



# VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

## JULY 2023 NEWSLETTER

Website address: [www.voicesisrael.com](http://www.voicesisrael.com)

Amuta No. 58-019-703-6

### **President**

Judy Koren  
Mobile: 054-741-7860  
[president.voices@gmail.com](mailto:president.voices@gmail.com)

### **Secretary**

Pesach Rotem  
Mobile: 052-510-4720  
[secretary.voices@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.voices@gmail.com)

### **Treasurer**

Chanita Millman  
Tel: 02-653-6770  
[millmanm@inter.net.il](mailto:millmanm@inter.net.il)

### **Membership Coordinator**

Yochanan Zaquantov  
Mobile: 053-708-9140  
[zaquantov@gmail.com](mailto:zaquantov@gmail.com)

### **Workshop Coordinator**

Elana Dorfman  
Mobile: 054-668-6513  
[elanado@gmail.com](mailto:elanado@gmail.com)

### **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- President's Letter**
- July Meeting Dates**
- Welcome New Member**
- Reuben Rose Competition**
- Kudos to Our Members!**
- An AI Poetry Experiment**
- Crossroads Workshop**
- Calls for Submissions**

### **Fourth of July**



### **Quatorze Juillet**



# VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Poets,

It's submission time! -- the **Reuben Rose Competition** opens on July 10<sup>th</sup> and runs till October 10<sup>th</sup>. As I mentioned last month, we've **updated the prizes and entry fees** which had become seriously undervalued after not being raised for over a decade. The First, Second and Third Prizes will now be \$750, \$250, and \$100 respectively. That's just over a 50% increase altogether. The entry fees are going up by less: a quarter to a third: to \$8, \$16 and \$24 (instead of \$6, \$12 and \$18) for one, three and six poems respectively. This is still only on par with the cheapest entry fees we've found for other competitions.

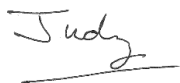
On June 19<sup>th</sup> we held our **Zoom mini-workshop, "Crossroads,"** attended by 15 participants (out of 19 registered). Dina Yehuda led us in a consideration of the choices we make in life, using as example the Biblical story of Naomi and Ruth as seen by various artists and poets. Dina is a wonderful presenter and feedback was very enthusiastic. As usual we're preparing a PDF chapbook which will be distributed to all participants. **Last call: if you haven't yet sent me your poem(s) for inclusion in it, please do so right away.**

We've also finalized the production of the Voices Israel Anthology and have sent it to the printer. It should be ready for distribution sometime in the first half of this month.

Since 2020, we have been uploading the Anthology to EBSCO, a major database producer to which most academic and many public libraries subscribe. As the original 3-year contract with them came up for review, I have negotiated with them a commitment to make the poems available in their main Poetry And Culture database, with a fixed annual licensing payment of \$1000 a year (the previous license was pay-per-view and the anthology wasn't in their main database so it didn't net us much). Now another major database company, Proquest, has also requested a license to index the Anthology, including back issues, and I'm negotiating the terms with them. Let's all remember that, apart from bring us a small revenue stream, these databases are one way of publicizing our work to the general public – so again, do remember to submit your poems to both the Reuben Rose Competition and the Anthology. A check of past years shows that a decade ago, the anthology received over twice as many submissions as it does today and correspondingly published twice as many poems. We can't publish what isn't submitted... or to put it another way: if you want a chance to win the lottery you need to buy a ticket. Your poems now have a chance of reaching an audience far wider than just Voices Israel members.

Sadly, we still have no Publicity Officer. I'm therefore appealing to all our members to **publicize our events – e.g. now, the Reuben Rose Competition – in your Facebook pages, blogs, and other social media accounts.** Spread the word!

And meanwhile, happy writing!



Judy Koren,  
President, Voices Israel.

# VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

## JULY 2023

### MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES

<p><b>SOUTHERN</b></p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Sunday, July 16 at 17:00 – 19:00</p> <p>Coordinator: Miriam Green Tel: 05-738-8640</p> <p><a href="mailto:miriamsgreen@gmail.com">miriamsgreen@gmail.com</a></p>	<p><b>TEL AVIV</b></p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Thursday, July 13 at 7:00 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Mark Levinson Mobile: 054-444-8438</p> <p><a href="mailto:nosnivel@netvision.net.il">nosnivel@netvision.net.il</a></p>	<p><b>JERUSALEM</b></p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Wednesday, July 19 at 7:00 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Avril Meallem Tel: 02-567-0998</p> <p><a href="mailto:aemeallem@gmail.com">aemeallem@gmail.com</a></p>	<p><b>WESTERN GALILEE</b></p> <p>No meetings scheduled. Contact Phyllsie for details.</p> <p>Coordinator: Phyllsie Gross Mobile: 052-874-6880</p> <p><a href="mailto:phyllsie@hotmail.com">phyllsie@hotmail.com</a></p>
<p><b>HAIFA</b></p> <p>Wednesday, July 19 at 19:00 at the home of Elana Dorfman</p> <p>Contact Debbie Golden for details</p> <p>Coordinator: Debbie Golden Mobile: 054-580-6209</p> <p><a href="mailto:deborahg@edu.haifa.ac.il">deborahg@edu.haifa.ac.il</a></p>	<p><b>NETANYA/SHARON</b></p> <p>Monday, 31 July at 7:00 p.m. at Susan Olsburgh's home</p> <p>2/6 Zalman Shazar, 3rd floor Ramat Poleg</p> <p>Coordinator: Susan Olsburgh Mobile: 054-919-3575</p> <p><a href="mailto:olsburgh.susan@gmail.com">olsburgh.susan@gmail.com</a></p>	<p><b>UPPER GALILEE</b></p> <p>Summer Vacation! See you in August!</p> <p>Coordinator: Reuven Goldfarb Tel: 04-697-4105 Mobile: 058-414-0262</p> <p><a href="mailto:poetsprogress@gmail.com">poetsprogress@gmail.com</a></p>	<p><b>GLOBAL GROUP</b></p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Thursday, July 20 at 19:15 Israel time</p> <p>Coordinator: Shoshana Kent Mobile: 052-808-9365</p> <p><a href="mailto:Y2nosh@netvision.net.il">Y2nosh@netvision.net.il</a></p>

# VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

## WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Voices Israel is pleased to extend a warm welcome to our new member:

– **Peter Brav**, Hopewell, New Jersey, USA

## THE NEXT REUBEN ROSE MEMORIAL POETRY COMPETITION

The 34th annual Reuben Rose Memorial Poetry Competition will be open for entries from 10 July until 10 October 2023.

First prize has been increased to \$750, second prize to \$250, and third prize to \$100. The entry fees have been increased by a smaller factor — to \$8 for submitting one poem, or \$16 for submitting three, or \$24 for submitting six.

As before, there will be ten honorable mentions. Among the thirteen winners, no poet will be included twice. All prizewinners and honorable mentions will be published in the coming year's Voices Israel poetry anthology.

Judges are award-winning poet, novelist, and essayist Nancy Shiffrin; Iris Dan, last year's winner of first prize; and David Silverman, last year's winner of second prize. The contest is open to everyone in the world.

Submit original poetry, in English, on any topic. Challenging, humorous, and/or eccentric poetry is welcome, but typographical tricks are discouraged and any illustrations will be discarded. Line limit per poem: 41 lines, including any stanza breaks, dedication, epigraph, etc., but not including the title. Exceptionally lengthy lines count as more than one line.

Poems must be unpublished and must remain unpublished until the list of winners is e-mailed to the entrants. (Target date is December.) Thereafter you may publish and republish as you like; copyright remains with you, and Voices Israel claims only a non-exclusive license to publish and republish the winning poems and honorable mentions in any form, physical or digital. For this competition, poems are not considered previously published if they have appeared in the monthly Voices Israel newsletter or in a Voices Israel workshop chapbook.

Poems are judged without the poets' names. The judges' decision is not subject to appeal. Make sure that your name appears only on the online entry form, not anywhere in the file you send or in the file's name.

To enter, go to <https://voicesisrael.submittable.com/submit> and select the appropriate Submit button.

Questions may be sent to [reubenrosepoetrycompetition@gmail.com](mailto:reubenrosepoetrycompetition@gmail.com).

## A SPECIAL OFFER FROM JOHNMICHAEL SIMON

Johnmichael Simon is offering his chapbook design services to Voices Israel members and friends.

If you would like to possess a beautifully presented and published collection of your own favorite poems, please contact Johnmichael for details of this special offer at [johnmichaelsimon@gmail.com](mailto:johnmichaelsimon@gmail.com).

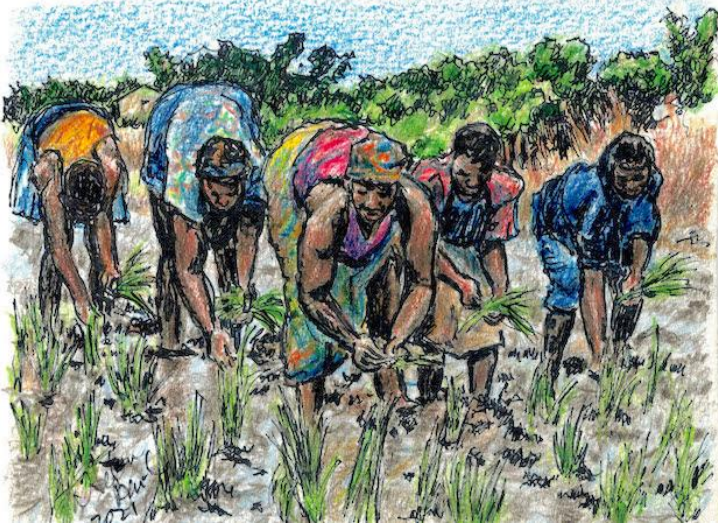
# VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

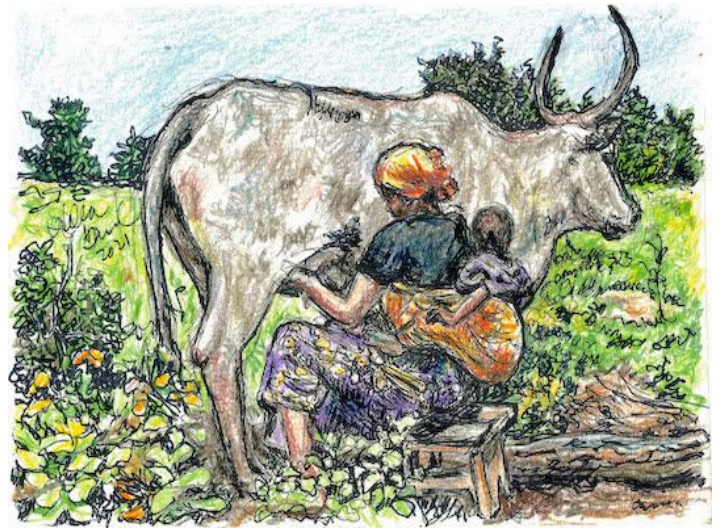
To – the Voices Israel members whose work appeared in the Summer 2023 issue of *Persimmon Tree*:

- **Ann Bar-Dov**: “My Immigrant Story” (poem)
- **Wendy Dickstein**: “Luminosities” (poem)
- **Helen Bar-Lev**: “Women of Ghana” (a series of eleven miniature pencil paintings with ink)

All appear at <https://persimmontree.org/summer-2023/international-poetry/>



Helen Bar-Lev, “Women of Ghana”

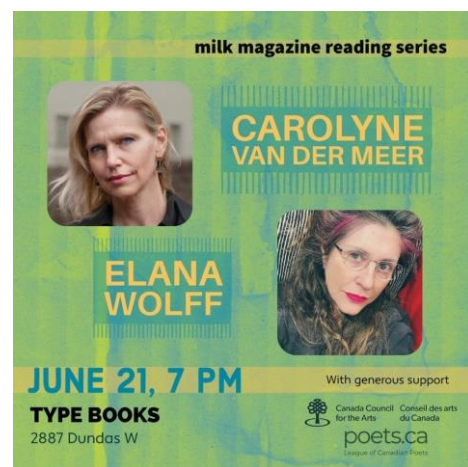


To – **Stanley H. Barkan**, whose poem “Womb Thoughts” was published in the English original and in Irish (Gaelic) translation by Rogha Gabriel at <https://roghahgabriel.blogspot.com/2023/06/smaointe-broinne-womb-thoughts.html>.

To – **Channah Moshe**, whose poems “Borders Crossed” and “Russia Ukraine” were accepted for publication in *Ukraine: A World Anthology of Poems on War*, compiled and edited by Dr. Christopher Okemwa in Kenya.

To – **Isaac Cohen**, who read his poems “The Sanctity of Love” and “The Aroma of Love” with the Fertile Brains on June 4 (<https://youtu.be/hmpDprX9x1A?t=2025>), and his poems “Dear Muse” and “The Trickle of Love” with the Fertile Brains on June 25 (<https://youtu.be/ZGwcBtjMb9k?t=2495>).

To – **Elana Wolff**, who had several successful poetry readings in Toronto during the month of June.



# VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

## NETANYA/SHARON GROUP AI (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE) EXPERIMENT

by Donna Bechar

The seed was sown a few months ago when Judith Fineberg read a poem that her granddaughter had 'written' for her. We were impressed ... and then she gleefully told us that her granddaughter had indeed inputted key words, but that it was the Chatbot that 'wrote' it!

So, our coordinator, Susan Olsburgh, suggested that for this month's meeting, aside from writing one poem using our prompt word, which was 'village', we create an AI poem, using one of the Chatbot apps, inputting the same prompt word. A number of us embarked on this endeavor, with some surprising, intriguing, and amusing results.

What we discovered: The poems were impressive – in iambic pentameter and classic rhyme schemes, descriptive of historically-based villages of yesteryear. Indeed, they were cozy and lovely and saccharine-sweet. What amused us was that they all followed a similar format and wording, with variable configurations, using similar tropes and clichéd scenarios with formulaic predictability.

Our ultimate takeaway conclusion: We do not yet need to be afraid that AI will replace us as unique, thinking-outside-the-box poets! It is no substitute for the individual imagination, personal memories, private experiences, insights, layering of meaning, and unusual connections that a human poet brings to his/her poems. Can AI compose a viable, classical and even lovely, heartwarming, image-filled poem? A resounding yes. However, its programmed algorithms and large language models are not so much creating, as amassing, collecting, collating, and assembling. It is a well-built façade, but can it express the million little things that form the substance and essence of a human poet's soul? We don't think so.

## A SUCCESSFUL CROSSROADS WORKSHOP WITH DINA YEHUDA



Ruth and Naomi, Pieter Lastman, 1624

On June 19, Dina Yehuda led a Zoom workshop on the theme of Crossroads. The fifteen participants started with a reading of chapter one of the Book of Ruth, in which Ruth and Orpah arrive at a crossroads and each must choose whether to move back to Moab or to follow Naomi forward to Judah. We then read an excerpt from "Ode to a Nightingale," in which Keats refers to "the sad heart of Ruth" who "stood in tears amid the alien corn," and we looked at several paintings depicting Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth at the crossroads. Finally, we picked up our pens and wrote our own variations on the theme, and then we shared our creations with the group. After some tweaking and fine-tuning, our works will be collected in a chapbook to be edited by Judy Koren. All participants agreed that it was an excellent workshop, with much appreciation expressed for workshop leader Dina Yehuda.

# VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

## CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

**The Helen Schaible International Sonnet Contest**, run by Chicago Poets & Patrons, is open to all. There are two categories: Traditional Sonnet and Modern Sonnet. Both categories award a First Prize of \$50, Second Prize of \$30, and Third Prize of \$20, plus three Honorable Mentions and three Special Merits per category. You may enter a poem in either or both categories. There is no fee to enter. Deadline to enter is July 15.

Complete guidelines at [www.poetsandpatrons.net/sonnet-contest-rules](http://www.poetsandpatrons.net/sonnet-contest-rules).

**The Winchester Poetry Prize** is awarded in conjunction with the Winchester Poetry Festival in Winchester, England. First prize is £1,000, second prize is £500, and third prize is £250. The competition is open to everyone. Poems may be on any subject and in any form or style, with a maximum length of 40 lines. The winners will be announced live at the Winchester Poetry Festival on Sunday, 15 October 2023, and the winning and commended poems will be published in a competition anthology that will be available on that day. Entry fee is £6 for first poem, £5 for subsequent poems. Deadline to enter is 31 July 2023. Complete guidelines at [www.winchesterpoetryfestival.org/prize](http://www.winchesterpoetryfestival.org/prize).

The **Dream Quest One** Summer Poetry Contest is open. First prize is \$250, second prize is \$125, and third prize is \$50. Poems must be no longer than 30 lines. Previously published poems are accepted and welcomed. Entry fee is \$7 if submitting electronically. Deadline is September 30. *All poems are judged on the basis of originality, creativity, characterization, artistic quality, adherence to the 30-line limit, and the ability to dream.* Complete guidelines at [www.dreamquestone.com/rules](http://www.dreamquestone.com/rules).

**Arboreal Literary Magazine** is a new quarterly journal that is published both in print and online. The theme for the next issue is Illusion. *How to interpret this theme is entirely up to you. We simply invite you to venture into the realms of imagination and unravel the illusions that shroud (or illuminate?) reality.* Deadline is July 15. There is no fee to submit, but there is an option to pay \$2.50 for an expedited response within 7 business days. Complete guidelines at <https://arborealmag.com/submissions/>.

**Spillway** is an annual print literary journal. Submit up to five poems. *We are in search of well-crafted poetry that is smart, imaginative, honest, and engaging.* Previously published poems are welcome. Submission fee is \$10. *This nominal fee gets you a free copy of the Spillway you are submitting to, whether your work appears in it or not.* Deadline is September 10. Complete guidelines at [www.moontidepress.com/spillway](http://www.moontidepress.com/spillway).

**Thema** is a tri-annual theme-related print journal. The theme for the next issue is The Missing Piece of the Puzzle. Submit up to three poems. *What we like: poems that are thoughtfully constructed and carefully distilled.* Poets in the U.S. must submit by postal mail; outside the U.S. may submit by email. There is no submission fee. Deadline is November 1. Complete guidelines at <http://themaliterarysociety.com/submissions.html>.

**Ponder Review** is a biannual print journal produced by graduate students at the MFA program at Mississippi University for Women. *We invite you to explore, expound, and inspire through short plays, fiction, flash fiction, nonfiction, poetry, new media, and visual art.* Submit up to five poems that combine to total no more than nine pages. Submission fee is \$2. Deadline is September 15. Complete guidelines at [www.muw.edu/ponderreview/submit/](http://www.muw.edu/ponderreview/submit/).

**805** is the Dewey Decimal number for literary journals. It is also the name of an actual online literary journal founded and run by a team of librarians and writers. They are open to submissions year-round with occasional temporary closures. *We're looking for writing and art that is unexpected, striking, and moving.* There is no submission fee. Complete guidelines are at [www.805lit.org/submissions](http://www.805lit.org/submissions).

Contributions published in this Voices Israel newsletter and files linked to it, including in our workshop chapbooks, are the sole copyright of the contributors themselves.

Any of the opinions in the content published in this newsletter are the sole opinions of the individual contributors and do not represent the views or opinions of Voices Israel Group of Poets in English.