



# The Muse Messenger

The Newsletter of the Alabama State Poetry Society

December, 2016

Vol. 47, Nr. 12

## Who is the Santa in this Picture?

See: "Updates from the North Pole" on page 3.



## Musings from the Editors

As 2016 comes to a close, we've been looking at both the accomplishments and the disappointments of this year. It's sobering to realize an entire year has gone by and to look at how we've invested our time.

We've evaluated the projects we're involved in and made some decisions about what to keep and what to let go. Being your co-editors for the *Muse Messenger* is one of the things we will continue for 2017, but it does require a significant investment of time so we can't do it alone.

We're glad to report that Betty Cannizzo will be writing an article for the *Muse Messenger* every month starting in January. We could really use your help as well. If you'd like to write for the *Muse Messenger*, let us hear from you. We'd like one more person to write a regular monthly article and several others to write an occasional article.

We hope you too are looking back at 2016 and setting goals for 2017 and that one of those goals is to renew your ASPS membership. On behalf of the officers of ASPS and the editors of the *Muse Messenger*, we wish you a Merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years.

### Our Wish for You

We wish you faith and love and hope  
and dreams come true beyond the scope  
of your imagination.

We wish you sunshine, not much rain,  
endless fields of golden grain,  
and someone dear to share them.

## "OH BABY": THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO WRITING

from Negative Capability Press

(Thank you, Sue Walker)



Yes, at 10 ½ months, Charlize knows her Ps and Qs. So why not write an Index? Or a Catalogue? How so? Let's think Hybrid. Make a list of P-words. Peas – black-eyed. It will soon be a New Year – so think: Hopping John. Charlize is perusing food – and I recall that Carson McCullers wrote

about black-eyed peas in "The Member of the Wedding."

Those black-eyed peas were a test of mortality. If someone waved a bowl of Hopping John in front of someone's nose and they didn't rise up, they were dead, sure-enough. So one word in your Index / Catalog would be peas. Then add a little period – centered – and choose another P. How about Peanuts? Or Pushmataha or Pokemon? Think Q –

query / quiver / quicksilver / quandary (listed by Lindinberg)?

But one more word or two about Index. One of our favorite books here at NCP is Rebecca Lindenberg's "Love, An Index." One of the poems, in addition to "Love, An Index" is entitled: "A Catalogue of Ephemera." Thank you, Charlize, for today's prompt(s).

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## Wordworthical

~ Michael Johnson

The recent "Black Friday Madness" started me thinking about how other days need to be elevated to a higher status. Words are free and much more enjoyable than shopping (at least to me).

### Wordworthical Definition:

"Wordworthical (word-worth-I-cal) is like mathematical, but with words. One line or stanza reacts by adding and then subtracting from another. The challenging form requires "wordworthical" thinking. Two of my "wordworthical" poems appear below. Take a look at them. Then put some words in your metaphorical cart, choose a day, and write a poem. Have fun!

### Wordworthical Monday

Monday went one way  
The poet another;  
Monday dug up worms  
The poet planted flowers.

The birds went one way  
The bees another;  
The birds ate the worms  
The bees kissed the flowers.

Monday ticked off minutes  
The poet courted hours;  
To relieve all the birds and bees  
From all the worms and flowers.

----- and -----

### Crying Tuesdays

Some days are good  
Some days bad  
Some days, it's the way  
We make them sad.

Some days are slow  
Some days fast

Some days, it's the way  
We make them last.

Some days are hot  
Some days cold  
Some days, it's the way  
When we get old.

Some days are dull  
Some days sharp  
Some days, it's the way  
We use the heart.

Some days are nothing  
Some days have clout  
Some days, it's the way  
We cry them out.

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## The Daily Workshop

~ Rita Moritz

*This column will propose "workshops" you can do all by your lonesome, in the privacy of your own home. Most will take no more than an hour and all can be done daily, weekly or whenever you can...remember that a little self-discipline goes a long way!*

Last month's workshop suggested you start collecting images. Some of the images I collected included the gorgeous view of the Tennessee River Valley from Gorham's Bluff. We have visited many places over the years, but only a few of those places can compare with that view! And I came away inspired to write about it.

I also wrote a poem last month about an outdoor scene from my childhood. It's called, "Skating Next Door to Lane's Garage." When I read it to my writing group, someone suggested it included all the senses except "smell." I've heard it said smell triggers more memories than any of our other senses, and I believe that's true.

My kids say they "see me" when they smell "White Shoulders." The same applies to a specific bread I used to make. For our "workshop" this month, let's collect smells and the memories they bring back.

Perhaps the smell of hay takes you back to feeding the cows at 5:30 a.m. on Christmas morning. Maybe the scent of lilacs reminds you of your first kiss.

Does the smell of rising bread take you back to your childhood? Whatever the smells from your past,

chances are they evoke some memories, whether good or bad.

Once you've gathered your "scents" or "smells," write about the memories they stimulate. I continue to love "stream of consciousness" writing because it gets you and me out of the way and allows our Muse to write beautiful and/or insightful things. Give it a try.

If you write something based on this month's workshop, consider sending it to us. If there's room in the January *Muse Messenger*, we'd love to include it.

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## Writing Prompts - The Fifty Most Quoted Lines of Poetry

Choose one or more of these most commonly quoted lines of poetry to create your own poem. If it's overused and trite, which most of them are, make it fresh and new. Check back next month for the last 10.

20. "Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all"  
(1,470,000 Keats)
19. "To be or not to be: that is the question"  
(1,640,000 Shakespeare)
18. "In Flanders fields the poppies blow"  
(1,640,000 John McCrae)
17. "The proper study of mankind is man"  
(1,770,000 Alexander Pope)
16. "A little learning is a dangerous thing"  
(1,860,000 Alexander Pope)
15. "But at my back I always hear"  
(2,010,000 Marvell)
14. "Candy/Is dandy/But liquor/Is quicker"  
(2,150,000 Ogden Nash)
13. "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun"  
(2,230,000 Shakespeare)
12. "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold"  
(2,330,000 W.B. Yeats)
11. "Because I could not stop for death /  
He kindly stopped for me"  
(2,360,000 Emily Dickinson)

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## Updates from the North Pole

~ Mike Wahl

I am the 'real beard' Santa at Florence Mall 7 days a week through Christmas Eve, with a slight break on Sunday mornings. On Saturday, I had at least 100 kids on my lap, many crying. Of course, Santa's hours will soon increase from 10 hours per day to 12, so the crunch continues.

I entertained a bunch more kids today (Sunday), the longest line of the season thus far. However, I am thankful there are only three more weeks remaining.

To ease tensions, I sometimes tell the bashful kids little anecdotes about my reindeer, using the antics of my farm livestock as true life adventure stories. And of course, no child (or adult, for that matter) is ever too heavy for Santa's lap, since Rudolph makes a habit of sitting there when Santa's at the North Pole.

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## Something of Interest

~ P.T. Paul

P.T. Paul's Spring 2017 "Introduction to Poetry Writing" classes will be offered by Faulkner State Community College in Fairhope on Jan. 17, 24, 31 and Feb. 7, 14, 21 from 1:30pm to 3:00pm. For more information, or to register, contact the Center for Professional Development, Faulkner State Community College, 251-990-0445.

P.T. Paul would like to invite you to tune in to WABF1220-AM Thursdays from 10:30am to 11:00am to hear "Culturally Speaking with Tod Jonson, Man About Town." Tod shares memories of his adventures as a gossip columnist and contract player with Warner Brothers in the glory days of movie making and P.T. presents an original poem each week. You can live stream the program on your computer (and soon on your iPhone)! You just need to go to the website [www.wabf1220.net](http://www.wabf1220.net) and then click on **Listen Live**.

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## Call for *Muse Messenger* Submissions

What Can I Submit to the *Muse Messenger*?

Our goal as the Editors of the *Muse Messenger* is to make it a “real” member newsletter. That means we want the content to be focused on, of interest to, and even written by you...the members of ASPS. Here are some of the features that would welcome your submissions:

- **Member News.** If you’ve won a contest, had something accepted for publication, hosted a party or done anything else you want other members to know about, let us know. We love hearing about your success and letting others know about it.
- **What’s Happening.** Do you have an event planned? A workshop? A conference? If it has value, share it so other members will know about it.
- **Tips & Tools of the Trade.** What writing prompts work for you? What are some common errors to avoid? Put together three or four tips and send them to us. If we can use them, we’ll credit you.
- **Articles.** We’re always looking for well-written articles about poetry and writing. Articles should be between 300-600 words and should also be crisp, clean copy. Write it, edit it carefully and send it to us.
- **Monthly Challenges.** If you send your challenge to us, we will include it in a future issue and credit you.
- **Fillers.** Fillers should be 100 to 200 words. They can be interesting, informative, or just fun.

All your submissions should be attached as a Word document and sent by email to:

[editor@musemessenger.org](mailto:editor@musemessenger.org). Put the feature you are submitting to in the Subject line (i.e. Article, Tips and Tools, etc.). If you wish, you may also send your submissions for any section of the *Muse Messenger* using snail mail to:

**Muse Messenger, P.O. 1651, Pell City, AL 35125.**

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## Member News for December

**Judith Christian-Moon's** new book, *Angel Bells*, is now available on E-Bay, Nook, Kindle and Amazon. The book is a collection essays and poems about her journey through grief, including some suggestions that might assist someone who is in the grief process.

**Urainah Glidewell** has a regular article every week in the St. Clair News Aegis. Her latest article was an

“Author Focus” on Rita Moritz (Rita hastily adds she’s not nearly so impressive as Urainah thinks). You can view the article at <http://bit.ly/2hdy8sS>.

**Joyce A. Harris-Stokes** had a poem published in the book *Misunderstood: The Love Scales Story* about the first black elected to Auburn University's homecoming court. Joyce A. Harris-Stokes aka Harris-Taylor Stokes.

**Karen McAferty Morris** reports that she and her husband, who is a digital artist, will have a show at Artel Gallery in Pensacola in the corner room called “The Vault.” Called “*Luminous Language*,” this show will feature Karen’s poetry and his art. The show will run Jan. 10 - Feb. 17, 2017, with the opening reception Thursday, Jan. 19, from 6:00 – 8:00.

**Rita Moritz's** new book, *So You Love a Prodigal: What You Can't Do, What You Can Do, Why You Can't Quit*, is available from Amazon and from Rita’s website. Her book has been endorsed by David Bennett (Editor, *HomeLife*) and Jennifer Rash (Editor elect, *The Alabama Baptist*) and includes a blurb from our own Sue Walker. For more information, go to: [ritamoritz.com/takealook](http://ritamoritz.com/takealook).

**Sue Walker** had two flash fiction items, “The Memory of Leaves” and “Sunset Limited,” published in *Walt Ink*. She also had two poems, “A Round or Two” and “The Faltering,” published and both a poem “A Matter of Repetition,” and a short story, “The Memory of Leaves: Calliope and Hector Visit Blakeley State Park in the Mobile Tensaw Delta” published.

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## *Muse Messenger* Monthly Challenge.

Each month, the editors choose challenges to include in the *Muse Messenger*. The challenges this month were taken from the National Federation of State Poetry Society’s yearly contest. The \* indicates the category is open for members only. If you are a member of ASPS, you are also a member of NFSPS. The **deadline for entries is March 15**. Between now and then, all the monthly challenges will be categories taken from the NFSPS contest. The three for this month are as follows:

\*31. MINUTE AWARD (\*Members Only)  
Sponsored by Sharon Martin Turner.  
Subject: Capture a Slice of Life.

Form: A Minute Poem, created by Verna Lee Hinegardner. A 60 syllable, 12-line poem in strict iambic meter, syllable count for each line is: 8,4,4,4. Rhyme Scheme: a,a,b,b,c,c / d,d,e,e,f,f.

32. POETRY SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN AWARD Sponsored by the Poetry Society of Michigan. Subject: Any. Form: Free Verse. 40-line limit.

33. MISSISSIPPI POETRY SOCIETY AWARD Sponsored by the Mississippi Poetry Society, Inc. Subject: Any. Form: Sonnet (Indicate sonnet pattern on entry).

We would love to hear some suggestions from you. What prompts do you use? Send them to us, and we'll be glad to share them with the rest of ASPS. If you've written a poem based on one of the monthly challenges, send that to us as well. If there's room in the *Muse Messenger* the following month, we'll publish it. Send prompts and/or poems to us at: [editor@musemessenger.org](mailto:editor@musemessenger.org), and we will include them in a future issue of *Muse Messenger* and credit you.

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## What's Happening?

**December 1: Please Note Change in Time and Location! Writers Anonymous** will meet on December 1 at the new Pell City Library, 1000 Bruce Etheredge Parkway, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. For more information, go to: [writersanonymous.us](http://writersanonymous.us).

**December 2: Bamaslam Montevallo Poetry Slam** is on Friday, December 2. Sign up at 8:00 p.m., and the slam begins at 9:00 p.m. at Eclipse Coffee and Books, 1032 Main Street in Montevallo. Email Jerri Hardesty at: [WytRabbit1@aol.com](mailto:WytRabbit1@aol.com) for more information.

**December 6: Gifts of a Wordsmith**, a poetry workshop for adults, meets on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:00 to 7:45 p.m. at the downtown Birmingham Public Library. Email Barry Marks at: [barry@leaselawyer.com](mailto:barry@leaselawyer.com) for more information.

**December 10: Author Expo**, hosted by Chelsea General Store, 14555 Hwy 280, Chelsea, AL 35043. Fourteen authors will be there with their books. There will be door prizes, tastings, and an

opportunity to buy some unique gifts from Chelsea General Store.

**December 10: Pensters Writing Group**, University of South Alabama, 111 St. James St. Room 11, Fairhope will host the 2016 Pensters Holiday Celebration from 10:00 to 12:00. Join us for food and fellowship. Members will have tables set up to sell or advertise their work. For more information, go to: [pensterswritinggroup.com/events/](http://pensterswritinggroup.com/events/)

**December 19: Gifts of a Wordsmith**, a poetry workshop for adults, meets on the third Saturday of each month from 3:30 to 5:15 p.m. at the downtown Birmingham Public Library. Email Barry Marks at: [barry@leaselawyer.com](mailto:barry@leaselawyer.com) for more information.

**January 3: Gifts of a Wordsmith**, a poetry workshop for adults, meets on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:00 to 7:45 p.m. at the downtown Birmingham Public Library. Email Barry Marks at: [barry@leaselawyer.com](mailto:barry@leaselawyer.com) for more information.

**January 5: Please Note Change in Time and Location! Writers Anonymous** will meet on January 5 at the new Pell City Library, 1000 Bruce Etheredge Parkway, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. For more information, go to: [writersanonymous.us](http://writersanonymous.us).

**January 13: Bamaslam Montevallo Poetry Slam** is on Friday, January 13. Sign up at 8:00 p.m., and the slam begins at 9:00 p.m. at Eclipse Coffee and Books, 1032 Main Street in Montevallo. Email Jerri Hardesty at [WytRabbit1@aol.com](mailto:WytRabbit1@aol.com) for more information.

**January 21: Gifts of a Wordsmith**, a poetry workshop for adults, meets on the third Saturday of each month from 3:30 to 5:15 p.m. at the downtown Birmingham Public Library. Email Barry Marks at: [barry@leaselawyer.com](mailto:barry@leaselawyer.com) for more information.

**January 24: The Huntsville Literary Association's** poetry workshop meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month except December at rotating venues. For location of this month's meeting or for other information, contact Jimmy Robinson at 256-520-0811 or [jmr815@comcast.net](mailto:jmr815@comcast.net).

If you have an event you would like us to add to "What's Happening," please send us the details at: [editor@musemessenger.com](mailto:editor@musemessenger.com).

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## Highlights on State Poetry Societies:

In order for a State Poetry Society to be featured, it must have a web presence and allow both out-of-state membership and non-member entries in their contests. Keep in mind that contest deadlines may change. Some may accept outside submissions to their journals.

<i>State:</i>	<i>Dues</i>	<i>Contest Deadlines.</i>
<b>Kentucky:</b>	\$25/\$20	6/30
Inet: <a href="http://kystatepoetrysociety.org">kystatepoetrysociety.org</a>		

**Louisiana:** \$25 (due 7/1)  
Inet: [louisianastatepoetrysociety.org](http://louisianastatepoetrysociety.org)

**Maine:** \$20  
Inet: [mainepoetsociety.com](http://mainepoetsociety.com)

(Information on the poetry societies highlighted this month came from [poets.com](http://poets.com))

### Kentucky State Poetry Society:

Established in 1926, the poet laureate position in Kentucky is held by George Ella Lyon, who was inducted on April 24, 2015. She is the author of four books of poetry, a novel, a memoir, a short story collection, and thirty-seven books for young readers. She works as a freelance writer and teacher in Lexington, Kentucky.

### Louisiana Poetry Society:

Established in 1942, the state poet laureate position in Louisiana is currently held by Ava Leavell Haymon. Haymon is the author of four poetry collections, including *Eldest Daughter*, published by Louisiana State University Press in 2013. She has received the Louisiana Literature Prize for poetry, the L. E. Phillabaum Poetry Award, and the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters. She is a teacher and directs a summer retreat center for writers and artists.

### Maine State Poetry Society:

Wesley McNair is the Poet Laureate of Maine. His most recent books are *The Words I Chose: A Memoir of Family and Poetry* and *Lovers of the Lost: New & Selected Poems*. McNair is currently Professor Emeritus and Writer in Residence at the University of Maine at Farmington, where he directed the creative writing program and received the Distinguished Faculty Award and the Libra Professorship.

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## Contests, Contests, Contests!

(December/January Contests with Deadlines)

12/1—Slipstream Chapbook Contest:  
[bit.ly/1QLhWdy](http://bit.ly/1QLhWdy) December 1

12/1—Slipstream Chapbook Contest:  
<http://bit.ly/1QLhWdy> December 1

12/15—Massachusetts: Arthur (Skip) Potter Memorial Contest <http://bit.ly/1OvutOX>

12/20—Poetry Society of TN (Members Only)  
Submit by Dec 20th for Jan  
<http://poetrysocietytn.org/>

12/22—Poetry Society of America:  
<http://bit.ly/1OkNszx>

12/25—Saturday Evening Post Limerick Laughs Contest: <http://bit.ly/1p3VXfh>

12/31—ASPS: Book of the Year:  
[alabamapoets.org](http://alabamapoets.org)

12/31—ASPS: Poet of the Year:  
[alabamapoets.org](http://alabamapoets.org)

12/31—Blue Mountain Arts - Biannual Poetry Card Contest: <http://bit.ly/1SnXflz>

12/31—California: Monthly Topics by month  
<http://bit.ly/1LEi3zR>

12/31—National Writers Association Nonfiction Contest <http://bit.ly/2gq4387>

12/31—San Antonio Writers' Guild Annual Contest <http://bit.ly/2cyxBzm>

12/31—Tampa Review Prize for Poetry:  
<http://bit.ly/1Nd9Dk5>

12/31—Tethered by Letters: <http://bit.ly/1SnY91A>

12/31—The Society of Classical Poets – See subject requirements. <http://bit.ly/1IOHARY>

12/31—Tupelo Press Dorset Prize – poetry manuscript <http://bit.ly/1leSWc7>

1/1—MA Poetry Soc Of Thee I Sing Contest  
<http://mastatepoetrysociety.tripod.com/>

- 1/1—NFSPS Annual Contest (Submissions Open 1/1)  
[http://www.nfsps.com/poetry\\_contests.htm](http://www.nfsps.com/poetry_contests.htm)
- 1/2—Gemini Magazine Poetry contest  
<http://bit.ly/1YUI0aU>
- 1/8—North Carolina:  
<http://www.ncpoetrysociety.org/adultcontests/>
- 1/15—Pennsylvania Poetry Society Annual Contest <http://www.nfsps.com/pa/>
- 1/15—Poetry Soc of TX Monthly Contest  
(Rec'd by Date)  
<http://poetrysocietyoftexas.org/>
- 1/19—Poetry Society of Virginia  
<http://bit.ly/1ku4X23>
- 1/20—Poetry Soc of TN (Mem Only) Submit by 1/20 for Feb <http://poetrysocietytn.org/>
- 1/31—California: Topic by month and submitted during each month. <http://bit.ly/1LEi3zR>
- 1/31—Grayson Press Poetry Chapbook Contest  
<http://www.graysonbooks.com/contest.html>
- 1/31—Snapshot Press Haiku Calendar Competition <http://bit.ly/1Sqhi5i>
- 1/31—Austin International Poetry Festival Anthology submissions  
<http://www.aipf.org/aipf/default.asp>

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## Publishers and Journals That Are Accepting Submissions

The following publishers and journals are now open for submissions. Be sure to read and follow the submission guidelines provided on each website. Only your very best work should be submitted.

*The Birmingham Arts Journal:*  
<http://birminghamartsjournal.com>

*Chicken Soup for the Soul:*  
<http://chickensoup.cosm/>

*Cicada (Cricket Magazine)*  
[cricketmag.submittable.com/submit/17820](http://cricketmag.submittable.com/submit/17820)

*Decasp: Bite Size Chunks of Humor*  
<http://www.decasp.com/submissions.html>

*Desert Breeze Publishing*  
[desertbreezepublishing.com/submissions](http://desertbreezepublishing.com/submissions)

*Haiku Journal:*  
<http://bit.ly/22JMYpt>

*Heirloom Gardener*  
<http://bit.ly/2dQE1q0>

*Kudzu House Quarterly:*  
<http://kudzuhouse.org>

*Mayfly*  
<http://bit.ly/1Zs4e0w>

Negative Capability Press:  
<http://negativecapabilitypress.org>

*Penny Magazine:*  
<http://youfoundpenny.com>

*Purpose Magazine:*  
(Submissions must meet the monthly themes.)  
[faithandliferesources.org/periodicals/purpose](http://faithandliferesources.org/periodicals/purpose)

*Reader's Digest* 100-word True Story:  
[rd.com/100-word-stories-submissions](http://rd.com/100-word-stories-submissions)

*Woman's World Magazine*  
<http://www.womansworld.com/p/contact>

The Poetry Foundation:  
<http://poetryfoundation.org>

Sterling Publishing  
[sterlingpublishing.com/author-guidelines.html](http://sterlingpublishing.com/author-guidelines.html)

Sunpenny Publishing  
[sunpenny.com/#!/submissions](http://sunpenny.com/#!/submissions)

### Submissions with Deadlines:

12/15 Black Orchid Designs (ELJ Editions)  
[elj-editions.com/submit/black-orchid-designs](http://elj-editions.com/submit/black-orchid-designs)

12/31 Manifest West #6: Women of the West  
[westernstatepress.submittable.com/submit](http://westernstatepress.submittable.com/submit)

Be sure to check the website for submission guidelines before submitting to any of these.

If you know of publishers or journals that are accepting submissions, please let us know so they can be included in the next *Muse Messenger*.

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## The Alabama State Poetry Society — Our 2017 Officers:

President:	Jodi Adamson 361 Rives Mill Loop Deatsville, AL 36022	<a href="mailto:adamsjo75@hotmail.com"><u>adamsjo75@hotmail.com</u></a>
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