Chair**
Cleo Griffith, PSJ
- Convention Chair, 2007**
David Lapiere, PCR
- Convention Program Chair**
Dan Saucedo, Tw
- Annual Contest Chair**
Lisabeth Shuman, PSJ
- Youth Contest Chair**
Elaine E. Harper, Tw
- Children's Poetry Fair and
Education Committee Chair**
Linda McCarty, VW
- Publications Chair**
James Shuman, PSJ
- Roster and ByLaws Chair**
Jeremy Shuman, PSJ
- Archivist and Librarian**
Katharine Wilson, RF
- Millennium Poetry**
C. Joy Haas, RF
- Web Site**
www.ChaparralPoets.org

CALIFORNIA
FEDERATION
of
CHAPARRAL
poets
inc.

Frank Bidart wins Bollingen Poetry Prize

A three-judge panel has named Frank Bidart the 2007 winner of Yale University's Bollingen Prize in American Poetry. He is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of English at Wellesley College.

The judges described Bidart as "a poet whose work exemplifies consistent originality of theme, sustained linguistic and formal explorations and a strong sense of the profoundly serious and adventurous nature of the poetic calling."

This year's judges were Langdon Hammer, professor of English at Yale, Nicholas Jenkins, professor of English at Stanford University, and the poet Ellen Bryant Voigt of Vermont.

William Cain, head of the English Department at Wellesley, hailed Bidart as "one of the most important, influential poets in the country."

"His work was enormously groundbreaking in terms of typography, he was using tons of odd punctuation and strange spacing, but it worked," said Tree Swenson, executive director of the Academy of American Poets, and the co-editor of *On Frank Bidart: Fastening the Voice to the Page*, to be published

Senate confirms Dana Gioia for second term as NEA Chairman

The U.S. Senate recently confirmed Dana Gioia for his second four-year term as chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). President Bush reappointed Gioia to the position last September.

Gioia's books include the poetry collection *Interrogations at Noon* (Graywolf, 2001) and the essay collection *Can Poetry Matter?: Essays on Poetry and American Culture* (Graywolf, 1992). During his first term he oversaw the publication of the "Reading at Risk" report, which revealed a dramatic decline in the number of serious readers of literature in America, and The Big Read, an initiative that provided funding to literary organizations in cities across the country to promote reading and literature in American culture.

The Senate also confirmed six new presidential appointees to the National Council on the Arts, which advises the NEA on funding decisions that provide grants to artists and arts organizations. The appointees include Bret Lott, the author of the novel *Jewel* (Pocket Books, 1991) and editor of the *Southern Review*, as well as a movie executive, an artistic director, a percussionist, an arts coordinator, and an arts patron.

by University of Michigan Press in March.

In announcing their selection, the judges also said: "An unearthly mixture of the Dionysian and the Apollonian impulses, the terrifying and the humane, the wildly inspired and the minutely crafted, Bidart's poems — eerie, probing, sometimes shocking, always subtle—venture into psychic terrain left largely unmapped in contemporary poetry. His imaginative strenuousness and his fastidious avoidance of complacency or easy repetitions of past triumphs have led him to *Star Dust* (2005), one of the strongest

continued on page two, 'Prestigious'

Convention dates nearing!

Enclosed in this issue are registration forms for this year's action-packed convention, so sit down right this minute and fill them out and send them off! Hurry! Don't be late, and don't be left out! Bringing back some of the most popular speakers from last year and adding a few new events calculated to improve the mix, the *Legends*-themed weekend promises both ideas-and-suggestions and practical hands-on workshops at the state CFCP, Inc. Convention April 27–29, 2007. It will follow a "Writers' Conference" format, according to Program Chair Dan Saucedo and Convention Chair David Lapiere.

Well-known writers and performers from throughout the state will present sessions during the 2½-day weekend of events at the Piccadilly Inn Shaw Avenue, in Fresno. Notable among them are Dr. Corrinne Clegg Hales, a professor at CSU Fresno and Deborah Edler Brown, a Los Angeles-based author, performer, and workshop leader.

The customary awards and recognition for contests will be woven into a series of appropriate activities each day.

The Convention will begin at 3 pm with a Round Table discussion of new writing, in which attendees can join as they arrive throughout the afternoon.

Keynote Speaker Dr. Corrinne Clegg Hales, a Fresno-area poet and professor of creative writing and American literature at CSU Fresno, will speak at 6:45, challenging us to expand our poetic horizons

continued on back page: 'Convention'

Chaparral updrafts

Editor & PublisherJames Shuman

2521 Meadow Rue Drive
Modesto, CA 95355-3910
209-523-6954 FAX 209-521-8778

TreasurerRoberta Bearden

P O Box 1750, Empire, CA 95319
209-522-9600

Corresponding Secretary

.....Dorothy Marshall

430 Eleventh St, Pomona, CA 91766
888-308-7488

Please send news and information items to the editor one month in advance of intended publication date.

For questions involving membership, either new or renewal, please contact the treasurer.

Be sure to visit our new web site:

<http://www.ChaparralPoets.org>

Prestigious Bollingen Prize awarded to Frank Bidart

continued from page one

books of the last two years, in which Bidart manages to extend his range while never losing his voice. Indeed, Bidart's uniquely stringent meditations on the problems, enigmas and possibilities of a poet's 'voice' constitute one of the most distinctive characteristics of his poetry.

"For all these reasons, the Bollingen Prize Committee for 2007 is pleased to honor Frank Bidart, who has already built up a lifetime's worth of memorable work and yet whose future writing seems certain to be freighted with fresh challenges for himself and for his readers."

The Bollingen Prize in Poetry, established by Paul Mellon in 1949, is awarded biennially by the Yale University Library to an American poet for the best book published during the previous two years or for lifetime achievement in poetry. Previous winners include Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, W. H. Auden, E. E. Cummings, Kenneth Koch, Gary Snider, Louise Glück, Adrienne Rich and Jay Wright. The prize includes a cash award of \$100,000.

Frank Bidart was born in Bakersfield, California, in 1939 and educated at the University of California at Riverside and at Harvard University, where he was a student and friend of Robert Lowell and Elizabeth Bishop.

His first volume of poetry, *Golden State* (1973), was selected by poet Richard Howard for the Braziller Poetry series, but it wasn't until the publication of *The Sacrifice* (1983)

there are plenty of opportunities for all who are interested.

CFCP, Inc. is a wonderful institution to consider, because all gifts and donations are tax deductible. There's even a plan to assist you.

When making a donation, please indicate how you wish it to be used, if you have any preference. Make checks to CFCP, Inc. and

that Bidart's poetry began to attract a wider readership. Bidart's early books are collected in *In the Western Night: Collected Poems 1965-90* (1990).

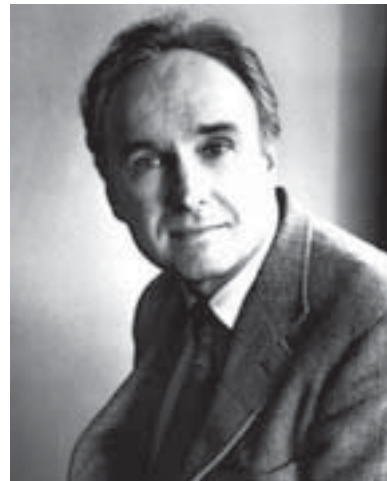


photo © Jerry Bauer

Frank Bidart

His recent volumes include *Star Dust* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), *Music Like Dirt* (2002), and *Desire* (1997), which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, and was a finalist for both the National Book Award and the National Book Critic's Circle Award. He is also the co-editor of Robert Lowell's *Collected Poems* (2003).

About his work, the former U.S. Poet Laureate Louise Glück has said, "More fiercely, more obsessively, more profoundly than any poet since Berryman (whom he in no way resembles) Bidart explores individual guilt, the insoluble dilemma." And about his career as a poet, she said, "Since the publication, in 1973, of *Golden State*, Frank Bidart has patiently amassed as profound and original a body of work as any now being written in this country."

His honors include the Wallace Stevens Award, the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Foundation Writer's Award, the Morton Dauwen Zabel Award given by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Shelley Award of the Poetry Society of America, and *The Paris Review's* first Bernard F. Connors Prize for "The War of Vaslav Nijinsky" in 1981.

Bidart was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets in 2003. He lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he has taught at Wellesley College since 1972.

compiled from various press releases and biographical information.

mail them to the treasurer. The names of individuals and chapters who have sponsored these categories will be included with publicity at the convention and in the *Updrafts*.

The Board has also instituted an endowment plan for those who might wish to consider making larger gifts and bequests. Contact the treasurer, Roberta Bearden, for full details.

Thanks for financial support; donations are still needed

The Board is extremely grateful to those who have given and pledged money toward the 2007 convention. Treasurer Roberta Bearden recently reported that the Orpheus Chapter has donated \$50 to be used for prize money in the annual contest. Also, several chapters and individuals donated toward support of the honorable mention prizes for the youth contest, totaling nearly \$100.

CFCP, Inc. thanks each of you warmly for supporting our efforts by helping to provide the funding necessary for a program as far-reaching as ours has become. But there are still many prizes for which no donation has been received.

Remember that the Board has determined there will be no auction of gift baskets this year. Instead, the Board has re-instituted a practice from previous years to invite individuals and chapters to sponsor single prizes or entire categories in the annual contests. You can choose categories 1 through 4 in the Junior-Senior Contest, consisting of three prizes of \$50, \$35, and \$20 in each category; and categories 2-5 and 7 in the Annual Contest, consisting of three prizes of \$60, \$40, and \$25 in each category. You can donate for a single prize or an entire category. With nine categories, and three prizes in each one,

Monthly Contest Winners

on the topic of *Fences*

Writing Madly

Grape Shots

Our scuppernong vine, née famous, waxed infamous—
but not in the least for the vinous or bibulous.
It was my grandmother’s sinecure,
a claim her daughter-in-law would have her abjure.

Like my father, I tried to stay nonaligned.
I ascended its giant central root to feel anodyned.
Jill climbed her Grapestalk, stood under the sky.
Adult squabbles simply didn’t exist up that high.

Mama won the battle, had the grapevine razed.
The war? I don’t think so. Most deemed Mama crazed.

—Lynn Veach Sadler, Sanford NC
First Place, November

Racing insane from Bacchanalian joy down midnight streets:
Those nights have gone to dust.
All the poets, my friends, were drunk and holy fools.
We loved great causes wrapped in mindless raptured passion,
All warriors were noble,
All wars just.

—Pat Bustamante, Cupertino CA
Second Place, November

Lovers’ Morning

Au-deux breakfast...
patio sunlight
pooled on the blue tablecloth

captures champagne
bubbles scampering in
our glasses;

not unnoticed by
a snoopy geranium leaning
over the redwood fence.

—Norma Kohout, Sacramento CA
Third Place, November

Slate of Candidates nominated for election as Officers for 2007 – 2009

The Board approved the Nominating Committee at the October meeting. The president provided each with a set of guidelines regarding the search process, and the Committee presented its results to the Board at the January meeting.

The Board accepted the Report and formally declared the following individuals to be candidates for their respective offices:

<i>President</i>	Ed Bearden
<i>First Vice President</i>	David Lapierre
<i>Second Vice President</i>	Katharine Wilson
<i>Third Vice President</i>	Dan Saucedo
<i>Fourth Vice President</i>	Ursula Gibson
<i>Treasurer</i>	Roberta Bearden
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	Lee Collins
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	Dorothy Marshall
<i>Members-at-Large Chair</i>	Frances Yordan

Most of these people have served in the same or some other board office in the past, and are therefore known to you.

Ed Bearden, the nominee for president, is a member of the Poets of the San Joaquin chapter, where he is serving his second year as its president. He and his wife Roberta are realtors and property managers, and he has been a school board member for over twenty years, currently serving as president of that organization.

Ed has been not only a writer of poetry, but a winner of prizes, as well. He has been published in several central California journals, and is a member of the board of the *Song of the San Joaquin*.

He has taken several prizes in the CFCP Annual Contests, including two first places last year.

Each of these candidates has accepted his or her nomination and has agreed to serve if elected. Our By-Laws, however, do provide for “nominations from the floor,” so this is your official notice of the right to exercise that option. Should you choose to do so, please include with your nomination a signed statement from the nominee indicating acceptance of the nomination and willingness to serve if elected. The deadline for submitting nominations is April 5, 2007.

Please send such nominations to:

Nancee Maya,
Nominating Committee Chair
701 Ward Avenue
Patterson CA 95363

In the event that one or more office is contested, a ballot election will be held at the Convention, with the Nominating Committee conducting it as an Election Committee.

Pondering poetry, profundity, and the power of words

A Boston Globe correspondent questions the value of the Poet Laureate position

by Ellen Steinbaum, Globe Correspondent | March 4, 2007

Ever since Boston City Councillor John Tobin proposed the idea of a Boston poet laureate, I've been wondering why the idea exists at all. Don't get me wrong — I'm glad it does. It's just that I'm curious about the concept: Why a poet laureate rather than, say, a teacher laureate, a lawyer laureate, a hedge fund manager laureate? Or, staying with the arts, why not a novelist or sculptor laureate? Why is poetry the way we articulate our civic

life? As I guess I'm often asking, what is it about poetry?

I asked Dagan Coppock about that. Coppock is a resident at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. He is also co-editor of "Body Language: Poems of the Medical Training Experience," a collection written by people who clearly were busy doing other things. And yet they turned to poetry.

"We live in a country, in a society that is pretty driven by technological progress," he says. "In the end, poets are society's last

vestige of the shamans, the keepers of words for everyone. "

I think he's on to something. There is a spiritual quality to poetry, an ability to aim itself straight to the deepest part of our beings.

That's why we turned to it in droves to exorcise the terrible power of 9/11 or, as this column talked about recently, the devastation of the Gulf Coast that followed Hurricane Katrina.

Tobin's proposal, written in slightly tongue-in-cheek verse by Joe Bergin, a member of the Carpenter Poets of Jamaica Plain, noted that "only poetry can give voice to the profound." It also quoted John F. Kennedy: "When power leads man toward arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When power narrows the areas of man's concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of his existence."

Tobin envisions a poet laureate whose words would commemorate public occasions. But, he told me, a city poet could also provide another way to talk about the city and its life. I like that. Someone who could mark a mayoral inauguration or public building dedication, sure. But maybe also someone who could ponder blinking lights under the Longfellow Bridge or voice the public anguish over young people shot to death on our streets.

As Coppock notes, it is the stories we live by that tell us who we are. "All societies have had holy people at their spiritual center who were the keepers of their stories just the way that in our own families there are always the patriarchs and matriarchs who know the family stories."

Telling those stories in words, the currency of our everyday interactions, delivers them in a way that, perhaps, visual art or music could not.

"There is something about words and story — narrative — that is important to collective society, that gives written word power over society that other arts may not have," says Coppock, adding: "Poetry has moved in recent decades to the personal and away from more narrative forms. But sometimes the personal can mirror what's going on in society."

© Copyright 2007 Globe Newspaper Company.

So, is Poetry really dying or not?

The last two or three years has seen tremendous change in the poetry world, and it should not be surprising that poets and critics from divergent fields are proclaiming their particular points of view. We recently printed excerpts from an article by John Barr, the president of the Poetry Foundation, the organization that received the largesse of the Lilly Bequest. Needless to say, many would enjoy having the privilege of deciding how to "enrich" the poetry world by millions of dollars each year.

In a recent article on the Poetry Foundation, *The New Yorker* contributed to the ongoing intellectual debate. That is, who reads poetry, what does it mean to "understand" poetry, and who cares about poets? According to the critics quoted by *The New Yorker*, the Poetry Foundation's mission to broaden the audience for poetry is a lamentable one, for with popularity comes mediocrity. Artists should worry about making art, not about who's looking at it.

Others stake out their own positions. D. W. Fenza, the president of AWP, the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, responded directly to the article by Barr with one of his own, "Who Keeps Killing Poetry?" a 6,300-word exposition complete with another 840 words in footnotes, in which he defends the academic world and especially the numerous MFA writing programs now in existence as the leading source of emerging poets. The article is available online at <<http://www.awp-writer.org/magazine/writers/fenza02.htm>>.

Fenza writes "Barr would have you believe that MFA programs are places where the fog of spiritual malaise is so thick that one's own self becomes the only reference

point—a self misled by the disembodied discussions of technique and careerism that drift over the seminar table."

Fenza cites a long line of doom-sayers, from Edmund Wilson in "Is Verse a Dying Technique?" in 1928, Karl Shapiro in "Creative Glut" in 1979, Donald Hall in "Poetry and Ambition" in 1980, Joseph Epstein in "Who Killed Poetry" in 1988, and Dana Gioia in "Can Poetry Matter?" in 1991, who have preceded Barr in voicing their concerns. He quotes Donal Hall's, "...always the Giants grow old and die, leaving the Pygmies behind" as summing up the attitude so frequently expressed in these essays and speeches.

But he then lays out his own thesis, beginning with "The Temper & Plurality of Today's Poetry" and continuing through "Impressarios, Curators, and Representatives of Poetry" and "The Demand-Side Economics of Poetry" to the "Emersonian Circles & the Gift of Poetry." Fenza is thorough in his argumentation.

Also of interest are the comments from Bruce Covey, a popular creative writing professor at Emory University in Atlanta, GA, in an interview by Steven Stein in the January 23 issue of *The Emory Wheel*, the student newspaper. Called "The Tuesday Ten: Coconuts for Covey," the article can be found at <<http://www.emorywheel.com/home/archives>> and clicking on the "23" under January 2007, then selecting the article under "Editorials." The interview ranges over questions of whether poetry matters, and why, to the importance of rhyme and meter, to how the Internet has changed poetry.

continued page six, 'Poetry'

10,000 Poems Project tops out at amazing 15,972

“Contrary to public opinion, poetry is not anything confined to books in libraries or campuses; rather, poetry is within every individual, and everyone has access to the poetic spirit,” said Lawson Fusao Inada, 2005–06 Steinbeck Chair.

One of the goals of this year’s Steinbeck Chair program with poet and educator Lawson Fusao Inada was to collect 10,000 poems from students, community members and elders of all ages and backgrounds. The total number received by the deadline was 15,972, with over 50% received in the last few weeks. The goal was to encourage writing and the poetic voice within everyone. Selected poems will be posted on line at the <www.10000poems.com> website later and published in the *Homestead Review* published by Hartnell College.

“We had a huge influx of poems during the

last few weeks. We’re thrilled that the response has been so strong and we hopefully helped new poets find their voice and a new means of expression,” said Kathleen Rose, Dean of Fine Arts of Hartnell College. “It is a testament to the creative spirit.”

Poems came in on a variety of topics ranging from vegetables, love, loss, and family, to spiders and sea otters. All forms of poetry were accepted, in many genres, from all ages, and many countries.

Hartnell College, The Western Stage and The National Steinbeck Center, Salinas Library and Partners for Peace named poet and author Lawson Fusao Inada as the Steinbeck Chair at Hartnell Community College and the National Steinbeck Center in fall of 2005. Mr. Inada, the current poet laureate of Oregon, has participated in a variety of community activities including

lectures and outreach activities in partnership with area schools including the poetry group at Everett Alvarez High School, library events with Friends of the Salinas Public Library, and writing workshops.

Inada’s final residency culminated on Sunday, October 29 with a dance and poetry performance “Existing without Barriers” at Hartnell College performed by the Antique Moving Company and Hartnell College students. A celebration of the 10,000 Poems Project and Steinbeck Chair program was held immediately following the performance.

Lawson Fusao Inada is regarded by many as the poet laureate of Japanese America. His works go far beyond poetry. He is a writer, editor, educator and musician. A Professor of writing at Southern Oregon University, Mr. Inada has published extensively. He was the first Asian American to publish a collection of poems with a major New York publishing house. He has won two National Endowment of the Arts Fellowships, and was one of the twenty-one poets to be honored at the White House, for a Salute to Poetry and American Poets. His second book of poetry *Legends From Camp*, received the American Book Award. Inada has written extensively about his internment camp experience. His documentary, *What It Means To Be Free*, captures life in the camps with actual footage accompanied by his poetry readings.

The mission statement of the Steinbeck Chair program is: “to establish a Steinbeck Chair as a catalyst for community collaboration in support of literacy and scholarship in the Salinas Valley, in celebration of literature and the arts, and to foster pride in our community’s rich cultural heritage.”

The goals of the program are: 1) to inspire the residents of the Salinas Valley to support literacy and scholarship by bringing the works of a writer or artist who is recognized and dedicated to creative excellence, in the tradition of John Steinbeck; 2) to promote a community-wide celebration of literature and the arts by interweaving educational experiences with community events of popular appeal and 3) to foster pride in our rich cultural heritage by raising awareness about the achievements of a writer or artist whose work embodies our community’s history, values and aspirations.

The Steinbeck Chair project is supported in part from an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. Additional support comes from the Community Foundation for Monterey County, the Harden Foundation and the Hartnell Foundation.

How to read a poem: grammar for poets

by Michael Ryan

About a thousand years ago, English began to lose most of its inflections—suffixes that indicated the gender, number, and case of nouns, the tense of verbs, and the person and number of the verbs’ subjects. Without the system of inflections for its grammar, English gradually evolved to a fixed word-order to distinguish subjects from objects and the relationships among phrases: Subject-verb-object, S-V-O. Its influence on English speakers can hardly be overstated.

S-V-O is our expectation for a sentence every time we hear one or read one, and channels our thinking every time we speak one or write one. Every English sentence occurs against the S-V-O grid: fulfilling it, frustrating it, playing with it or against it. Every English sentence is a mystery novel whose plot we already know. The suspense usually comes not from who did it but what they did to whom, although we certainly want to know who did it right away. If the subject is suspended by introductory clauses, we wait for it, sometimes impatiently, and we want the subject to be the main character, unless we understand from the context why it isn’t.

We then want the verb to follow quickly after the subject. We want to know what the who did. And we like those actions to be specific, even if they’re conceptual or metaphorical actions. If the verb is transitive, we’d like to have the object follow the verb quickly, too. We are eager to understand, to learn, to know. We want our S-V-O fix. That we want it so much allows for all sorts of suspensions

and elaborations and fine-tunings of opposite kinds: from James and Faulkner at the one end to Hemingway and Carver at the other.

One could also graph the sentences in poems across the same stylistic range, according to how they fulfill-frustrate-play with-or-against our S-V-O expectation. Poems no less than prose are made of sentences, and expectations of sentences (by the reader), and avoidances of sentences (by the writer). But they are also made of lines that alter our experience of sentences, by foregrounding the sounds of the words, phrases, and pauses which make up sentences but which we don’t attend to until these sounds are highly organized and orchestrated.

The primary instrument of this orchestration is the lines, and lines can also be arranged in stanzas, which may further foreground the lines by signifying their own organization independent of the sentences. The difference between metered and un-metered lines, in the strictest stanza forms to the free-est verse, is no more than the difference between the degree of foregrounding of the lines against the sentences, and therefore the degree to which our attention to those sentences is complicated.

The sentences are nonetheless always primary. The way to read a poem is to read the sentences (not the lines)—and you parse each sentence as you read it, from phrase to phrase, gambling on the relationships of the phrases, constructing a multi-dimensional Lego, making larger pieces of the smaller pieces as they click into place. We perform

continued on page six, ‘Learning’

Learning to 'read' a poem aids understanding

continued from page five

this in nanoseconds. We not only understand grammar automatically, we do so at the speed of light, integrating semantics, grammar, and lexicon simultaneously and interactively.

When we enter Grammar World we enter inner space at warp speed, brain speed, firing synapses and lighting up neurons still well beyond the understanding of linguistics or neurobiology. We translate sound-bits and nanopauses into words, and group words into phrases. We gamble on the meaning of the phrases, according to not only their grammatical relationships but also the context they create among themselves, and the context of our own individual experience (variable and idiosyncratic as it may be), experience that's being changed even as we read. We interpret, and reinterpret if we have to, and wait to understand. And we provide connections when we have to—among the multiple and variable conceptual, connotative, and metaphorical meanings that words have individually and in conjunction with one another. We provide the mind for the protean organism of language, with its indistinct categories, fuzzy boundaries, inconsistent rules, and bizarre idioms.

Most people learn how to do this before they're two years old. This is why the sentences not the lines of poems are the primary focus of our attention: the function of language is the transmission of meaning, and we've attended to sentences as the life-giving instrument of meaning since infancy, long before we ever started reading poems. But

Convention Committee seeks Display Area coordinator

The Convention Committee is looking for a Display Area coordinator— please consider volunteering to help in this way.

In the interest of efficiency, the Board has revised the way the Display Area will be managed. Individuals will no longer be expected to be solely responsible for their own materials; instead, two or three volunteers will be on duty at all times, with one of them acting as cashier. All people leaving the display area will need to pass the cashier's desk and make payment there. Each person who plans to have books or other items for display/sale should volunteer at least two hours of their time, and provide in advance a list of all items they have for sale and the price of each.

The coordinator would not need to be present at all times, but would be the organizer of the schedule, and the general contact person.

language is also a system in which everything is connected to everything else—*tout se tient*, in Ferdinand de Saussure's words—which is why the orchestration of sentences through the agency of lines may produce a unique kind of musical meaning that expands the meaning of sentences as they unfold.

First published in *The Threepenny Review*. Copyright © Michael Ryan.

Michael Ryan was born in St. Louis in 1946. He received a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame, an M.A. from Claremont Graduate University, and both an M.F.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. While studying at Iowa, he was the Poetry Editor of *The Iowa Review*. He currently lives in California with his wife, Doreen Gildroy, and their daughter, Emily.

Ryan's poetry manuscript, *Threats Instead of Trees* (1974), was selected by Stanley Kunitz for the Yale Series of Younger Poets and was a finalist that year for the National Book Award. His second collection of poems, *In Winter* (1981), was a National Poetry Series selection. Since then, Ryan has published two other collections of poetry, *God Hunger* (1989), which received the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize; and *New and Selected Poems* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004), which received the 2005 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award.

He is also the author of an autobiography, *Secret Life* (Pantheon Books, 1995), a memoir, *Baby B* (Graywolf Press, 2004), and a collection of essays about poetry and writing, *A Difficult Grace* (University of Georgia Press, 2000).

Poetry controversy continues

continued from page four

During the interview Covey, who started the online poetry magazine *Coconut* a year and a half ago, commented, "To me, Ron Padgett is about the best poet we have in expressing basic, genuine emotions in matter-of-fact phrasings.... A member of the so-called 'New York School of Poets,' he embodies both their focus on the everyday with all of its associated, charged emotions, and their brilliant wit and originality...."

"When web-based journals began six to 10 years ago, a separate aesthetic seemed to dominate — in other words, the poets who predominantly published on the web and the poets who predominantly published in print seemed to be mutually exclusive. Now that divide no longer really exists, and I believe we ultimately help each other — I read more print journals than ever before, but I also keep up with what's online. One of my missions with *Coconut* was to bring many great print poets online for the first time."

Library of Congress enters digitalization race

The Library of Congress recently announced that it will digitize thousands of public domain books in its collection, including many that librarians have deemed "brittle" and in danger of becoming unusable. The "Digitizing American Imprints" program, funded by a two million dollar grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, is expected to begin in a few months. The project will focus on six groups of rare books, including the Benjamin Franklin Collection, selected first editions from the Library's Rare Book and Special Collections Division, and volumes on American history and U.S. genealogy.

The Library will use part of the grant money to develop technologies and strategies for scanning the vulnerable works. While Google and the Open Content Alliance (in partnership with companies such as Microsoft, Yahoo, and Adobe) have launched their own digitization projects, they have not focused on deteriorating books because of the more complicated scanning process.

Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney wins T. S. Eliot Prize

At a ceremony in London on Monday, T. S. Eliot's widow, Valerie Eliot, announced that British poet Seamus Heaney won the prestigious poetry award bearing her late husband's name. Heaney won the 2006 T. S. Eliot Prize, worth ten thousand pounds (approximately twenty thousand dollars), for his twelfth poetry collection, *District and Circle* (Faber and Faber; Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006). The finalists were Simon Armitage, Paul Farley, Paul Muldoon, and Hugo Williams.

Heaney, who is sixty-seven, did not attend the ceremony because of a recent illness. Paul Keegan, Heaney's poetry editor at the British publishing company, Faber and Faber, accepted the award on his behalf. The annual prize, funded by Valerie Eliot, is given for a book of poems published in the U.K. during the previous year. Heaney, who won the Nobel Prize in 1995, was shortlisted for the T. S. Eliot Prize in 2001 for *Electric Light* (Faber and Faber; Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), but Anne Carson received the award that year for *The Beauty of the Husband* (Knopf, 2001)

Poetry is "the exercise of language at its highest pitch."

—John Updike

Now's the time to get your creative juices flowing!

We've already finished 'Turnabout' and experienced the 'Landscape of Winter' and it's time to tackle lions, lambs and hares! But beware the Ides of March!

The topics are new for this year, so don't retain any old versions of this page that might still be on your desk, or else the poems you submit might not be for the correct topics or you might not have followed the current rules. The rules did change a bit a few months ago, to make things clearer and the process smoother to operate. Notice that line length does *not* include the title or blank spaces, and you are asked for *two* copies of each poem.

It's still a good time for recruiting new members, so that they can attend the Convention and get to know us better. For your convenience we have included the membership form below. If you know of anyone who neglected to renew their membership and wants to re-join, give them this form, but first run off a few blank copies to have available for recruitment.

It's a great idea to place copies of this page on the bulletin board at local libraries and universities, and to carry a few copies with you to hand to friends and acquaintances. One-to-one discussion is our best ally as we continue the drive to increase membership. We need your help!

2007 CFCP, Inc. Monthly Contests

Except where otherwise indicated, poems are limited to 28 lines of text. All forms accepted for all categories.

JANUARY	—	Turnabout
FEBRUARY	—	Landscape of Winter
MARCH	—	Hares, Lions, Lambs
APRIL	—	How to Advertise a Poem
MAY	—	Spring Moon
JUNE	—	Looking Forward
JULY	—	no contest
AUGUST	—	Doldrums or Daydreams?
SEPTEMBER	—	Memories, Altered
OCTOBER	—	Smoke <i>(12 lines or fewer)</i>
NOVEMBER	—	Fences
DECEMBER	—	no contest

RULES

Contests are open to all poets in the United States and Canada. Each submission must be typewritten on standard size paper with the contest month in the upper right-hand corner. Send TWO COPIES of each poem with author's name and address in the upper right corner on ONE copy. Put no identification on the second copy. Address labels are acceptable. Multiple entries are welcome.

Only UNPUBLISHED POEMS and poems not previously awarded a money prize are eligible. A fee of \$2.00 must accompany each poem submitted (3 for \$5.00). Send cash or make checks to CFCP, Inc. DEADLINE is the last day of the contest month. Envelope must be postmarked no later than 12 midnight of that day. *Print contest month on outside of mailing envelope.*

NOTE: *In any month wherein insufficient entries are received, those poems which were submitted will be held over and judged with the entries for the following month.*

1st prize: \$25.00 2nd prize: \$15.00 3rd prize: \$10.00

Poems will be returned only if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Allow one month after closing date of contest before sending poems elsewhere. Winning poems will be printed in the Chaparral Updrafts newsletter.

CALIFORNIA
FEDERATION
of CHAPARRAL
POETS, INC.

➔ Cleo Griffith
mail contest Monthly Contest Chair, CFCP, Inc.
entries to 4409 Diamond Court
Salida, CA 95368-9632
<cleor36@yahoo.com>



YES!

I definitely want to be a member of the California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc. for the year 2007.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (____) _____ FAX (____) _____

E-MAIL _____

I PREFER TO RECEIVE MY UPDRAFTS NEWSLETTER BY: _____ E-MAIL _____ US MAIL

Your membership includes all issues of the newsletter, Updrafts, free entry in the Annual Contest, Monthly Contest information, and Membership Roster every 2 years during the membership period. All memberships renew between 8/1 and 12/31 yearly. Persons joining between February 1 and July 31 will use the pro-rated formula. New memberships received between August 1 and December 31 will be extended for the following full year.

*** Those who desire to continue membership with a chapter, please remit dues to your local chapter treasurer.**

How to Become a Member

check the appropriate item:

- _____ Membership Annual/Renewal\$15⁰⁰
- _____ New Member (February 1 to April 30)\$12⁰⁰
- _____ New Member (May 1 to July 31)\$7⁵⁰
- _____ Spouse (1/2 regular member)..... \$7⁵⁰, \$6⁰⁰, or \$3⁷⁵
- _____ Junior (under 21; show proof of age)\$3⁰⁰
- _____ Donation (specify amount)

_____ I am interested in joining a Chapter in my area (name of Chapter) _____

_____ I wish to join as a Member-at-Large.

_____ We wish to form a Chapter of our own (5 or more Regular Members are required to form a new Chapter) to be called _____

Members-at-Large: Clip this form and mail along with a check or money order **made payable to CFCP, Inc.** to:
Frances Yordan, Members-at-Large Chairman, 2575 W. San Jose Avenue, Fresno, CA 93711-2733.

All Others: Send this form along with a check or money order **made payable to CFCP, Inc.** to:
CFCP Treasurer, P.O. Box 1750, Empire, CA 95319.

Convention coming soon—send in registration now!

continued from page one

and examine our writing in light of best practices.

At 8:20 we will be treated to a concert of Magical Madrigal Music.

Saturday will follow the tradition of exhibiting the Children’s Poetry Fair as well as having members’ books and materials on exhibit. It will open with a “Bring Your Breakfast” discussion session on the Building Blocks of the Narrative Poem, followed by morning sessions will include workshops by Deborah Edler Brown on what holds a poem together, and Dan Saucedo on keeping something for the ending. The luncheon will be combined with the General Board Meeting.

The afternoon will begin with a writing lesson and exercise emphasizing best practices, by debbie loyd, followed by a lesson and exercise by our new Youth Chapter.

At 3:30 the Youth Contest Awards will be presented. This will be followed by a Young Poets Reception for the winners, their parents, and all participants.

The evening will begin at 7:30 pm with

another lesson and practical exercises by Dr. Hales.

Sunday morning will open with a “Bring Your Breakfast” discussion session on new writing with Debra Edler Brown, followed by the Annual Poetry Awards. The afternoon will offer a workshop by Deborah Edler Brown at 2:30, and a 4:15 session on Writing the Long Poem by Dan Saucedo. The evening will

Hotel reservations must be made early — and properly

Although our contract with the Piccadilly Inn is secure, your ability to stay there at the advertised price and in accommodations to your liking may not be.

Why is this?

First, it is important that you meet the deadline of March 27! Failure to make certain the hotel receives your registration by that date could result in no room at all, or one at a higher rate.

Second, it is important to make certain that the reservations service person knows you are booking as part of CFCP or California Federation of Chaparral Poets. If you either mail or FAX the form included with this issue of the *Updrafts*, it will be obvious to them, but if you

host the traditional Golden Pegasus Banquet, with Dr. Hales as the featured speaker. It will conclude with the awarding of trophies and installation of the new Board of Directors.

Each evening will have time and space for the traditional Bardic Circle, the read-around so popular with many participants. So plan to bring along some of your new work, as well as old favorites.

are telephoning, it is possible for misunderstandings to occur, so be patiently persistent. If you are telephoning, and it is before March 27, we are *guaranteed* that there will be room space, so *don’t* accept a negative answer.

In addition, if you have special needs, please make certain that you mention them at the time you send in your registration. But don’t just assume you will be accommodated! Guests are checked into their actual rooms only when they arrive, and it is easy for a harried desk clerk to overlook a note on the registration form. Politely double-checking before accepting it that all your requests have been met in the room assigned to you, will result in greater guest room satisfaction.

• Inside:

- Bidart wins Bollingen Prize
- State of Officers Nominated
- 10,000 Poems Project a success
- Grammar for Poets
- Poetry controversies
- Convention Information

servicing California poets for over 65 years

Chaparral Updrafts

Volume 68, No. 1, February 2007

Chaparral Updrafts (ISSN 1543-5903) Published monthly except January, June and August by the California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc. at 2521 Meadow Rue Drive, Modesto, CA 95355-3910. Subscription price of \$3.60 is included in annual dues. Periodical postage rates paid at Modesto, CA.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc., 2521 Meadow Rue Drive, Modesto, CA, 95355-3910.

