



PEACH PRESERVES

MAY 2026
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Georgia Poetry Society Newsletter



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Members,

Flowers are not the only thing blooming this spring. GPS is growing. We've seen a steady increase in our membership each month.

Attendance at Open Mic is steadily increasing, with a diverse group of people joining each month to share their poems. It was a pleasure to listen to regular and first-time guests in April, share poems, some of which they indicated did not represent their usual style.

The departure from the norm was refreshing for all and brought plenty of laughter. I believe laughter is the best medicine, and I certainly felt better at the end of the evening.

I'd like to remind all poets, and those who simply enjoy reading and listening to poetry, to register for the May Open Mic and join us on Thursday, May 21st, at 7pm.

For new writers, this is a wonderful opportunity to practice reading poems in a casual atmosphere among very friendly and supportive poets. We like to keep poems short

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How to Find Poetic Inspiration During a Busy Summer

Summer has a way of filling our days before we even notice. Vacations, visitors, heat, errands, gardens, family plans — suddenly the hours that once held quiet writing time are crowded with motion. But inspiration doesn't disappear in busy seasons; it simply hides in smaller spaces.

Here are a few gentle ways to keep poetry alive during the months ahead:

Notice the brief moments. A poem doesn't require an hour of silence. Sometimes a single sensory detail — the smell of sunscreen, the sound of sprinklers, the way dusk settles later each night — is enough to spark a line.


Use the season's natural pauses. Waiting in the car. Sitting on the porch. Standing at the stove. These tiny pockets of stillness can hold a surprising amount of imagination.

Let your phone become a notebook. Jot down fragments, overheard lines, colors, textures, or questions. You don't need full poems — just seeds.

Read one poem a day. Even in the busiest seasons, a short poem can reset your creative mind and remind you what language can do.

Give yourself permission to write small. A haiku, a list, a single metaphor — these are poems too. Summer doesn't demand masterpieces; it invites noticing.

Inspiration doesn't vanish when life gets full. It simply asks you to meet it where you are.



*Inspiration doesn't vanish when life gets full.
It simply asks you to meet it where you are.*

How to Keep Your Craft Alive During the Summer

Summer often disrupts the routines that support our writing lives. But craft doesn't have to pause just because schedules get crowded. In fact, busy seasons can sharpen our attention — if we let them.

Train your eye, even when you can't write. Craft begins with noticing. Pay attention to contrast, movement, texture, and emotional temperature. These are the raw materials of poetry.

Collect language, not poems. Instead of trying to “write,” try gathering: verbs you overhear, colors you can't name, surprising metaphors that appear in conversation. Craft grows from accumulation.

Practice compression. Busy seasons are perfect for learning how to say more with less. Try writing a three-line moment each day. Focus on precision, not length.

Let structure help you. Short forms — haiku, tanka, lute, American sentence — give you a container when time is scarce. Structure can be a gift, not a limitation.

Return to your notes later. Summer is for gathering. Fall can be for shaping. Trust the rhythm of your own seasons.

Craft doesn't disappear when life gets full. It adapts — and sometimes becomes sharper.



Finding Inspiration in the Gentle Chaos of Summer

A Small Collection of Poetic Starting Points

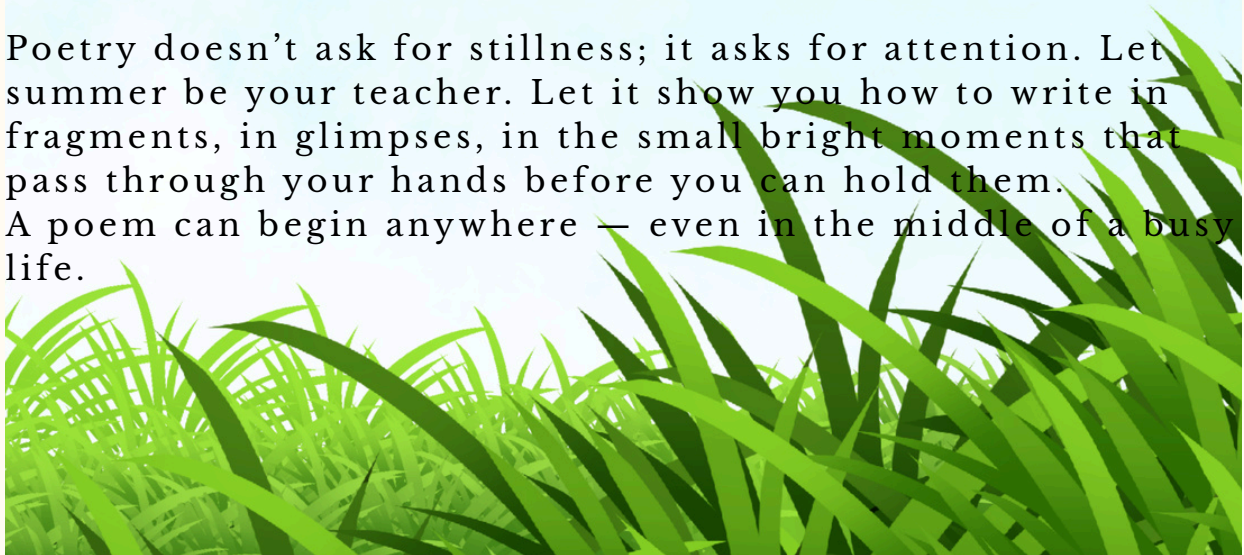
Summer is a season of motion — doors opening and closing, sunlight shifting across the floor, days that stretch long and then vanish quickly.

It's easy to believe there's no room for poetry in all that movement. But inspiration often lives in the very places we overlook.

Here are a few moments worth noticing — each one a doorway into a poem:

- the hum of an air conditioner in the late afternoon
- heat shimmering above the pavement like a mirage
- the quiet exhaustion that settles after a long, bright day
- the sweetness of a ripe peach and the memory it unlocks
- the smell of cut grass rising like a childhood echo
- the way light pools at 8 p.m., soft and golden
- the sudden loneliness of a crowded place
- the sound of ice shifting in a glass
- the moment a storm breaks open the sky
- the hush that follows laughter when friends go home
- the coolness of tile under bare feet
- the way a breeze lifts the edge of a curtain
- the first star appearing before the sky is fully dark

Poetry doesn't ask for stillness; it asks for attention. Let summer be your teacher. Let it show you how to write in fragments, in glimpses, in the small bright moments that pass through your hands before you can hold them. A poem can begin anywhere — even in the middle of a busy life.



President's Corner, continued

so everyone has a chance to read. I look forward to seeing new faces among the familiar ones each month. I'd also like to remind our members who have published poetry collections that we would be honored to showcase your books in our online Book Store. We love to highlight our members' books, so if you are not in our bookstore, let us know, and we will help you through the process.

I think it's important to mention that GPS is a member of the National Federation of Poetry Societies. As members of GPS, poets are eligible to participate in numerous contests held by other member states. We hope members will take advantage of this opportunity and share this information with other poets invited to become members themselves.

This newsletter regularly highlights the many advantages of GPS membership, our anthology, Reach of Song, and our many opportunities to develop poetic skills through articles, events, classes, and online courses.

The GPS all-volunteer board welcomes any member who would like to help guide and support the work of GPS. We encourage you to consider volunteering for one of our open positions. Experience is welcome, but enthusiasm matters just as much. What matters most is the willingness to participate, contribute, and learn. If there is a particular area of leadership you're interested in, please contact our Vice President, Michelle Alderman, at VP@georgiapoetrysociety.org. We'd love to have you involved.

The intensity of April Poetry Month has ended. May turns our attention to warmer weather, outdoor activities, and the anticipation of vacation days. Wherever you'll be this summer, whatever you'll be doing, don't forget to look for inspiration around you and snap a picture, make a note in your journal, or write a few tentative lines of a new poem. Let the season fill your senses — the poems will follow.

Warmly,
Barbara Barry Nishanian
President, Georgia Poetry Society

Poetry necessitates that we slow down, deepen our attention, practice care with language and with each other; poetry is an essential language ... and it affirms our shared humanity."

Arthur Sze, US Poet Laureate

Interview with Rigoberto Gonzalez January/February issue of
Poets and Writers

Celebrating April Poetry Month: A Look Back at the Georgia Poetry Project

April Poetry Month has come to a close, and with it our first year of the Georgia Poetry Project, sponsored by the Georgia Poetry Society. While not every idea unfolded exactly as we first imagined, the project was still a meaningful success — full of creativity, collaboration, and community spirit.

This inaugural year was shaped in partnership with Barbara Barth, MWCA Literary Chair, and the Monroe–Walton Center for the Arts, who embraced the project with enthusiasm, bringing poetry into public spaces throughout Monroe. Inspired by Barbara’s idea of “Random Acts of Poetry,” MWCA created moments of surprise and delight — from pop-up readings to spontaneous poetry encounters — bringing verse into everyday life.

GPS Vice President Michelle Alderman developed and coordinated the statewide vision and supported local efforts in Monroe. The result is a flexible model that other communities can build on in future years. Even with fewer participating towns than we originally hoped, the response we did receive was heartfelt, genuine, and encouraging. People showed up. They read poems. They listened. They shared. And that is the heart of this project.

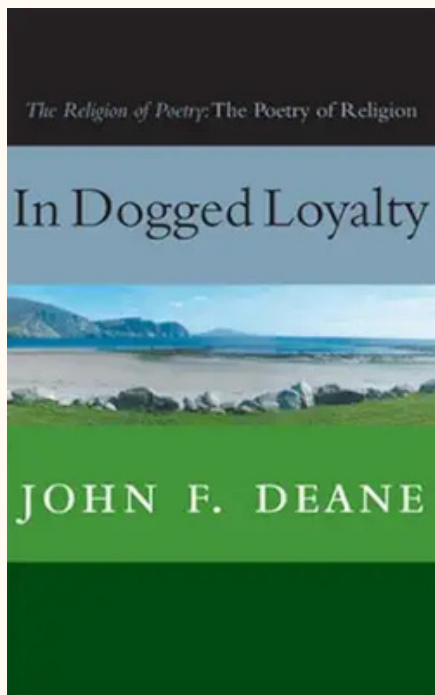
Highlighting the project in Monroe was an Open Mic event held at Grizzle Beer on April 22. A comfortable crowd of around twenty people attended, many reading their own or favorite poems. Even Monroe Mayor John Howard joined and read — a wonderful reminder that poetry truly belongs to everyone.

The Georgia Poetry Project will continue to grow — one community, one arts center, one poem at a time. We’re grateful to everyone who participated, supported, or simply paused to enjoy a poem this April. Poetry belongs everywhere, and this month proved that Georgia is full of people ready to welcome it. Here’s to next year, and to the creative momentum we’ve begun together.

ZOOM Courses Coming

GPS IT Webmaster Marion Owen is developing a series of engaging Zoom courses for members and non-members in the coming months. Topics will range from poetry in the digital age to creating poetry blogs and podcasts, along with other sessions designed to help poets strengthen their craft and expand their audiences. All courses will be free for GPS members. We hope you’ll take advantage of these opportunities as they roll out. Watch your inbox for special announcements.

In Dogged Loyalty by John F. Deane



In Dogged Loyalty is a rich blend of essays and curated poems exploring how poets across centuries have wrestled with questions of faith, doubt, devotion, and the human search for meaning.

Deane traces a long lineage of writers — from medieval voices to George Herbert, John Donne, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Emily Dickinson, R. S. Thomas, and others — showing how poetry has always been a vessel for spiritual inquiry.

Part anthology and part reflection, the book offers both insightful commentary and a treasury of poems that illuminate the “golden seam” of religious poetry in English.

Deane argues that poetry is not merely an art form but a vital way of perceiving the world — one that deepens our humanity and can even guide us back toward faith, honesty, and shared understanding.

This is an excellent resource for poets interested in the intersection of craft and spirituality, or anyone curious about how writers have used poetry to grapple with the sacred across time.

 **GEORGIA POETRY SOCIETY**

OPEN MIC

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026

Hosted on Zoom • 7:00 PM

Join us for an evening of poetry, community, and connection. All are welcome—whether you'd like to read, listen, or simply enjoy the company of fellow writers.



Hosted by:
Barbara Barry Nishanian
President,
Georgia Poetry Society

Bring a poem to share, or come to enjoy the voices of our GPS community.

ZoomLink: May 21 Open Mic
Link: [Georgia Poetry Society](#).

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