



The Museletter

News and Resources from the National Association for Poetry Therapy

Liberating Voices in Boston: Reflections on the 2006 NAPT Conference

NAPT Executive Committee
(2005-2007)

President

Perie Longo

Vice-Presidents

Diane Allerdyce (Conferences)

Mary Caprio (Membership)

Robert Carroll (Institutional Development)

Recording Secretary

Geri Chavis

Corresponding Secretary

Ted Bowman

Treasurer

Richard Rosenfield

Ethics & By-Laws Chair

Leia Francisco

Journal of Poetry Therapy Editor

Nick Mazza

Publications Chair

Karen vanMeenen

NAPT Board Members

Barbara Bethea (Diversity)

Margaret Blanchard

Richard Brown

Jerri Chaplin (Praise of Muses)

Victoria Levitt (Education)

Dahlia Lorenz

Phyllis Klein

Barbara Kreisberg

Anne Sheffield

Ingrid Tegnér (Research)

A Praise of Muses

Jennifer Bosveld

Michael Dennis Browne

Rafael Campo

Michael Collier

Jack Coulehan

Patricia Hampl

Edward Hirsch

Jane Hirshfield

David Read Johnson

Shaun McNiff

Gregory Orr

Grace Paley

Linda Pastan

James Pennebaker

Luis J. Rodriguez

Myra Sklarew

Henry Taylor

The Museletter

Editor — Karen vanMeenen

Layout — Connie Banta

Last Day, Marriott Courtyard

Contributed by Eleanor Appleyard

I press my hotel room phone for messages one last time before checking out of Marriott Room 1233. My suitcase is packed and waiting at the door. I am clutching my notebook, now vocal with poems, and the automated phone voice mail speaks in my ear, "You have reached an unoccupied room." "Unoccupied?" I laugh.

This room is fully occupied and has been for four days. It has been alive, loud and crammed with NAPT memories, laughter, wonder, healing and transformation. I have met new and reunited with old NAPT friends. Isabella Stewart Gardner's spirit lived here; Maria Gillan and her immigrant family visited, providing for me the necessary permission to revisit and write of my immigrant parents and their Irish roots of fear, survival and strength. Poems of addiction and psalm poems were embraced here. Thea and I responding to each other with poetic empathy was combined with art in this room.



Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez

Journeying with Warrior Ekiwah whose love, joy of life and truth invaded my dreams; compassionate memories of courageous lives in unique theater performances; rare glimpses into NAPT members' lives via open mic; my unique song-time line poems and narratives—all were cherished in this room. I hold every recollection in my heart as a treasure. Four invigorating days of gentle, safe, nurturing workshops, meals, friends, adventures—far beyond any expectation and too countless to list—were all inspiring and sacred to me. Departing this "unoccupied room," I find I am humming, with a most grateful heart, "Ode To Joy." ■

Conference coverage continued on page 5



Karen vanMeenen

From the Editor

At the 26th annual NAPT annual conference in Boston in April we explored our roots and grew new buds as we celebrated our already strong branches. And it was not only metaphor that thrived at this event, but practical tools and information as well, resulting in an energizing, inspirational, food-, friend- and poetry-filled weekend. Two things that stand out for me were the life story and poetry of Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez and a particularly powerful closing ceremony during which the talented, compassionate, empathic members of True Story Theater enacted my personal story of finding my life's work in teaching and writing therapy. I was frankly astonished by the power and poetry that emanated

from my story through their live dramatic interpretation. Many in the audience commented to me at the time and since that it was a moving experience for them as well. Read on in this issue for more positive, poetic responses to the conference from dozens of attendees.

Driving home to New York from another conference in Boston just a few weeks later, I took a detour to Amherst, Massachusetts, to see Emily Dickinson's house for the first time. There was only one other visitor on the last tour of the day, and the two of us enjoyed the undivided attention of the docent who sat with us and went well over the scheduled length of the tour answering our questions and talking about the life of this unique poet. It was thrilling to be in Emily's bedroom, looking at her handwriting, basking in the presence of such poetic genius, and learning so much more about the personal life of this writer I have so long admired. The other visitor, a man named Tomas from Budapest who is spending the summer working at the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, was planning literary trips each of his weekends in the summer, and we spent a lovely evening strolling, talking about literature (and where to visit what literary landmarks) and drinking Chinese tea. On the heels of the NAPT conference, which is always full of new and "old" friends, I made yet another friend through a shared love of words... Isn't it extraordinary how poetry works to bring people together? ■

In This Issue

Liberating Voices in Boston: Reflections on the 2006 NAPT Conference	1
From the Editor	2
President's Message	3
Feature: Poetry Therapy and No Degrees of Separation in Mexico	13
Poems as Process	17
NAPT News	18
NAPT Foundation News	18
NAPT Federation News	21
Process	24
Muse Reviews	25
Member News	27
Findings	28
Poem Nation	30
Notes from the Field	34
Found Poetry	35
Chapbook	36

Contributors to This Issue

Eleanor Appleyard, Ted Bowman, Mary Caprio, MS; Robert Carroll, MD; Normandi Ellis, MA, CPT; Karen Gerhardt Fort, BA, MA; Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, PhD, CPT; Deborah Eve Grayson, LMHC, RPT, M/S; Esther Altshul Helfgott, PhD; Perie Longo, PhD, RPT, MFT; J. Elaine McCracken, MLS; Karen Rippstein, BS, CPT; Wendy Rosenberg, MEd; Charlie Rossiter, PhD, CPT, M/S; Karen vanMeenen, MA, CPT; Lila Lizabeth Weisberger, MS, CASAC, RPT/MS, plus numerous conference attendees and members of the Board of Directors of the National Federation of Biblio/Poetry Therapy.

With this issue we say goodbye to our talented layout artist, Mary Caprio, who has left *The Museletter* to focus on other important projects such as her role as NAPT's VP of Membership. She hands the reins to the capable and vibrant Connie Banta, who has stepped right up to the layout plate. Welcome, Connie, and our gratitude to Mary for all her hard work.

● *The Museletter* is published in March, July and November by The National Association for Poetry Therapy. All copyrights remain with the individual contributors.

● Please address all newsletter submissions to:
Karen vanMeenen, Editor
The Museletter
11 Granger Place #4
Rochester, NY 14607-1642
naptmuseletter@yahoo.com

● Address all subscription inquiries as well as general NAPT inquiries, memberships, address changes and administrative business to:

NAPT
525 SW 5th St., Suite A
Des Moines, IA 50309-4501
Toll-Free: 866-844-NAPT
E-mail: info@poetrytherapy.org

● Visit NAPT's website at www.poetrytherapy.org

Sharing Ideas, Liberating Voices

After each one of our annual conferences, while saying our farewells, there is talk of the unspoken spirit that drove the conference forward—words like “the most dynamic conference” or “the sweetest.” Maybe “the most inspirational!” For each of us this year in Boston it might have been something different. For me, it was one of great energy and courage, generosity of time and talent, and dedication to our theme as we explored the historical influence of our roots and where we go from here. It was also the first conference where we began to put into practice NAPT’s new mission statement: *to bring together professionals from the fields of health, literature and education to promote growth and healing worldwide through the interdisciplinary study of language, symbol and story with individuals, groups and communities.*

Even if you were unable to attend the conference, what happens there affects the membership for the coming years. I am lucky to be president of an organization whose members find within our ranks people whose lives have been influenced greatly by poetry and other forms of literature, and want to share that experience with others in their communities to liberate their voices and improve their personal lives. From the moment Dr. Roy Nuzzo took the stage as one of our keynote speakers, chosen because of performing surgery with a team of other surgeons to correct the malformed spine of a young poet from Mexico, Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez, so that he might not only live but stand up to deliver his magnificent poetry, there was an energy that charged the air and kept us talking, sharing our ideas and liberating our voices throughout the weekend.

Ekiwah transfixed us with his exquisite poems and youthful, creative energy as well as his maturity. He dreams as he flies, and flies as he dreams. I found myself jotting down some lines as he read. “Poets die of hunger more than once a day.” And “the sky provides room for the moon to move.” I couldn’t help but think of NAPT with his metaphor of the sky. We try to provide room for everyone who believes in our work to “move,” whatever their discipline or interest, and we long to fill ourselves with words that satisfy our longing to express ourselves and our light. To see and hear Ekiwah sit tall in his wheelchair four years after surgery filled us with hope and inspiration, and gratitude for people like Dr. Nuzzo who can make such a miracle appear before our eyes. A special thank you to Jerri Chaplin who brought these two incredible keynoters to our attention, after seeing them on a *Dateline* program two years ago.

Keynote poet Maria Mazziotti Gillan was the perfect poet to carry our theme forward. Her poems and comments reflected a woman who had found her voice through writing. The

daughter of Italian immigrants, she was once shy and had difficulty learning to speak English. Gillan is a professor of English and founding director of the Poetry Center at Passaic County Community College and Director of the Writing Program at SUNY Binghamton. She feels the importance of “giving back to the community.” One of her comments was, “the more I give away, the more there is to give.” And she gave us her all, summed up in a poem that ended, “And here I am.”

Thank you, Maria, for your energy and generous heart. And a thank you to all the workshop presenters for your generous creativity and wisdom in sharing your experience with us which enriched our lives and gave us ideas to take home to our communities. The closing ceremony by True Story Theater was one of the most meaningful endings we have ever had to a conference as participants told their stories and had them spontaneously acted out and transformed visually with sensitive interpretation by this talented troupe of actors. A special thank you to Karen vanMeenen for her story of how her adolescence spent in a brace to correct scoliosis made it possible for her to stand up as an adult, that her “fib” at having been hurt parachuting, as explanation for the sudden appearance of her brace to her classmates, was really an example of the imagination that would make it possible for her to truly fly.



Perie Longo

President's Message

Help Wanted

I especially mention our keynote presenters in this letter because their messages have everything to do with the future of NAPT. In order for us to continue to be the dynamic organization we are that “feeds” others, we need everyone’s help.

At the conference, a sheet was handed out inviting members to participate on one of our many committees. Many of you were unable to attend the conference, and we invite you to contact the chairs of these committees to get involved. The chairs of these committees and their email addresses are listed here. Please do contact them. **Conference:** Diane Allerdyce (DianeAllerdyce@aol.com); **Membership:** Mary Caprio (mfcaprio@comcast.net); **Diversity:** Barbara Bethea (Poemee@aol.com); **Research:** Ingrid Tegner (poeticreation@earthlink.net); **Publications:** Karen vanMeenen (naptpublications@yahoo.com); and **Institutional & Academic Outreach:** Robert Carroll (RobertCarroll@att.net).

Recently we put out a call for a Public Relations Coordinator to write press releases and work with other committee chairs to spread the word of NAPT. Barbra Drewry, a new member, has offered to take on this task. Thank you so much Barbara. If anyone is interested in helping Barbara on this committee please email me at perie@west.net and Barbara at scribe7@cox.net.

In addition, we are putting into place a board mentoring program. This year we will be building a board for the 2007–09 term, and I would like anyone interested in the possibility of becoming a board member to be in touch with me at the email above, or phone me at (805) 687-1619. You don't need experience, only a willingness to learn all the ways we can build a stronger organization and reach out to more and more people to let them know of the essential work we do to promote growth and healing. Toward the end of this year we will be calling for nominations for the board, and would like many of you to come forward to offer your experience and knowledge.

One of the projects we have been involved with this year is reducing the size of our board and dividing up more of the tasks. With that in mind, we are also revising our by-laws under the experienced chair of this committee, Leia Francisco. NAPT's Executive Director for 2005–06, Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, has written about this in previous issues of *The Museletter*. At this time I would like to thank Caryn for the tremendous job she has done as Executive Director this past year. She has helped me immeasurably in so many ways, not the least of which was to talk me through many difficult situations and to help tie up many of the projects and changes we have been making in our policy and procedures, along with Mary Caprio. For the first time we now have a NAPT Policies and Procedures manual to make it easier for any new board to take over. Caryn has found it necessary to resign her position for personal reasons, and I, along with all of us, wish her health and joy with a huge heartfelt thank you.

I could not close without thanking Diane Allerdyce again, as VP of Conferences, for her outstanding job coordinating the Boston conference, which made it one of the most energetic. It took great courage to take on this huge responsibility. She and her committee made this another "winner" in our long list of conferences. And I don't know what we would have done without our Administrator Sheila Dietz, who took care of hundreds of details and stood watch over all the comings and goings of the conference, as well as organized all of the registrations and packets along with our amazing volunteers, chaired by Hannah Menkin. A special thanks to Barbara Kreisberg who took on the task of coordinating the book sales. And thank you to a magnanimous board who gave of themselves tirelessly all year. We have an exciting year ahead of us and I look forward to the part ev-

It Was All about Patricia, but I'm not Chopped Liver
(dedicated to Patricia Smith and Jack Grapes
depending on who I'm reading it to)

*It was all about Patricia
She be the superstar.
Four time National Poetry Slam Champ
And I was her co-feature at the Cantab Lounge
In Cambridge, Massachusetts. Here,
Where the crowd eats poetry
And the beer flows like beer.*

*After the open mic I went up
So of course I dedicated my first one to her.
All the poets were there from our slamming days
When I first read here back in ninety-eight,
But tonight was about Patricia, so I rode that
As I picked up the mic and began.*

*"I know a girl who writhes like St. Vitus.
She dances arms waving,
Eyes rolled up in her head."*

*And I felt the room rise
As the heads nodded, Yes, then
The uncontrolled gasp
For the boy strapped to his bed,
And the dead silence when I finished
Until the roar rose up
And the crowd gave their love
And lifted us up*

*Yeah, it was all about Patricia,
But I'm not chopped liver.*

—Robert Carroll

everyone will play.

As I write this, ideas for a theme for the Portland 2007 conference are already flying across email land. By the time you receive this issue of *The Museletter*, you will be informed of next year's theme. Stay tuned and remember that not only does Poetry Matter: each of you matter! Everything you write matters and everything that others write through your guidance and inspiration becomes a part of the whole...sky... where we all live, and move, toward our dreams.■

Liberating Voices in Boston: 2006 NAPT Conference continued...

From Our Roots to the Present: A Conference Overview

Contributed by Deborah Eve Grayson

The 26th annual National Association for Poetry Therapy conference, held in Boston, Massachusetts, just days after the excitement of the world-renowned Boston Marathon, was a highly charged, successful event. The diversified workshops, pre- and post-conference sessions and everything in between made this conference a stellar, memorable and knowledgeable experience in its ability to liberate voices in expressive freedom as well as satiate our thirst for historical perspectives. Always the highlight of my year, the annual conference never fails to energize, excite, regenerate and renew most psyches and souls ten-fold. It is a time for us to exchange ideas, network with like-minded friends and professionals and immerse ourselves in a literary wonderland for a while. From the historical and restorative day trip to Walden Pond to the closing performance by True Story Theater, participants were treated to a cornucopia of creative insights, talent and wisdom.

Day trips to Walden Pond, hosted by Richard Brown on Wednesday and Rob Merritt on Thursday, were the perfect prelude to our poetic marathon. I learned the fine art of sauntering along water's edge where Henry David Thoreau lived and wrote for two years in order to "live deliberately and to front only the essential facts of life."



Niall Hickey of Maynooth, County Kildare, Ireland, at Walden Pond. Photo by Richard Brown.

For the first time in conference history, we hosted a "newcomers" dinner with NAPT "old-timers." Many cuisines were offered—Thai, Indian, Italian, Ethiopian, Seafood and Malaysian, to name a few. Interested people had the chance to select one of the listed, local restaurants to share dinner and conversation with other members of NAPT. I hope we continue to offer this opportunity as it was a wonderful way to welcome newcomers to feast in more ways than one.

The opening performance by slam/performance poet Patricia Smith allowed our ears to hear voices of children too familiar with death and drugs as well as the gossiping barbershop owner, Terrell, who had a comment for anyone who sat in his chair or passed by his store's window.



Dr. Roy Nuzzo



Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez

I was spellbound by keynote speakers Dr. Roy Nuzzo and Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez—one a noted doctor and writer who performed a high-risk surgery for the other, a teen poet and prodigy from Mexico. This surgery enabled the teen to straighten his body so he could stand as well as sit comfortably in a motorized chair—a chair that seemed to disappear as he read selections from four of his books. The dynamic story of patient/doctor and poet/poet unfolded in a dramatic piece that was featured recently by *Dateline*. After a screening of the television show, Dr. Nuzzo spoke of the neuroscience of poetry and the healing process, but it was Ekiwah,

with his name meaning “warrior,” who won the respect and awe of the audience. Born with a double S curve in his spine and cerebral palsy, Ekiwah burst through all physical barriers with his gift of words and wisdom beyond his 19 years.

I attended an excellent expressive writing workshop called “Lights On!” which was facilitated by someone new to NAPT, Ronni Miller from Sarasota, Florida. I was pleased to experience a fresh series of group exercises and come away with new ideas for the groups I work with in my private practice. “The Rattlebox” open mic hosted by Jennifer Bosveld on Friday night was an eclectic mix of performance poetry, traditional work and literary gems from NAPT members as well as an audience from the Boston area. Saturday’s keynote by poet Maria Mazziotti Gillan was yet another enriching experience as we heard poems steeped in Italian ancestry that echoed universal themes of traditional teachings as well as contemporary issues and the gift of daily, ordinary celebrations.

In various workshops we could sing, dance or write our way into wellness and wholeness. Some of the titles read like a beautiful and conclusive group poem: “Experience Poetry Therapy, Embodying Poetry, Autobiography through Poetry Art Dolls, Finding the Heart of Compassion, How Songs Free Stories, A Harmonic Convergence, From Feelings to Voice, Singing the Body Electric...”

I thought the closing ceremony from True Story Theater was incredible. We were able to see our stories and



(l to r): Alma Rolfs, Deborah Eve Grayson, Patricia Smith and Dianne Allerdycy

perspectives of the conference as well as stories about a life challenge we’ve experienced played out in front of an audience with their interpretive translations expressed through words and actions. Audre Lorde has said, “Once we recognize what it is we are feeling, once we recognize we can feel deeply, love deeply, can feel joy, then we will demand that all parts of our lives produce that kind of joy.” It was a beautiful unfolding of metaphor and meaning—the perfect close to a perfect conference. ■



Save the Dates!

for the next NAPT Annual Conference

Expanding the Frontiers of Poetry: Growth & Healing through Language, Symbol and Story

April 17-22, 2006

Marriott Portland Downtown
Portland, Oregon

*To propose a workshop or for more information, watch our conference page at
www.poetrytherapy.org
or contact
DianeAllerdycy@aol.com*

Poems from the Conference

Absence

(In the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum)

*Mary is everywhere
the boy, too, of course
but it's Mary here
in plaster or bronze or paint
Mary in homespun or velvet
Mary with crown or mantle
goldfinch or apple.*

*Where is the father?
Not he who sent the lily—
that was the easy part—
Where is the dad
who teaches the boy—
to labor at the lathe
to honor his mother.
Where is he who
teaches the boy
to be a man?*

*Even when he appears
just the once, in Botticelli's Nativity
he is old, his curls rich with gray
and he looks not out at us
but down
his only task
to give the boy away.*

—Elizabeth Bourque Johnson

Isabella in the Garden

*For us to dance for a while,
is what she would have wanted.
To move among the jonquills and orchids
like Artemis in the garden.
To rest under the long branches
of the small palm trees and remember shade
after many days of sun.
She would have liked
our slow movement
through her Venetian home.
Our standing still before beauty
brought from so far,
distilled into sanctity and stone,
then released into words
that gesture and dance
in the garden.*

—Susan Jeffs

Oh Isabella

For Vivian, gracious guide

*In your Medusa's garden
everything lives, or turns to stone,
only stone. Oh Isabella, lillies blossom
redolent beside the rocky child's tomb,
tribute to your only one.*

*You lost your baby,
hung your spirit on these walls,
hung candles, red Chinese lanterns
to glow around your grief.*

*The light paints lace kaleidoscopes
through the glass ceiling, red wallpaper
holds paintings of the masters placed
completely by your hand, only you.
How they misunderstood you, oh,
Isabella, lost your husband,
came to live here where your collection
lives forever, heals us, forever Spring.*

—Phyllis Klein

The Attic

*The musty attic entombed with
Lost threads of the past
Is an emotional cemetery
Cobb-webbed in silence.
Behind the squeaky door,
Wooden floors shift
With the weight of curiosity.
There is no light,
No movement,
No breath,
Just the stillness of stagnant air and
The dormant dust of yesterday.
I find the tether of the string
To pull the light into being and see
A cornucopia of treasures
Strewn across the floor boards,
Popping out of rusty trunks, and
Broken baskets
Like jack in the boxes full of surprise.
I am drawn to the one thing I cannot deny.
My history, my people, my tribe.
Here lies the ancient mirror
With a brocade handle
That blinks back
the faces of my ancestors,
Now ghosts in sepia-toned photographs.*

—Deborah Eve Grayson

Walden Pond Day Trip

Contributed by J. Elaine McCracken

A visit to Walden Pond is akin to pilgrimage for an American Literature/English major. Henry David Thoreau was a standard among the Norton Anthology readings. What stands out for me is that I continue to recall him fondly among the many great authors I read during my undergraduate years. Thoreau's essay, "Resistance to Civil Government," and selected chapters from *Walden Pond* continue as crucial readings for learning to think critically about our impact on the environment in the early twenty-first century.

Rob Merritt had prepared a sixteen-page booklet that he gave to each of us attending this special day trip to Concord. The booklet contained quotes from poets, short excerpts



Walden Pond. Photo by Deborah Eve Grayson.

from *Walden Pond*, a short history of Walden and Thoreau's experience there, guidance on nature writing, observations from Thoreau's journal, and writing exercises. Rob added a special section on Thoreau's spiritual practice, which included: 1) finding the divine in Nature, 2) maintaining a practice of contemplation/prayer/meditation, 3) reading from a sacred text such as the Bhagavad-Gita, 4) maintaining sacred time & space (importance of

leisure), and 5) creative expression. Rob read a couple pieces from his booklet, then led us across the road that led into the woods toward the pond. He instructed us to find a spot under the trees, to listen, and write.

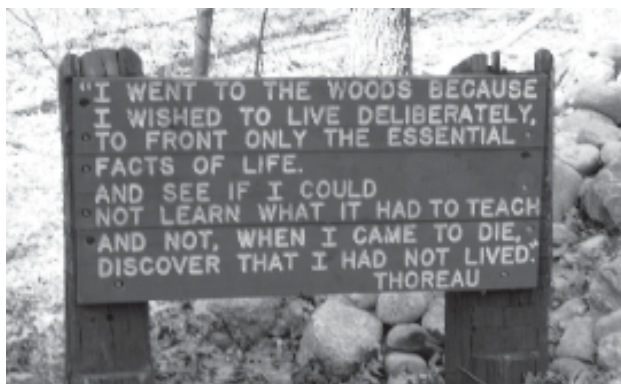


Photo by J. Elaine McCracken.

NAPT Board Member Richard Brown, who facilitated the Wednesday day trip to Walden, writes:

A wonderful time was had by all who circumnavigated Walden Pond after spending some time at Thoreau's foundation, site of his original cabin.

Stones of intention were placed, participants pondered and wrote, walking in the footsteps of a great saunterer of the woods.

After lunch at The Colonial Concord Inn, the day concluded at Author's Ridge, resting place of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry. This is from one of my journal entries from the day:

"I sit here and look around at this beautiful moment, as eleven journalers, in the spirit of Thoreau, sit, reflect, on stumps and stones, building their own foundations, pursuing their own dreams. Silence in the woods. Contemplation in action."

Throughout this visit to Walden's Pond, viewing Thoreau's replica cabin, walking the footworn paths through woods and around the pristine, clear-water pond, stopping to write several times in this lovely environment, finding my sacred stone and a lovely acorn cap, listening to birds sing and ducks chatter, I was aware of how special this place is,



Our group by the stone pile. Photo by J. Elaine McCracken.

and how there are so many places like Walden Pond that have been protected from over-development. Where can each of us go from here to sit among nature and give thanks?

When we day trippers all reached the original site of Thoreau's cabin, Rob invited us to add our sacred stone to the large mound that others before us had been contributing to over time. I had a moment of doubt, for I had grown attached to my beautiful little rock, holding onto it for the last half hour or so. But Thoreau had given me, and so many others, so much—a new way to think, or rather, confirma-

I Sit on a Fallen Tree Branch

*I sit on a fallen tree branch, my nature seat
Here in Walden Pond National Park,
Concord, Massachusetts,
Home to Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo
Emerson, and the Alcotts, Louisa's Little Women.*

*Writers draw me along a winding path – my life.
Praise the muses and thank the powers of light.
Here under pine trees, among ancient ground,
Leaves—brown and brittle, though very much alive.*

*We built a tree fort on similar grounds in an empty Minnesota field,
from scrap wood, and nails from Dad's red metal tool box.
The purpose: adventure and privacy.*

*Later, I recall Thoreau's influence,
Those college marches against apartheid,
And later still, Saturday morning protests to support
gay rights, nuclear free zones, choice, freedom.....*

*There's a peace growing here in Walden's Woods,
Despite the nearby road, and semi-trucks rolling along nearby.
The sun warms, birds call out an invitation.
It's time to travel on, into the depth of the forest.*

—J. Elaine McCracken

tion of the reality of sacredness in nature. I rose, and placed my rock among the others on the mound. Let it remain where it began, here for others to admire.

We emerged from the woods, and returned to our van. Our next stop was the Colonial Inn, situated in the center of Concord. The Colonial Inn was built in 1716, and has the feel of a building that has been much loved and used for the almost three centuries it has been in business. We were lead to a private room decorated with Colonial portraits, and seated around two large tables. Our meal of chicken potpie and potatoes, plus dessert and coffee, re-energized the group, and gave us a chance to sit and talk more amongst ourselves. Rob invited us to introduce ourselves, and speak a bit about what had brought us to this place. What an amazing gathering of mind, creativity and compassion! Even our tour guide, a local historian and literary man, stood and spoke of his love of poetry and nature and New England. He said he felt a part of our group, and indeed, we couldn't have been treated to a more like-minded guide.

After lunch at the Colonial Inn, our guide drove to the nearby Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. Here, we paid homage to Thoreau, Emerson, the Alcotts and Hawthorne in their resting place. Oddly enough, their old houses, the Colonial Inn



"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately and front only the essential facts of life." Photo by J. Elaine McCracken.

and Walden's Pond—places we saw on the drive into Concord and during the day, places that live on—seem to hold the spirits of these writers more than their gravestones do. Rob gathered us together for one last time to share a piece of our day's writing with the group. One by one, in a spirit of quiet reverence, we read. Then, tired and satisfied, we hiked out of the cemetery, climbed into the van one last time, and returned to Boston for the opening of the NAPT conference.

If this day trip to Concord had been the entire conference, I would have been satisfied. However, this was the conference that continued to give. ■

WALDEN POND

*Go confidently in the direction
of your dreams! Live the life
you've imagined. As you
simplify your life, the laws of
the universe will be simpler.*

Henry D. Thoreau

2006 NAPT Awards

Contributed by Perie Longo

Each year NAPT honors members with specific awards for their lasting contributions and dedication to the efforts of the association. The selection committee for 2006 was comprised, as always, of the previous year's recipients who were Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg (chair), Steve Rojcewicz, Sherry Reiter and Kay Adams. The process begins in January with everyone nominating their choices. This year the nominations were almost unanimous from the very beginning.



The Distinguished Service Award was presented by NAPT President Perie Longo to **Diane Allerdyce**, PhD, CPT, VP of Conferences, for not only doing a superb job of coordinating this year's conference, but "for her years of board contributions and enduring the winds of change." Diane jumped over many hurdles organizing the program, not the least of which was sending out workshop proposal acceptances from a laptop computer powered by a generator set up outside her school, Toussaint L'Ouverture High School for Arts and Social Justice in Delray Beach, Florida, shortly after hurricane Wilma. Diane is the co-founder of her school and a professor at Lynn University where she teaches an on-line course in Poetry and Narrative Therapy.

Two **Outstanding Achievement Awards** were given this year to **Mary Caprio**, MS, CPT trainee and VP of Membership, and **Dorothy (Dottie) Joslyn**. Perie Longo presented the award to Mary for her "leadership, energy, creativity in membership development and her work as designer of *The Museletter*." Some of her many accomplishments were establishing the NAPT members on-line discussion group, creating the member e-newsletter for Membership, initiating the "Let's Grow" member-get-a-member recruitment campaign, enhancement and creation of materials in support of recruitment, and serving on the Finance Committee, as well as the ad-hoc committees for the Policies and Procedures Manual, Board Restructuring, and Vision and Mission Statements. We wish Mary success as she takes up a new challenge, working on her MSW at the University of Tennessee.

Steve Rojcewicz presented Dorothy Joslyn her award. Since childhood, Dorothy has been a writer and poet, with these identities only strengthened since leaving college to

get married and raise a family, and by her long career in book-keeping and accounting. Thirty-three years after beginning college, Dottie received a degree in Creative Writing and Literature, and joined NAPT. In her role as Treasurer of the NAPT Foundation, she has organized the financial systems with "expertise, thoroughness and grace."

Elaine Brooks, RN, MA, RPT, was presented the **Morris Morrison Education Award** by Kay Adams for her work as Credentials Chair for the Federation for Biblio/Poetry Therapy. In her two years as Credentials Chair, Elaine has worked tirelessly to ensure that training standards are enforced fairly and consistently for those applying for training in poetry therapy, and applying for credentials at the end of their training program. Her work will have lasting impact for current and future generations of practitioners of poetry therapy.

Victoria Field, MA, CPT, was presented the **Art Lerner Pioneer Award** by Sherry Reiter, last year's recipient. Sherry wrote that Victoria has been involved from the earliest stages of developing Lapidus, NAPT's sister organization, now celebrating its tenth birthday and is the president for a second term. She was the first to qualify as a CPT in the UK, enabling poetry therapy to be offered in new ways, including one-on-one work with dementia patients and work with a group of homeless people, as well as the creation of innovative projects in schools. Victoria, unable to attend the conference, wrote that, "To be honored by NAPT—an organization which has literally changed my life—and so indirectly the lives of those I work with—is very heaven." Her friends and colleagues Pam Thorne and Robin Phillip, who are doing pioneering work themselves, accepted the award on her behalf.

The **Public Service Award** was presented to **Pat Schneider and Amherst Writers and Artists (AWA)** by NAPT Executive Director Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg. Pat founded AWA over 25 years ago after finding how empowering and essential writing was to a group of low-income women at a Chicopee, MA, housing project. AWA now conducts trainings of its writing facilitation method, and has AWA workshops going on around the world. Pat came to our conference along with her husband, Peter Schneider, and AWA Executive Director Carol Booth. When Pat accepted the award, she said that some people referred to the work people in NAPT and AWA do as "write and cry." She said, "It's a lot better to write and cry than slash and burn." We are very grateful to all the recipients for their courageous work in carrying forth the vision and mission of NAPT. Congratulations again to all. ■

CPTs Awarded at the Conference

Seventeen people were awarded the designation of CPT at this year's conference in Boston. Two people have received their certification since then. This equals last year's record-setting group. The designation of CPT is awarded by the National Federation for Biblio/Poetry Therapy, an independent credentialing organization, to fully qualified applicants who have completed a minimum of 440 hours of training and have duly applied and been approved by the Federation. As each candidate was presented by their mentor/supervisor, it was a pleasure to hear about the outstanding work that these individuals have accomplished. Our newest CPTs and their Mentor/Supervisors are:

Diane Alonso (Kay Adams)
Laurie Arnold (Lila Weisberger)
Richard Brown (Alma Rolfs)
Gina Campbell (Peggy Heller)
Sana Mulji Dutt (Lila Weisberger)
Susan Embry (Kay Adams)
Leia Francisco (Kay Adams)
Christine Greenspan (Sherry Reiter)
Carolyn Koesters (Kay Adams)
Nessa McCCasey (Lila Weisberger)
Johanna Martinez (Lila Weisberger)
Cameron Marzelli (Shanee Stepakoff)
Dianna Miller (Sherry Reiter)
Nora Nellis (Deborah Eve Grayson)
Karen Rippstein (Lila Weisberger)
Patti Russo (Lila Weisberger)
Judy Schattner (Peggy Heller)
Thea Schiller (Sherry Reiter)
Vicki West Sickels (Lila Weisberger)

Help Wanted

The NAPT Conference Committee
is seeking to fill the following
volunteer position
in preparation for the
2006 Conference in Portland:

CEU Researcher/Coordinator

Job description: Research the requirements for NAPT to become a CEU provider for various professional organizations, provide information to the committee, and follow through with actions needed to ensure compliance with CEU award regulations.

Contact: DianeAllerdyce@aol.com

The following poem was written to honor the newest wave of Certified Poetry Therapists. Congratulations.

Shepherd

*A poet weaves a portrait of language
Blending intrigue with word and sound
His meter or rhyme may paint a bold seascape
Woodland or pavement
Beautiful
Heartache*

*A poetry thread may be
Prickly or smooth
Tender or hostile
Gentle
Exciting
A tapestry woven
Modern or old
The poet
A minstrel of verse and line.*

*But the Poetry Therapist is
More than a poet
More than a blacksmith of word
She is satin and silk
Gossamer yarn
Mending perilous tears in the cloth
He is looking-glass artist
With fine beveled edges
Dividing harsh light into
Prisms and color
A window reflection
Casting light from her world
Shining muse to another horizon.*

*A Poetry Therapist is more than a poet
Or minstrel
Or shepherd—of word and rhyme
With poem for a crook, verse firmly in hand
The Poetry Therapist, a shepherd of lives.*

© Susan Reuling Furness

Responses from First-time Conference Attendees

Ed. Note: Individuals who attended an NAPT conference for the first time in 2006 were invited to submit their written thoughts about the experience to The Museletter. Read on for the responses and poetic offerings of our most recent NAPT conference friends.

From Cathleen Perez of Paterson, New Jersey

Participating in my very first NAPT conference was very memorable. I arrived in Boston on Thursday, where I shared a room with newly inducted CPT Johanna Martinez. I was already anticipating wonderful poetry therapy related moments in Boston, and Johanna's stories about her wonderful experiences at previous conferences made me excited about this annual NAPT event. Throughout my two days at Boston, I was received warmly by fellow trainees, Mentor Supervisors, and board members alike. I was also exposed to different styles of poetry therapy, attending workshops that dealt with healing the mind, body and soul. I feel that poetry therapy is the right medicine to aid all spiritual and emotional afflictions for this trio. Seeing these poetic practitioners in their element was a great thing to experience for the first time, and I will cherish these memories while adding new ones at future NAPT conferences.

From Ronni Miller of Sarasota, Florida

I was excited to discover colleagues from all over the world equally as passionate as I am pursuing careers and research to help individuals heal through writing. Until attending the conference I felt I was working alone in my field. Friendliness and enthusiasm greeted me when I arrived and continued through my stay at the conference. Years ago, as a graduate from Boston University with a BA in English, I had left the city with seeds that were to become an expressive writing career. It was fitting I return to Boston to expand that career with NAPT.

From James Brandenburg of San Antonio, Texas

I experienced the most exciting and inspirational conference in my lifetime. One highlight was the Triple Workshop, three poetry therapy sessions run by an experienced facilitator. Inspirational were Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez, Dr. Roy Nuzzo, Maria Mazziotti Gillan and True Story Theater. Ekiwah participated in several of my workshops, and I visited briefly with John Fox, whose books I have read as a poetry therapy trainee. I have definitely found my niche and will travel to Portland next April.

From Joyce Richard of Leesburg, Florida

Although I am a total novice in writing, the workshops provided guidance in being able to write and share feelings, memories and ideas. Because the presenters are gifted, participants wrote, shared and bonded. I carry the experience forward, and treasure the opportunity provided to begin to create written material that reflects me. The keynote speakers were inspiring. Keynote poet Maria Mazziotti Gillan was amazing. She transforms the audience in time and place to identify with the girl she was, the feelings she had. I was totally awed. I am grateful to have experienced the 2006 conference.

From Jon Wolston of Providence, Rhode Island

Leaving the hotel early Saturday morning waiting for the Audi, I was chatting up the doorman in a quiet moment about the remarkable people I'd met at the conference. "Poetry fo' therapy," he muttered, shaking his head and smiling at the same time. "Ah wouldn't o' thought of usin' poe-tree 'cept on a woman."

Finally, a poetic response from Beate Gilliar of North Manchester, Indiana

Rooting Webs

*Wisdom from spaces
some hidden
other Dis-closing
through gifted Grace
and spiritleined Inspirations
invited to
Listen
Voice
Intuit
in Awe
as unearthing Roots
reminded
and taught
new steps
of our Dance through Wor(l)ds
webbing to embrace
and remind
simply
being human
from the earth
as humility foregrounds the next
move(ment).*

Poetry Therapy and No Degrees of Separation in Mexico

Contributed by Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg

I used to believe the notion that there are only eight degrees of separation between any two people in the world. Then I went to Mexico, and found eight degrees were about seven degrees too many.

Some of this was because the woman who organized all my poetry therapy events, Laura Kuri of Cuernavaca, also organized the council of the Continental Bioregional Congress (an ecological, cultural group), which I was also attending. But it turned out that it wasn't just that the poetry therapy and bioregional people knew each other: indeed, in many cases, they were the same people.

While walking through the Huehucocoyotl ecovillage, near Tepotzlan (an hour south of Mexico City), where we were having meetings, I met Baru Adler, who was working on his rental house there. Turns out Baru is also Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez's father. I went back to the house where I was staying, somewhat amazed, only to discover that a fellow American staying here was the ex-stepfather of one of my daughter's friends in Lawrence, Kansas. Then I found out all my contacts in Mexico knew Ekiwah since his mother had been pregnant with him.

This is kind of how it went each day I was there: someone was related to someone I knew, or deeply involved in what I loved about poetry or community building or healing in general. Despite my knowledge of Spanish being limited to asking where the bathroom was or ordering chicken with mole, I soon found I had crossed a border without leaving the heart of my home.

Poetry and the Eco-Punks of Mexico City

Aside from once, during college, dressing up like a quasi-punk for a Sid Vicious Memorial Party some friends threw, I'm not much of a punk rocker. But when in Mexico City, where we first stayed in a simple hotel located in the old Italian colonial section of the city, we headed out one night to the Bat Cave Bar, the new eco-punk hangout just "two blocks" ("two blocks" suggested by our Mexican hosts was always more like 15 blocks) from our hotel. The walls were red with black bats painted on them, the music was scorchingly loud, and all the punks were exclusively in black, except for their chains and piercings of course.

The eco-punks, some of whom I had met at previous Continental Bioregional Congresses in Kansas and in North



Caryn with Dr. Rosa Beléndez (Ekiwah's mother)

Carolina, are definitely punks, and they're definitely involved in ecological projects around Mexico City, such as organizing the Alternative World Water Forum. When it comes to the need for security for any ecological event in the city, many now call on the eco-punks, who provide sensible and gentle assistance, and by their sheer dress, tend to intimidate would-be troublemakers and keep the peace. When our bioregional council met, several eco-punk young men even provided diversions for my three kids, taking them to a castle in the city and on a long walk through several old neighborhoods before returning to share cake and fruit with us.

Many of the eco-punks I met were also wild about poetry and its power to heal. Outside the Bat Cave, I met Alejandro Sanchez Monroy, a young man with a passion for writing. Upon realizing I wrote too, he immediately opened his notebook to pull out a piece of purple paper folded carefully around a piece of notebook paper that he unfolded. "This poem helped me survive losing my uncle," he said, and then he read me a passionate, swaying, edgy poem, "Tributo" about how his close encounters with the sights of ordinary life gave him strength.

In turn, I made up a poem aloud to share with him, he read me another poem, and then we started talking about who we love to read, from Poe to Neruda. People in big black boots and chains passed by us constantly, hugging each other, sipping beer and occasionally rushing inside to dance while we stood in the street light sharing the poets who had shone light on our paths for much of our lives.

But the Bat Cave was only part of my immersion into the words and rhythms of poetry, and soon, Laura took me to the Poet's House, a three-story building devoted to readings, publications and just hanging out, complete with a balconied coffee bar. The buildings and poets I would encounter later on in Cuernavaca showed me even more about how the poetic power of words can fill the streets.

Trauma into Transformation at the Instituto Cultura des Artes

“This place where we’re meeting was once a terrible hospital where I almost died,” Laura told me, as we walked toward the Instituto Cultura des Artes, an art institute in Cuernavaca teeming with musicians, dancers, artists and poets today. We walked into the main entrance, right into an open-air rectangular courtyard in the middle of a plaza and with a story of balconies above, leading into classrooms. Laura pointed toward one, telling me this was where she was taken after a deadly car accident 20 years ago in which she lost all her teeth and broke ribs and hips and other assorted bones. At the time, this hospital was notorious for letting patients die so that staff could sell the patients’ vital organs for a hefty profit.

Laura had not been back to this place since she was mercifully, and with the help of family, transferred to a much better hospital in Mexico City two decades earlier. She hadn’t been back until a few months before my visit, when her inquiries about where to stage the poetry therapy workshop, the “mama cancer” (breast cancer) and the arts panel, and the reading with Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez and me led her here. “There must be a reason,” she said, leading me to the room where we would do the workshop.



Angelica Flores, medicine woman from Cuernavaca, and Caryn’s daughter Natalie Lassman.



Laura Kuri (far right), organized all the poetry therapy events. She is accompanied here by Josie Proctor (center), activist from Mexico City, and Barbara Harmony, director of the National Water Center in AR.

Despite the heat of the afternoon, and heavy competition from other events in the city, about 30 people showed up for the three-hour workshop. They were students from the Institute, women who had heard of this workshop from Laura and another artist (currently displaying a breast cancer installation at the Institute) named Gela Garcia, and people who just heard it mentioned in the news. Elenia Dehoyos, a social worker who specialized in working with domestic violence survivors, translated for me along with writer, artist and professor Kenia Cano, helping me communicate in the rhythms of two languages at once.

After I introduced poetry therapy, passed out a translation of some of the material from the NAPT website, and explained what poetry therapists did and where they worked, I invited everyone to introduce themselves. To my surprise, almost everyone used the word “surprise” to respond to poetry therapy. “I always knew poetry was healing, but I’m so surprised there’s such a thing as ‘poetry therapy,’” said an older woman. “Poetry Therapy surprises me, and I’m so glad it’s around,” said a young man. Many spoke about how poetry had been therapy for them most of their lives, and they were thrilled to know of NAPT and the work being done in the U.S. and around the world.

I then passed out poems in Spanish and English—I’m grateful to Alma Rolfs and Perie Longo for their Latin American poetry workshop at a past NAPT conference, which supplied me with a great resource, *Reversible Monuments: Contemporary Mexican Poetry*, edited by Monica de la Torre and Michael Wieggers. We read a poem called “I’ve never been in love enough”—focusing on never having been in love enough with chairs, for example, and much more—in both languages, and then wrote of what we’ve never been in touch enough

with. People wrote deeply about their mothers, their bodies, their hunger for meaning, their losses, their visions, and like many poetry therapy groups I've facilitated, there was intense laughter and some crying too, but to quote Pat Schneider, who spoke briefly at the 2006 NAPT conference when accepting the award for Public Service, "It's a lot better to write and cry than slash and burn."

The next day, Laura, Helena and I went to a public radio station, where I gave an interview on the value of poetry therapy, and how writing and listening closely to what our writing—and other's writing—shows us can bring us deeper understanding of ourselves and our communities. Of course, I enjoyed talking about the work we do with words, but lacking Spanish, I had to fill the small-talk moments that were sometimes only partially translated for me with looking into people's eyes and kissing them hello and goodbye, as I experienced more of life outside the exchange of words.

That evening we returned to the Instituto for the panel on Mama Cancer and the Arts, to the same room, filled again with women, people of all ages, students from the Institute. Elenia and Kenia sat close to me, whispering translations in my ear throughout the presentation so that I was hearing two languages at once in stereo.

First, Hela Garcia spoke of her healing through creating body casts of her torso, one for each round of chemo, that she then cut and shaped, painted and collaged, and to which she connected many outside objects—such as leaves and needles—as a way to show what she experienced through surrendering her body to this treatment. Next, her mother-in-law, a 30-plus-year survivor of breast cancer spoke of long-term surviving, and how we must love ourselves, give ourselves time to heal and be, and listen to our deepest intuition. Then it was my turn, and I read aloud several poems about how the earth's healing is entwined with our own before speaking about how images and rhythms helped me express—and discover what I had to say—in ways beyond the words itself. By the time the panel ended, everyone in the room was in or close to tears. I found Hela and her mother-in-law, and the three of us hugged like a wide tree for a long time.

Then it was time to make the transition for the reading with Ekiwah, all of which happened so fast that I hardly had a chance to do more than hold Ekiwah's hand briefly to meet him. Angelica Flores, a medicine woman who has come to several bioregional gatherings in the states and speaks powerfully about what it means to be alive, offered blessings to the four directions of the room and to all of us.

Ekiwah had suggested that we take turns reading poems, something I hadn't done before, but looking into his brown eyes, of course I said "yes." So it began: my poem, and then one of his that related, preceded by his elegant and moving comments about his own healing through writing, and then a poem of mine that I introduced by talking about



Caryn with Ekiwah at their reading.

my own healing. When I read my poem, "Jonah and the Whale," about how, "Once you've come so far/ how can you not let others come too?," I dedicated it to Ekiwah who, through his poetry and his story, bridged what poetry can do for us and our communities. But mostly during the reading, Ekiwah and I looked into each other and found kindred spirits at home.

At the end of the reading, I asked the audience for words, some of which were lavender-inspired since a young activist named Josie had passed lavender around the room for people to take, and then I started speaking. Having the poem translated, line by line, as I composed it not only gave me more time, but it brought a different rhythm to my words, one that helped me feel like I was discovering a place in me long ago forgotten. At the end of the poem, Ekiwah's mother, the amazing homeopathic doctor Rosa Beléndez, called out, "What portal are you connected to?"

"The same one as Ekiwah," I answered, and we all laughed, dissolving into hugs and heading toward wine and chips. The reception was a time of more inspired storytelling among many I met, talks about coming back to do longer workshops and sharing poetry therapy resources all around, and enough time for Ekiwah and me to sit quietly for a few minutes while my husband, who runs a custom wheelchair clinic, examined what was wrong with Ekiwah's wheelchair.

"Who do you love?" he asked me.

"William Stafford, Pablo Neruda, Emily Dickinson, so many others," I answered, "And you?"

"All of them and Stanley Kunitz, Octavia Paz, and did you hear the poetry of..."

Our conversation was interrupted by people saying goodbye to Ekiwah, but we picked up right where we left off when we met again at the NAPT conference in Boston. The way that poetry inhabits Ekiwah is so visceral that it speaks to the poet and poetry in me, making me want to read and

write much more, and see what I see in doing so. And isn't that what traveling into and through poetry is all about? The trip to Mexico helped me most of all to dissolve the degrees of separation in myself and find my way back to what poetry can do.

Finally, I dedicate this to Laura, who had to return to the place where she almost died to seed the healing power of words there. The events she organized brought her full circle, landing in her another story of turning trauma into transformation, and creating a space where others find their own path through their words too. ■

Flying and Swimming
for Ekiwah

*I dreamt you were
on the wind current,
relaxed, speeding by,
or you were swimming,
leaning into the echoes of water
fast and smooth, its current
mimicking the lines of river bank.
A dolphin, a log, a heron,
a rippling black cloth,
you were singing the air
like a twirling skirt, dancing
the river like swaying lines of dark fish
pouring through each other.*

*In any case
it wasn't walking or standing,
riding the chair or holding steady
yet it was you, a pair of mourning
doves tossed into space,
a long winnow of fish,
explosion of winter into summer
leaves falling upon rocks,
twirl of collective breath,
the lungs so happy
to take wing,
the voice so ready
to speak the deep blue
across the span
of page or room.*

—Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg

Help Wanted

NAPT Treasurer- Trainee

Current NAPT Treasurer is in search of a person willing to become a vital part of the NAPT executive committee to learn the Treasurer's position and assume the office of Treasurer beginning April 2007 at next year's conference in Portland.

The most important prerequisite is an interest in helping NAPT operate within its means and use NAPT's financial position as a planning tool to assist the president and committee chairs formulate and achieve realistic financial and organizational goals.

Familiarity with accounting, while helpful, is not required. Candidates should be detailed-oriented enough to perform monthly financial oversight, review financial documents, coordinate with management company accounting department and administrator, approve monthly invoices and prepare fiscal year financial reports and yearly budget and review of yearly tax reporting forms. The Treasurer chairs the finance committee and also serves as NAPT's liaison with the NAPT Foundation to insure continuity of designated areas of financial support.

Time requirements for normal monthly oversight functions are minimal. Fiscal year end reports and preparation of budget require a period of concentrated activity following the close of the fiscal year at the end of June. Other activities, conducted on an as-needed basis, include advising the president, working with the executive committee on management contract renewals and with committee chairs and the NAPT Foundation on financial matters.

If you are interested in serving NAPT as Treasurer and wish to benefit from an apprenticeship beginning with the preparation of this year's financial report and 2006-07 budget, please contact Rich Rosenfield at rrosen@aol.com. If you have an interest but have questions or feel intimidated by numbers, please contact me and we'll talk. Thanks.

Poems as Process

With a poem offered by Ted Kooser in his “American Life in Poetry” column and writing prompts by Ted Bowman

American Life in Poetry: Column 060

by Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate

Most of us have taken at least a moment or two to reflect upon what we have learned from our mothers. Through a catalog of meaningful actions that range from spiritual to domestic, Pennsylvanian Julia Kasdorf evokes the imprint of her mother’s life on her own. As the poem closes, the speaker invites us to learn these actions of compassion.

What I Learned From My Mother

*I learned from my mother how to love
the living, to have plenty of vases on hand
in case you have to rush to the hospital
with peonies cut from the lawn, black ants
still stuck to the buds. I learned to save jars
large enough to hold fruit salad for a whole
grieving household, to cube home-canned pears
and peaches, to slice through maroon grape skins
and flick out the sexual seeds with a knife point.
I learned to attend viewing even if I didn’t know
the deceased, to press the moist hands
of the living, to look in their eyes and offer
sympathy, as though I understood loss even then.
I learned that whatever we say means nothing,
what anyone will remember is that we came.
I learned to believe I had the power to ease
awful pains materially like an angel.
Like a doctor, I learned to create
from another’s suffering my own usefulness, and once
you know how to do this, you can never refuse.
To every house you enter, you must offer
healing: a chocolate cake you baked yourself,
the blessing of your voice, your chaste touch.*

Reprinted from *Sleeping Preacher*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992, by permission of the publisher. First printed in *West Branch* Vol. 30 (1992). Copyright © 1992 by Julia Kasdorf.



Writing Suggestions

- Using this provocative poem by Julia Kasdorf, choose a person from your past—mother, father, sibling, teacher—and start with a list of things you have learned from that person. Then, choose one or more of the learnings and write some lines of poetry or declarative sentences that elaborate on the impact for you.
- An alternative version would be to name one or two things you learned from someone that you want to continue and one or two things you want to do differently. Write a poem or paragraphs about those differing thoughts.
- Kasdorf’s poem is a poem about caring or helping, especially at times of death. Write something you think is crucial at a time of sorrow. For example, a grieving father wrote that he needed and wanted people to sit with him on his mourning bench. Choose a metaphor or picture of what caring support would include or look like. Write some lines about that image.
- Read another poem, like Robert Hayden’s haunting “Those Winter Sundays,” about a son’s insight about one of the ways his father offered love and care. Choose a memory of care or the absence of care and write about that memory.
- Finally, start with a list of analogies for compassion. List as many as you can. Then, choose one to write more about.

Ed. note: If you would like to contribute original copyright-free poems or writing prompts for this column, please contact the Editor at naptmuseletter@yahoo.com. ■

NAPT News

Institutional Development Update

Contributed by Robert Carroll

NAPT welcomes two new Institutional Members: **The Creative Righting Center** in New York City, founded and run by Sherry Reiter, and **Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR)** in Los Angeles.

NAPT's vision statement is "To Cultivate the Application of Poetry Therapy for Growth and Healing Worldwide." In Hebrew the concept of "healing or repairing the world" is contained in the phrase *Tikkun Olam*. It is said that the healing and repairing of the world requires both inner and outer work. When I interviewed Sherry Reiter of The Creative Righting Center and Rabbi William Cutter of The Kalsman Institute for Judaism and Health at Hebrew Union College both used the phrase *Tikkun Olam* to describe their missions. How appropriate then that our two new members share this mission with NAPT.

Sherry Reiter, winner of the 2004 Art Lerner Pioneer Award, began teaching poetry therapy in 1978 with Dr. Jack Leedy at The New School. Dubbed the "youngest pioneer," Sherry began working on establishing training standards in the 1970s and, with the earliest APT pioneers, worked on creating professional pathways for poetry therapists. The Creative "Righting" Center began in her home and by the 1990s, The Creative "Righting" Center was established in her Brooklyn office. Today the Creative "Righting" Center offers, in addition to creative counseling, a full two-year poetry therapy training program, individually tailored to the needs and goals of each individual, both long distance and regional. Peer groups are offered one Sunday a month at The Institutes for the Arts in Psychotherapy in Manhattan from September to June.

From June 26-29, "Poetry Therapy Toward Self-Knowledge," an experiential four-day seminar grounded with theory was offered featuring special guest Dr. David Johnson, an expert on "Writing and Trauma." This course features diverse theories and a huge anthology of healing poems tested in the field.

A five-day Cape Cod retreat will be held July 23-27, called "Sojourn: A Celebration of Word, Song and Spirit." Distance learners can attend these seminars to accrue needed hours. However, the Cape Cod retreat is also a way for writers and established poetry therapists to rejuvenate themselves. The Rosalie Brown scholarships are available for both seminars as well as the Fall peer group.

There is, in each of us a "self-righting" mechanism. Just as surely as a plant will turn toward the light, our creative imagination helps us to recreate ourselves. The Tree

of Life is the time-honored symbol for the Creative "Righting" Center. Its roots anchor the tree to its home and access nutrients, its spine sustains us, its branches reach out in a supportive network, and its leaves are the creative blossoms of our lives—our writings. Check out the web site at www.erols.com/sreiter.

With the destruction of the centers of higher Jewish learning in Europe during the Holocaust, HUC-JIR became one of the few surviving Jewish academic institutions in the world. It has four campuses: Los Angeles, New York, Jerusalem and Cincinnati.

At the Los Angeles Campus The Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health has been in existence since 2000. HUC and the Kalsman Institute are dedicated to training within the context of traditional rabbinic study. Its students have served in many Los Angeles area hospitals including Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica Hospital and the City of Hope.

The Kalsman Institute's director, Rabbi William Cutter, has been a supporter of Poetry Therapy and NAPT's Southern California Regional organization since 2001 when he generously offered to host our annual Art Lerner Memorial Poetry Therapy Day on the HUC campus at no charge. It was through Rabbi Cutter's generosity that NAPT has found a home for this conference the last five years.

Rabbi Cutter is a Professor of Education and Modern Hebrew Literature. He is an accomplished translator of Israeli Hebrew poetry into English. There is extensive information about HUC-JIR, The Kalsman Institute, and Rabbi Cutter on HUC's web site at www.huc.edu. ■

NAPT Foundation News

Contributed by Normandi Ellis, NAPT Foundation President

Okay, I confess. When I was in college I knew all the words to that song "Please come to Boston in the springtime..." Thirty years later, I finally arrived there to find the sidewalk at night was peopled by Blue Men, the Boston Commons comely in soft rain and pale blossom, and maybe the doppelgangers of Joni Mitchell and Leonard Cohen still strolling through the city's hotel lobbies.

I've grown to love this annual conference, following new maps through portals into new realms of possibility, finding new voices (including my own), meeting old friends, and celebrating the work of poets and poetry therapy. (At a late night reading Jennifer Bosveld taught us to chant the name of a rising star on the national poetry scene: "Ekiwah Adler-Beléndez!")

Amid the graduating trainees (17 of them), the slam poets (Patricia Smith, who was headed to Kentucky, my home state, for a women writers conference) and the powerful presence and pioneering spirit of Pat Schneider of the Amherst Writers Group, I found that one of my new favorite annual conference rituals will be the introduction of a representative sampling of Foundation grant recipients at the Friday Foundation Fundraiser. NAPT has some truly brilliant and pioneering spirits among its membership, and many generous donors to the Foundation's programs as well. This year we raised a record \$8,330 to help fund such projects as NAPT conference support, publications programs, national and international scholarships, Poetry Alive grants, and the recently established Pursue the Dream: The Chris Mazza Poetry Therapy Award, among other programs.

At the conference fundraiser we heard NAPT treasurer Rich Rosenfield and *Museletter* editor and NAPT Publications Chair Karen vanMeenen affirm the contributions provided by the Foundation to support the conference through direct contributions as well as ad placement in national media, and support of *Giving Sorrow Words* and future publications for use by poetry therapists. CPT trainee and Poetry Alive grant recipient Anjana Deshpande offered a moving testimony to the powerful movement toward hopefulness instilled in a group of Vietnam veterans through her poetry therapy project, Recon Mission. She also received a conference scholarship. International attendees Dahlia Lorenz and Ayn Lever testified to the meaningful impact that attending the conference has had on their work.

Through last year's contributions, we were able to fund three international scholarships for attendees from Israel, France and the United Kingdom, and five national scholarships to worthy candidates, some of whom were attending their first NAPT conference, or receiving their certification as poetry therapists.

Last year the Foundation received 16 Poetry Alive applications for 2007, funding five of those applicants: Debra Thornley, MA, CPT, working with the Winterspring community group (Oregon) to assist senior center, hospice centers and teen bereavement groups assisting populations with issues of transition or loss; Hannah Menkin, MA, and the Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center providing Tools for the Journey to free the poetic potential in American veterans; Anjana Deshpande, CPT trainee, for her work with Colorado Vietnam veterans in a continuation of her Recon Mission program; Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, CPT, introducing poetry therapy to individuals and organizations in Cuernavaca, Mexico, through radio programs, joint readings and workshops and in-service programs for expressive arts practitioners; and Mary Lawson, CPT, and the Hennepin County Public Library (Minnesota) for a project using poetry therapy and expressive writing to examine the Seven Tasks of Creative Aging.

This year, monies raised at the conference will allow the Foundation to fund additional Poetry Alive grants that support the work of poetry therapists and poetry therapy trainees. The application process and forms are available online at www.journaltherapy.org/foundation.projects.html. In addition, letters of intent and recommendation for The Chris Mazza Poetry Therapy Award will be offered beginning in 2007.

During the conference, we announced three recipients of the Weisberger Funds for special populations. Gene Weisberger funds were awarded to Sue Furness of Boise, Idaho, for her work with HIV-positive women and their families, and to Jill Teague of Wales for an innovative poetry and nature workshop for oncology patients and their caregivers. Jerri Chaplin received monies from the Jeanette Fund for her hospice work.

We also announced the debut of the visual art/poetry book by Peggy Osna Heller and Cathy Cohen, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Poet*, published by Magnolia Street Publishers. The royalties from this collaboration have been generously donated back to the Foundation to support future publication projects, an example of but one way to give the gift that keeps on giving!

This year the Foundation gained two strong board members, Cathy Callahan, CPT, who helped organize the successful NAPT Conference at the historic Union Station Hotel in Saint Louis last year, and Lisa Conger, a CPT trainee, writer and teacher at Spokane Falls Community College in Washington. Recently, Lisa has led workshops for health professionals and chaplains at a major medical center to provide a creative response to the pressures of being a professional caregiver and to encourage personal growth and insight. Cathy continues her long-standing, and highly popular developmental group, "Easy Writers," that encourages self-exploration through poetry and journal writing. They join a vibrant board, including NAPT's first international CPT, Victoria Field of the United Kingdom; Joy Sawyer of Denver, Colorado; Dottie Joslyn of Springfield, Missouri; and Marisis Nelson of Brooklyn, New York.

Poetry Alive Grants

Mark your calendars now! Poetry Alive grants will be accepted via email only from July 15 through September 15, 2006. Grants, limited to \$1,000, are intended to seed and grow poetry therapy workshop series, publications, events and other projects. All projects must begin and end in the calendar year 2007. Grant awards will be announced in November 2006. Anonymous members of the Foundation Board and outside readers review these applications. Applications are increasing in competitiveness and will be scored according to their impact in direct program content, budgetary needs, programming for diverse and at risk populations, and local grassroots support. You may direct questions regarding the application process to Normandi Ellis at ellisis@aol.com prior to August 15, 2006.

Pursue the Dream: The Chris Mazza Award for Poetry Therapy Announced

The NAPT Foundation has established the new funding category—"Pursue the Dream: The Chris Mazza Award for Poetry Therapy" to promote projects that benefit, uplift and support the development of adolescents and young adults. The award will be given to recognize, support and deepen the continuing work of a poetry therapist working with young people. If you or someone you know might be a worthy recipient of this grant, please let us know by January 1, 2007. Look for further details forthcoming on the Foundation's webpage. The award honors the memory of Christopher J. Mazza (May 13, 1984–November 1, 2005), a kind and loving young man with an unconquerable spirit. May the glow of Chris's life light shine on through those who try to make this world a better place to live. ■

Call for Proposals

April 2007 NAPT Conference in Portland, Oregon

The National Association for Poetry Therapy (NAPT) invites you to submit an original workshop proposal for our 27th Annual Conference, "Expanding Frontiers: Growth and Healing Through Language, Symbol, and Story," to be held April 17-22, 2007, at the Marriott Portland Downtown, Portland, Oregon.

We invite proposals for 60-, 90- and 120- minute workshops covering any aspect of the use of poetry, literature, journaling, creative writing, storytelling, performing and expressive arts and related fields. Panel discussions and poster sessions are also welcome. Workshop proposals that involve movement and/or walking excursions beyond the hotel walls will be especially well received. The deadline for workshop, poster session and panel discussion proposals is September 15, 2006.

Those who have successfully offered an NAPT conference workshop in the past are welcome to submit a proposal for pre- and post-conference workshops to be held on Thursday, April 19, 2007, and Sunday, April 22, 2007. There is a separate deadline for pre- and post-conference workshop proposals: August 1, 2006.

To submit a proposal:

Visit www.poetrytherapy.org

and follow the links to the 2007 conference page, where you can find more information and download a proposal form.

What Children Try to Teach Us

Dedicated to Nick Mazza and his son, Christopher, at age 7

*Children try to teach us
What we forget to know.
Comfortable in their casualness,
Their patience for us could be patented.
Hands on hips,
they look on with adult eyes
As we try to learn the language
Of love, leaves and the mystery
Of the playground.
They wear pizza sauce for rouge,
dismiss napkins with a flick,
then spin cartwheels and handsprings
As if to prove that throwing up
Is not always an end result.
They only masquerade as kids
Hoping they'll be clever enough
To reach puberty
Without too much incident.
Every now and then
They slip into their innate wisdom
Like a warm winter coat and
We're allowed a glimpse of their
greatness.
Like today.
He was counting playfully,
Repeating the sounds of 1,2,3,4,5,6,7!
1,2,3,4,5,6,7!
The numbers drifted out of reach
Like notes on a scale.
Suddenly, he stops at 7.
He is poised and intent.
Adult that I am, I prod for facts,
Prepared to impart wisdom.
I make an issue of intellect and ask,
"That's very good, Christopher,
but do you know what comes after
7?"
And then without a pause,
Confident in his conclusion he says,
"Yup, all the others!"
And I slink into my stupid skin,
Knowing
Nothing.*

— Deborah Eve Grayson

NAPT Federation

News

Credentialing Update: A Conversation Among Friends

Romeo would, were he not Romeo called, retain that dear perfection.....

—Wm. Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene 2

The National Federation of Biblio/Poetry Therapy, the credentialing and standards-setting body for the field of poetry therapy, has had to make changes to the professional designations that it confers. These changes will affect developmental certified poetry therapists and registered poetry therapists, and those in training. We, the Board of Directors of the Federation, want to explain these changes in the form of a dialogue that answers questions we've been asked. We hope it will answer your questions and calm any concerns or anxieties that may arise. If you have questions or comments, please email them to NFBPT@aol.com.

Q: What's this about a change in the certified poetry therapist (CPT) designation?

A: About a year ago, the Federation learned that some poetry therapy professionals who have rightfully earned their CPTs might inadvertently be out of compliance with their state laws. We learned that some states restrict the use of the terms "therapist" and "therapy" and variations of those words—in an emotional/behavioral health context—as we use them in the field of poetry therapy. Following a modern trend, some states restrict the use of those terms to licensed and registered mental health professionals. Because the Federation is a national certifying body, we realized that we had to inform our professionals about these changing laws that applied to people who weren't licensed therapists.

Q: So what does that mean?

A: The Federation is changing the title that we grant to developmental practitioners of poetry therapy. Instead of the credential stating "Certified Poetry Therapist," we need to find a different name. The one we're leaning toward is "Certified Practitioner, Trained (CPT) in Poetry Therapy." That designation would allow those who have successfully completed the 440-hour developmental train-



ing program to comply with state laws across the country and still use the initials "CPT."

Q: If I already have a CPT, meaning certified poetry therapist, will I have to give it up?

A: No. The Federation will not remove credentials that have been issued. However, if you hold an active credential as a certified poetry therapist and you choose to retain the word "therapist" in your professional designation, we advise and expect you to check with your own local legal counsel as well as your state's department that regulates professional licenses, to learn your state's rules. If "therapy" or "therapist" is a protected term in your state, or if there is any such legislation or other regulation pending, we expect you, as a poetry therapy professional, to comply with all legal requirements or restrictions.

Q: Can't the Federation just list the states that are problematic and let CPTs in those states deal with it?

A: No. Laws change all the time. Some states have out-and-out restrictions; others are more subtle. Some states, for instance, don't require licensure to call yourself a "therapist," but do require special registration and application as an unlicensed therapist. Some states may deal with these matters in regulations rather than statutes; some may have laws or regulations pending but not yet passed. Local legal counsel will be your best advisor.

Q: What about people who are currently in training?

A: Current trainees will receive exactly the same education, training, supervision, experience, personalized and guided course of study that they would if the designation weren't changing. The 440-hour program remains the same. They will still have the same relationship with their mentor/supervisor.

Upon successful application, all trainees will receive a certificate that states that they have attained Certification in Poetry Therapy with a designation abbreviated to initials that they can place after their name and on business cards. Again, we have received excellent feedback on “Certified Practitioner, Trained (CPT) in Poetry Therapy,” but that has not yet been decided.

Q: How is this being received by CPTs and those in training?

A: The response has been varied. Some people are not at all happy with the change and feel that something is being taken away from them even though the Federation is not taking the certified poetry therapist designation away from anyone who actively holds it. We are learning that many CPTs have been uncomfortable with the term “poetry therapist” to describe themselves in their work with classrooms, communities, churches, libraries or businesses, and they report being pleased and relieved with the change. Others tell us that they are neutral about the change in the name, and so long as they are allowed to continue doing their work uninterrupted, they will be fine with whatever is decided.

Q: I’ve heard some people say that this change feels very abrupt, almost careless, and that’s why they’re upset. It seemed to hit pretty quick. Couldn’t you have had a town hall meeting at the Boston conference, or something?

A: With 20/20 hindsight, and a “do-over,” it’s possible that we’d do exactly that! Certainly it would have given people the opportunity to speak out and hear others face-to-face. As for it feeling abrupt or careless—the Federation’s board process took ten full months of layering down into the core issues and coming into dialogue with each other as board members, and then with the mentor/supervisor community. Mentor/supervisors were encouraged to begin talking with their trainees and graduates about these matters as early as last November. We decided we couldn’t make a generalized announcement until after our board meeting in Boston in late April 2006, and after we’d had a chance to discuss it face-to-face with the mentor/supervisors at the Roundtable on Saturday afternoon of the conference.

Q: Earlier you talked about credentials being “active.” What do you mean by that?

A: CPTs and RPTs have always paid a credentialing renewal fee to the Federation of \$40 (CPT) or \$50 (RPT) each year. Until 2005 these fees were collected by NAPT as a portion of membership dues in the “professional member” category. The Federation has now taken over the collection of these credentialing renewal fees and fees are due in July of even years (2006, 2008, etc.) for a two-year cycle. No one will be

charged a credentials renewal fee for the first year of their CPT or RPT. Only those CPTs and RPTs whose credentials fees are current are considered actively credentialed. Those with inactive credentials can be restored to full active status at any time and given the new professional designation by remitting the fee. There is no penalty or additional fee for restoration.

Q: Why do we have to make this change? Can’t we just all go along the way it has been?

A: The Federation is following (rather late) in the footsteps of the other creative arts therapies and some college and university programs that offer education in creative and expressive arts. Our sister NCCATA organizations have been through this process. So have the Transformative Language Arts program at Goddard, the expressive arts program at Salve Regina University in Rhode Island, and other colleges and universities. All are trending away from using or issuing credentials that allow professionals to use the word “therapist” to describe practitioners who are not clinically trained and licensed. If ignorance of the law isn’t a defense, then surely knowing the law and deciding not to comply with it isn’t a defense.

Q: Okay, I’m confused. You say you can’t certify trainees as “poetry therapists” but you keep referring to “certification in poetry therapy.” What’s the difference?

A: “Poetry therapy” is the name of the field. The field of poetry therapy has practitioners who are trained to facilitate the work. The state laws that raise the issue don’t regulate the field of poetry therapy. Rather, they regulate those who practice in the field and the professional designations they can use.

Q: And I’m confused about something else, as well. What exactly is “developmental” poetry therapy?

A: The CPT represents the developmental level of training, which is the 440-hour program designed for practitioners to work with groups and individuals who represent the normal range of human experience across the life span, using poetry, story and writing. Just glance through the table of contents of one of our field’s essential texts, *The Healing Fountain: Poetry Therapy for Life’s Journey*, edited by poetry therapy pioneers Geri Chavis and Lila Weisberger, and you’ll see the range: we all begin at the beginning, and then we all experience love, loss, joy, anger, fear, challenge and struggle, celebration and self-worth, connection with nature and beauty, relationships with partners and children and parents. We care for others, and we are cared for; we get sick; we do our work in the world; we strive for meaning and a map to travel by; and in the end, we prepare for death. This is the work of the

developmentalist: to guide and facilitate individuals and groups through these essential life stages, using poems and writing processes as the place where we begin. In the field of poetry therapy, we come to this work from many backgrounds: writer, poet, educator, librarian, nurse, doctor, community activist, spiritual director, clergy, business executive, even civil engineer, and also as counselor, social worker, psychologist. The developmental training is the same, regardless of where we enter.

Q: What about RPTs? You said that they are also affected.

A: In many states, the initials “RPT” are reserved exclusively as a designation for “Registered Physical Therapist.” So we are following in the footsteps of our good friends in art therapy, where a registered art therapist is referred to as an ATR. The designation “Registered Poetry Therapist” will be referred to as “PTR,” standing for “poetry therapist-registered” (although, like art therapy, we’ll probably still say “registered poetry therapist”).

Q: And RPT—excuse me, PTRs—can still call themselves therapists because... ?

A: Because clinical training and licensure is an entrance requirement for all PTRs. They are already “therapists” by the time they complete the PTR, which is more than twice the hours (975 instead of 440) of the CPT, including 2.5 times (300 instead of 120) the facilitation hours.

Q: Got it. When will we get the new designation?

A: As soon as possible. We haven’t finalized a new designation yet, so for the next few months we will continue to be in transition. A task force has been appointed to take suggestions and propose the new name for the board’s consideration and approval. The task force will also take a look at other aspects of this change, including how we can help developmentalists promote the new designation when entering into the worlds of education, business, health care or commerce. We welcome dialogue and discussion and ideas. We’ve also got space on the task force for people who want to contribute in a direct way and who have time and energy to commit. Ingrid Tegnér, CPT, is chair of the task force. If you’re interested in participating, email NFBPT@aol.com.

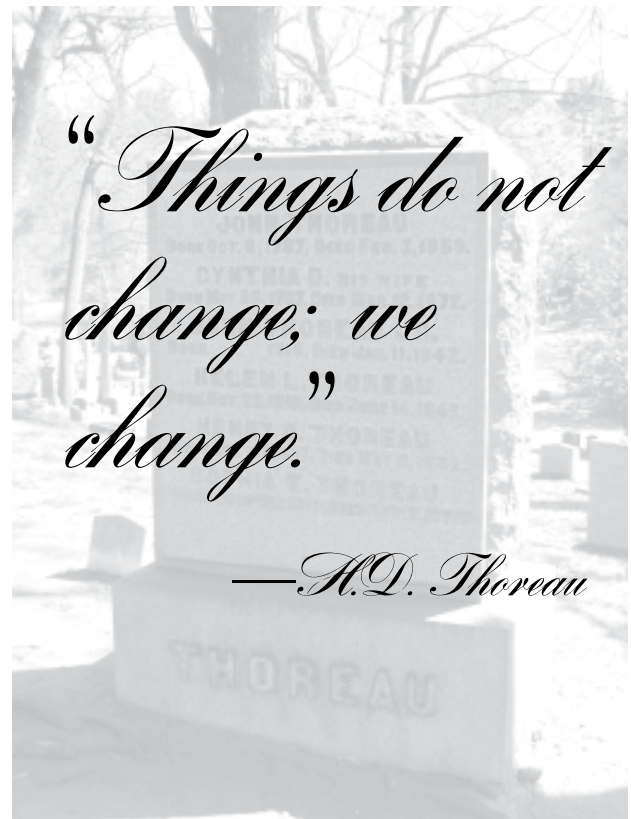
Q: And as for the changes, are they a done deal?

A: The Federation board, by majority and/or unanimous vote, made these changes at or before our 2006 board meeting after 10 months of research, investigation, discussion and thoughtful consideration.

Q: Anything else?

A: There’s been quite a bit of confusion about the differences between NAPT, the membership organization, and the Federation, the credentialing and educational standards-setting body. It’s understandable, because although the Federation was incorporated in 1983 as an independently functioning body, it has been responsible for credentialing only since 2002. Until then, it worked side-by-side with NAPT; credentialing and training functions were carried out through a certification committee that operated under the NAPT board. Federal regulations, however, now require certifying bodies to be separate from membership organizations.

Today, in 2006, the Federation is fully emancipated from NAPT and stands, together with NAPT (the membership organization that supports the field through conferences, publications, publicity, fellowship and resource sharing) and the NAPT Foundation (the charitable nonprofit which supports the field of poetry therapy and its practitioners through grants, scholarships and special projects) as one of a triumvirate. Each is fully autonomous from the others, with independent missions, goals, purposes, business structures and volunteer boards. But each is a strand that is braided into the plait of poetry therapy. ■



Process

An Invitation to Being A Person

Contributed by Karen Rippstein

As a member of the Poetry Caravan, whose mission is to bring poetry to people who cannot reach it on their own, I was invited to facilitate a poetry workshop at the Greenburgh Arts Festival in Westchester County, New York.

I developed a facilitation plan with which I've had positive results where the participants are given a chance to explore who they are as people and how they might interact with people they don't know. The process always seems to allow for mindfulness, self-awareness and self-understanding. The impetus for my workshop was magazine photos of people and the poem, "Being A Person," by William Stafford. For the warm-up, I handed out a different magazine photo of a person to each participant. I asked them to notice details about the person: what message might the person be giving to them and how would they interact with the person, as a friend, an enemy, a companion, or a guide? After a 10-minute timed writing, the participants shared their meaningful responses. In particular, one participant who was given a photo of a young woman wrote a poem about how she recognized the facial expression, but asked what had happened to her *familiar* body now that she is older.

Next we read "Being A Person," and discussed many of the poem's lines that resonated for us. I asked each participant to consider what being a person means to them by listing qualities that make them who they are, noting both the good and bad characteristics that contribute to their individual selves. Using the lists, I had the participants write from the perspective of imagining themselves as a person living 50 to 100 years ago. In their writing they were to capture what their world might be like and what role they might have had. The writing was very absorbing, and as I listened to the shared responses, I realized how the poem's images reflected the participants' feelings of sacredness, love of the earth, and the importance of being connected to one another.

The youngest participant of the group, who was only 12 years old, wrote about Anne Frank and how she maintained hope in the midst of crisis. This image helped Drew realize how he stayed positive while trying to handle a problem he recently faced. Another participant, Frank, wrote a poem that left him so deeply involved with the experience that he began to cry when he read the poem to us. Frank said that he had no idea where any of the thoughts came from, but once he started writing, the words kept flowing.

I suggested to the participants that if they write something that brings up deep feelings for them, or an image that keeps appearing in their writing, they could contain it and

write about it separately for further exploration. The participants really appreciated the suggestion. I realize every time I facilitate a group, how much I get out of the experience and how fulfilling poetry therapy work is. The poem below, written by Frank Sisco and printed with permission, was a vital part and representation of the session's process. It really touched all of us.

Photo at 50

*When I look back at this photo
of me at 50
from here at 90
about to finish up
this trip on Earth,*

*You've always kidded me
that I always smiled
in the sun
and in the rain.
You've always asked why.*

*I say to you Clara,
Always smile,
it will keep you going
through hard days.*

*Oh Clara, my only child,
hold my hand.
You are such a sweet daughter.*

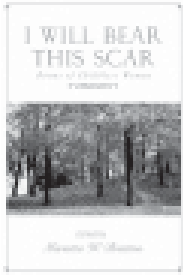
*I'm so blessed.
Hold it tighter.*

*come next to me
on this chair
and hug me tightly
like when you were small
and said "Daddy, Daddy, I love you."*

*Now don't you cry, my Clara.
Just put on a smile.
I know the next life for me
will be fine
and I'll be greeting your mother.
Oh, she's my prize too.
That's your answer to your
insistent question.
"Dad, why do you always smile?"
Because God gave me her
and you.
Now hold me
while I go to sleep.*

©2005 Frank Sisco ■

Muse Reviews



I Will Bear This Scar: Poems of Childless Women

edited by Marietta W. Bratton
Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, Inc., 2005

Reviewed by Wendy Rosenberg

“Dealing with my childlessness has been a ten-year search for healing and connection with other women,” writes Marietta W. Bratton of her own journey toward wholeness in a society that assumes all girls will grow up and become mothers. Those women whose paths diverge from this scenario are often confronted, judged, blamed, pitied or misunderstood as Peggy Lin Duthie expresses in her poem “the soul selects its own...”:

*it seems so parched to them
that, neither nun nor saint,
i would choose, no children.*

*their pity smoulders
like unnecessary summer*

and from Jenn Monroe’s “Eve’s Legacy”:

*a childless woman is
at greater risk for
breast cancer
incessant maternal badgering
inappropriate questioning*

The poems in *I Will Bear This Scar* were contributed by nearly 50 childless women who eloquently describe their struggles and the emotional chaos that has permeated many of their lives. In “Chaos,” Lisa Beatman acknowledges how a woman’s suffering can extend to her husband: *my husband turned to stone, I to water*. Alison Stone’s “Nursing Ganesha” echoes this sentiment: *Each month he tries to hide his disappointment when my blood begins*.

Like many of the women in this book, I am a scarred woman, though I have a child of my own through adoption. I woke up in my twenties to find out that a congenital anomaly would likely prevent me from conceiving a child or carrying one to term. I experienced the emptiness described by so many of the poets in this book. Reading this book reaffirmed a connection I have always felt with childless women.

While a large portion of the poems in this anthology were written by women who arrived at their childlessness through miscarriage, abortion, infertility or a trauma experienced in

their youth, other poems are tales of conscious decisions and contentment. In “A Woman Childless by Choice,” Bernadette Benedict delights in both her freedom and her abundance:

*One pictures a turbulence—
but all I feel is the empty womb, emptying.
Can anyone be less encumbered?
The lightness of my load astounds me.*

...
*there is no emptiness.
I walk in plenitude as women do.*

Some women, like Wisconsin poet Alison Townsend, may have waited too long to decide. From “Forty-five This Spring”:

*All this year I have secretly been growing old,
the ovaries spilling their last burgundy stain
...
They’ve been shutting down when I wasn’t watching,
closing up shop while I plotted the possibility of a child*

The title poem, “I Will Bear This Scar,” written by the editor, leaves readers hopeful, accepting of life’s vicissitudes, and open to its possibilities:

*this scar
sign of healing*

*this scar
way of remembering*

*a closing of
an opening to*

I Will Bear This Scar also includes “The Good Wife,” “Kore” and “Winter Comes,” heartfelt, moving poems written by NAPT member/CPT-in-training Dianna Vagianos Miller.

This book is the first collection of poems I have come across that honors the painful struggles, realities and choices often faced by women. It should help many realize that they are not alone. It is also an exceptional book for men coping with related issues. These beautifully written poems are honest and revealing, epitomizing the inner strength of the human spirit. ■

Books Noted

This section of “Muse Reviews” provides space for shorter (100-200 words) reviews of not-so-recent books and other media that may, for various reasons, not be covered in a full review in “Muse Reviews.” Please send your contributions or ideas to naptmuseletter@yahoo.com with the subject line: “Books Noted.”

Compassionate Witness: Before We Say Good-Bye

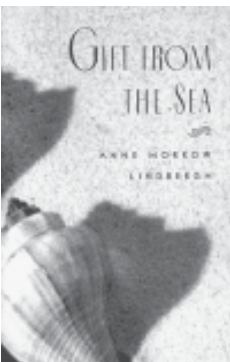
by Lianne Mercer

Fredericksburg, TX: Barons Creek Press, 2005

Contributed by Karen Gerhardt Fort

Trust a poet to find the right words. In *Compassionate Witness*, Lianne Mercer describes her inward journey toward acceptance of her interlocking roles as nurse and poet, daughter and caregiver to her elderly mother, a woman who had always been difficult to understand and, as she grew older, became increasingly hostile toward the world around her. As each struggle to refine their relationship, resolve old misunderstandings, and learn new ways of communicating, their journey toward the end becomes a process of revelation.

A certified poetry therapist and NAPT member, Mercer tells her own story as well as her mother's, through poetry, photographs and recipes. And while the book explores emotional pathways, Mercer takes the subject of caregiving a step further by providing practical information. She discusses the needs of the elderly such as proper breathing, nutrition, skin care and personal attention. Also a psychiatric nurse, Mercer addresses the emotions of anger, depression and grief, and gives suggestions for handling them. She provides tips for dealing with the difficult topics of hospice care, legal and funeral arrangements, and writing an obituary. Perhaps best of all, Mercer offers guidance for managing the caregiver's role through poetry, music and journaling. *Compassionate Witness* resonates with heart, help and hope.



Gift from the Sea

by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

New York: Pantheon, 50th Anniversary edition (1991)

Contributed by Mary Caprio

When a friend gave me a copy of *Gift from the Sea* shortly after my first daughter was born, I read the first chapter of the book, thought it was nice, and then set the book aside in

favor of more pressing demands. Going back to the book nine years later, I was astounded by how Lindbergh so gracefully conveyed the lessons she was learning. Using seashells as a metaphorical framework for the stages of marriage, Lindbergh's essays touch on issues of self and relationship which will resonate with women today much as they did when the book was first published in 1955: in her words, "... how to remain whole in the midst of the distractions of life; how to remain balanced, no matter what centrifugal forces tend to pull one off center; how to remain strong, no matter what shocks come in at the periphery and tend to crack the hub of the wheel."

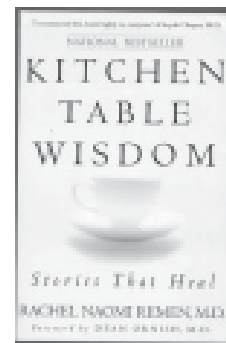
Kitchen Table Wisdom

by Rachel Naomi Remen

New York: Riverhead Books, 1996

Contributed by Mary Caprio

Rachel Naomi Remen is a psychiatrist who specializes in the treatment of people with chronic or terminal illness. She is a professor at the University of California—San Francisco School of Medicine and the co-founder of the Commonwealth Cancer Help Program. But she is much more than even her titles would suggest—a wise woman in the archetypal sense, a wounded healer and a pioneer in re-integrating modern medicine with the holistic approaches it has often left behind. The short essays in *Kitchen Table Wisdom* offer the reader a dilemma—each one begs to be savored and thoroughly processed, and yet the writing style and the hopeful qualities of the stories urge you to finish one and leap into the next. Remen's perspectives as both physician and patient (she has had Crohn's disease for several decades, with several life-threatening episodes) offer new insights into what it means to give and receive care. This is a life-affirming and perhaps even life-changing book.



Writing and Being: Embracing Your Life through Creative Journaling

by G. Lynn Nelson

San Francisco: Inner Ocean Publishing, 2004

(previously published by Innisfree Press with the subtitle *Taking Back Our Lives Through the Power of Language*)

Contributed by Mary Caprio

This is a lovely guide both to writing for yourself and to finding comfortable ways to share your stories with others. Poetry therapists and journal therapists will find much to appreciate in G. Lynn Nelson's approach to writing as a path of self-discovery: "The simple act of starting with the heart can transform both our writing and our being. As we take back our feelings, value and validate them, acknowledge and explore them, we experience a new creativity and power in our words and a new vitality in our lives. ... When we take back our feelings, our words and our being come alive, and things are never the same again." Add this book to your list of "recommended reading" for clients and friends interested in the power of language and the healing power of writing for yourself. ■

Books Received

At Blackwater Pond: Mary Oliver Reads Mary Oliver (audio recording on CD) Boston: Beacon Press, 2006.

Blue Peninsula: Essential Words for a Life of Loss and Change by Madge McKeithen. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2006.

Ethical Issues in Art Therapy (2nd ed.) by Bruce L. Moon. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas Publisher, Ltd., 2006.

First Edition (poems) by Dianalee Velie. Middleborough, MA: Rock Village Publishing, 2005.

Glass House (poems) by Dianalee Velie. Middleborough, MA: Rock Village Publishing, 2004.

Losing A Life: A Daughter's Memoir of Caregiving by Nancy Gerber. Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2005.

Spiritual Journaling: Writing Your Way to Independence by Julie Tallard Johnson. Rochester, VT: Bindu Books, 2006.

Listing in "Books Received" does not preclude future notation or full review in The Museletter. Individuals interested in reviewing titles listed here, or other books that may be of interest to readers of The Museletter, are requested to contact the Editor at naptmuseletter@yahoo.com. ■

Member News

Mari Alschuler (Plantation, FL) and **Norma Leedy** (Union, NJ) have chapters in the recently published *The Creative Arts Therapies Manual: A guide to the history, theoretical approaches, assessment, and work with special populations*, published by Charles C. Thomas Publisher.

A poem by **Linda Barnes** (Grants Pass, OR) entitled "At a poetry workshop, I am handed an old brass weight to write about" will be included in the upcoming South Coast Writers' Conference anthology, *Rogue River Echoes*.

Normandi Ellis (Berea, KY) offered workshops in journal therapy techniques for community healing at the Writing for Reconciliation Conference hosted by Berea College, in Berea, Kentucky, June 1-4, 2006. The conference was sponsored by the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning, a division of the National Council of Teachers of English.

An essay titled "The Use of Poetry as a Psychotherapeutic Intervention" by **Hirsch Silverman**, PhD, DSc, LLD, DHL, LittD (West Orange, NJ), was published in the March 2006 edition of *Metverse Muse*.

Mary Willette Hughes (Waite Park, MN) has had four poems accepted from her poetry book, *Flight on New Wings*, for the third annual "Art of Recovery" exhibition held at the Minnesota State Arts Board display area in St. Paul, MN and on their web site. The five-week exhibition celebrates the expressive and healing power of the arts in recovering from trauma. She has also had poems published in the March issue of the *Journal of Poetry Therapy* and in Bemidji State University's *Dust and Fire*, an annual literary compilation of women's writing and art. Mary continues to co-facilitate

poetry therapy sessions at the Recovery Plus Program for addiction at the St. Cloud Hospital, where she has worked with staff therapists for over five years.

Please send your professional news announcements of 150 words or fewer in the format exemplified here to the Editor at naptmuseletter@yahoo.com by the published deadline for each issue. Please note: we do not list events or awards that are listed elsewhere in The Museletter (e.g., Poetry Alive awards and awarding of CPTs and RPTs). Members wishing to publicize these accomplishments in the monthly member e-newsletter are encouraged to email the information to Mary Caprio at mfcaprio@comcast.net. ■

NAPT is seeking contact information for the following former members:

Barbara Bowen, Lisa Friedman, Alexandria Hieb, Maria Kaylor, Rosemary McMullen, Evelyn Neinken, Anita Rankin and Carol Siegel

If you have any information on how we can contact these former NAPTers, please email Sheila Dietz at sdietz@assoc-mgmt.com

Findings

The Rhythm of the Heart: Changes of Heart

Contributed by Lila Elizabeth Weisberger

*THE heart asks pleasure first,
And then, excuse from pain;
And then, those little anodynes
That deaden suffering;*

*And then, to go to sleep;
And then, if it should be
The will of its Inquisitor,
The liberty to die.*

—Emily Dickinson

My mother died at age 94 in a Nursing Home on Valentine's Day. I am writing this a few weeks before Mother's Day as I look at the quilt squares created by my sister, Kiala, hanging on my wall. Each Valentine's Day I receive a gift of remembrance from Kiala, in honor of our mother. She creates a quilted heart and sews it onto a square of material and adds an image of our mother on the back.

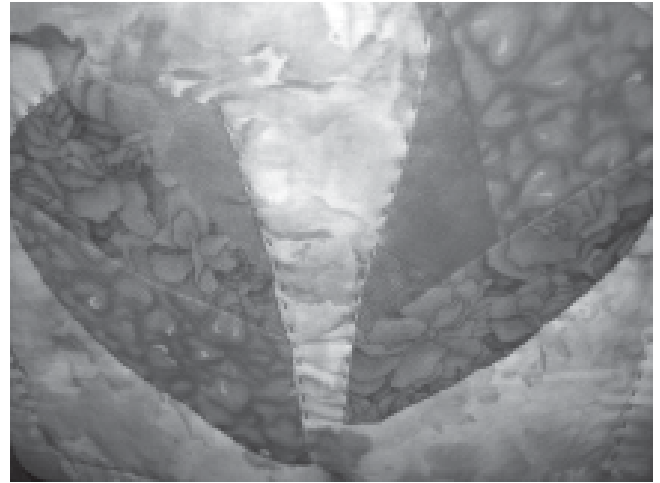


All quilt squares by Kiala Reich

Each year Kiala helps herself and others in the family heal by displaying the changes that have occurred in her heart with the passage of time. She adds no words except, "IN REMEMBRANCE." Year after year, I look forward to receiving this special gift. Through the creative expressions of my family we helped one another through a difficult time and then through each Valentine's Day.

The year after our mother died the quilted heart was broken with no part of the halves touching. At the bottom, the material in the background shows a red spot, which could be from the bleeding heart.

On the first anniversary of our mother's death the bottom halves of the heart are connecting, and I interpreted the uneven knots and stitches as scaring.



The miracle of the third Valentine's Day Remembrance Heart is the image of an intact heart, with even lines depicting separated, blocked off segments. Kiala started the tradition of creating quilted hearts before my mother died for family members on Valentine's Day. I wonder when, if ever, I will receive a heart that resembles the ones I received many years ago. I had become used to receiving puffy, intact, colorful hearts.



On the day of my mother's death, my daughter Sharon and my nieces Sara and Danya were with their grandmother. They stayed on the bed with her even after her life was over. They were finding it impossible to leave her, although they knew she was gone. They phoned the hospice worker who advised them how to leave her, and said she would meet them at the nursing home even though it was three A.M.

My daughter Sharon, wrote about the parting from her grandmother. It so comforts me to read this poem over and over. Sharon subsequently read it at my mother's funeral.

Sharon's Poem

*When I was twelve I walked
in my sleep to you
and you were marching around a moon.
I said "don't go there,
grandma, don't go there."
I told the marchers
you would never walk in their line
so they shouldn't call to you.*

*We have the white sheet down,
the white sheet down,
so we can hold you close.
We have the window shade up.
We stay in the bed with you.*

*So I was twelve and asleep
and you tucked me back into bed
your lips on my forehead.
I won't go there, you said,
your hands on my hair
all the rest of the night.
You've grown cold now.
You've grown heavy.*

*We will pull the white sheet up.
We will pull the white sheet over your legs.
We will pull the window shade down.
We will be going soon.*

*All my life I had your velvet voice,
your fingers touching me
like thank you notes
resting on my shoulder.
You may rest now.*

*We will pull the white sheet up.
We will pull the white sheet up
over your fingers.
The white sheet up over your fingers.
Soon we will go.*

*The transition was molecules.
Just atoms of change.
But if we take our hands off your cheeks,
as cold as they are,
go to the foot of your bed,
it's only then that we see it.
There is a body in the bed.
And the body is dead.*

*We will pull the white sheet up.
We will pull the white sheet up,
up over your shoulders,
so we still see your face.
We will tuck you in like we tuck in our children.
We promise you are safe and free now.
We will pull the white shade down.
We will be going soon.
We will be going soon.
We will be going now.*

—Sharon Groth © (by permission of the author) ■

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

such as **The Poetry Works, Inc.
The Center for Journal Therapy
The Center for Symbol and Story and
bridgeXngs Poetry Center**
offer vital support for NAPT and new
opportunities for collaboration.

**In return, Institutional Members connect
with our regular membership and receive
a variety of incentives and discounts.**

**For details please contact
Robert Carroll, MD, NAPT VP for
Institutional Development at
RobertCarroll@att.net,
or visit the NAPT web site:
www.poetrytherapy.org**

Poem Nation

Professional Training

• California

Perie Longo, PhD, MFT, RPT, announces that the Southern California Peer/Supervision Group meets the second Saturday of each month, either in Los Angeles or Santa Barbara. Trainees take turns facilitating groups followed by processing the experience. Case studies, literature review and skill development are part of the training. The second summer training intensive is in the process of being planned. Quarterly meetings are also held on Sundays, led by Robert Carroll, to develop activities throughout the year, which includes the annual Art Lerner Poetry Therapy Day in October. Call Perie Longo at (805) 687-1619 or email perie@west.net for further information.

• Colorado

Colorado CPT training group meets the third Sat (with some schedule variations) near downtown Denver. Peer group, literature review, group supervision. Contact Kay Adams at (303) 986-6460 or KAdamsRPT@aol.com for schedule and information.

• Florida

The **South Florida Peer Group** meets the third Sunday of the month at the office of Mentor/Supervisor Deborah E. Grayson, LMHC, RPT, in Fort Lauderdale. Each month participants are treated to the latest techniques in Poetry Therapy, thematic poems, new books and resources in the field and invaluable feedback from their peers. We allow ample time for discussing difficult cases, reviewing applications and updating personal files. This has been an ongoing group for eight years! Join us by reserving your space at (954) 741-1160.

Mari Alschuler, LCSW, RPT, M/S, is available for **mentoring** of CPT and RPT trainees. She continues to offer a correspondence/email course in **Poetic Devices**. Please contact her at MAlschulerRPT@aol.com or (954) 424-9085.

• Illinois

Charlie Rossiter, PhD, CPT, offers **mentoring** for poetry therapy trainees as well as writing and poetry therapy workshops in the Chicago area. For more information or to be added to his mailing list to be kept informed of offerings contact him at Charlie.Rossiter@poetrypoetry.com. Charlie is also working on developing an “**Off-Season Training Intensive**” in the Chicago area. The goal is to gather for a long weekend of training sometime between late January through

February. If you are interested in receiving details when they become available, you can send a note to Charlie.Rossiter@poetrypoetry.com, with “off-season intensive” as the subject line.

• Minnesota

Geri Chavis, LP, CPT, PhD, facilitates a poetry therapy **supervision group** in Minneapolis. For information contact Geri at ggchavis@stkate.edu or (651) 690-6524.

Minnesota Regional Gatherings: Since the early 1980s, the Minnesota Poetry Therapy Network has been meeting six times a year and continues to be going strong. This peer experience poetry therapy group meets once every other month, focusing on a particular theme, reading and creating together and sharing resources. For example, at a recent gathering, our theme was “Difficult People Who Help Us Grow.” At each meeting, we have 10-20 participants. For details contact Geri Chavis at ggchavis@stkate.edu or at (651) 690-6524.

• New England

The **New England Chapter of the American Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama (ASGPP)** offers free, open psychodrama trainings three times a year in New England. For information e-mail diarydoor@aol.com or phone (508) 647-0596.

• New Jersey

Linda Lanza is available to facilitate poetry therapy **peer group** sessions toward certification or registration at your location within driving distance of central NJ. E-mail lindalanzacpt@inkwings.com or visit www.inkwings.com or www.talkwithmyhands.com.

• **New York City/Long Island/Long Distance bridgeXngs Poetry Center**, a state-of-the-art, comprehensive poetry center and intentional community pioneering on-line courses for poetry therapy trainees directed by Lila L. Weisberger, offers **local and long distance training**, individual and small group supervision. Monthly poetry peer groups are offered in Manhattan as well as the intensive “**ACTIONWEEK**,” July 22–30, 2006, in Manhattan (enrollment is limited).

Also offered are on-line groups with other trainees; an on-line poetry peer group for long distance trainees (10 hours); an on-line 10-month didactic course based on the text *The Healing Fountain: Poetry Therapy for Life's Journey* by Geri Chavis and Lila Weisberger starts Sept. 1, 2006; and three courses that may be required prerequisites for certification: Poetic Forms/Devices: Poetry as Symphony, Poetry as Container; Abnormal Psychology: Learning Through Literature; “Poetry As Healer” Study Group working with

the text by Jack Leedy; Healing Fountain: a 10-month course working with the text by Chavis and Weisberger; and AHA study group working with the text by Arleen Hynes. For information please contact Lila at bridgeXngs@aol.com or (917) 660-0440 (cell).

● **On-line/Virtual/Region-free**

2-year CPT distance learning program with Kay Adams RPT, mentor/supervisor. (303) 986-6460, KAdamsRPT@aol.com, www.journaltherapy.com.

Online CPT psychology prerequisite courses. Abnormal Psychology, Group Process and Counseling Methods classes of 10 weeks each are forming now. Call Kay Adams, (303) 986-6460, email KAdamsRPT@aol.com or see www.journaltherapy.com for details and schedules. **Independent study Language Arts prerequisite classes** also available with Gayle Nosal, CPT, gnosal@ecentral.com.

The **Wordsworth Center's signature Intensives** that engage the wider world of applied literature in poetry therapy are available for presentation in your community. Ken Gorelick and Peggy Heller, clinical poetry therapists, mentor/supervisors and former presidents of NAPT, have developed unique intensive programs, often called "creativity camp," for students, practitioners and seekers in the poetry therapy field. All participants will attain knowledge of poetry therapy methods and principles through lectures, discussions, readings and writing processes; skills through experience of classical and action poetry therapy and team design of field applications hours in didactic, peer group and group supervision applicable to CPT or RPT credentials or mentor/supervisor requirements. For more information about sponsoring and organizing a Wordsworth Intensive in your community contact Peggy Heller at peggyheller@verizon.net or Ken Gorelick at kengorelick@verizon.net.

Margot Van Sluytman offers five on-line courses in Poetry/Writing and Healing: 1) Poetry and the Process of Healing: The Dance With Encounter; 2) Poetry from Soul—Soul from Poetry; 3) Writing From Wild Self—Real Self: Surrender Not Control; 4) Writing and the Process: Out of Dark Night; and 5) Writing and the Process Two: The Healing Art of Dancing With Words. For information visit www.Dance-With-Words.com and select "On-Line Course" link or contact Margot at info@MargotVanSluytman.com or (705) 760-9446.

Workshops, Classes, Seminars, General Educational Opportunities

The Master of Arts Program of The Union Institute and University (formerly Vermont College of Norwich Univer-

sity), as of October 2006, will be offering opportunities for graduate study in Creative Arts and Humanities, Health and Wellness, and History and Culture Studies. This program offers students the chance to earn their MA degrees while also meeting requirements for poetry therapy certification. Many NAPT members are graduates of, or faculty in, this unique program for adult learners. Studies, which are self-designed, with guidance from expert mentors, can focus on the healing arts or on the creative arts or some combination of both. Study can be entirely on-line or can include cycle residencies every six months in Vermont (October and April) for face-to-face meetings with faculty and learning communities of people with shared interests. For more information, contact Deborah Alicen at Vermont College Admissions (Deborah.Alicen@tui.edu).

University of Denver's University College is offering MA-level courses in Writing & Healing designed/taught by Kay Adams, RPT, and Joy Sawyer, RPT. Both campus and on-line classes available. Call Nathalie Jautz-Bickel at (303) 871-3935 for information.

Writing for Life: Creating a Story of Your Own by Sandra Lee Schubert. The journaling and scrapbooking techniques taught in this course provide a creative way to connect with the inner self and heal emotional wounds while documenting your story, your life in a fun and unique way. For more information and to sign up, please visit www.selfhealingexpressions.com/scrapbooking.shtml.

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, PhD, CPT, facilitates ongoing workshops for people living with or recovering from cancer at Turning Point of Kansas City: A Center for Hope and Health; Lawrence Memorial Hospital in Lawrence, KS; and The Light Center, Baldwin, KS. Caryn also regularly facilitates workshops on writing as a spiritual practice, writing from the earth and mythopoetics. Please see www.writewhereyouare.org for what's coming up.

Lapidus is the UK's national Association for the Literary Arts in Personal Development and brings together people with an interest in creative words for health and well-being. **Lapidus offers monthly "Writing-Well" seminars**, part of a program of regional development for Lapidus in Scotland, which follows the aims of central Lapidus to promote and develop the role of the literary arts in healthcare, education and the community. Each evening focuses on a theme (recent themes include "Cancer, Poetry and Healing" and "Dementia and Creativity") and allows ample time for creative and reflective writing, discussion and questions with a guest speaker. For details email lapidus@butlerlarry.demon.co.uk.

Goddard College's Transformative Language Arts Master's Program allows students to pursue social and personal transformation through the spoken and written word through a deep exploration of your personal TLA practice (as a writer, storyteller, etc.) as well as the social and cultural picture informing your particular focus of study (a focus you choose!). TLA students may also fulfill most of the poetry therapy certification requirements through this degree. TLA criteria include a community-based practicum, thesis project of your own design, and a balance between theory and practice in your study and art of words. Students also have opportunities to shadow poetry therapy and related practitioners around the world. See www.goddard.edu/academic/tla.html or contact Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg at mirriamgoldberg@goddard.edu for information.

Calls for Work/Articles/Proposals

The Museletter is seeking writers of book reviews, "Profiles" of organizations and individuals, "Poems as Process," "Happenings" reports, "Process" pieces, "Chapbook" poems (with accompanying explanatory text), interviews with poets and creative arts therapies practitioners and feature articles for future issues. The Editor welcomes proposals 3+ weeks in advance of submission deadlines. We are unable to publish all the submissions we receive, so please refer to issues of *The Museletter* for general style and content guidelines before submitting a proposal or article. See ad in this issue for full Submission Guidelines, including upcoming deadlines.

Patient Education and Counseling presents a new section comprised of selected narratives on reflective practice. Reflective Practice will provide a voice for physicians and other healthcare providers, patients and their family members, trainees and medical educators. The title emphasizes the importance of reflection in our learning and how our patient care and own self-care can be improved through reflective practice, similar to other health care provider skills. We welcome personal narratives on caring, patient-provider relationships, humanism in healthcare, professionalism and its challenges, patients' perspectives, and collaboration in patient care and counseling. Most narratives will describe personal or professional experiences that provide a lesson applicable to caring, humanism and relationship in health care.

Submit manuscripts through the *Patient Education and Counseling* on-line electronic submission system at <http://ees.elsevier.com/pec>. *Patient Education and Counseling* is an international journal indexed in Medline and 13 other related indexes. All manuscripts, including narratives, are peer-reviewed.

If you would like an electronic copy of the editorial describing the Reflective Practice section, "Sharing Stories: Narrative Medicine in an Evidence-Based World," please e-

mail Dr. Hatem or Dr. Rider. Editors: David Hatem, MD, University of Massachusetts Medical School: HatemD@ummhc.org; Elizabeth A. Rider, MSW, MD, Harvard Medical School: elizabeth_rider@hms.harvard.edu; Florence van Zuuren, PhD, University of Amsterdam and the Free, University in The Netherlands: FJ.van.Zuuren@psy.vu.nl.

Submissions of poems, stories, diary entries and essays on the analytic experience are being sought for ***The Psychoanalytic Experience: Analysands Speak***. No rhymed or religious material. Deadline: Ongoing. Email submissions to Editor Esther Altshul Helfgott, PhD, at eahelfgott2@comcast.net. For more information visit www.analysands.homestead.com.

The Canadian Art Therapy Association Journal, which publishes on a variety of subjects relevant to Art Therapy and Expressive Arts Therapies, is seeking submissions. For more information and instructions for authors please visit www.catainfo.ca.

Funding/Grant Opportunities

Arts in Healthcare grants are available through the Johnson & Johnson/Society for the Arts in Healthcare (SAH) Partnership. SAH seeks to promote the use of the arts to enhance the healthcare experience for patients, their families, and caregivers. Proposals are being sought from healthcare organizations and/or arts agencies working in partnership to produce innovative projects to serve patients, their families and caregivers in healthcare settings to promote healing and preventative health. J&J/SAH projects may be located in a variety of settings, including clinics, hospitals, hospices, medical schools, public health services or other community health programs.

The range of grant projects is intended to be broad and highly innovative. Preference will be given to projects that are new initiatives and have the potential to be replicated. In addition to projects serving broad patient populations and health care providers, a portion of grant funds will be reserved for arts programs serving those living with HIV/AIDS, their families and/or caregivers.

Visit www.thesah.org for complete guidelines, application and frequently asked questions. Letter of Intent deadline is August 16, 2006.

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that this year's **Rosalie Brown Annual Scholarships** are made available to trainees in Biblio/Poetry Therapy. Rosalie Brown was a pioneer in poetry therapy whose dedication and competency made her a leading voice in establishing the training guidelines that are standard for NAPT and the National Federation of Biblio/Poetry Therapy. The awarding of scholarships is based on

criteria demonstrating exceptional promise and talent in the field of poetry therapy, as evidenced through prior work. They are available to those trainees who are in their second or subsequent year of training. The following alphabetical list contains scholarship offerings for 2006–07:

Mari Alschuler, LCSW, RPT, M/S – Half-price Poetic Devices correspondence course.

John Fox, CPT – 3 three-day weekend workshops and 2 half-price weekend workshops anywhere in the country. Schedule available on John’s web site www.poeticmedicine.com (travel not included).

Marion Goldstein, MA, RPT – 3 hours of mentoring/supervision (1 hour per month).

Debbie Grayson, RPT, LMHC – 2 three-hour training sessions meeting one Sunday a month.

Deborah Langosch, PhD, ACSW, CPT – 3 hours of mentoring/supervision (1 hour per month).

Perie Longo, PhD, RPT – 4 hours of mentoring/supervision (1 hour per month); 1 three-hour peer supervision group held in Santa Barbara.

Sherry Reiter, PhD, RPT – One semester at The Creative Righting Center, September–January, one Sunday a month (includes peer group and supervision). For further information see www.erols.com/sreiter.

Applications are available from mentor/supervisors. Please return application plus four copies to Marion Goldstein, MA, RPT, Chair, Rosalie Brown Scholarship Committee, 84 Highland Ave., Montclair, NJ 07042.

Offers

Jennifer Bosveld, Publisher of Pudding House Publications and one of NAPT’s *A Praise of Muses*, is extending to NAPT members a special offer for Pudding House’s latest anthology, *Hunger Enough: Living Spiritually in a Consumer Society*, edited by Nita Penfold. Jennifer writes, “though the cover price is \$18, because you apply poetry with good intent, Pudding House will send NAPT members three copies of the book for \$18 and free postage if you promise to give the other two copies away to anyone struggling with these issues.” Send \$18 to Pudding House, 81 Shadymere Lane, Columbus, OH 43213. Include note: “The Hunger Enough 3-1 for deal.”

Networking

Ed. Note: This section of PoemNation provides a forum for NAPTErs to exchange ideas and contact information pertaining to specific work being undertaken outside of the realm of NAPT proper. Please send your text of 150 words maximum to the Editor at naptmuseletter@yahoo.com with the subject line: PoemNation Networking.

Those interested in learning more about an **evolving project to serve veterans of the Iraqi war who may be vulnerable to PTSD**, please contact Faye Snider at fayesnider@rcn.com.

Research Projects

Ed. Note: This section provides students and researchers a forum for obtaining information from and establishing connections with the poetry therapy community. Send information about your research projects, including what information you are seeking, from whom, for what purpose and by when (maximum of 200 words) to naptmuseletter@yahoo.com with the subject line: PoemNation: Research Projects.

Products & Services

Videos of NAPT conference keynote poets, including Rafael Campo (Miami, 2003), Li-Young Lee (Costa Mesa, 2004) and Gregory Orr (St. Louis, 2005) are available on DVD or VHS tape for \$12 each, which includes priority mailing, or receive all three for \$25. The three LaperTapes documentary DVDs (or VHS tapes) on poetry as healing are \$20 each, including priority mailing. These are (1) *The Truth About Ourselves: How Poetry Heals*, (2) *Tell All the Truth: How Poetry Heals A Multicultural Society* and (3) *Moving Towards Truth: Poetry, Motion and Wholeness*. As a package, all three are specially priced at \$40 (one free!). Please email orders or requests for further information to jennylaper@yahoo.com or write to LaperTapes at 1330 West Hwy WW, Springfield, MO 65803. ■

*“What lies before us and what lies
beyond us is tiny compared to what lies
within us.”*

—*H. D. Thoreau*

Notes from the Field

Donald Hall named new Poet Laureate

On June 14, 2006, Librarian of Congress James H. Billington announced the appointment of **Donald Hall** to be the Library's **14th Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry**, better known as the United States Poet Laureate. Hall's first official activity as Poet Laureate will be opening the Library's annual literary series in October with a reading of his work. He will also be a featured speaker at the Library of Congress National Book Festival poetry pavilion on September 30 in Washington, DC. Hall succeeds Ted Kooser as Poet Laureate and joins a long line of distinguished poets who have served in the position, including most recently Louise Glück, Billy Collins, Stanley Kunitz, Robert Pinsky, Robert Hass and Rita Dove.

Hall has published 15 books of poetry, including his most recent, *White Apples and the Taste of Stone*, a selection of poems written between 1946 and 2006. In 2005 he also published *The Best Day The Worst Day*, a memoir about his marriage to poet Jane Kenyon, who died in 1995. He has also authored numerous books of prose. His poetry has earned Hall the Lenore Marshall/Nation Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award, the *Los Angeles Times* Book Award and the Ruth Lilly Prize for Poetry. One of his books for children, *Ox-Cart Man*, won the Caldecott Medal. In addition, he has received two fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation. Hall is a member of the Academy of Arts and Letters.

Former Poet Laureate Billy Collins recently reviewed *White Apples and the Taste of Stone* in the Washington Post, stating, "Hall has long been placed in the Frostian tradition of the plainspoken rural poet. His reliance on simple, concrete diction and the no-nonsense sequence of the declarative sentence gives his poems steadiness and imbues them with a tone of sincere authority. It is a kind of simplicity that succeeds in engaging the reader in the first few lines." You can listen to Hall read one of his poems on the Library of Congress web site: www.loc.gov/today/pr/2006/06-131.html.

National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies Associations Update

As noted in the March 2006 issue of *The Museletter*, this year marks the **25th anniversary of NCCATA** (www.nccata.org). The remaining **2006 conferences of NCCATA organizations** are listed below. Each member organization offers a complimentary conference registration

to one representative from each of the other member organizations. If you are an NAPT member and are interested in attending one of these conferences as a representative of NAPT and contributing a report about the event to *The Museletter*, please contact Nancy Scherlong, NAPT's Government Affairs Chair, at poemsheal@aol.com.

American Art Therapy Association

37th annual conference

"Reaching Out and Rebuilding Our Communities"

New Orleans, LA

November 15-18, 2006

For information visit www.arttherapy.org

American Dance Therapy Association conference

(NDTA is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2006)

"Choreographing Education" (joint conference of American Dance Therapy Association and the National Dance Education Organization)

Long Beach, CA

October 19-22, 2006

For information visit www.adta.org

American Music Therapy Association

8th annual conference

Kansas City, MO

November 14-19, 2006

For information visit www.musictherapy.org

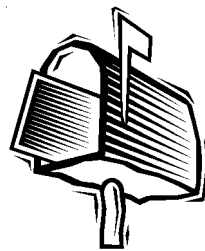
National Association for Drama Therapy

27th annual conference

New Brunswick, NJ

August 10-13, 2006

For information visit www.nadt.org ■



Address changes?

Email address changes?

Please let us know so we can keep you up-to-date on NAPT activities & issues.

Email: info@poetrytherapy.org

Please put "NAPT" at the start of your message's subject line.

Museletter Submissions: Deadlines & Guidelines

ARTICLE DEADLINES

November 2006: September 4, 2006 deadline

AD DEADLINES

November 2006: September 4, 2006 deadline

Submission Guidelines

- Submissions can only be accepted as email ATTACHMENTS to the Editor. Do not send text in the body of an email unless requested. Send submissions to naptmuseletter@yahoo.com.
- Microsoft Word files are preferred, with SimpleText or RTF files accepted. Do not send zipped or stuffed files.
- Submissions must include a subject line noting that the email is in regard to *The Museletter* and indicating for which section of *The Museletter* the submission is intended. Example: "Museletter submission: Speakeasy."
- Before sending completed manuscripts, please format according to Museletter style, using past issues as a guide. For example, we use bold, left-aligned titles (not centered); tabs for paragraph returns (with the first paragraph of an article not tabbed); no underlining; poem titles are in quotes; book titles are in italics.
- Texts submitted must not include hyperlinks. Please deactivate hyperlinks before sending texts. Texts submitted with active hyperlinks will be returned to author.
- Notes are discouraged but if they must be used, they must be included as endnotes, not footnotes.
- Include your name exactly as you would like it to appear and the acronyms of any credentials you hold for inclusion in our Contributors' list (e.g., Jane Smith, MSW, RPT). We are unable to include any other biographical information.
- Submissions are greatly appreciated before the deadlines.
- In order to keep the publication schedule on time and to get timely information to our members, submissions are not accepted after 5pm on the day of the deadline (usually the first Monday of the month) unless prior arrangements are made.
- We are unable to publish all unsolicited submissions. Potential contributors are encouraged to discuss proposals and article ideas with the Editor via email at least three weeks prior to the submission deadline.
- Please see box at right for advertising rates and technical specifications. Email info@poetrytherapy.org for details.

Karen vanMeenen, Editor, *The Museletter*
naptmuseletter@yahoo.com

Found Poetry

Contributed by Charlie Rossiter

Charlie writes, "This is compliments of an unknown spammer, complete with wacked-out grammar. I especially like the second line. Of course I contributed the line breaks, and I dropped a couple lines that were redundant (and not funny enough to keep)."

Want to live forever?

*Hi there! Want to live forever?
Or at least, longer than you was to?
Here is the way to trick Mother
Nature!*

*It's widely known, that there is a special hormone.
But what if bring this Human Growth Hormone
from somewhere outside and into your body?*

*The scientists has found a formula
for a rejuvenation course,
so don't wait
and find the solution of the eternal problem here!*

AD RATES

- **FULL PAGE:** 7.5" x 10" (\$280)
- **HALF PAGE (LANDSCAPE):** 7.5" x 5" (\$140)
- **HALF PAGE (PORTRAIT):** 3.625" x 10" (\$140)
- **THIRD PAGE (LANDSCAPE):** 7.5" x 4" (\$110)
- **QUARTER PAGE:** 3.625" x 5" (\$70)
- **EIGHTH PAGE** (Similar to business card size):
3.625" x 2.5" (\$35)

The editor reserves the right to refuse ads which are not relevant or appropriate to the mission of NAPT and *The Museletter*. **Ads must be submitted with payment to the NAPT Office according to stated deadlines** (see left). JPEG, TIFF or PDF files are preferred, but camera-ready artwork may also be used.

Institutional Members receive a 10% discount on stated advertising rates in the Museletter.

Typesetting may be available — e-mail Sheila Dietz at info@poetrytherapy.org or call 866-844-NAPT.

Chapbook

Esther writes, “My husband was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s three years ago. While writing has always helped me understand my relationship to trauma, how it affects my thinking and behavior and my relationship to others, it is most important to me now and to my husband as we go through the experience of Alzheimer’s together. The poem form lends itself well to this disease in allowing the poet to split her words and syllables, often in a manner that mimes an Alzheimer victim’s speech. *Mary Oliver’s Bone* appears in my manuscript-in-progress *Diary of My Husband’s Illness: Dear Alzheimer’s, Why Did You Pick Our Sheltered Lives to Visit?* The title comes from a line I wrote in a poem to Norma Leedy while participating in Phyllis Klein and Perie Longo’s workshop, Poetic Conversation: The Intimate Connections of Poetry Therapy, during NAPT’s 2004 conference in St. Louis.

NAPT National Office
525 SW 5th St., Suite A
Des Moines, IA 50309-4501
Toll-Free 1-866-844-NAPT



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 2006 Conference Reflections
- Poetry Therapy and No Degrees of Separation in Mexico
- Poems as Process
- Poem Nation
- And much more...

Mary Oliver’s Bone

for Abe

*Today, I read him Mary Oliver’s Bone.
He loves it so, he cries
until the tears
fall in-
to his mouth
and flood
the tide she searches for
in the ear
bone
of the pilot whale
she finds
on the beach
off Provincetown.*

*In Seattle,
her book re-
turned
to our shelf
I fold
us in-
to each
oth
er’
s
bodies
as we
sleep
in the dark
wet
night.*

—*Esther Altshul Helfgott*

PRRT STD
US Postage
PAID
Ames, IA
Permit No. 307