

August 2012

# The Utah State Poetry Society's POET TREE

A line from the 1<sup>st</sup> sequel to the movie, *Aliens*, popped into my head today. The marine gunnery sergeant greets his troops and states, "Another glorious day in the Corps." Any day you wake up and see the sun rising in the east is a glorious day, no matter the circumstances. We have another opportunity to make a difference, read a good book, write a poem, listen to good music, or brighten another person's day. On 16 July, I said goodbye to my mother by giving her life sketch at her funeral. Two of my sisters are taking her departure harder than the rest of us, so I made use of two poems that I had long since memorized: *When You Are Old* by Yates and *What God Hath Promised* by Annie Johnson Flint. The former began the life sketch and the latter concluded it. Poetry has a healing power that reaches across the ages and touches all lives. I am thankful every day for parents who encouraged me to read and imagine. Sterling W. Sill, in his book *The Power of Poetry*, said, "Poetry can sometimes say more, and say it with more effectiveness, than other forms of speech. It can add perception to life, widen our horizons, sharpen our spiritual concepts, elevate our spirits, raise our enthusiasm, and increase our joy." I know that it has been a help to me in good times and bad.

We recently concluded the NFSPS National Convention in Indiana. It was not as well attended as others that I have gone to - perhaps because it was held on Father's Day weekend. When the state presidents and the board members present met, this was discussed. New Mexico will host the National next year - also on Father's Day weekend. This should be the last time that we experience this situation. One of the problems that we discussed in our meeting was the time that it took to present the winning poems. We discussed not reading the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place poems if the poet wasn't in attendance. The 1<sup>st</sup> place winner would be read either by the winning poet or one of the people selected to read if the winner wasn't in attendance. This procedure would greatly enhance the process so that the awards don't run on so long. I also



recommended that they use a computer, projector and screen to show the winning entries as they are read. The food was excellent at the hosting facility; the workshops were well-attended and well-planned. One of the major presenters forgot her commitment and decided to go to Europe. We were all encouraged to find a quiet spot and write poetry to fill the time. I especially enjoyed listening to Mark Turcotte and his presentation as the Keynote Speaker. In fact, I liked it so much that I purchased two of his books.

I hope that all of you are having a great summer and don't melt in the heat.

Eric Read

#### POET TREE deadlines 2013

Board members and chapter presidents, please note the following due dates for your submissions to Poet Tree.

February issue  
August issue

January 25, 2013  
July 27, 2013

[vera@xmission.com](mailto:vera@xmission.com)





**Dawnell Griffin**  
UTSPS Poet of the Year 2012

Dawnell H. Griffin was born and raised in Millard County, Utah. Her love of reading, writing and history began at an early age, in part, because of the efforts of both her parents who were educators. Dawnell began her college education at the age of sixteen, attending the College of Southern Utah (now S.U.U) and Utah State University before she married Wade W. Griffin. Wade and Dawnell are the parents of eight children and have numerous grandchildren. Dawnell later resumed her education at Brigham Young University where she majored in Local and Family History, and genealogy. She has worked as a researcher and consultant, traveling to England, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden and most of the Southern and Western States. She has published several family histories, a children's book, and has won several awards for her short stories and poetry.

#### **Dawnell Talks About her Book.**

“In the summer of 2010, one of our sons, Joshua, experienced a traumatic event in his life and as a result, our entire family was involved in his care and recovery. For me, writing was a way to cope with the difficulties connected with this experience, but also a way to be part of Joshua's journey until at last we were able to move on again. In the beginning we did not know if our son would survive, but after he was moved out of intensive care, we began the healing and rehabilitation process together. This was and is an intensely personal experience for me, but I think I felt from the beginning that it was also a shared experience.”

(This poem won a special recognition 2012, in category 23, Time Piece.)

Dachau was built in 1933, later used as a concentration camp during World War II. That year there were 38 dust-bowl storms in the Midwest, and President Roosevelt ended the gold standard.

#### **Between the Lines** by Dawnell Griffin

Mama took a class in Palmer's Penmanship,  
her P's and Q's rounded in perfect etiquette,  
matched straight lines and dangling tails,  
black on white.

Her marriage in '33, begun in innocence and  
nonchalance, was far removed from dust bowls  
in the west and Dachau in the east, but snubbed  
against the Great Depression, coined for us who  
have the luxury of looking back.

She bought a ledger, kept close tabs on money  
spent for spools of thread, a needle for her new  
machine to justify the cost of clothes she sewed  
herself. The cent sign dominates the page.  
A loaf of bread was seven, yeast and flour not  
so much. Notations say she baked that day.

The effect of scrimping then, and then the war,  
exhibited itself in hoarded stuff we threw away when  
she was gone, except for sweetheart notes we'll keep,  
the journal with its starts and stops, the quarrel, singular,  
that kept its place while all the others never graced  
a page or else were blotted out. Her tears when Daddy  
died still smear the spot. Of all the things she left me,  
I treasure these the most.

Diaries are set aside for email, chat rooms, Facebook,  
blogs, with anonymity a loss and correspondents  
so unschooled they do not know the tragedy of lost  
calligraphy, sarcophagus, and intimacy  
between the lines.

Mark your calendar for the book concert on Saturday,  
October 13 at the Salt Lake Library where Dawnell  
will introduce her book *On Judgment Day*. You can  
also get your own copy then.

NFSPS CONVENTION 2012  
Merrillville, Indiana  
by Eric Read

Everyone was excited. We had a great time. Thirty-six Utah poets submitted to the national contest, and we led the field with 79 winners. Texas came in second. Markay, Barbara, Paul, and myself were the only representatives in attendance. I was asked many times where everyone was. We missed you but cheered loudly for all of our winners. A special congratulations to Maurine Haltiner who took home the Big One! Other Utah winners were: Jon Sebba, Markay Brown, Kolette Montague, Barbara Funke, Candy Lish Fowler, Edith Baker, Clarence Socwell, Kathy Larson, Joyce Kohler, Judy Johns, Geraldine Felt, Juanita Watts, Karen Gibson, Lynne Elise Benson, Martha Morrise, Grace Diane Jessen, Anita Krotz, N. Colwell Snell, Glenn Pruden, Marillyn Johnson, Crystie Cook, Vera Bakker. Way to go!

Utah had 36 entrants, 1063 entries, and 79 wins. Texas had 75 entrants, 1527 entries, and 72 wins. Number 3 was Florida with 16 entrants, 382 entries, and 30 wins. Ranked number 4 was Minnesota with 14 entrants, 421 entries, and 26 wins.

NOTHING SO CERTAIN AS CHANGE  
Kolette Montague

The April rumbles were not from thunder clouds, but from amazed poets who heard of so many disqualifications during the 2012 contest. All I can say is "Let the writer beware!" The majority of disqualifications could have been avoided by **following the contest rules**. Each year we revamp the rules for clarification and conciseness. Each year we are amazed at the number of writers who DO NOT read. There really is nothing quite like sharing your winning poetry with an appreciative audience. So read and follow the rules carefully, then enjoy your fifteen minutes of fame, and thank one of our sponsors personally after you've won in a category.

NFSPS CONVENTION 2013  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Next year's national convention will be held on June 13-17 in the Hotel Albuquerque. They are taking advance reservations at this time. The toll-free number is 1-800-505-7829. Or email the hotel at [hotelabq@hhandr.com](mailto:hotelabq@hhandr.com) and give them the following code: Block Code 13062013NA 2013 National Federation of State Poetry Societies. You can find convention details by going to [www.nmpoetry.com](http://www.nmpoetry.com).

**Departed Poets**

*for Patricia Grimm, Helen Beaman, Theda Bassett*  
by Vera Ogden Bakker

They left us last year  
with a legacy of language and love  
we shall long remember:

Gentle Patricia with her  
wry twist of wit.  
*I dawdle down the ages,*  
*singing Flippancy in Greek. (1)*

Gracious Helen with her  
flair for performance.  
*One day it will hold still for me*  
*so I can slip right through. (2)*

Vibrant Theda with her  
zest for service.  
*to do for you after death*  
*things I could not do for you in life. (3)*

Their faith carries  
beyond the grave  
to grace the heavens with  
words and ways  
that enriched our lives.

1. from *Grasshopper's Fables*  
2 from *Enhanced Vision*  
3 from *Ethereal Pressure*

**Dixie Chapter**

by Lin Floyd

Keeping busy is our theme as our group continues to meet during the summer months on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from 2-4 pm at the St. George library. Our members are busy submitting to contests and winning awards. Recently Marilyn Ball won 1st place in the ZARTS Zion Arts and Humanities Council RiverWork contest for those residing near the Virgin River. The theme was their personal experiences with the river in poetry and prose. Marilyn won \$250 for her poem entitled "Wanton Woman." Markay Brown, Barbara Funke, and Candy Fowler were winners in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies contest this year. Congratulations!

A very busy April found our group involved with POETRY IN THE PARK for our third year with Budd Powell Mahan, distinguished poet from Texas, as our presenter for a delightful day of poetry and beauty at Zion National Park. The founder of PIP is LaVerna Johnson. A group of 20 poets enjoyed a day of inspiration and writing which also included an easy hike along the Virgin River with naturalist Michael Plyler. We would love to see more UTSPS poets from throughout the state join us in this magical experience

The second annual Youth Poetry Contest and Celebration was held during the month of April at Tuacahn Saturday Market on April 1, 2012. Organized by Lin Floyd and RoseMary Brossard of TSM, 212 students from the Washington County School District area participated with the theme of What If? Winners included poets from 1st through 12th grade and were awarded prizes contributed by local businesses in St. George. A short program entitled "Introduction to Poetry" was presented by POETRY in ACTION directed by Lin Floyd then winning students read their poems. A fun activity for all – commemorating National Poetry Month.

Congratulations: to the following poets published in Dixie State College's Southern Quill: Marilyn Ball, Marleen Bussma, Nad Brown, Gary Christian, Lin Floyd, Marie Tollstrup, and Betty Vickers. Marilyn Ball has a new poetry book,

*Stepping on Water and Stone: Lake Powell Poems.* and Marleen Bussma has published her own cowboy poetry in *She Wanted to Ride Like Dale.*

**REDROCK WRITERS' CHAPARRAL POETRY  
CONTEST.**

Chair: Barbara Funke ([bfunke2@gmail.com](mailto:bfunke2@gmail.com)). Entries welcome: postmarked Oct. 10, 2012, through Jan. 10, 2013.

CHOLLA Division: any subject, any form. Prizes: \$200, \$100, \$50.

CHAQUETA Division: Southwest subject--nature, people, history..., any form. Prizes: \$100, \$50, \$25.

CHAPAREJOS Division: Rhymed & metered, any subject. Prizes \$100, \$50, \$25.

CHIMERA Division: Imaginative or absurd/humorous, any form. Prizes \$100, \$50, \$25.

GUIDELINES: Each poem must:

1. be original, UNPUBLISHED, 42 lines or fewer;
2. have line lengths to fit chapbook pages;
3. be typed neatly on white 8 1/2 x 11 paper without art work;
4. be in good taste;
5. have won no more than \$10 in any contest.

SEND TWO COPIES of each poem, Division title in top left corner: first plain, no ID; second ID top right corner (name, address, phone, email).

Fees: \$3 per poem; checks (no cash) payable to Redrock Writers Guild. Mail poems and check in one envelope to Chaparral Poetry Forum Contest, Barbara Funke, 474 W. Rolling Hills Dr., St. George, UT 84770-6111.

Will publish top 3 poems in the *2013 Chaparral Poetry Forum* chapbook (editor, Barbara Funke) and online at [www.redrockwriters.org](http://www.redrockwriters.org). For winners list, include SASE.



**NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE ARTS**

This project is supported by the Utah Division of Arts and Museums, with funding from the State of Utah and the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Fall/Winter Calendar 2012-2013**

Oct. 13 Poetry Concert-- SLC Library 7 p.m.

Nov. 10 Workshop –Bountiful Library\* 10 a.m.

Jan. 10 Chaparral Poetry Contest deadline

12 Workshop –Bountiful Library\* 10 a.m.

27 Deadline for February Poet Tree articles

Feb. 1 UTSPS Contest deadline  
(watch for rules in October)

9 Workshop – Bountiful Library\* 10 a.m.

Mar. 9 Workshop – Bountiful Library\* 10 a.m.

15 NFSPS contest deadline

22 Poetry in the Park  
[www.poetry-in-the-park.com](http://www.poetry-in-the-park.com)

23 Redrock Writers' Seminar  
[www.redrockwriters.org](http://www.redrockwriters.org)

Apr. 19-20 April Awards Festival  
special guest speaker

\*Bountiful Library 725 S Main, Bountiful. Take Bountiful 5<sup>th</sup> S. exit, go east to Main St., turn right. The library is just north of BDAC our former meeting place. Meeting rooms are downstairs.