

Moab Poets and Writers

Fall / Winter 2004

Volume 1, Issue 2

The Moab Poets and Writers newsletter

In This Issue

Cowboy Poetry Event

Note from the Board

Moab Poet

Utah Writer Passes On

Find It on the Web

Results from UAC Contest

Writing Exercise

From the MP&W Board

We want to thank each of you for your support of Moab Poets and Writers over the past year. We have enjoyed the workshops, the readings, the putlucks, and especially the creative energy of our members and visitors. You enliven the organization and we appreciate your participation. As a board, we have gone through several transitions. After our recent Board Retreat, we believe we are emerging with greater clarity. We have two new board members, Tom Eyler and Pam Allred, who will add new insight and enthusiasm to our board. We welcome back Robin Straub -- hi Robin!

As some of you are aware, we have made some specific changes to the MP&W schedule of events. For several reasons, we have switched from monthly "Final Friday" readings to Seasonal Readings, which will be held once a quarter. We hope the additional time between readings will lend more time for writing and that our Seasonal Readings will brim with new works and energy. We plan to continue publishing a quarterly newsletter and add updates to our Web site (thanks to Ann Gordon for both of these), and we look forward to seeing familiar faces back at our readings, workshops, and other events. Remember to check our Web site: <http://www.geocities.com/moabpoetsandwriters/>

The next Seasonal Reading and Open Mic event will be held at Eklectika on **Friday, December 3rd**. Eggnog, hot apple cider and cookies will be served.

Season's Greetings!

2nd Annual Cowboy Poetry Event

In February 2004, Moab Poets and Writers sponsored our first Cowboy Poetry event. By everyone who attended or participated, the event was hailed as a resounding success! This event has been named **Moab's Western Stars**, to reflect a broader perspective of our Western culture. Cowboy poetry and music remain a big part of the program, but this year's event has been expanded. Our many thanks to Rusty Salmon for her hours and hours of work as event coordinator.

The 2005 **Moab's Western Stars** event will be held Presidents' Day weekend, February 18-21. Mark your calendars, watch for flyers and advertisements, and check out our new Web site: <http://www.moabwesternstars.com>

Utah Writer Passes On

Ellen Meloy of Bluff, Utah, a remarkable neighbor, artist, naturalist, and award-winning writer, died on Thursday, November 4. Ellen lived with her husband Mark Meloy in a house overlooking the San Juan River.

Ellen's work not only captivated readers in Utah, but gained respect around the world. Her book, *The Anthropology of Turquoise*, was nominated for the Pulitzer prize in nonfiction.

The Boston Globe described Ellen Meloy's writing as 'spirited and intelligent, as vivid and vibrant as the land itself is dry and spare.' Her books, *Raven's Exile*, *The Last Cheater's Waltz*, and *The Anthropology of Turquoise* earned several awards including the Utah Book Award and the Whiting Foundation Writer's Award. Her last book, *Eating Stone*, is approaching publication.

Her commentaries on her desert home were frequently featured on Utah Public Radio, and her insight and generosity as a teacher encouraged many students. Earlier this year, Ellen held a writing workshop in Moab at the request of Moab Poets and Writers. We will miss her generous spirit. Please see Jose Knighton's a poem for Ellen, below.

Total Eclipse for Ellen Meloy

by Jose Knighton

The harvest moon has been stolen away
at the peak of her fullness and brilliance!
That sudden shadow, empty and immense,
as wide as our world or our stunned dismay

leaves us stranded on this coldest, darkest night.
How I wish this metaphor were only
skin deep or held some ambiguity,
but her language was as deep as delight,

deep as the river, deep as deep could go.
I imagine the stalled and stopped San Juan,
refusing to be her Styx or Rubicon,
waiting for her before it dares to flow.

But her eclipse's light will not return
however long our sun decides to burn.

Results from the 46th Annual Utah Original Writing Competition sponsored by the Utah Arts Council

Check out the 2004 Utah Original Writing Competition results online. Read about the contest's winning entries at: <http://arts.utah.gov/literature/winners.html> The UAC Literature Program named 18 winners in seven categories, including novel, non-fiction book, collection of poems, juvenile book, poetry, short story, and personal essay.

In our region of the state, **Sandra Skouson of Monticello** took first place for her collection of poems, named *Woman Without a Net*.

For information about the next competition, visit the UAC Web site at:
<http://arts.utah.gov/literature/competition.html>

Find It on the Web

Nebula Awards - FAQ

<http://www.sfga.org/awards/faqsmaam.htm/>

Jeffrey A. Carver, Chairman of the Nebula Awards® Committee, has posted an informative page on the Science Fiction Writers of America site. On this page, Jeffrey answers the most frequently asked questions about submitting a sci-fi or fantasy book for the Nebula Award. Written in an informal style, the information offered on this page is informative, even for those writers who don't write sci-fi or who never plan on submitting a book. Jeffrey should know what he's talking about; he is the author of fourteen sci-fi novels.

Moab Poet

Taking Leave

by Joan Gough

Still November morning after the first hard freeze
The mulberry leaves drop by tens and pairs
Clicking on the pavement.
The tree doesn't protest their going.
The leaves don't cling and cry out to stay.
I marvel at such acceptance.
The mulberry stands mute,
her skirt of leaves at her feet.

Writing Exercise

Using Verbs

In September, Robert Dana, Iowa's Poet Laureate, visited Moab. During his visit, MP&W invited him to hold a writing workshop at the MIC.

In the workshop, Robert challenged participants to write a poem where each stanza (or line) begins with a verb. As an example, Robert used one of Gary Snyder's poems, **North Beach Alba**. Two lines of this poem are quoted below:

*walking half-drunk in a strange pad
making it out to the cool gray
san francisco dawn --*

Give this technique a try on your next poem!

Read some of Gary Snyder's poetry --

<http://www.wenaus.com/poetry/snyder.html>

Read more about Robert Dana --

<http://www.poems.com/mornidan.htm>



Moab Poets & Writers Membership

General Membership - \$18 Students and seniors - \$15 Sponsoring Business - \$35

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Check here if your contact information can be added to the membership mailing list

General Areas of Interests (prose, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, etc.): _____

(Please include membership payment with this form and mail to: MP&W, 59 So. Main, PMB 123, Moab, UT 84532)

Book Review by Mara Shurgot

Mountains Beyond Mountains

by Tracy Kidder, Pulitzer Prize winning author
Publisher: Random House

In a time of confusion, the clarity of Dr. Paul Farmer's vision emboldens and heartens. In *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, Tracy Kidder, Pulitzer Prize-winning author, profiles Dr. Paul Farmer's tireless quest to bring health care to Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. The title is a Haitian proverb: Beyond every mountain there is another; beyond every challenge, there is another.

Dr. Farmer's emphatic desire to treat and prevent HIV, tuberculosis, child and maternal mortality and chronic malnutrition led him to create Partners in Health, a non-profit organization focused on raising money and awareness of Haiti's conditions. Dr. Farmer has challenged traditional philosophies surrounding international health care, including going up against the World Health Organization.

He and his team expanded their campaign to treat multi-drug resistant tuberculosis in Peru and the Russian prison system. Dr. Farmer's efforts bring much needed treatment to some of the poorest and sickest people in the world. *Mountains Beyond Mountains* offers a glimpse of one person's ability to impact the world.

Thanks to Ann Gordon for creating these Newsletters.

Moab Poets and Writers
59 South Main, Suite 3, PMB 123
Moab, UT 84532

<http://www.geocities.com/moabpoetsandwriters/>