



73½ South Professor Street
P.O. Box 455
Oberlin, OH 44074-0455
Phone: 440-774-1700
Fax: 440-774-8061
Website: www.oberlinheritage.org
E-mail: members@oberlinheritage.org

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Contact: Patricia Murphy, Executive Director, at (440) 774-1700 or patm@oberlinheritage.org

Oberlin Heritage Center Hosts Poetry Reading *A Writer Returns Home*

The Oberlin Heritage Center will host “John Vanek: A Writer Returns Home” on Tuesday, July 21, at 7:00 p.m. at the Oberlin Public Library (65 South Main Street). Vanek, a physician and award-winning poet, will read selections from his new book of poems, *Heart Murmurs*. According to the poet, his work is “peopled with friends, family, and patients who live in the heartland and in my heart.” Vanek has published four dozen poems and won numerous awards.

John A. (Jack) Vanek was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, graduated from Case Western Reserve University and the University of Rochester School of Medicine and practiced medicine in Lorain County for many years. He discovered the healing properties of poems when dealing with illness, suffering, and loss in his circle of family, friends, and patients. Fellow poet, Lou Suarez, Red Mountain Award winner, and author of *Ask*, praised Vanek’s first collection:

In Heart Murmurs, John Vanek visits life’s essential counties –
Longing, Love, Lament – and there locates both faith and wonder.
These are poems that search the heartland, and those who reside therein,
for sense and constancy through language that both surprises and
emboldens, poems that do not expect miracles but wish them for us
all the same.

Vanek has been invited to read his work at the George Bush Presidential Library in Texas, the Akron Art Museum in Ohio, and Eckerd College in Florida. In 2002, his poem, “The People’s Republic,” was inducted into the permanent collection of the George Bush Presidential Library, and reprinted in *Red, White and Blues: Poets on the Promise of America* by the University of Iowa Press.

Jack and his wife Geni were long-time residents of Oberlin and now live in Sandusky and St. Petersburg, Florida. The event is free and open to the public. Books will be available for purchase and signing following the program. The cost of the book is \$15 and Vanek has graciously offered to contribute \$2 from each sale at this program to the Oberlin Heritage Center. For more information, visit John Vanek’s website at <http://mysite.verizon.net/vanekj>.

To learn about other community programs sponsored by the Oberlin Heritage Center in coming months, visit www.oberlinheritage.org, or request a copy of an events calendar by calling (440) 774-1700 or sending e-mail to members@oberlinheritage.org.

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