

The CPS website is <http://ctpoetry.net/>.

While you're online, *Friend us on Facebook.*

#### **CPS Honorary Board**

Margaret Gibson, Connecticut Poet Laureate  
Rennie McQuilkin, Connecticut Poet Laureate,  
2015-2018  
Marilyn Nelson, Connecticut Poet Laureate,  
2001-2006  
Vivian Shipley, Connecticut State University  
Distinguished Professor at SCSU

#### **CPS Officers**

Co-Presidents: Tony Fusco & Pat Mottola  
Vice President: Victor Altshul  
Secretary: Christine Beck  
Treasurer: Mark Sheridan  
Contests: Joan Hofmann  
Webmaster: Tony Fusco  
Membership: Patti Fusco  
CRR Editor: Ginny Connors  
Newsletter: Ginny Connors  
Publicity: David Cundy  
Outreach: Mark Sheridan & Christine Beck  
Youth Outreach: Frederick-Douglass Knowles  
Program Director: Victor Altshul

#### **Annual Holiday Party at Real Art Ways**

We expect to see a festive crowd at our annual holiday party on Saturday, December 14th. This will take place in the beautiful, comfortable space offered by Real Art Ways, 56 Arbor Street in Hartford. The fun begins at 1:00 pm. and should continue until 4:00. A short program will honor some notable poets who passed away in 2019. Then some up-and-coming poets from the UConn Student Poetry Club will share some of their poetry. Of course, we'll have an open mic also, always a highlight of our gatherings! Come prepared with a poem to share. Plenty of delicious treats will be offered, so that both body and soul will be nourished. Guests are welcome at this annual event.

#### **A Contest for Connecticut Poets**

The Nutmeg Poetry Contest is open to submissions from Connecticut poets only. The deadline is January 31, 2020. Cash prizes are offered and CPS members can enter the contest without paying any submission fee. Enter using the Submittable link on the Connecticut Poetry website, or use this link

[Members enter here](#)

Connecticut poets who are not members, enter [here](#)

## CPS Chapters & Presidents

### Bethel

Liz Massey  
[finchwhistlehaven@gmail.com](mailto:finchwhistlehaven@gmail.com)

This chapter meets at Bethel Library, 189 Greenwood Avenue, on the second Saturday of each month, from 2:00 - 4:00 PM Bring 6 to 8 copies of a poem for the workshop, or just come to listen and respond. To receive an e-mail reminder each month, contact Liz.

### Farmington Valley

Terence McCaffrey  
860-416-6684  
[tmccaff24@hotmail.com](mailto:tmccaff24@hotmail.com)

This chapter meets one Tuesday of each month in the library at Tunxis Community College from 6-8 pm. Contact Terrence to get more information and to get on the email notification list. Bring copies of your poem if you want feedback.

### Greater Hartford

Julia Paul  
[Julia.Paul@cox.net](mailto:Julia.Paul@cox.net)

The Greater Hartford chapter meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, Sept. through June from 2-4 pm at Welles Turner Library, 2407 Main Street, Glastonbury. Bring copies of a poem to share if you want feedback on your work.

### Manchester

Ollie Jones  
[wwpoetryclub@gmail.com](mailto:wwpoetryclub@gmail.com)  
or [ojpianist@yahoo.com](mailto:ojpianist@yahoo.com)

The Manchester chapter meets from 1-3 pm on the second Saturday of each month from September through June at The Arbors, 403 West Center Street in Manchester. Bring ten copies of a poem to share, although we do not give serious critiques of the poems. The chapter meets informally in July and August at the same location.

### Middletown

Pamela Guinan  
860-563-5761  
[Pamela.cps@hotmail.com](mailto:Pamela.cps@hotmail.com)

The Middletown chapter meets at the Russell Library, 123 Broad Street at 6 pm on the last Wednesday of each month. Bring copies of a poem for reading and critique.

### New Haven

Vic and Laura Altshul  
[lauraaltshul130@gmail.com](mailto:lauraaltshul130@gmail.com)

The New Haven chapter meets on the third Saturday of the month at the Friends Room at Miller Memorial Library, 2901 Dixwell Ave., Hamden, from 10:15 am-12:15 pm.

### Pomfret

Christine Kalafus  
[CEKworks@charter.net](mailto:CEKworks@charter.net)

This chapter meets the second Monday of every month, excluding July and August. The meeting time is 7 pm and the location is Pomfret Town House, 17 Town House Road, Pomfret.

### Southbury

Marion McGauhy  
860-354-2157  
[Mcgauhy@aol.com](mailto:Mcgauhy@aol.com)

The Southbury Chapter meets on the fourth Sunday of the month at 2 pm. Meetings are held at the Southbury Public Library, 100 Poverty Road.

### Wilton

Ray Rauth  
[Rayrauth@optonline.net](mailto:Rayrauth@optonline.net)

This group meets every third Saturday from 2 to 4 pm in the Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road. Members bring in copies of poems to distribute to all of the attendees. The poems should be no more than 40 lines.

## Presidents' Message

Once again another year comes to an end – and we look forward to a new decade! We have much to be thankful for. We are fortunate to live in a country that offers free public education, free public libraries, and the freedom to express ourselves, as well as enjoy the creations of others in the arts.

For CPS, 2020 promises to be a year filled with activity, accomplishment, and continued growth. Our membership has soared to over 200 and counting. Our national journal, *Connecticut River Review*, continues to garner recognition throughout the U.S. and abroad. Our Executive Board is stronger than ever, giving tirelessly and generously to keep CPS profitable and productive in all ways, contributing so much and so often to the poetry community in Connecticut and beyond.

Winston Churchill in his wisdom stated: “We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.” Poetry is that precious gift whose spiritual value far surpasses its commercial value. That gift of spirit gives back to us all in a myriad of ways, so that what we give *of* ourselves we also give *to* ourselves.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! Remember to take time to relax, meditate, and reflect, and to enjoy writing, reading, and discovering poetry. May the gift of poetry and friendship enrich your life in every way.

–Tony Fusco and Pat Mottola, Co-Presidents

## Guilford Poets Guild Publishes Anthology

One way that the Guilford Poets Guild is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary is with the publication of an anthology: ***Our Changing Environment***. Guilford's Poet Laureate Gordy Whiteman, who has been involved with the guild and its predecessors since 1985, said that the town's history and landscape is rich with material for local poets that have been gathering and sharing their literary experiences of the town for many decades. The 20th anniversary anthology offers a heavy focus on climate change, Whiteman said, with writers exploring their experiences with a shifting, uncertain future and the loss of natural beauty and resources. He said that most of the 200 submissions or so came from people living on the Connecticut shoreline.

*Our Changing Environment*, edited by Edwina Trentham, features 48 Connecticut poets.

On Thursday, December 12, the Guilford Poets Guild will celebrate with a special reading by 12 members of the Guild. The event will take place from 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Guilford Free Library. It begins with an Open Mic from 6:30 – 7:00 p.m. Guests are asked to bring an unwrapped children's book, new or gently used, to be donated to the Community Dining Room.

Readers for the evening include: Carol Altieri, Evelyn Atreya, Gwen Gunn, Juliana Harris, Norman Marshall, Nancy Meneely, Jane Muir, Patricia H. O'Brien, Jen Payne, Elizabeth Possidente, Edward Walker, and Gordy Whiteman. Each poet will read poems selected for the new publication.

## Poet in the Spotlight: Terrence McCaffrey

Terrence McCaffrey keeps a pocket-sized notebook with him almost all of the time. If an image, a phrase, or something someone says strikes him, he jots it down, whether he's waiting for one of his kids to finish a music lesson, getting an oil change, or even waiting for a take-out order. He cobbles together the skeleton of a poem, and then types out a first draft.

In his poems he strives for accessibility, yet he pays a lot of attention to craft. McCaffrey favors strong images and lines that are powerful enough to stand alone, and yet add to the overall theme of the poem. He writes poems about the quotidian, about mortality, marriage, mental illness, fatherhood, and teaching.

Some of his early poems were compiled in a chapbook called *Between Two Cities*. Most of his copies of this collection were lost in an apartment fire thirteen years ago. McCaffrey has published poems in journals such as *Connecticut River Review*, *Freshwater*, and *Red Eft Review*. Presently he is working on poems for his first full-length collection. He's reworking older poems and creating a lot of new poems too. He also writes fiction. He says that, "my focus, though, inevitably drifts back toward poetry, the challenge of conveying a lot of meaning with very few words."

He likes to see clear, imaginative imagery in a poem and smart turns. McCaffrey believes that poems can be challenging without being esoteric, and that poems can evoke a host of different emotions in readers. Recently he's been reading *Contemplative Man* by Brock Guthrie, *Dancing in Eurynome's Shoes* by James Mele, *The Dead*



*and the Living* by Sharon Olds, *North of Eden* by Rennie McQuilkin, and lots of poems by Emily Dickinson.

Terrence McCaffrey leads the Farmington Valley chapter of CPS, which meets monthly in a conference room in the Tunxis Community College library. He enjoys the camaraderie of meeting with other poets, and the "understanding that other likeminded individuals are writing in solitude somewhere, trying to figure things out."

McCaffrey teaches high school English at Westminster School in Simsbury. He enjoys spending free time with his wife Jennifer and his two children. His neighbors often see him shooting hoops in his driveway.

## Connecticut Poets Laureate Honored at State Capitol

On November 1, State Senator Saud Anwar hosted a program at the state capitol featuring some of Connecticut's poets laureate. This was a way of participating in National Authors Day. Several poets shared some of their work, and all of the attending poets were given official citations from the General Assembly honoring their contributions to the arts.

Among those in attendance were Margaret Gibson, Connecticut's State Poet Laureate, Charles Margolis, Ginny Lowe Connors, Daniel Donaghy, Joan Hofmann, David Leff, Gordy Whiteman, Tony Fusco, Katie Eber, Diane Lowman, and Mick Theebs.



Ginny Connors, Charles Margolis, Margaret Gibson and Senator Anwar

## CPS Members Are Busy Writing...and Publishing!

David Cundy's latest publication is *More Inappropriate Anagrams*. It is a sequel to *Inappropriate Anagrams*, and features humorous biographical "Shenanagram" poems and portraits in the spirit of Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, e.e. cummings and other literary humorists. The secret alter egos of the featured luminaries are brought to life by the author's light-hearted, laugh-out-loud collage portraits.



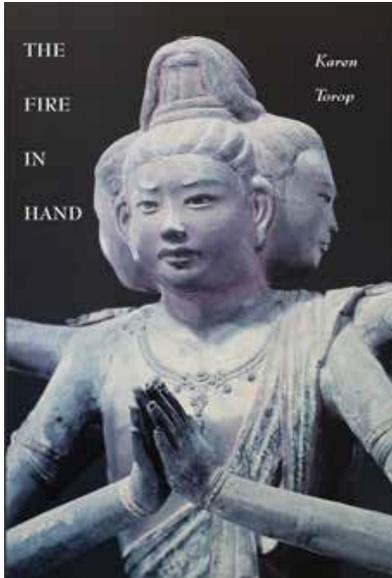
Joan Hofmann's new poetry collection is also a sequel of sorts. *Alive, Too* follows her earlier collection, *Alive*.

Vivian Shipley responded to the book this way: "In *Alive, Too*, Joan Hofmann offers us a feast of poems about the natural world...Not only will readers be impressed by her lyrical language but they will learn so much about why they should treasure the world they inhabit."

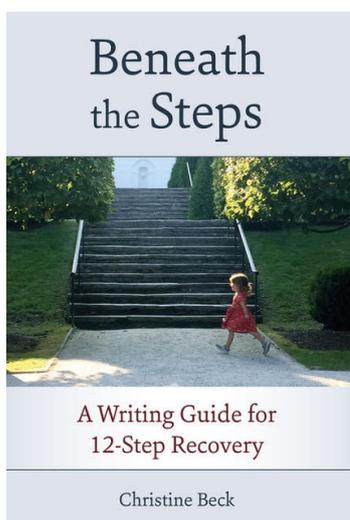
Peter Ulisse's new book is *Apple Tree November*. Some of the poems in the book are paired with images from his paintings. The book also contains personal insights on the poems.

## More Recent Books by CPS Members

Karen Torop's new book *The Fire in Hand* is winning praise. Edwina Trentham calls it "a gorgeous, complex collection of poetry."

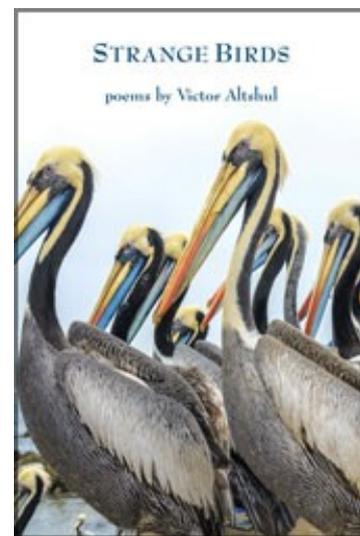


Christine Beck's new book, *Beneath the Steps: A Writing Guide for 12-step Recovery* (Flying Horse Press), is a memoir in poetry and prose of her childhood in an alcoholic home, and of her experiences as she was becoming an alcoholic herself later in life. The book shares the way poetry has the power to heal childhood wounds. It includes writing prompts for others interested in healing through creative writing.



Laura and Vic Altshul are busy with readings from their new books. Laura's book of poetry, *Looking Out*, and Vic's book, *Strange Birds*, have both been published this year.

Laura and Vic work together to lead the New Haven chapter of the Connecticut Poetry Society. The chapter will meet as usual on Saturday, December 21 at 10:15, in the Friends Room of the Miller Library in Hamden.



## POP: Poets on Poetry Present...

### Jane Kenyon

Christine Beck will host a discussion of Jane Kenyon's moving poetry at the Avon Public Library, from 2-4 pm on December 12.

### Dante

*The Divine Comedy* is 700 years old. Why does it still resonate today? Carol Rizzolo, a cultural mythologist and popular lecturer, will help unlock the complex narratives woven into this literary masterpiece. This inspiring talk will take place on January 25th, 10:00 am, at the Hartford Public Library.