



**Worcester County  
Poetry Association**  
Growing Poetry Since 1971

# *Annual Report* 2023



**Worcester County Poetry Association**

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2023 has been a year of new energy, expansion and connection to exciting new partners and projects.

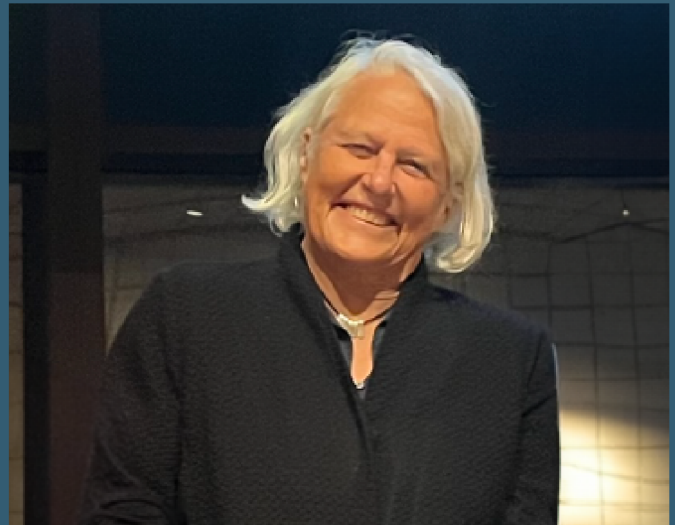
The WCPA believes in the power of diverse authors and ideas that have the capacity to open our minds and expand our hearts. With that, we welcome The Worcester Writer's Collective and the Dirty Gerund Poetry Show, the newest fellow poets, writers and visionaries to join us underneath the WCPA tent. WELCOME!

We piloted a new poetry workshop series for children at Worcester's Black Leadership Academy. Envisioned, created and led by Irena Kaci, our Public Program and Outreach Coordinator, it is well positioned to expand its reach.

We published the 44th edition of *The Worcester Review* with fee-free submissions for BIPOC writers and fee waivers for anyone who asked. The feature for Volume 44, "Let's Build a Place Worth Living In: A Portfolio of Writing by Clemente Students," honored the need to hear the voices our Clemente students firsthand. Submissions at *The Worcester Review* continue to grow by large amounts.

2023 Kunitz Medal recipient, Paul Szlosek, was honored for the creation of new, invented poetry forms and a lifetime of living, breathing, speaking, singing and teaching poetry through his blog "Paul's Poetry Playground".

Under the leadership WCPA Vice president, Joe Fusco, Jr., and his Programming Committee, we sponsored new events for local poets such as Poet- Pourri as well as promoted Poetry Extravaganza, a monthly open mic at Redemption Rock Brewery, the city's first ever Baseball Poetry Festival and Arts in the Garden. Susan Roney- O'Brien continued to work her Thirsty Lab magic on zoom 16 times this year, continued teaching at WPL and organizing the Women's Reading. Please read Joe's report and visit our website for the exhaustive, full line up.



Organized by Kate Gregoire, our Rain Poetry event painted 13 new poems on Worcester sidewalks for the third straight year and our Mapping Worcester in Poetry collaboration with the College of the Holy Cross, run by Beth Sweeney, continues to thrive.

The Finance Committee, under new Treasurer, Ashley Marcum, continues to map out our financial future. Thank you, Ashley, for your dedication this year.

The Communications Committee has put forth a beautiful, new newsletter thanks to new board member Brett Larrobino.

And last, but not least, our exciting new Fellowship in honor of Dan Lewis, awards its very first prize today.

Our Working Board does all this new for YOU, our dear members! We need you to help keep these balls rolling! Please join one of our four working committees which meet every other month and do your part to keep all the new energy coming. Bring your poetry vision to us and we'll work together to make it happen. This is our vision and our responsibility to those that have come before - a powerful community of writers and thinkers, poets and artists with the capacity to expand hearts and minds.

Thank you to everyone who has served and continues to serve, to the new members coming in and to everyone here tonight for the vitality you bring to our common mission. It's been an honor to serve as your President and I look forward to another great year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Bacon

# SECRETARY'S REPORT

## WCPA Annual Meeting, April 3, 2022

The 51st Annual Meeting of the Worcester County Poetry Association was held in the ballroom of the Salisbury House, 61 Harvard Street, Worcester, MA, on April 2, 2023, at 2:00 PM.

### Board Members in Attendance:

- Rodger Martin
- Joe Fusco
- Beth Sweeney
- Kate Gregoire
- Therese Martin
- Elizabeth Bacon
- Kate McIntyre
- Robin Boucher
- Robert Steele
- Carolyn Oliver
- Joe Aguilar

### Opening Poem:

Rodger Martin read "The Way Water Remembers," by Becky Kennedy, from *The Worcester Review* Volume 43.

### Call to Order:

Rodger Martin, President, called the meeting to order, asking the members to sign in as required for voting. He noted copies were available both in hard copy and online

### President's Message:

Rodger Martin delivered the President's Message, noting that 2022 was a year of transition, into the second half-century of the WCPA's existence. Highlights were related to transitioning out of quarantine requirements related to Covid, moving from the Sprinkler Factory to the Salisbury Mansion, hiring our first paid staffers, and of Bob Gill stepping back from his involvement, and the number of hats he wore through the years. Rodger noted that he would also be stepping away from the role of the president.

### Secretary's Report:

(The Secretary's report is in the printed and online version of the Annual Report 2023 booklet.)

Beth Sweeney made a motion that the board accept the Secretary's minutes as reported in the 2022 Annual Report. Joe Fusco seconded the motion. The motion carried by a show of hands.

### Treasurer's Report:

(The Treasurer's report is in the printed and online version of the Annual Report 2023 booklet.)

Bob Steele made a motion that the board accept the Treasurer's Report, 2022, as presented in the 2022 Annual Report. Robin Boucher seconded the motion. The motion carried by a show of hands.

### Committee Reports:

(These reports are in the printed and online version of the Annual Report 2023 booklet.)

Joe Fusco summarized the Programming Committee report, highlighting both past and upcoming events, and the desire to expand programming even further in Central Massachusetts

Kate Gregoire reported highlights of the Rain Poetry project, and noted events to be held later this month.

Beth Sweeney shared information on the Mapping Worcester in Poetry project

Carolyn Oliver, editor for *The Worcester Review*, shared comments for Vol 43.

Elizabeth Bacon reported that the 9th Clemente class will be graduating May 14th.

### **Bylaw Change Discussion:**

(The proposed Bylaw changes are in the printed and online version of the Annual Report 2023 booklet.)

Rodger Martin noted that bylaws are guidelines for those on the board who come after us. The intent is for the bylaws to serve as a guide for new board members with information relative to various committees and their structure.

Beth Sweeney moved that the bylaws as amended be accepted. Therese Carr and Joe Fusco seconded.

Before a vote took place there was a discussion relative to Section IV, Paragraph three. As outlined it states “The vice-president will preside in the president’s absence...”. As there will be two vice presidents with the bylaw changes it was thought that it should be changed to “A vice-president...” Robert Steele made a motion to amend Section IV with the change as stated above. Bob Cronan seconded the motion. The motion carried by a show of hands.

Robert Steele made a motion to remove “chair” on page 2 relative to the subcommittees. Elizabeth Bacon and Rodger Martin stated in the planning of the bylaw amendment it was thought that a named “go-to” person such as a chair was intended to give a framework to the committees. Therese Carr agreed but also pointed out there is a sentence in the bylaws that state they are subject to change.

The vote to accept the bylaws with the one change carried.

### **Membership Fees:**

General Discussion was held on the membership fees. The board needs to vote on whether or not to change the annual fees from \$30.00 to \$35.00.

### **Board Nominations:**

The nominating slate was presented by Robert Steele as outlined in the Annual Report.

The motion to accept the General Board was made by Beth Sweeney and seconded by Bob Cronan. The motion carried. The motion for the Executive Board was made by Therese Carr and Seconded by Beth Sweeney

### **Awards of Recognition:**

An award of recognition and thanks was presented to Bob Gill in his honor for his years of service and wearing of many hats throughout them all.

Ann Lewis was also honored for all her work on the Dan Lewis Memorial Poetry Fellowship and with the moving of the office from the Sprinkler Factory to the Salisbury Mansion.

### **Oliver de la Paz Reading:**

After a short break, Rodger Martin introduced Worcester’s Poet Laureate, and the featured reader, Oliver de la Paz. Reading from his various published and newer works, Oliver de la Paz shared with the audience some insights into his life, family, and the things that move him as an artist.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

Rodger Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Elizabeth Bacon seconded. The motion carried.

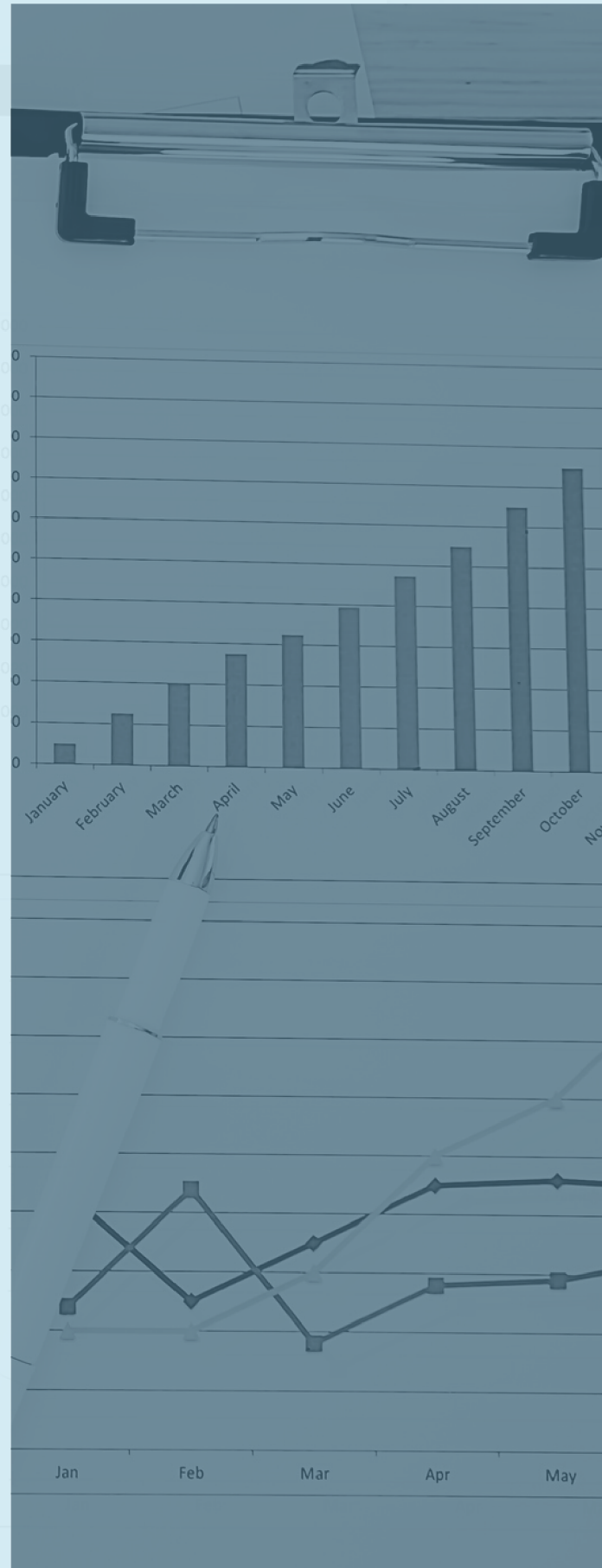
Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Warren



# TREASURER'S REPORT

1. In late 2023, we received a \$7,500 donation in honor of Richard Fox. The donation will be used to create a Fox Fest Event starting in 2024 in his honor.
2. We moved all of our bank accounts to Millbury National Bank in 2023.
3. We accomplished another successful year of various events such as Rain Poetry and Poet-Pourri.
4. The Dan Lewis Fellowship was created to support the poetry aspirations of a poet residing in Worcester County when there may be limited other opportunities of support for these endeavors. The first winner of this fellowship is Laura DiCaronimo from Hubbardston, MA who received \$2,500 from the Dan Lewis Fellowship.
5. The association now has six endowments held by the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, which will deliver annual support for poetry programming in Worcester County. These demonstrate great support from the Worcester community and we are very grateful.
6. We received a \$20,000 Pandemic Recovery Grant from Mass Humanities, which combined with operational support from the Greater Worcester Community Foundation will support our new Public Program Manager/Outreach Coordinator Position for a total of two years.
7. Thank you to all the funders and Finance Committee members for your continued support.
8. I'd also like to thank membership for their faith in me over the last year and although I need to step down from the treasurer position due to being consumed with graduate school, I have great faith in the next treasurer, and I'll be staying on the Finance Committee.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ashley Marcum, Treasurer





### WCPA Budget 2023

	2023 WCPA Budget	2023 Clemente Budget	2023 TWR Budget	Total 2023 Budget	2022 Actual
<b>Revenue</b>					
4000 Contributions, Support	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,500.00
4010 Individual Contributions	1,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	11,000.00	17,606.92
4020 Corporate Contributions	3,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	18,000.00	23,050.04
4230 Foundation / Trust Grants	5,000.00	51,650.00	0.00	56,650.00	41,057.41
5180 Program Service Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5181 Annual Contest Fees	40.00	0.00	0.00	40.00	60.88
5182 Clemente Faculty Stipends	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 5180 Program Service Fees	\$ 40.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 60.88
5210 Membership Dues	3,900.00	0.00	2,100.00	6,000.00	5,570.00
5300 TWR Revenue	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	3,827.01
Grant from our GWCF Endowments	2,820.00	0.00	3,440.00	6,260.00	0.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 15,760.00</b>	<b>\$ 76,650.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,540.00</b>	<b>\$ 99,950.00</b>	<b>\$ 93,672.26</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
7200 Salaries & Related Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,250.00
7500 Consultant and Contractor Expenses	7,200.00	31,000.00	0.00	38,200.00	32,180.09
7520 Accounting Fees	815.00	815.00	0.00	1,630.00	1,359.00
7540 Clemente Stipends	0.00	25,000.00	0.00	25,000.00	17,750.00
7550 Other Services	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 7500 Consultant and Contractor Expenses	\$ 8,015.00	\$ 56,815.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 64,830.00	\$ 55,539.09
7600 TWR Honoraria	0.00	0.00	1,600.00	1,600.00	2,044.48
8110 Supplies	150.00	0.00	265.00	415.00	2,118.21
8120 Web Hosting Fees	40.00	0.00	270.00	310.00	19.99
8121 Website Expenses	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	4,000.00
8130 Telephone & Communications	380.00	0.00	0.00	380.00	339.42
8140 Postage & Shipping	1,317.00	4.16	0.00	1,321.16	1,830.87
8170 Printing & Copying	200.00	0.00	3,000.00	3,200.00	3,019.31
8190 Bank & Merchant Fees	175.00	0.00	100.00	275.00	268.86
8200 Facility & Equipment Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	700.11
8210 Rent / Lease	4,575.00	1,000.00	1,525.00	7,100.00	7,500.00
Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 8200 Facility & Equipment Expenses	\$ 4,575.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,525.00	\$ 7,100.00	\$ 8,200.11

for board approval



### WCPA Budget 2023

	2023 WCPA Budget	2023 Clemente Budget	2023 TWR Budget	Total 2023 Budget	2022 Actual
8300 Travel & Meetings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
8310 Travel	0.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	134.28
Total 8300 Travel & Meetings	\$ 0.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 134.28
8330 Meeting Meal	0.00	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00	\$ 1,069.12
8400 Event Expenses	2,570.00	7,400.00	0.00	9,970.00	2,811.00
8410 Rain Poetry	2,250.00	0.00	0.00	2,250.00	1,980.83
8500 Other Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	306.91
8532 Dues and Subscriptions	0.00	216.00	795.00	1,011.00	334.50
8540 Staff Development	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
8570 Advertising Expenses	170.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,170.00	139.20
8580 Filing Fees	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	70.00
8600 Supplies for Programs	0.00	8,762.80	28.92	8,791.72	1,218.00
8610 Bridge Course Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 8600 Supplies for Programs	\$ 0.00	\$ 8,762.80	\$ 28.92	\$ 8,791.72	\$ 1,218.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 19,942.00</b>	<b>\$ 77,197.96</b>	<b>\$ 9,583.92</b>	<b>\$ 106,723.88</b>	<b>\$ 85,444.18</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>					
5310 Interest Income	15.00	0.00	7.00	22.00	21.42
6800 Realized/Unrealized Gains/Losses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-46,385.02
Total Other Revenue	\$ 15.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 7.00	\$ 22.00	-\$ 46,363.60
<b>Other Expenditures</b>					
9000 GWCF Administrative Fees	5,625.00			5,625.00	3,900.28
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 5,625.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 5,625.00	\$ 3,900.28

# Worcester County Poetry Association

## Statement of Activity January - December 2023

	TOTAL	TOTAL
Revenue		
4010 Individual Contributions	26,254.76	26,254.76
4230 Foundation / Trust Grants	94,846.00	94,846.00
5180 Program Service Fees		
5181 Annual Contest Fees	277.00	277.00
5183 Workshop	350.00	350.00
<b>Total 5180 Program Service Fees</b>	<b>627.00</b>	<b>627.00</b>
5210 Membership Dues	6,974.00	6,974.00
5300 TWR Revenue	1,952.23	1,952.23
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$130,653.99</b>	<b>\$130,653.99</b>
GROSS PROFIT	<b>\$130,653.99</b>	<b>\$130,653.99</b>
Expenditures		
7500 Consultant and Contractor Expenses	1,200.00	1,200.00
7515 Consultants & Contractors	15,704.98	15,704.98
7520 Accounting Fees	3,177.50	3,177.50
7540 Clemente Stipends	53,420.00	53,420.00
7550 Other Services	3,948.97	3,948.97
<b>Total 7500 Consultant and Contractor Expenses</b>	<b>77,451.45</b>	<b>77,451.45</b>
7600 TWR Honoraria	2,320.91	2,320.91
8110 Supplies	7,014.85	7,014.85
8120 Web Hosting Fees	320.87	320.87
8121 Website Expenses	2,259.39	2,259.39
8130 Telephone & Communications	322.84	322.84
8140 Postage & Shipping	1,966.03	1,966.03
8170 Printing & Copying	2,909.00	2,909.00
8180 Books, Subscription & Reference	773.87	773.87
8190 Bank & Merchant Fees	591.44	591.44
8200 Facility & Equipment Expenses		
8210 Rent / Lease	5,575.00	5,575.00
8220 Utilities	67.00	67.00
<b>Total 8200 Facility &amp; Equipment Expenses</b>	<b>5,642.00</b>	<b>5,642.00</b>
8330 Meeting Meal	130.80	130.80
8400 Event Expenses	4,290.46	4,290.46
8500 Other Expenses	635.00	635.00
8532 Dues and Subscriptions	558.16	558.16
8570 Advertising Expenses	124.29	124.29
8580 Filing Fees	1.24	1.24
8600 Supplies for Programs	906.68	906.68
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$108,219.28</b>	<b>\$108,219.28</b>
<b>NET OPERATING REVENUE</b>	<b>\$22,434.71</b>	<b>\$22,434.71</b>
	TOTAL	TOTAL
Other Revenue		
5310 Interest Income	419.28	419.28
5312 Credit Card Promo	31.26	31.26
6800 Realized/Unrealized Gains/Losses	31,769.33	31,769.33
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>\$32,219.87</b>	<b>\$32,219.87</b>
Other Expenditures		
9000 GWCF Administrative Fees	3,054.77	3,054.77
<b>Total Other Expenditures</b>	<b>\$3,054.77</b>	<b>\$3,054.77</b>
<b>NET OTHER REVENUE</b>	<b>\$29,165.10</b>	<b>\$29,165.10</b>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>	<b>\$51,599.81</b>	<b>\$51,599.81</b>

# Worcester County Poetry Association

Statement of Activity  
January - December 2023

	TOTAL	TOTAL
<b>Revenue</b>		
4010 Individual Contributions		26,254.76
4230 Foundation / Trust Grants		94,846.00
5180 Program Service Fees		
5181 Annual Contest Fees		277.00
5183 Workshop		350.00
<b>Total 5180 Program Service Fees</b>		<b>627.00</b>
5210 Membership Dues		6,974.00
5300 TWR Revenue		1,952.23
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$130,653.99</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>		<b>\$130,653.99</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
7500 Consultant and Contractor Expenses		1,200.00
7515 Consultants & Contractors		15,704.98
7520 Accounting Fees		3,177.50
7540 Clemente Stipends		53,420.00
7550 Other Services		3,948.97
<b>Total 7500 Consultant and Contractor Expenses</b>		<b>77,451.45</b>
7600 TWR Honoraria		2,320.91
8110 Supplies		7,014.85
8120 Web Hosting Fees		320.87
8121 Website Expenses		2,259.39
8130 Telephone & Communications		322.84
8140 Postage & Shipping		1,966.03
8170 Printing & Copying		2,909.00
8180 Books, Subscription & Reference		773.87
8190 Bank & Merchant Fees		591.44
8200 Facility & Equipment Expenses		
8210 Rent / Lease		5,575.00
8220 Utilities		67.00
<b>Total 8200 Facility &amp; Equipment Expenses</b>		<b>5,642.00</b>
8330 Meeting Meal		130.80
8400 Event Expenses		4,290.46
8500 Other Expenses		635.00
8532 Dues and Subscriptions		558.16
8570 Advertising Expenses		124.29
8580 Filing Fees		1.24
8600 Supplies for Programs		906.68
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<b>\$108,219.28</b>
<b>NET OPERATING REVENUE</b>		<b>\$22,434.71</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>		
5310 Interest Income		419.28
5312 Credit Card Promo		31.26
6800 Realized/Unrealized Gains/Losses		31,769.33
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>		<b>\$32,219.87</b>
<b>Other Expenditures</b>		
9000 GWCF Administrative Fees		3,054.77
<b>Total Other Expenditures</b>		<b>\$3,054.77</b>
<b>NET OTHER REVENUE</b>		<b>\$29,165.10</b>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>		<b>\$51,599.81</b>

# Worcester County Poetry Association

## Statement of Cash Flows

January - December 2023

	TOTAL
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	
Net Revenue	51,599.81
Adjustments to reconcile Net Revenue to Net Cash provided by operations:	
1450 Other Assets:Prepaid Expenses	-225.00
2000 Accounts Payable (A/P)	512.12
2100 BOA Card	-42.43
<b>Total Adjustments to reconcile Net Revenue to Net Cash provided by operations:</b>	<b>244.69</b>
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>\$51,844.50</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>	
1670 Fixed Assets:Computers / Office Hardware	-3,884.40
1510 GWCF Agency Fund:Founders' Fund	-2,488.39
1520 GWCF Agency Fund:Worcester Review Endowment Fund	-6,309.54
1530 GWCF Agency Fund:Stanley Kunitz Award Fund	-1,725.47
1540 GWCF Agency Fund:Gregory Stockmal Reading Fund	-1,691.16
1550 GWCF Agency Fund:College Contest Fund	-1,034.61
1560 GWCF Agency Fund:Dan Lewis Memorial Poetry Fund	-10,334.60
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>	<b>\$ -27,468.17</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>	
Board Restricted Funds	-1,500.00
Board Restricted Funds:2022 Rain Poetry	0.00
Board Restricted Funds:2023 Gregory Stockmal Reading	0.00
Board Restricted Funds:2023 Poet Pourri Event	100.00
Board Restricted Funds:2023 Pop-up Poets	0.00
Board Restricted Funds:2023 Rain Poetry	1,337.91
Board Restricted Funds:2023 Stanley Kunitz Medal	0.00
Board Restricted Funds:Administrator Contract Position	18,400.02
Board Restricted Funds:Annual Contest The Frank O'Hara Prize	70.70
Board Restricted Funds:College Contest (annual not GWCF)	0.00
Board Restricted Funds:The Worcester Review	3,065.30
Restricted Funds Contra Account	-21,473.93
<b>Net cash provided by financing activities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>NET CASH INCREASE FOR PERIOD</b>	<b>\$24,376.33</b>
Cash at beginning of period	96,928.72
<b>CASH AT END OF PERIOD</b>	<b>\$121,305.05</b>

## Worcester County Poetry Association

## Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2023

	TOTAL
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1010 Millbury FCU Operating	0.00
1020 Millbury FCU Savings	0.00
1030 Paypal	4,126.93
1040 LCU TWR Checking	1,302.89
1050 MNB Checking (8031)	8,247.91
1060 MNB Savings (8049)	7,517.99
1070 MNB CD (8015)	20,408.67
1075 MNB Admin	18,400.02
1080 MNB Strategic Planning	8,000.00
BOA Clemente Bank Account (NEW)	38,439.64
BOA Clemente Bank Account (OLD)	0.00
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$106,444.05</b>
Accounts Receivable	
1100 Accounts Receivable (A/R)	
1110 Accounts Receivable	0.00
<b>Total 1100 Accounts Receivable (A/R)</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Other Current Assets	
1400 Other Assets	
1450 Prepaid Expenses	225.00
<b>Total 1400 Other Assets</b>	<b>225.00</b>
Undeposited Funds	14,861.00
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>\$15,086.00</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$121,530.05</b>
Fixed Assets	
1300 Website	10,000.00
1350 Accumulated Depreciation	-5,277.00
1600 Fixed Assets	
1640 Fixed Asset Furniture	1,352.84
1670 Computers / Office Hardware	10,289.11
<b>Total 1600 Fixed Assets</b>	<b>11,641.95</b>
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$16,364.95</b>
<hr/>	
	TOTAL
Other Assets	
1500 GWCF Agency Fund	
1510 Founders' Fund	34,378.40
1520 Worcester Review Endowment Fund	88,819.19
1530 Stanley Kunitz Award Fund	22,802.29
1540 Gregory Stockmal Reading Fund	17,151.87
1550 College Contest Fund	10,795.75
1560 Dan Lewis Memorial Poetry Fund	95,668.28
<b>Total 1500 GWCF Agency Fund</b>	<b>269,615.78</b>
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<b>\$269,615.78</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$407,510.78</b>

## LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

### Liabilities

#### Current Liabilities

##### Accounts Payable

2000 Accounts Payable (A/P)	686.12
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<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<b>\$686.12</b>
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##### Credit Cards

2100 BOA Card	0.00
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<b>Total Credit Cards</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
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##### Other Current Liabilities

Due to Elizabeth Bacon	0.00
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<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
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<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$686.12</b>
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<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$686.12</b>
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### Equity

3000 Net Assets	355,224.85
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Board Restricted Funds	0.00
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2022 Rain Poetry	0.00
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2023 Gregory Stockmal Reading	0.00
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2023 Poet Pourri Event	100.00
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2023 Pop-up Poets	0.00
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2023 Rain Poetry	1,337.91
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2023 Stanley Kunitz Medal	0.00
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Administrator Contract Position	18,400.02
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Annual Contest The Frank O'Hara Prize	70.70
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College Contest (annual not GWCF)	0.00
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The Worcester Review	3,065.30
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<b>Total Board Restricted Funds</b>	<b>22,973.93</b>
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Restricted Funds Contra Account	-22,973.93
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### TOTAL

Net Revenue	51,599.81
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<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$406,824.66</b>
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<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$407,510.78</b>
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# PUBLIC PROGRAM MANAGER AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR'S REPORT

This year has been filled with opportunities and changes. Of note, the WCPA has expanded its reach into the community through the following projects:

## **Black Excellence Academy Children's Workshops**

In September 2023, Gloria Hall of the Black Excellence Academy reached out to the WCPA in hopes of setting up a series of poetry workshops for children ages 6-12 for a weekly 45-minute after school segment. The program ran for 7 weeks (from November 6th - Dec 18th) and was a resounding success.

During the development of this program, the WCPA developed a 6-week poetry curriculum for three tiers of students: Level 1- 1st and 2nd graders, Level 2- 3rd and 4th graders, and Level 3- 5th and 6th graders. The development of this rudimentary curriculum is the first step in what will hopefully become a robust children's poetry literacy program.

In addition to the triumph of setting up the curriculum, the WCPA had the opportunity to connect with our Rain Poetry and Clemente Alums in search for BEA approved instructors. We were fortunate enough to connect with Vanessa Gonzalez-Oyola, Tarique Cooper, and Xaulanda Thorpe, who became the three rotating instructors for the poetry series. All three poets are heavily involved in the poetry scene in Worcester, with Vanessa serving on the Clemente Board, and Tarique agreeing to join the WCPA Board.

At the end of the 7-week poetry series, the children of the BEA put on a showcase performing their poetry, and presenting their very own chapbooks. We are proud to continue partnering up with the BEA in the new year.

## **The Worcester Writers' Collective Partnership**

In May of 2023, a small and plucky group of local writers known as the Worcester Writers' Collective began making waves in the Worcester community. Irena Kaci, WCPA programs administrator, who had been a regular member of the group for about 6 months, joined the two- person team running the Collective.

Once Irena was onboarded, the Collective continued to grow exponentially and become more and more relevant to the cultural and literary scene of the city. At the tail end of summer, the WCPA began the many months process of partnering with, and vetting the WWC in hopes of offering WWC our fiscal sponsorship.

After many months of hard work, and copious talks and meetings, the WCPA is poised to establish a long-term Fiscal Sponsorship relationship with the Worcester Writers' Collective, and thus increasing the potency of both organization. In concert with the partnership, the WCPA is also gaining founder of the WWC Brett Iarrobino on its board, as a programming committee member, growing our board.

The two organizations combining opens the door for a number of future possibilities, including many opportunities for workshops led by local poetry veterans of Worcester County, as well as showcases of Worcester's bountiful bevy of literary wealth. Cross fertilizing with one of the most productive literary initiatives in the city will open some really wonderful possibilities in 2024.

## **The Dirty Gerund Partnership**

Expanding its reach into all corners of the poetry community, the WCPA began meeting with slam poetry organization The Dirty Gerund. The Dirty Gerund has been a Worcester staple for over 10 years with a reliable following. Over the course of many months and collaborative efforts, the Dirty Gerund is also poised to become a fiscal dependent of the WCPA. Collaborating with all the current local literary initiatives sets the WCPA up to be both a powerhouse and a focal point of poetry in Worcester County.

In addition to the possibility of partnering with the Dirty Gerund, the WCPA will be gaining yet another board member, Dirty Gerund co-host and event promotions associate Sam Capradae. With our board growing and expanding into the community, we are once more set up to extend our reach into corners of the Worcester Community in which we've never been before.



### **Worcester Common Ground Day of Giving Event**

In November 2023, Worcester Common Ground reached out to the WCPA and invited us to participate in their annual 'Giving Day' event with the aim of setting up a small poetry activity for participants in the festival, as well as raising Winslow Peace Park's profile.

The WCPA had a table front and center and engaged with the local community by encouraging them to write brief community-celebrating poems. The community responded very joyfully and we were able to create a wonderful display of the event. The poems celebrating Pleasant Street generated by the event can be found on our Instagram page. In addition to generating some wonderful work, Giving Day gave the WCPA a chance to facetime with the Pleasant Street community, invite new followers to our social media pages, and even collect information about how to better serve the community. We were able to connect with Worcester Common Ground in hopes of future collaborations as well. It was a tremendous learning experience and we are so looking forward to doing it again in November 2024.

### **stART on the street**

In September of this year, the WCPA had its first significant foray into Worcester's most well known street festival, also known as stART on the Street. Rain Poetry's inimitable Kate Gregoire organized the signup as well as some charming props featuring rain poetry. Irena Kaci arranged a connection with the Worcester Writers' Collective, who was also tabling for the event. The two groups joined forces and created a combined mega table promoting both organizations. We were set up in the Bank Pavilion right on Park Avenue and saw a lot of foot traffic.

This gave the WCPA a chance to spread the word for many of our annual programs and initiatives, including our Rain Poetry Contest, the O'Hara Prize Winners' reading, and the Dan Lewis Fellowship. It was our first ever tabling event in recent memory and it went off impressively well. We met so many people and got to chat in a neighborly way with many local artists and artisans. It was an unqualified success!

### **Strategic Planning Grant**

Lastly we applied for and received a generous GWCF grant for "Strategic". It was a huge boost to our coffers and an incredible opportunity to build on some of the work that we've already begun. We are going to kick off 2024 working hard to use the grant to truly level up our plans and practices.

### **To The Future**

This may seem like a lot for one year, but we are just getting started. The WCPA is focused on engaging with our greater Worcester community and collaborating with as many of our local artistic nonprofit as we can manage. In the upcoming year we are excited to reprise our performance in all of these aforementioned events, and much more. We are always striving to serve our community and finally have a dedicated employee who is ready to listen and roll up her sleeves. Please don't hesitate to contact us at [wcpaboard@yahoo.com](mailto:wcpaboard@yahoo.com) or [irena@worcestercountypoe.org](mailto:irena@worcestercountypoe.org) and let us know how we can better serve you in 2024! Together we can bring the arts, and more specifically poetry, back where it belongs: the heart of the commonwealth.

Respectfully submitted,  
Irena Kaci

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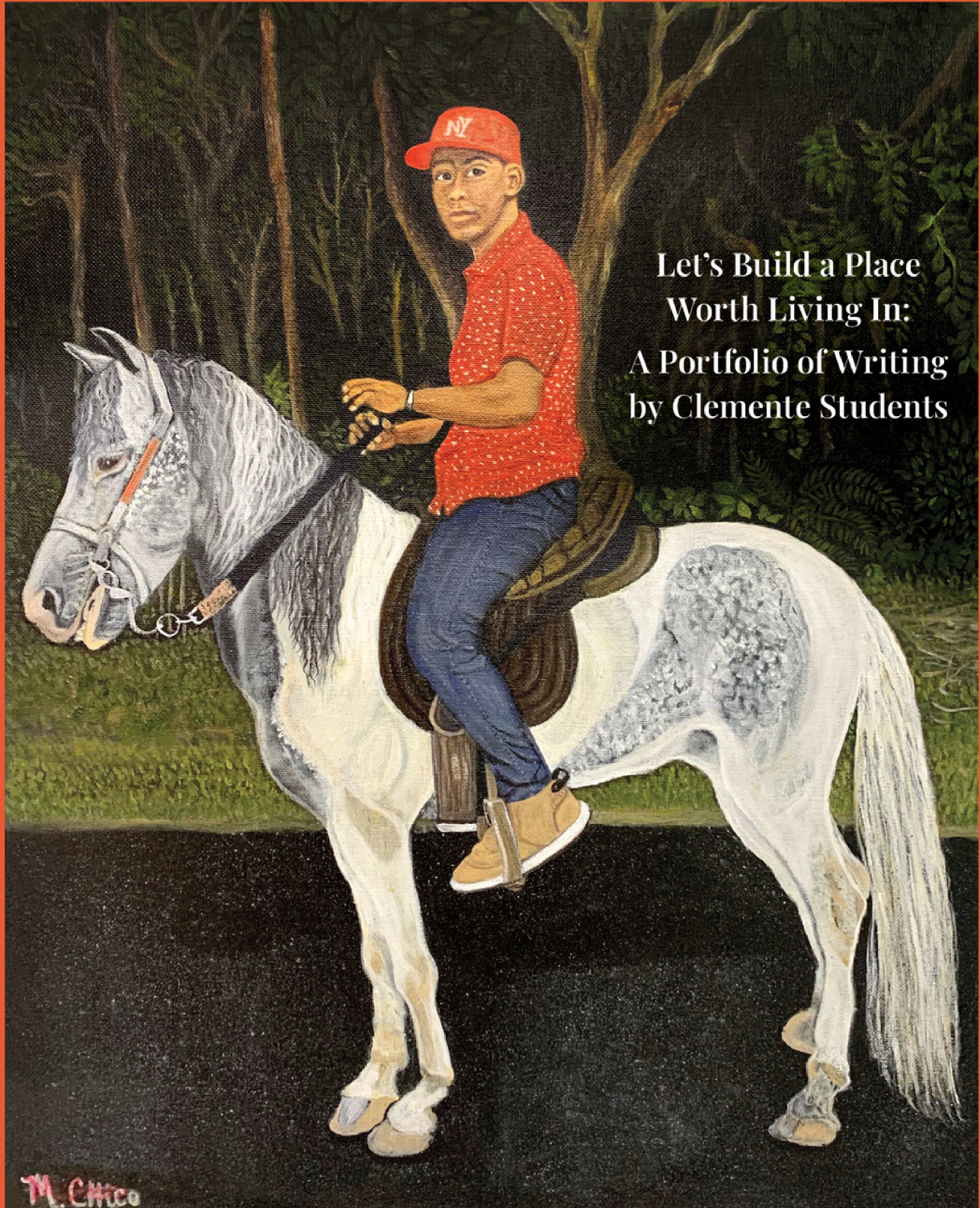
# THE WORCESTER REVIEW

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VOLUME XLIV, NUMBERS 1 & 2

2023 / \$18.00

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Let's Build a Place  
Worth Living In:  
A Portfolio of Writing  
by Clemente Students

*Including 2023 Winners of the WCPA's Annual Frank O'Hara Prize*

# THE WORCESTER REVIEW EDITOR'S REPORT, 2023

Prepared in January 2024 for the WCPA Annual Meeting, March 2024

Volume 44 of *The Worcester Review* arrived in late September, just in time for copies to be hand-delivered to the winners of the WCPA's Frank O'Hara Prize at the annual reading. With the generous assistance of WCPA board member Robert Steele, copies were mailed to contributors and WCPA members shortly thereafter.

In addition to poems by the winners and judge of the annual Frank O'Hara contest, Volume 44 features the work of thirty-four poets and—in the review's first fiction section devoted solely to flash—eighteen fiction writers. Volume 44's striking cover art is by Worcester artist Migdalia Chico.

Volume 44's feature section, "Let's Build a Place Worth Living In: A Portfolio of Writing by Clemente Students" was edited by *TWR* editors and WPI professors Joe Aguilar and Kate McIntyre. In this portfolio, fourteen writers from the Clemente Course in the Humanities share their essays, reflections, and poems.

In addition to finishing their work on Volume 44, in 2023, *TWR* editors began reading submissions for Volume 45. After the success of the adjusted reading period for Volume 44, the review once again received poetry from August through November, and fiction in August and October. As with the previous two reading periods, *TWR* offered fee-free submissions to BIPOC writers, and a fee waiver to any writer who requested one.

(The review received over 840 submissions for Volume 45, roughly 100 more than it received for Volume 44, and more than double its submission numbers for Volume 41, during the last pre-pandemic reading period.)

In staff news: *TWR* welcomed Eve Rifka (fiction), Rachel Lloyd (fiction), and Mandy Gutman-Gonzalez (fiction and poetry) to Volume 45's editorial board. Poetry editor Hope Jordan took on the additional role of interviews and reviews editor. Heather Long plans to step back as a fiction editor in 2024; the editorial board thanks her for her years of service to the review.

Volume 45 will be the last issue I work on as editor. I am delighted to share with the WCPA's members and supporters that writer and Clark University professor Phil Lemos will join *The Worcester Review* as its next editor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn Oliver, Editor, *The Worcester Review*



## Contributors

Rasha Abdulhadi, Joe Aguilar, Faiz Ahmad, Talia Bloch, Wendy BooydeGraaff, Edward Buckbee, Louise Burrell, Angela Chaidez Vincent, Migdalia Chico, Rita Ciresi, Michael Colbert, Douglas Cole, Tarique Cooper, Rebecca Cross, Kinsale Drake, Rebecca Faulkner, Debra Francis, Robbie Gamble, John Garton, Kirk Glaser, Vanessa Unicorn Gonzalez Oyola, Rae Gouirand, CeCe Heard, Kathleen Hellen, Marcy Rae Henry, Matthew E. Henry, Aiden Heung, DJ Hills, Thomas Hobohm, John T. Howard, Irena Kaçi, Jen Karetnick, Candice Kelsey, Gunilla Theander Kester, Mina Khan, Young King, Tawanda Adrian Konde, Tim Love, Larry Madden, Jennifer Martelli, B. Eugene McCarthy, M. Toni McComb, Rodney A. McCr Simmons, April McIntyre, Kate McIntyre, Jory Mickelson, Julian Mithra, Walter Molina, Leshawn Parrish, Ronak Patel, Dani Putney, Kimberly Ramos, Sage Ravenwood, Arnisha Royston, Kaitlin Ruiz, Doreen M Samuels, Jude Samuels, Claire Schaeffer-Duffy, Brian Simoneau, Karen Skolfield, Joannie Stangeland, Dalena Storm, fatima abby tall, Rodrigo Toscano, Heather Truett, Cameron Vanderwerf, Lou Ventura, Don Vo, Katherine Vondy, Monica Wang, Walter Weinschenk, Kathryn Weld, Margot Wizansky, Patrick Wright, Katie M. Zeigler

# PROGRAMMING AT THE WCPA 2023

WCPA sponsored the Thirsty Lab Zoom Readings hosted by Susan Roney O'Brien with technical support by Lex Thomas. Sixteen readings in 2023 with over 400 listeners

Susan along with Beth Sweeney also coordinated the Gregory Stockmal Reading in honor of Stanley Kunitz on September 21st with J.D Scrimgeour as the feature poet at Holy Cross College.

On June 13th, there was a Tribute Zoom Reading for Richard Fox with Richard performing two sets along with other poets reading his works. 83 people zoomed in.

On April 20th, Susan coordinated a Women's Zoom Reading co-sponsored by the Princeton Library. 74 zoomed in.

Poet-Pourri on May 18th was the 2nd time the WCPA sponsored local authors who read from and promote their musings. Nine poets read and 42 attended the 'live' event. Joe Fusco Jr hosted the event.

WCPA co-sponsored Arts in The Garden for a 2nd year on West Boylston Drive in Worcester. Hosted by community organizer Carl Gomes, the bi-weekly event combined the talents of local poets and musicians and averaged 30 patrons.

WCPA also promoted the Poetry Extravaganza, a monthly open mic/feature hosted by Joe Fusco, Jr

at Redemption Rock Brewery (30 plus every month), and the 1st Baseball Poetry Festival on April 28th (Open mics had over 100 in attendance). We also promote Poets Who Are Artists at TidePool Book Store.

The 2023 Frank O'Hara Poetry Contest was judged by Karen Skolfield. Winners were Rebecca Cross, John Garton, Irena Kaci, and Claire Schaeffer-Duffy. There were 126 poetry entries. The award ceremony was on 9/24/23.

Susan Roney O'Brien also ran Zoom poetry workshops at the Worcester Public Library.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joe Fusco, jr.



*Joe Fusco at the Greendale Y*

# THE CLEMENTE COURSE IN THE HUMANITIES, WORCESTER,



Clemente Worcester began its tenth academic year in person at the Worcester Art Museum and Trinity Lutheran Church with a full cohort of 27 students in late September 2023.

Recruiting was accomplished for a second year by Jude Samuels, a 2018 graduate.

64 applications were received and 33 people were interviewed. Three students who had completed last year's class but did not receive the credits available from Bard College, returned to try again. Every year we remain true to our motto, "Once a Clemente student, always a Clemente student".

With great excitement, faculty, graduates, Advisory Board members and guests welcomed the new class and their families at a Community Dinner held in their honor on Tuesday, September 26th at Trinity Lutheran Church. We are thrilled to have professional chef and current student, Louise Burrell, cooking for us this year. After dinner, Children's' Program Managers, Claudia and Jack Bastante, held a spirited drumming circle in the Trinity Lutheran Church gym. Academic orientation followed the drumming at the Worcester Art Museum.

On Thursday, September 28th, many graduates, faculty and supporters joined Community Coordinator, Elizabeth Bacon, as she accepted The Governor's Award in the Humanities from Mass Humanities at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston.

Thanks to the generosity of Mass Humanities, our largest funder and supporter, all students were supplied with Chromebooks and internet connections, if needed. The pandemic and its continuing aftermath continue to take a toll on everyone - students, their children, faculty, and staff alike. The Chromebooks have allowed class to go on-line when necessary. However, it is our belief that The Clemente Course is best taught in person which is now augmented by a new program called "Cook for Clemente" where current students and faculty cook dinner for each other every night. It is important that we all bring our full selves into conversation with each other. Clemente's power lies in the structure of the living classroom, where each participant joins together to "repost the street signs, fight propaganda with poetry and find our way on the long road to knowledge in the aftermath of atrocity." (Jill Lepore, The Last Archive Podcast, titled, "the Inner Front," May 13, 2021.)



We thank our dedicated and talented faculty lead by Academic Director, Amy Richter, for their devotion, inspiring humor, thoughtfulness and creativity.

<https://www.clarku.edu/faculty/profiles/amy-richter/>

Amy Richter, PHD, Chair of the History Department at Clark University

<https://www.wpi.edu/people/faculty/kboudreau>

Kristin Boudreau, PhD, Instructor of Literature, WPI

<https://www.assumption.edu/people-and-departments/directory/elissa-chase-jd>

Elissa Chase, PHD and JD, Instructor of Art History, Assumption

Joined:

<https://www.worcester.edu/Faculty-Profiles/Philosophy/Laura-Wildemann-Kane/>

Laura Kane, PHD, Instructor of Philosophy, Worcester State

<https://www.worcester.edu/Faculty-Profiles/Philosophy/Laura-Wildemann-Kane/>

2022 Summer Bridge Course Instructor, Lucia Knoles, PHD, Assumption University,

(<https://assumption.edu/people-and-departments/directory/lucia-z-knoles-phd>)

invented a totally new pedagogy which she calls a “Story Circle.”

We recruited a mix of new students and graduates for this hybrid course. The course resulted in the culminating, self-printed publication, "Writing Our Way Home: Life Stories by members of the 2023 Worcester Clemente Storytelling Circle" This collection of student work is also published on [www.masshumanities.org](http://www.masshumanities.org). We supplied an additional three graduates with computers so that they could participate.

Claudia Bastante continued in her leadership role as Clemente Children's Program Manager. She has been supported by her husband, Jack. [www.monanoart.com](http://www.monanoart.com)

With regret and many thanks, we said goodbye to Kourtney Senquiz, PhD., Instructor of Critical Thinking and Writing, Clark University. Current faculty assumed the role of teaching the Critical Thinking and Writing strand together.

Our 2024 Graduation will be held for the third year in The American Antiquarian Society's Antiquarian Hall on Sunday, May 12th at 2pm. Please join us. All are welcome. In celebration of our 10th year in Worcester, during the month of May, we will be staging a public art action in collaboration with The Inside/Out project (<http://www.insideoutproject.net>) and the Worcester Art Museum on the exterior wall of the museum's Lancaster Street entrance.

We thank our wonderful Advisory Board; our funding partners: Mass Humanities, The Alden Trust, The Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Clark University, QCC, Anna Maria College and The Clearbrook Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation; our program hosts: the Worcester Art Museum and Trinity Lutheran Church; our faculty, alumni, and students for another inspiring year of thoughtful dialogue and community making during these challenging and fractious times. Most importantly, we thank the WCPA for everything it does to make Clemente Worcester possible. It is a joy to be under your roof.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Bacon, Community Coordinator, the Clemente Course in the Humanities, Worcester, MA



# 2023 STANLEY KUNITZ MEDAL AWARDED TO PAUL SZLOSEK

The 9th Stanley Kunitz Medal was conferred at a ceremony on Thursday, July 27th from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Worcester Historical Museum. The recipient, Paul Szlosek, was honored for his lifelong commitment to poetry, therefore emulating the spirit and energy of Worcester native, Stanley Kunitz (1905-2006). Speakers included William Wallace, Executive Director of the museum, and WCPA board member Susan Roney-O'Brien, who read remarks submitted by president Elizabeth Bacon.

Committee members Joe Fusco Jr., Heather J. Macpherson, and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney read poems by Stanley Kunitz, followed by a splendid keynote reading by Paul Szlosek, which thanks to videographer Tim Millunzi, can be viewed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXdSN57UDHg>.

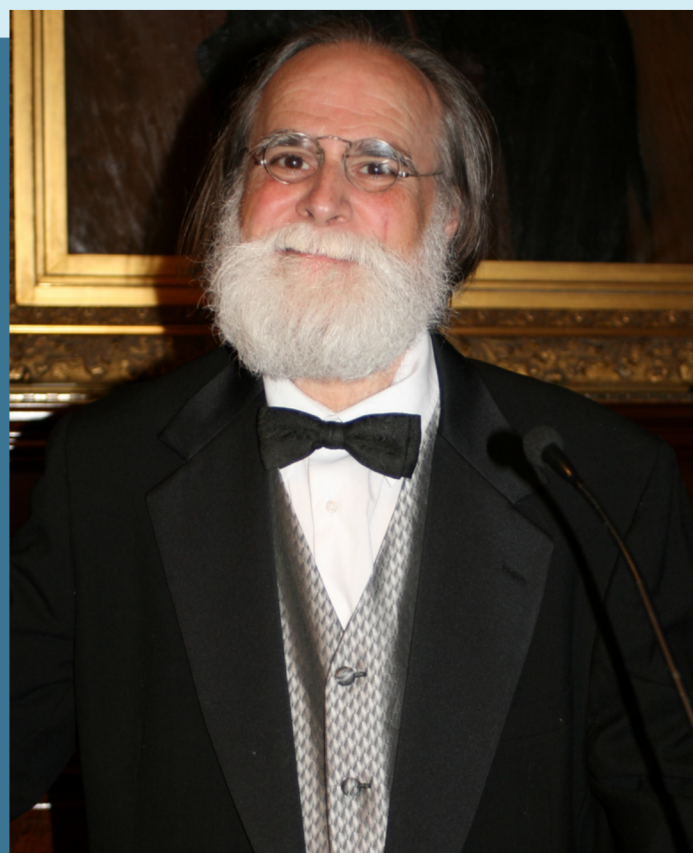
Announced was the additional honor bestowed on past living and future Kunitz Medal recipients: Honorary Lifetime WCPA memberships to Carle Johnson, Fran Quinn, Judith Ferrara, Susan Roney-O'Brien, Eve Rifkah, Tony Brown, and Paul Szlosek.

The event closed with a 1991 recording of Stanley Kunitz reading "My Mother's Pears." Music was supplied by poet and musician Michael Milligan. Refreshments followed, including a sheet cake displaying an image of the medal, which was donated by Carol Stockmal, curator/owner of the Stanley Kunitz Boyhood Home.

Joe Fusco Jr. donated beverages, and committee member Heather Macpherson donated desserts. Added to the program in 2023 was a Power Point slide show featuring images from the eight previous ceremonies.

Photographer John Gaumond created two memento booklets of this event, one of which was presented to Paul Szlosek and the other archived with the collection housed at 4 Woodford Street. Paul's name was added to the medal plaque, also donated by Carol Stockmal, which displays all recipients' names and is kept at Woodford Street.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judith Ferrara, Chair Committee Members:  
Joe Fusco Jr., John Hodgen, Heather J. Macpherson, Susan Elizabeth Sweeney



Paul Szlosek, Kunitz Medal Recipient 2023

# THE DAN LEWIS MEMORIAL POETRY FELLOWSHIP FUND

## About the Fellowship:

After his death, Dan Lewis's family created an endowment with the Worcester County Poetry Association to support an annual fellowship bequest in his name to provide an aspiring Worcester County poet the means to fulfill a need in that poet's development that might otherwise go unmet. The 2024 Fellowship award will be \$2,500.

## About Dan Lewis:

Dan was born in Oakland, California, and moved to Wilton, Connecticut, with his family in 1960. He earned a BA from the University of Connecticut, majoring in English. After a number of jobs to put food on the table, Dan moved to Provincetown and worked as a Librarian. In 1988, Dan relocated to Worcester, Massachusetts, and set up his own business – Lewis Editorial Services. After 5 years of struggling to make it work, Dan worked at several computer companies, writing and editing user manuals and being an all-around fix-it guy.

Dan started writing poetry and short stories in his teens and did it sporadically through college and while in Provincetown. Upon moving to Worcester, he became acquainted and involved with the Worcester County Poetry Association. This was a turning point in his poetry as he was now in a community that offered support, assistance, and encouragement. Through this organization, he learned about many opportunities and, with assistance, could attend the Dodge Festival several times and the Monadnock Pastoral Writers Retreat. In addition, upon retirement, he had the time to publish three poetry collections and one chapbook.

Dan was a long-term member of the Four by Four visual artists and poets. He also mentored other poets. Through all these experiences, Dan became the poet he was, and understood the need for funds and/or time needed for someone to excel.

Dan published five poetry collections, was the Frank O'Hara Prize winner in 2012, and was awarded the Stanley Kunitz Medal in 2016. He described himself this way: "Lives on the edge of Worcester's Patch Reservoir. Old enough to know better, he finds himself walking in the world agog." He called "Manifesto" his statement to the world.

## Manifesto

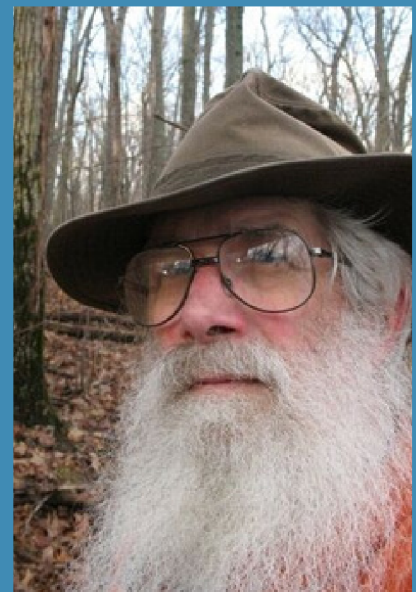
This is exactly what I mean.

In the middle of the half-acre dump, piled with broken bricks,  
old tires, and the street sweeper's waste,  
two bright sunflowers stand beatified in the slant light of morning.

We must over and over again bear witness to the wonder of this world.  
After the bone-rich ash is shoveled from the ovens,  
after the scarred witnesses have told their terrible tales,  
after the weapons have been gathered and burned,  
someone must still have voice to sing.

This is the only ground we have to stand on,  
this scorched and defiled garden.

It is here we must raise the cry  
until our throats tear with the fierce hymn of praise.



Dan Lewis

Judges have selected Hubbardston, Massachusetts, resident Laura DiCaronimo as the first recipient of the annual Dan Lewis Poetry Fellowship.

DiCaronimo, a Fitchburg State alum, runs The Openest Mic as a way to bring poets together in community. She said, "I am personally proud that ten of the sixty-five participants have never publicly read before; the energy in those rooms is just that good."

DiCaronimo, whose poetry has been featured in the Rain Poetry project on Worcester sidewalks noted, "I've been creating connections: Poets are collaborating on rap tracks! Politicians running for office have written beautiful poems about their home cities and city councilors have used 'The Openest' part of the Openest Mic to perform spoken word pieces about the closing of a local hospital."

DiCaronimo, who is also licensed optician, said she plans to use much of the \$2,500 fellowship to further that commitment to creating a poetry community.

The fellowship was created in memory of poet Dan Lewis to support the poetry aspirations of a poet residing in Worcester County when there may be limited other opportunities for support of those endeavors. DiCaronimo will receive the bulk of the award in a check presented by Ann Lewis, widow of poet Dan Lewis at the annual meeting of the Worcester County Poetry Association.

Her selection was a unanimous decision by judges Kyle Potvin, Exeter, N.H., poet; Tony Brown, Uxbridge, Mass., poet; and Rodney Obien, archivist, The Monadnock Special Poetry Collection, Keene State College, Keene, N.H.

### **Fellowship Guidelines:**

The fellowship limits the use of the funds provided to supporting, nurturing, and developing the literary capacities of an annual recipient poet via education, engagement, related travel expenses, and literary research and production that will best nurture that poet's creativity. The applicant must be a legal resident of Worcester County, Massachusetts.

The applicant will demonstrate how this fellowship will fill a need not otherwise easily available to the poet. Upon notification, the recipient will receive 80% of the fellowship award to be awarded at the WCPA's Annual Meeting. The remaining 20% will be paid upon the WCPA receiving a final certification to the community (within 30 days of the conclusion of the fellowship, which generally would arise one year after the award.) Such a report could include, as examples, a reading, publication, or talk showcasing how the fellowship supported the poet's development. This report should include a one-page document detailing the fellowship's support to the poet.

Three judges will independently judge each application to determine the 2024 recipient fellow to ensure as much equity as possible.

### **Deadlines:**

There is a two-month window to submit an application for this fellowship. Beginning September 1, 2023, applications will be accepted via the below link. The application window closes at midnight, November 1, 2023. Applications received after closing will not be considered. The fellowship recipient will be notified after January 15, 2024. The presentation of the award will occur at the 2024 Annual meeting of the WCPA.

### **About the Application:**

Submissions will be entered via webpage at WCPA website for basic info plus file attachments of required information such as poetry and resume.

Respectfully submitted,  
Irena Kaci

# FRANK O'HARA PRIZE

The WCPA Annual Poetry Contest: The Frank O'Hara Prize is open to all members, Worcester County residents and students, and employees of Worcester County businesses. Winning poems are published in *The Worcester Review*, and the poets are honored with a winners' reading.

The contest is open for submissions in January each year, closes on March 31st and winners are normally notified by the end of June. A Winners' Reading is held in September.

## Contest History

The Annual Poetry Contest is one of the earliest annual events established by the Association. It seeks to highlight and recognize the diverse poetic voices of central Massachusetts through publication and public readings.

In a ceremony held at The Worcester Art Museum on November 19, 2009, the Worcester County Poetry Association's annual poetry contest, established in 1973, was renamed the "The WCPA Annual Poetry Contest: The Frank O'Hara Prize" in honor of central Massachusetts born poet Frank O'Hara, and grateful recognition of The O'Hara Family for its support of the literary community.

American Poet Frank O'Hara (1926-1966) grew up in Grafton, Massachusetts, attended St. John's High School in

Worcester, and studied piano at the New England Conservatory in Boston.

After serving in the U.S. Navy during WWII, O'Hara returned to musical studies at Harvard through the GI Bill. His love of contemporary music and visual art led to an interest in poetry. Frank O'Hara graduated from Harvard in 1950 with a degree in English, attended graduate school at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and moved to New York, where he found work at the Museum of Modern Art. O'Hara had known John Ashbery at Harvard and joined Ashbery, Kenneth Koch, and others in what became known as the New York School of Poets.

O'Hara's *Meditations in an Emergency* (1956) and *Lunch Poems* (1964) reflect the inspiring energy and excitement of the New York art scene, which included literary friends and artists such as Larry Rivers, Jackson Pollock, and Jasper Johns. O'Hara wrote essays and reviews for *ArtNews*, as well as writing for various Museum of Modern Art publications. Frank O'Hara died in an accident while vacationing on Fire Island.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joe Fusco



# WRITE UP ON RAIN POETRY 2024 FOR ANNUAL MEETING

Our third year of the Rain Poetry project opened our call for poems beyond the city of Worcester to Worcester County.



## Our 2023 Rain Poets included:

- Evan Plante with “Staying Power”
- Gertrude Malesi with “[Hatua za Wwenyeji]” (Swahili for “A gait that belongs”)
- Jan Davini with “[The city beats in my heart]”
- Aidan Brueckner with “Phantom Limb Syndrome”
- Mark Wagner with “Flying Out of Worcester”
- Laura DiCaronimo with “Hot Drops”
- Chloe Mascitelli with “[The world feels lightest in Worcester]”
- John Zywar with “Indian Lake”
- Daniel Gregoire with “Worcester Time”
- Lisa Knight with “Rain Magic”

- Paul Szlosek with “[When Worcester was Worcester]”
- David Ginsburg with “Forever Worcester”
- Emily Haley with “History”

## 2023 Rain Poetry Honorable Mentions

- John Zywar with “Interlude”
- David Ginsburg with “Footsteps”

Our project was funded entirely by grants this year, \$250 from Cornerstone Bank and \$1616 from the Worcester Arts Council. We continued to work with Rain.Works to provide us with hydrophobic paint and stencils.

We accepted poems through the end of July, judged blind, and announced our Rain Poets in mid-August. Our judges included Worcester Poet Laureate Oliver de la Paz, WCPA Board Member Katherine Gregoire, Clemente Graduate Vanessa Gonzalez Oyola, 2021 Rain Poet Brett Larrobino, and Clark student Natalia Botero. In September, we represented the WCPA at stART on the Street, Worcester's annual art festival, and shared a tent with the Worcester Writers' Collective. It was a rainy fall, but we were finally able to prepare and place our stencils by the first week in October with the help of many of our Rain Poets, past and present, and incredible volunteers.

The 2023 Rain Poetry Reading is planned for Sunday, February 25, 2024 from 2-3pm at the JMAC Pop-Up space. We will launch the 2024 Call for Poems at this event, and expand our project to Worcester-area schools, thanks to a generous grant from the Academy of American Poets, made to us as part of a fellowship awarded to Oliver de la Paz.

Respectfully submitted, Kate Gregoire.



From left to right: Kate Gregoire, Elijah Johnson, Gertrude Malesi, and Evan Plante at Broadmeadow Brook



Vanessa Gonzalez-Oyola from Clark University



Hatua za Mwenyeji  
Hatua za upendo zadekeza mpendwa WOO  
Bikira aliye fichwa vilimani saba  
Yake ni kilele na mafanikio  
Lakini mwenyeji natembea nimesongwa  
Nashangazwa wanavyojipigania  
Ghini ya madaraja wametulia  
Wanakula makombo ya baridi kali  
Joshu na vijoto vyawaramba  
Pengine Masika yataosha shida zao  
Kwa mavuno wakusanyika wamelemewa.  
Unyevu uwatakase.

- Gertrude Malesi

Gertrude Malesi and family at Crompton Collective

# MAPPING WORCESTER IN POETRY NEWS, MARCH 2024

<https://worcestercountypoetry.org/mapping-worcester-in-poetry/>  
 Contact: Susan Elizabeth Sweeney, [ssweeney@holycross.edu](mailto:ssweeney@holycross.edu)



Here's the latest news about Mapping Worcester in Poetry, an initiative funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (through Scholarship in Action at Holy Cross) and directed by Susan Elizabeth "Beth" Sweeney, with the Worcester County Poetry Association as community partner and Katherine Gregoire as liaison with the WCPA. MWiP identifies, documents, and marks sites related to some of the city's best-known poets—including Stanley Kunitz, Elizabeth Bishop, Charles Olson, Frank O'Hara, Etheridge Knight, Mary Fell, and Chris Gilbert—while nurturing brand-new poetry about places in Worcester and Central Massachusetts.

## MWiP Project Update

Beth is working with two new student research associates, Ava Marena and Anahi Paulino Rumaldo, who locate historical photos, conduct research, edit copy, and are planning an event to celebrate poems set in our city's parks. Another student applied for a summer research grant to help complete two tours related to Frank O'Hara and study aspects of his art. MWiP was the subject of articles in the Telegram, Worcester Magazine, and Holy Cross Magazine and a Scholarship in Action poster.



## Worcester Poetry Tours

A unit on Worcester poets in Beth's African American Poetry class (spring 2023) included a visit by Catherine Reed and a tour featuring the site of Etheridge Knight's Free People's Poetry Workshop; an on-site reading of Chris Gilbert's "Pleasant Street"; stops on the Worcester Black Heritage Trail; and dinner at Fatima's Café.

Students in Poetry & Poetics (fall 2023) toured sites related to Stanley Kunitz (Green Street and Vernon Hill) and Mary Fell (South Main), and visited Bishop's grave.

The Bishop tour and one Kunitz tour are available online; others are nearly complete. Eventually, we will build these tours' narrative, thematic, historical, and biographical facets into an interactive story-mapped website.

### Elizabeth Bishop Graveside Readings

MWiP hosted two annual readings at Bishop’s grave in Hope Cemetery. Our celebration of her birthday on February 8 featured a cake made by Claire Mowbray Golding and inspired a new poem by Susan Roney-O’Brien, available on our website. On Oct. 6, Kate Gregoire’s daughter Grace listened raptly to several poems—including a choral reading of “Twelve O’Clock News”—beneath an umbrella.

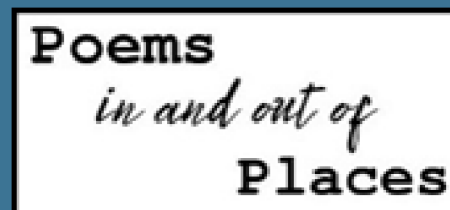


### Triple-Decker Poems

Each year, Preservation Worcester—a stakeholder in MWiP—celebrates Jane Week to honor Jane Jacobs, a journalist and advocate for thoughtful urban development. In May 2023, the celebration featured “A Closer Look: Worcester’s Three Deckers,” an illustrated talk by docents Marilyn Polito and Jan Parent that included discussion of triple-deckers associated with Stanley Kunitz, Charles Olson (pictured below: 4 Norman Street), Christopher Gilbert, and Mary Fell, based on research by MWiP.

### Poems in and out of Places

MWiP’s one-time contest to inspire new poems about public spaces in the city attracted almost a hundred entries by poets from established authors to schoolchildren. The contest was launched in April 2022 with “City in Motion,” a reading of published poems set in Worcester, and free public workshops on writing poems about historical spaces (with Susan Edwards Richmond) and Worcester’s changing neighborhoods (with Tony Brown). A collaborative poem about the physical space of “The White Room”—where one workshop was held—is now displayed there and is now available on our website.



In April and May 2023, we sponsored two more free public workshops (one with Katherine Gregoire and one with Irena Kaci and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney) to draft poems or receive feedback before the contest deadline in June 2023. The contest, judged by Worcester Poet Laureate Oliver de la Paz, has resulted in two dozen winners as well as several honorable mentions. Selected poems will be shared with the community through readings, displays on site, video recordings, publication, and an exhibit.

# MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR 2023 EOY REPORT

I took over the Membership Coordinator position in June of 2023 and it took me a couple of months to get the hang of it.

## Concerns:

- There was no documentation as to what the Membership Coordinator does and how. I prepared a document outlining what I have discerned as the process. The Board needs to review and make sure all information is accurate.
- The online donation process sends an email to the Membership Google Account, but it is confusing. The emails contain information for direct donations (no membership info), and the Clemente Project. This is a time consuming task.
- What does a membership in WCPA give someone. With all events on the website, and no longer doing Broadsides is the only benefit getting the TWR?
- The amounts reported on Financials do not agree with membership income on the membership report.

## In Process:

- The website is being redone, and the person doing it is looking to see if the memberships and donations can be directed to appropriate people as well as to the treasurer.
- Determine what benefits a member receives
- Four categories were approved by the Board in October and are being set up as the web site is in the process of being redone. The donation levels of \$75 plus are being moved out of membership levels and added to the donations page. These are the 4 membership levels:
  - Starving artist/student - \$12
  - Senior - \$20
  - Individual - \$35
  - Family - \$50
- And the Board will be defining the responsibilities of the Membership Secretary versus Membership Coordinator and if both are both needed.

## Statistics as of end of 2023 Fiscal Year:

- From 2012 to 2021 FY 192 Members have not renewed
- In 2023 sent email messages to 2022 lapsed memberships and 35 did not renew
- Sent renewal emails to all listed as 2023 renewals and 34 did not renew and this includes David Hallock which I have been told renewed but no info as to date and amount and Dennis Caldwell lacking information as to amount of check..
- As of 12/31/23 there are 148 memberships of which
  - 10 Lifetime members
  - 6 Honorary or Prize awards
  - 14 New Members
  - 1 gift membership
- See the Final Month by Month information at the bottom of report

Respectfully,

Ann Lewis, Membership Coordinator

Final Membership Report - FY 2023  
As of 12/31/23

	Members		Members By Level						
	Check	Square	\$12	\$30	\$50 - 75	\$75 - 150	\$150 - 250	\$250 - 1,000	\$1,000 +
January	11	0	4	5	1			1	
February	12	8	6	8	2	1	2		1
March	1	2		2			1		
April	1	2	1	2					
May	2	0	1		1				
June	0	2			1	1			
July	0	7	2	4	1				
August	4	8	4	1	2	3	1		1
September	8	4	6	4		1	1		
October	2	12	2	9	3				
Novemebe	2	6	2	5		1			
December	3	11	4	4	1	4	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Member Status	Current	Lifetime	2023 Lapsed	Honorary
	148	10	31	30

**Total Income Received = \$7,103.00**

Notes; Received Notice of Checks Received/Deposited in December in January  
\$12 = 1 \$30=1 \$75=1

# NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT 2024

The nominating committee would like to place in nomination the following members to serve on the 2024 WCPA Board of Directors. The names in bold print indicate members who have agreed to serve on the Executive Committee. The board will vote to approve Executive Committee members at its first meeting following membership approval of the board slate at the Annual Meeting.

Joe Aguilar

**Elizabeth Bacon (President)**

Rob Baker

Sam Capradae

Tarique Cooper

**Mary Driscoll (Treasurer)**

**Joe Fusco, Jr. ( Vice President-Programming)**

Kate Anderson Gregoire

Brett Iarrobino

Jay Lavelle

**Phil Lemos, (Managing Editor, TWR)**

Ann Lewis

Rodger Martin

Kate McIntyre

Oliver de la Paz

Robert Steele

Beth Sweeney

David Thoreen

**Linda Warren (Secretary)**

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Anderson Gregoire & Rodger Martin

January 21, 2024



The membership is invited to serve on one of the board committees which meet every other month.  
Committees:

Finance: Chair: Mary Driscoll, Treasurer,

Communications: Chair, Linda Warren,

College Contest Co-chair - Irena Kaci,

Program: Chair, Joe Fusco, VP Programming,

Competitive Awards: Chair, to be elected by the Committee

Stanley Kunitz Medal: Chair, Judy Ferrera (Term ends 7/2024)

Frank O'Hara Prize: Chair, Joe Fusco

Dan Lewis Fellowship: Chair, Rodger Martin

Elizabeth Bishop and Ethridge Knight Prizes: Chair, Beth Sweeney (NOTE: co- chair needed)



## Worcester County Poetry Association

Growing Poetry Since 1971

# Worcester County Poetry Association

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