



MISSISSIPPI POETRY SOCIETY

2023 SPRING CONTEST

RULES AND CATEGORIES

Eligibility - Poems must be original and unpublished and should not have won or placed in any poetry contest, other than honorable mention. A poet may not enter the same poem in more than one category. **Note that Categories 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are open only to MPS members.**

Take care that all entries meet the form requirements, line limit and any other instructions specified for the category. Spaces between lines do not count as numbered lines.

Entry Fees

The entry fee is \$1 per category for MPS members, with a maximum of \$10 to enter all categories. For non-members, the fee is \$3 per category, with a maximum of \$30 to enter all categories. For online submissions (see below), a small transaction fee will be automatically charged to cover the cost of processing.

Submission Process – Poems and entrance fees may be submitted either through the mail or online. The online submission process went smoothly in 2022! For 2023, we have made a number of improvements that we hope will make the process even simpler.

Online Submission (new and improved!)

Poems may be uploaded, and entrance fees paid, directly on the MPS website (contest tab):

<https://www.misspoetry.net/contests.html>

There are four steps:

1. Complete the online submission form
2. Click the “Upload” button to upload your document
3. After completing the form and uploading your document, hit “Submit”.
4. After submitting, pay the entry fee with Paypal or with a credit card.

Additional Instructions for Online Submission

File format: Poems may be submitted in any easily editable file format such as MS Word, Open Office Writer, or a simple text document (such as that produced by Notepad). **Please do not submit pdf files, as these are more difficult to edit for the journal.**

What to include in your document: In 2022, we asked you to include a cover page with your document. In 2023, this won't be necessary, because all of that information is in the submission form (see step 1 above). All you need to include is one copy of each poem, in order of category number. For each poem, include in the top left hand corner of the page your first and last name, the name of the category, and the category number. That's it!

Please submit a single document containing all of your poems. Do not submit separate documents.

Fees: The last step is to pay fees. There is a simple form to fill out, where you will indicate whether you are an MPS member or a non-member, and the number of categories you are submitting to. If submitting to 10 or more, select 10. A small processing fee will be automatically included.

Submission by Mail (steady and true!)

Submission by mail will follow the same procedure as in previous contests. Entries must be submitted on regular 8.5” by 11” paper, produced with a computer printer or typewriter, and submitted in an 8 ½ x 11 or 10 x 13 mailing envelope. Participants should submit two (2) copies of each poem per category entered, with the following distinctions: (1) The first copy must show the poet’s name, complete US mailing address, phone number, email address (if available), and “MPS Member” or “Non-member” in the upper right corner. (MPS members include all entrants who have paid dues for the 2022-2023 year, including at-large members.) The category number and category title should appear in the upper left corner. (2) The second copy must show only the category number and category title in the upper left corner. If a poem runs more than one page, please staple the pages together on each copy.

Mail entries and entrance fees to this address

Jason Ervin
246 Twin Lakes Drive
Canton, MS 39046

Awards - Certificates and monetary prizes will be presented to winners at the MPS Spring Festival to held April 21-23. The location of the Festival will be announced separately (keep a watch on the MPS website, and on your email!). Please cash prize checks within 45 days of their awarding. The winning entries and their author’s names will be posted on the MPS website, www.misspoetry.net All poems that place first, second or third will be published in the 2023 Mississippi Poetry Journal. (a copy of the journal is included with an annual membership!)

Deadline - Entries must be **received** by Wednesday, March 1, 2023. Please note that this date is a “must be received by” date, not a postmark date. No entries arriving after March 1 can be accepted. If you decide to submit via the postal service, please be aware of potential delays, and allow plenty of time for transit.

Should you have any questions or issues, don’t hesitate to contact us via email at ms.poetry.central@gmail.com We are thrilled you are entering Mississippi Poetry Society’s 2023 Spring Contest! We hope you enjoy yourself! We all look forward to some great contest poetry!

Contest Categories

BEST OF THE FEST

The first place winner of each category will be entered into the Best of Fest competition. These poems will be sent to a panel of independent judges whose choices will be combined to select an overall winner. The decision will be final. A Best of Fest prize of \$250 has been contributed by Ms. Marilyn Denington in memory of her husband Michael R. (Mick) Denington.

Category 1: Mississippi Poetry Society 2023 Award

Sponsored by Mississippi Poetry Society. (*Open to MPS Members only*)

Judged by William (Bill) Hill. Form: open. Subject: "Mississippi Food". Line Limit: 100. Prizes: 1st \$100, 2nd \$50, 3rd \$25. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 2: MPS North Branch Award

Sponsored by MPS North Branch. (*Open to MPS Members only*) Judge: Ann Carolyn Cates. Form: English sonnet. Subject: open. Line Limit: 14. Prizes: 1st \$50, 2nd \$30, 3rd \$20. Honorable mentions: as merited (up to 3).

Category 3: MPS Central Branch Award

Sponsored by MPS Central Branch. (*Open to MPS Members only*) Judge: Russell Strauss. Form: open. Subject: Courage Unrecognized. Line Limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$50, 2nd \$30, 3rd \$20. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 4: MPS South Branch Award

Sponsored by MPS South Branch. (*Open to MPS Members only*) Judge: Judy Davies. Form: Acrostic. Subject: Open. Line Limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$50, 2nd \$30, 3rd \$20. Honorable mentions, 3.

Category 5: MPS West Branch Award

Sponsored and judged by MPS West Branch (*Open to MPS Members only*) Form: Open. Subject: the Mississippi River. Line Limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$50, 2nd \$30, 3rd \$20. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 6: Doctor's Dream Award -- Sponsored and judged Dr. Philip Levin (Doctor's Dream Publishing). Form: open. Subject: Cannabis as a medicine. Line Limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$40, 2nd \$35, 3rd \$25. Honorable mentions, 3.

Category 7: Ekphrastic Award -- Sponsored and judged by Dr. Emory Jones.

Form: Open. Subject: some work of art (identify the work of art). Line limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$30, 2nd \$20, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 8: Grands Award -- Sponsored and judged by Dr. Emory Jones. Form: Open. Subject: Grandparents or grandchildren. Line limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$30, 2nd \$20, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 9: Ruth Richmond Award -- Sponsored and judged by Ruth F. Richmond. Form: open. Subject: Pillar(s). Line Limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$25, 2nd \$15, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions, 3.

Category 10: Purrfectly Pleasing Pets -- Sponsored and judged by Patty Butkovich and Judy Davies. Form: Open. Subject: Domestic Cats (nothing pertaining to animal cruelty). Line limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$30, 2nd \$20, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 11: Algebra Award -- Sponsored and judged by Jason Ervin. Form: open. Subject: write a poem that “solves” the system of inequalities below. Line limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$50, 2nd \$30, 3rd \$20. Honorable mentions as merited.

$$\begin{cases} x + y \leq 12 \\ 2x + y \leq 16 \\ x, y \geq 0 \end{cases}$$

Category 12: Shelton Couplet Award -- Sponsored by Michael Shelton. Judge to be chosen by sponsor. Form: rhymed couplet. Subject: open. Line limit: 24. Prizes: 1st \$20, 2nd \$10, 3rd \$5. Honorable mentions: 3.

Category 13: Northwest Poet’s Award --- Sponsored and judged by Gail Denham. Form: Fibonacci Form. Subject: humor. Line Limit: 6. Prizes: 1st \$25, 2nd \$10, 3rd \$5. Honorable mentions 3.

A Fibonacci is 6-line poem where the syllable count follows the fabulous Fibonacci sequence.

1st line: 1 syllable
2nd line: 1 syllable
3rd line: 2 syllables
4th line: 3 syllables
5th line: 5 syllables
6th line: 8 syllables

example of a Fibonacci Poem:

Dog
licks
my face;
but what did
this dear sweet pet lick
prior to his dear, loving kiss?

Category 14: Narrative Poem Award -- Sponsored and judged by Janice Canerdy. Form: rhymed & metered. Subject: open. Line Limit: 40 [maximum line length of 60 characters, including letters, numbers, special characters and spaces] Prizes: 1st \$30, 2nd \$20, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 15: Biblically Inspired Award -- Sponsored and judged by Rev. Randy and Mrs. Linda Owen. Form: free verse. Subject: hand(s) in the Bible. Line limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$25, 2nd \$15, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 16: Backyard Biology Award -- Sponsored by Rev. Randy and Mrs. Linda Owen. Judged by Catherine Moran. Form: open. Subject: Backyards are full of amazing creatures. One only need only look closely. Write a poem inspired by the plants, animals, bugs, fungi, microbes, etc that call your back yard home. Line limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$25, 2nd \$15, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 17: Noteworthy Award (Poems about Music) – Sponsored and judged by friends of James Thomas Miller III. Form: open. Subject: music. Line limit: 30. Prizes: 1st \$90, 2nd \$45, 3rd \$27. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 18: Original Inhabitants Award – Sponsored and judged by Daniel Pickett. Form: open. Subject: poem recognizing the history and culture of indigenous peoples. Line limit: 50. Prizes: 1st \$50, 2nd \$30, 3rd \$20. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 19: Wombat Award – Sponsored and judged by Gail Denham. Form: Kelly Lune. Subject: humorous poem. Line limit: 3. Prizes: 1st \$25, 2nd \$15, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions as merited.

A Kelly Lune is a 3-line poem with a humorous theme, no rhyming requirements, but specific syllable count requirements.

1st line: 3 syllables

2nd line: 5 syllables

3rd line: 3 syllables

example of a Kelly Lune:

I'm nowhere
near believing your
line of gab

Category 20: Primrose Award – Sponsored by Dorothy Wiman and judged by Lisa Kalmonick. Form: Sestina. Subject: A Royal Funeral. Line limit: 39. Prizes: 1st \$75, 2nd \$50, 3rd \$35. Honorable mentions: 3.

Category 21: Prufrock Award – Sponsored and judged by J.P. Stokes. Form: open. Subject: Uncertainty Line limit: 50. Prizes: 1st \$30, 2nd \$20, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions: as merited.

Category 22: Chester Terry, Jr. Memorial Award – Sponsored and judged by Mary Lee Terry. Form: Sonnet (include the sonnet pattern on your entry) Subject: Vietnam Memories
Line limit: as specified by the form. Prizes: 1st \$35, 2nd \$25, 3rd \$15.
Honorable mentions: 3.

Category 23: All Things New, Inc. Award – Sponsored and judged by Rev. Patsy Twiner.
Form: Free Verse. Subject: New Beginnings. Line limit: 30 Prizes: 1st \$75, 2nd \$35, 3rd \$15.
Honorable mentions: 3.

Category 24: Science Fiction Award – Sponsored by William Hill Art and Poetry. Judged by Florence Bruce. Form: open. Subject: What will Mississippi be like in 2222!? Line limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$25, 2nd \$15, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions: as merited (up to 3).

Category 25: Fast and Furryous Award – Sponsored by Anna’s Pet Sitting. Judged by Dierdre Payne. Form: open. Subject: humorous poem about animals. (nothing pertaining to animal cruelty). Line limit: 40 Prizes: 1st \$25, 2nd \$15, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions: as merited (up to 3).

Category 26: Poems for Children Award – Sponsored and judged by “Mimi and Papa”. Form: rhymed and metered. Subject: open. Line limit: none. Prizes: 1st \$25, 2nd \$15, 3rd \$10. Honorable mentions: as merited.

Category 27: Romeo and Juliet Award -- Sponsored and judged by Amanda Burcham Garvin. Form: open. Subject: Romantic love. Line Limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$30, 2nd \$20, 3rd \$15. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 28: Poverty, Pills, Pay, Prison, Pollution and Power Award -- Sponsored and judged by Devin Norman. Form: open. Subject: Challenges facing our state. Line Limit: 40. Prizes: 1st \$30, 2nd \$20, 3rd \$15. Honorable mentions as merited.

Category 29: Ann Award – In memory of Ann Hendon, who loved flowers. You are missed. Sponsored by Jason Ervin. Judged by Sue Creel. Form: Villanelle. Subject: flowers and floral arrangements. Line Limit: 19. Prizes: 1st \$50, 2nd \$30, 3rd \$20. Honorable mentions as merited.



Mississippi Poetry Society
Established 1932