

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Poets and Poetry in the Pikes Peak Area**

### **Q. Who is the most famous poet this area can claim?**

A. Helen Hunt Jackson lived in Colorado Springs from 1873 until her death in 1885.

### **Q. What's the most famous poem to come out of the Pikes Peak area?**

A. Katherine Lee Bates visited Colorado Springs in 1893 to teach a summer school class at Colorado College. After a trip to the top of Pikes Peak, she wrote a poem entitled "America the Beautiful." Two years later, it was published, and soon people were singing it to the tune of a hymn composed in 1882 by Samuel A. Ward.

### **Q. Who are some historical Pikes Peak area poets?**

A. Thomas Hornsby Ferril, Helen Hunt Jackson, Mrs. Gilbert McClurg (M. Virginia Donaghé), Rufus Porter, Dorothy Stott Shaw, Lilian White Spencer, Belle Turnbull and Nellie Burget Miller (Colorado's second state Poet Laureate.)

### **Q. Where can I find out more about the poetry scene in the Pikes Peak area?**

- A. 1. Poetry West ([www.poetrywest.org](http://www.poetrywest.org)) hosts monthly writing workshops and is the largest community of poets in the region.
2. Dragonswing ([www.dragonswing.org/](http://www.dragonswing.org/)) is a women's poetry group.
3. Open Mics: Karen Sucharski runs the Goddess Open Mic at Black Cat Books in Manitou Springs on the first and third Mondays of the month. The luvsaberb ([luvsaverb.com](http://luvsaverb.com)) open mic takes place monthly at a local Village Inn. Pikes Peak Community College has an open mic at the Downtown Studio campus on the first Friday of each month.
4. Colorado College's Visiting Writers Series ([www.coloradocollege.edu/dept/EN/VisitingWriters](http://www.coloradocollege.edu/dept/EN/VisitingWriters)) always includes poets.
5. The Film & Words section of PeakRadar.com is a good place to find out about poetry events.
6. The Pikes Peak Poet Laureate Project's web site [PikesPeakPoetLaureate.org](http://PikesPeakPoetLaureate.org) includes upcoming events, poetry and poetry related events

### **Q. Is there a poet laureate for the state of Colorado?**

A. Yes. The current laureate is Mary Crow, appointed in 1996. Previous laureates include Alice Polk Hill (1919-1921), Nellie Burget Miller (1923-1952), Margaret Clyde Robinson (1952-1954), Milford E. Shields (1954-1975), and Thomas Hornsby Ferril (1979-1988). The city of Denver has its own poet laureate, Chris Ransick, appointed in 2006 and recently reappointed for a second two year term through 2010.

### **Q. Any other useful sources for poetry in Colorado?**

- A. 1. The Colorado Poets Center, [colopoets.unco.edu/index.htm](http://colopoets.unco.edu/index.htm).  
2. The Colorado Poets Association, [www.coloradopoets.org](http://www.coloradopoets.org).  
3. The Colorado Authors League, [www.coloradoauthors.org](http://www.coloradoauthors.org).  
4. Pikes Peak Poet Laureate Project [www.pikespeakpoetlaureate.org](http://www.pikespeakpoetlaureate.org) then select "Poetry."