

# Texas Institute of Letters



**DOUBLE ISSUE:**  
**April/May/June 2012**  
**July/August/September 2012**  
**Newsletter**

---

*It's time to pay your dues for fiscal year 2012-13. Please use the form at the end of this newsletter when remitting them.*

---

## **Dates Set for Spring 2013 Annual Meeting**

Last year, TIL Fellow and Wittliff Collections founder **Bill Wittliff** suggested that we hold an annual meeting in San Marcos, with the Collections hosting the Friday night reception. We are pleased to announce that arrangements are in place to do just that.

The annual meeting will take place in San Marcos on April 5-6, 2013. The reception on April 5 will be on the campus of Texas State University at the Wittliff Collections, which includes the Southwestern Writers Collection, the Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection, and the Lonesome Dove Collection. It also is home to the archives of many members of TIL.

Here is a link: <http://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/>

The new member readings and annual banquet will take place at the City of San Marcos Conference Center. Here is a link: <http://www.toursanmarcos.com/ConferenceCenter>

Details will be available in upcoming newsletters.

---

## **Carolyn Osborn Named Newest TIL Fellow**

Kudos to **Carolyn Osborn**, who has been named the newest Fellow of the Texas Institute of Letters. The Council unanimously selected Carolyn for the honor at its September meeting in Austin.

Carolyn becomes just the 15<sup>th</sup> member designated a Fellow in TIL's 76-year history.

"What a wonderful surprise!" Carolyn says. "I'm immensely grateful to the Council for adding my name to such a fine group."

Carolyn has been one of the most active members of TIL since her induction in 1981. She served as a Council member and as Vice President during the 1990s and in 2000 began a two-year term as President. She received the Lon Tinkle Award in 2008.

Behind the scenes, Carolyn has been a tireless worker for TIL. She has been an important fundraiser and helped establish the TIL archive at the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University. And, not insignificantly, she and her husband, Joe, have allowed their home to be used for numerous TIL-related functions.

Originally from Nashville, Tennessee, Carolyn moved to Texas when she was twelve. She has worked as a newspaper reporter, radio writer, and English teacher at the University of Texas at Austin. Best known for her short stories, she is also an essay writer. Her work appears in many literary magazines.

Three of her short story collections have been published: *A Horse of Another Color*, *The Fields of Memory*, and *Warriors and Maidens*. The Book Club of Texas chose to publish a limited edition of one story, *The Grands*, as the first book in its New Texas Fiction series. She has published two novels, *Uncertain Ground* and *Contrary People*. She was one of the founders of the Texas Book Festival. Her stories have been awarded prizes by P.E.N. and TIL, and one was selected for the O. Henry Awards. In 2003 she was given the Antioch Review's Distinguished Prose Award. Carolyn lives and writes in Austin.

Here is the complete historical list of Fellows of the Institute: **Karle Wilson Baker, Joseph Dawson, J. Frank Dobie, Robert Flynn, John Graves, A.C. Greene, James Hoggard, Tom Lea, Carolyn Osborn, Leonidas W. Payne Jr., Marshall Terry, Frank Wardlaw, Walter Prescott Webb, John Edward Weems, and William Wittliff.**

---

## **Details for 2012 Literary Contests Released**

Distinguished judges have been named for TIL's 2012 literary contests. They will select finalists and winners for the best works of the year in eleven categories.

The judges will award writers a total of more than \$20,000 at TIL's annual banquet to be held April 5-6 at the San Marcos Convention Center, San Marcos, Texas.

Submissions of works published in the calendar year of 2012 must be sent to each member of the appropriate committees at the addresses listed below. They must be postmarked no later than **January 9, 2013**. A person or publisher may enter only one work per contest category. All works entered must be published in a print format: Unpublished manuscripts and online publications are not considered. To be considered, an entry must be the first published version of the work. The container of each entry must bear the words, "For TIL Award," and inside must be the name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the entrant. Also included must be a statement of eligibility confirming that the entrant was born in Texas or lived in Texas for at least two consecutive years at some time. A work whose subject matter substantially concerns Texas is also eligible. Materials submitted for entry will not be returned.

Winners are expected to attend the TIL awards banquet to be held in the spring of 2013. The exact dates and place of the event will be announced later.

### **Jesse H. Jones Award for Best Work of Fiction (\$6,000)**

#### **Steven Turner Award for Best Work of First Fiction (\$1,000)**

Sarah Bird (chair)  
6102 Mountainclimb Dr.  
Austin, TX 78731

Greg Garrett  
608-C Bellevue Pl.  
Austin, TX 78705

Shirley Ann Grau  
12 Nassau Drive  
Metairie, LA 70005

### **Carr P. Collins Award for Best Book of Non-fiction (\$5,000)**

Richard Holland (chair)  
309 Moore Blvd.  
Austin, TX 78705

John Spong  
TEXAS MONTHLY  
PO Box 1569  
Austin, TX 78767

Judyth Rigler  
1601 Hendola Dr. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87110-5519

**TIL Award for Most Significant Scholarly Book (\$2,500)**

Ty Cashion (chair)  
Sam Houston State University  
Department of History  
Box 2239  
Huntsville, TX 77341-2239

H.W. Brands  
Department of History  
University of Texas  
104 Inner Campus Drive B700  
Austin TX 78712-0220

Ron Tyler  
5536 Collinwood Ave.  
Fort Worth, TX 76107

**Helen C. Smith Memorial Award for Best Book of Poetry (\$1,200)**

**Bob Bush Memorial Award For First Book Of Poetry (\$1,000)**

Kurt Heinzelman (chair)  
6106 Cherrylawn Circle  
Austin, Texas 78723

Andrew Hudgins  
1380 Stoneygate Lane  
Columbus, OH 43221-1566

Naomi Shihab Nye  
806 South Main Avenue  
San Antonio, TX 78204

**Edwin "Bud" Shrake Award for Short Nonfiction (\$1,000)**

**This is a new prize for the best article or essay appearing in print newspapers, journals, or magazines. A series of articles appearing in a print newspaper is also eligible and all parts of the series should be submitted.**

W.K. Stratton (chair)  
P.O. Box 609  
Round Rock TX 78680

Dick J. Reavis  
P.O. Box 50108  
Raleigh, NC 27650

Jan Seale  
400 Sycamore Ave.  
McAllen, TX 78501

**Kay Cattarulla Award for Best Short Story (\$1,000)**

C Tafolla (chair)  
1109 W. Craig Pl.  
San Antonio, Texas 78201

Cheryl Chapman  
P. O. Box 143434  
Anchorage, AK 99514-3434

Geoff Rips  
1311 Ardenwood Rd.  
Austin, TX 78722

**Best Childrens Book (\$500)**

**Best Young Adults Book (\$500)**

T. Lindsay Baker (chair)

P.O. Box 507

Rio Vista, TX 7609

Norma Cantú

Department of English

University of Texas at San Antonio

San Antonio, TX 78249

Barbara Whitehead

2513 Janice Dr.

Austin, TX 78703

**Fred Whitehead Award for Best Design of a Trade Book (\$750)**

Carolyn Osborn (chair)

3712 Windsor Rd.

Austin, TX 78703

Russell Martin

6748 Patrick Lane

Plano, TX 75024

Andrés Tijerina

Austin Community College

Pinnacle Campus

7748 Hwy. 290 W.

Austin, TX 78736-3202

**Sourette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translation of a Book (\$1,000),**

Awarded biannually, not given this year.

---

***President's Message***

Not so many years ago, TIL was an organization on a shaky financial foundation. Thanks to the efforts of devoted members long before I was inducted, all that changed. Our total assets are now greater than \$800,000, and that is something we can all be proud of.

But that is not to say that we as an organization have no financial worries.

We are not immune to the financial woes that have affected America and the world in recent years. We depend on interest earnings to fund our awards and other activities. As you know, returns on investments in bonds have not been good over the past few years. Even some of our endowed awards are coming up short.

This is not a crisis situation, but it is one of concern.

How can you help?

Well, the first thing you can do is pay your 2012-2013 dues. They are now payable, using the form at the back of this newsletter. But I would ask you especially to notice that you can also donate to funds for some of our unfunded awards. Also on the list is the Paisano Fund. There

are recurring expenses for the Paisano Fellowship program, and money contributed to that fund will go to offset those. Anything you can contribute to any of these funds would help greatly, even \$5 or \$10.

Remember also that TIL is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, recognized as such by the IRS, so contributions are tax deductible.

Again, we're not facing a crisis now, but if we can address these concerns as they arise, we can avoid crises in the future.

– *Kip Stratton*  
*TIL President*

---

## **News from Paisano**

Soon a remarkable volunteer group called The Central Texas Trail Tamers will be periodically coming out to the ranch to build a series of much-needed trails. They have done wonderful work in such places as the Continental Divide Trail in Carson National Forest, N.M., the Davis mountains, the, Davy Crockett National Forest, just to mention a few. Normally, they volunteer their time and expertise only on lands open to the public. However, their board voted to make the Paisano Ranch an exception. We are very fortunate to have them involved with our program.

The William A. and Madeline Welder Smith Foundation has once again sent us a generous gift of \$10,000. We'll be using this for a number of things, including purchasing some new furniture and a large storage "house" that blends in with our rural architecture.

– *Michael Adams*  
*Paisano Director*

---

## **Member News**

The new Secretary apologizes for this somewhat tardy first newsletter. The Secretary "had issues" — the euphemism of our time — with the computer gymnastics required. One must start with the rave notices coming the way of our Prez. **W.K. (Kip) Stratton's** *Floyd Patterson: The Fighting Life of Boxing's Invisible Champion*. It has been published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt to positive reviews in the *Boston Globe*, the *New York Times* and elsewhere, including a rave in the *Wall Street Journal*, which called it a "first-rate biography" and "an engrossing portrait." This while he rides corporate herd on a staff of tech writers and, it seems, reads everything ever written. Kip confided recently that it's a signal moment for an Oklahoma-born lad to be chosen president of anything in Texas. ★★ ★ **Andrew Geyer** writes that he is "co-

editing *A Shared Voice*, a conversation in narrative by twenty-four fiction writers from Texas and the Carolinas. *A Shared Voice* includes twelve anchor tales—six by contributors from Texas and six by writers from the Carolinas — and twelve original works of fiction written in response to the anchor narratives.” ★★★ **Barbara Ras**, the director of Trinity University Press, is a nationally renowned poet and was winner of the TIL’s 2010 poetry award for her book *The Last Skin*. She will be the guest of honor at Gemini Ink’s “Inkstravaganza” in San Antonio on September 27. Gemini Ink is a novel college without campus or borders; many members of the TIL have participated in the seminars. ★★★ Our immediate past president **Darwin Payne** been named recipient of an award for the 2012 Awards for Excellence in Community Service, an annual honor dispensed by the Dallas Historical Society. It's in the "humanities/history" category, which Darwin assumes is for his chronicling of Dallas history. Darwin is presently writing a history of Southern Methodist University on the occasion of its centennial anniversary in 2015. SMU offers a wealth of material and we look to reading that. ★★★ **Larry D. Thomas's** poem, "Signs," which appeared in the Spring/Summer 2012 issue of the prestigious *Valparaiso Poetry Review*, was selected as a VPR "Poem of the Week." On Tuesday of each week, Edward Byrne, the VPR editor, highlights in his widely read poetry blog, *One Poet's Notes*, "an excellent work by a poet selected from all previously published issues of the journal." "Signs" was the second poem by Thomas to be selected as a VPR "Poem of the Week." Additionally, Thomas was selected as the featured poet for the May 2012 issue of the *Red River Review*. ★★★ **Jim Donovan's** *The Blood of Heroes: And the Sacrifice that Forged a Nation* was published by Little Brown in May. *Kirkus* has a reputation for prickly reviews and unkind jabs, but not with Jim’s latest: “Donovan reliably separates fact from legend, persuasively assessing the evidence and artfully setting the scene.” In his agent business Jim reports that he just sold a *Jaws*-type thriller and a sequel. ★★★ **Bill Sloan** sends this update: “My new novel, *Five Dark Riders*, was published June 19 and is now available on Amazon in paperback and Kindle formats and on Barnes & Noble in paperback only. This is a historical thriller about a Nazi plot to assassinate President Franklin Roosevelt at the Texas Centennial Exposition in Dallas in 1936. Along with my new military history, *Undeclared: America's Heroic Fight for Bataan and Corregidor* (published April 24) and *Hell in the Pacific* (published June 5), a memoir that I co-authored with a 92-year-old Marine – both from Simon & Schuster – I had three books published within a two-month period this spring. Believe me, this is a record I have no intention of ever trying to duplicate, and it’s also misleading since I began working on *Five Dark Riders* more than 18 years ago!” ★★★ Good news from **Ben Rehder**: “My Blanco County mysteries have been optioned to Warner Brothers Horizon Scripted Television for development as a cable TV series. The books were represented by Mary Alice Kier and Anna Cottle at Cine/Lit Representation on behalf of the Jane Chelius Literary Agency.” ★★★ **Jules Howe's** 2010 *Catty Wompus: A Tale of Friendship* has attracted an enthusiastic following of educators, parents, and children aged 5 to 12. Jules’ book received the 2010 Hoffer Award for Children's

Fiction. Jules and emerging New York artist Chason Matthams are currently working on a second book in the series, titled *Catty Wompus and the New Kid*. Also, Jules's screenplay *Jasper Milliken* won the prestigious Austin Film Festival Screenwriting Competition for Comedy in 2010 and was a Nicholl Fellowship quarterfinalist in 2009. It is currently in development with Experience Media Studios and slated to begin filming in early 2013, directed by Jonathan Lynn, whose credits include *My Cousin Vinny*. ★★★ The special exhibit "Women Shaping Texas in the Twentieth Century" opens Dec. 8 and runs through May 19 at the Bob Bullock State History Museum, with TIL's own **Paula Marks** as guest curator. The exhibit explores how Texas women early in the century challenged the cultural idea that woman's place was in the home and traces how women became more visible and active in public life throughout the century, often overcoming cultural and legal hurdles in order to make a difference in the workplace, government, the arts, etc. In part because this is primarily an urban story, a secondary exhibit, on which Paula is consulting, will provide oral histories and portraits of women who have persevered on the land itself. ★★★ **Gwendolyn Zepeda** reports that a "pre-order raffle" has been arranged for her upcoming novel, *Better With You Here*. Readers can win a \$300 Saks gift card, \$150 Amazon card, or \$50 Starbucks card by buying her book or tweeting or Facebook-ing about the raffle. <http://gwendolynzepeda.com/news-and-events/> ★★★ **L. D. Clark** reports that his screenplay *Reapers of the Whirlwind*, which he adapted from his novel *A Bright Tragic Thing*, has been published in a Readwest Foundation anthology called *ReadWest, Stories of the American West*. Also, the Texas State Historical Association is bringing out a joint edition of the only two accounts known about the Great Hanging at Gainesville, October, 1862, one by Thomas Barrett and the other by George Washington Diamond. L.D. wrote the afterword for this edition, which will be published in September. ★★★ **Judy Alter's** *Trouble in a Big Box* has been released by Turquoise Mountain Press as the latest installment in the Kelly O'Connell mystery series. ★★★ **Karla Morton** sends this update: "My seventh poetry book, titled *Passion, Art, Community: Denton, Texas, in Word and Image* became available August 30, 2012. The City of Denton asked me to write the history of Denton, Texas in poetry form, then held a call for artists, and paired up each poem with a local artist. The result is a beautiful, hard-cover book and the ultimate Public Art. ★★★ In San Marcos in May the **Wittliff Collections** at Texas State University-San Marcos welcomed **Cyrus Cassells**. A Pulitzer Prize-nominated poet and professor of English at Texas State, Cassells read from his latest collection of poems, *The Crossed-Out Swastika*, and took questions from the audience and signed books. Also in May the Wittliff Collections hosted *New York Times* #1 best-selling novelist **Rick Riordan** in the LBJ Student Center Ballroom on the Texas State campus. Rick talked about his "Percy Jackson and the Olympians" series, followed by a question-and-answer session. ★★★ **Paul Christensen** is a featured poet in the latest edition of *Louisiana Literature*, a bi-annual literary journal, with six poems and a review of his most recent book of poetry, *The Human Condition*, a finalist in this year's TIL awards. ★★★ **Chitra Banerjee**



**Divakaruni** has been on a creative tear of late. She has completed her novel *Oleander Girl*, which will be out in March 2013 from Free Press (Simon & Schuster). She read from her work at Wentz Concert Hall in Naperville, which is near Chicago. The event was sponsored by the ThinkGlobalArts Foundation. She recommends a *Houston Chronicle* column by TIL member **Maggie Galehouse** on ground-breaking women authors. Here is a link you'll find interesting: <http://blog.chron.com/bookish/2012/03/books-by-ballsy-broads/#3629-2> ★★ ★ **Alwyn Barr** sends this update: "In February 2012 I spoke to a Humanities Texas teacher workshop on Texas history about the early twentieth century transition of the state from a rural and agricultural society to an urban and industrial society. At the annual meeting of the West Texas Historical Association in March I gave the banquet presentation on 'Black Cowboys: Background and Roles in Texas.' My essay, 'The Influence of War and Military Service on African Texans,' appeared in *Texans and War: New Interpretations of the State's Military History*, edited by Alexander Mendoza and Charles David Grear and published by the Texas A&M University Press early this summer. ★★ ★ And our Vice President **Andrés Tijerina** has received several honors: He received a national award and published a chapter in a scholarly history book: 'Foreigners in Their Native Land: The Violent Struggle between Anglos and Tejanos for Land Titles in South Texas during Reconstruction' in Kenneth W. Howell, ed., *Still the Arena of Civil War: Violence and Turmoil in Reconstruction Texas, 1865-1874* University of North Texas Press, 2012. He also received an A.H.A. 2011 Equity Award. The national equity award is presented by the American Historical Association to recognize and publicize individuals and institutions that have achieved excellence in recruiting and retaining underrepresented racial and ethnic groups into the historic profession. The citation for the 2011 Equity Award states that Andrés "has demonstrated a commitment to promoting the study of the history of underrepresented groups in the Southwest. As a professor of history and mentor to Tejano students at Austin Community College, a general series editor for Texas A&M University Press, and a Texas State Historical Association Fellow, Andrés has worked diligently to enhance diversity within the historical profession." ★★ ★ **Gary Cartwright** provided **Kip Stratton** with the uncut version of his lively and reflective comments on receiving the 2012 Lon Tinkle Award in San Antonio. Gary was busily trimming his speech that night as the silverware rattled and a dispute erupted about John Howard Griffin. Kip has now added the full version to the TIL archive and it's posted on the TIL Website. Soon afterward, agent **David McCormick** and University of Texas Press editor **Casey Kittrell** persuaded Gary to expand on those reflections and write a memoir of his shenanigans, Hollywood feuds, losses, and loves. The old rascal's not done yet. ★★ ★ **Robert Draper's** *Do Not Ask What Good We Do: Inside the U.S. House of Representatives* (Free Press) was published in April, made an appearance on the *New York Times* bestseller list, was widely remarked on (including appearances on the Jon Stewart, CBS This Morning, and NPR Weekend Edition programs.) Robert's book was also described at some length by Vice President Joe Biden in his recent address to the NAACP. Now living in

Washington, D.C., Robert is a contributing writer for the *New York Times Magazine* and *National Geographic* and a correspondent for *GQ*. ★★★ **Katherine L. Hester's** short story "Trafficking," which was first published in *storySouth*, has been selected for *The Best American Mystery Stories 2012*, edited by Robert Crais. ★★★ **Clay Reynolds** was awarded a Spur Award for Short Fiction by the Western Writers of America for his short story, "The Deacon's Horse," that appeared in *Texas Sound Tracks*, a collection of short fiction inspired by Texas songwriters, edited by Terry Dalrymple and published by Ink Brush Press. ★★★ **Mary Walker** reports that she's adapting a screenplay from her novel *Under the Beetle's Cellar* and, knowledge of Comanches being a growth industry these days, is planning an autumn pleasure jaunt to the Medicine Mounds, the Pease River, Adobe Walls, Quanah Parker's Star House in Cache, Oklahoma, and other landmarks of that rich history. ★★★ In addition to his work as political editor for the *Houston Chronicle*, past TIL president and onetime high school quarterback **Joe Holley** has published his Sammy Baugh biography *Slingin' Sam: The Life and Times of the Greatest Quarterback Ever to Play the Game* (University of Texas Press). The book comes with an amazing (if you've ever asked a quarterback for anything) foreword by Denver Broncos slinger Peyton Manning, who is by most counts the greatest one playing the game now. Joe will be promoting the book at an annual celebration and parade in Hamlin in October. Serious football country, out that way. ★★★ **Carlton Stowers'** view of small town Texas, *Where Dreams Die Hard*, is the 2012 selection of the One Book, One Waco program. A columnist for American Airlines in-flight magazine, *American Way*, Stowers was recently awarded a Grand Award for Writing in the national APEX competition and received the Houston Press Club's Lone Star Award for Best Magazine Column. ★★★ **Robert Bonazzi** sends this update: "Pecan Grove Press has just published my new book of poems and prose poems, *The Scribbling Cure*, which along with *Maestro of Solitude* (Wings Press, 2007), constitutes a selected poems (1972-2012). Currently at work on *Reluctant Activist*, the authorized biography of the late John Howard Griffin (1920-1980). I'm 400 pages into the first draft." ★★★ **Bill Crider's** *Murder of a Beauty Shop Queen*, the 19th Sheriff Dan Rhodes mystery, was published by St. Martin's in August. ★★★ **Jan Seale** reports: "I've been happily busy since being appointed 2012 Texas Poet Laureate. Out-of-town visits and readings have included high schools and middle schools in San Antonio, Waxahachie, and Houston, a Port Aransas retreat, San Jacinto College, Lamar University, El Paso Community College, and Tarrant County College. I've also presented poetry at the summer conference of the Poetry Society of Texas, the San Antonio Poets' Association, the Langdon Review of the Arts Festival, and Padre Island Writers. As the first Texas poet laureate from the Rio Grande Valley, I have been graciously received by Valleyites, who have kept me busy with 24 presentations so far here in the Valley." In addition to publishing a book of poems, *Nape*, last fall, Ink Brush Press recently brought out her collected poems, *The Wonder Is*, in a second edition, with an introduction and new section of poems. Soon to be published is a second book of short stories, *Appearances*, from the new

Lamar University Press. ★★★ **Jay Brandon** reports: "I have a new novel coming out in August, *The Jetty*, a ghostly love story set in Port Aransas. I'm converting my early novels into eBooks and making them available at Amazon. And I had a new short story, "The Walls," published in an anthology called *Murder Here, Murder There* that came out in May. Yes, I've been busy lately." ★★★ The Wittliff Collections has acquired the archives of **Tom Grimes**. "We are proud to announce the acquisition of Tom Grimes' literary archive," said **David Coleman**, collections director. "As a gifted writer, and inspiring teacher, Tom has had a powerful influence upon the literary life of our university, our state, and our region." ★★★ **Norma Cantú** participated in the CantoMundo 2012 workshop at UT Austin in July and spent two weeks at the Universidad de Alcalá de Henares (Spain) on the Nebrija Fellowship for Creative Writing. ★★★ **Joyce Gibson Roach** lets us know she was inducted into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame in 2010. *The Cowgirls* (UNT Press) is considered the "foundational text" on arena cowgirls and ranch women. Although Joyce used to be handy on horseback and runs a cattle ranch in Wise County, she was inducted under the category of Artists and Writers. She also has a collection of short stories, all centering on West Texas forthcoming from Texas Tech Press entitled *The Chronicles of Toad*. ★★★ **Carolyn Osborn's** novel, *Contrary People*, was published by Wings Press September 9. It's not about your family or her own, Carolyn cautions. ★★★ The Montana band Stellarondo teamed up with our own **Rick Bass** to record scored stories as part of a joint venture that will hopefully land the group in the hallowed Ryman Auditorium in Nashville. According to the band's Website, it has big plans: "Along the way, we will play at a literary festival in Spokane, play a eulogy for a dear friend in Idaho, record an album, publish a chapbook, and film a documentary. We hope to play a gig with the Dalai Lama, play a six a.m. lullaby nap-time song-and-story for 100,000 all-night revelers at an electronica concert, perform the Star Spangled Banner before a game in the Dallas Cowboy's new stadium, play with the Hellgate band at a football game in Missoula, play a gig at the Dallas Museum of Art, and visit as many of the cultural touchstones in American music history as possible: San Francisco, Seattle, Austin, Lubbock, New York, Chicago, and the Mississippi River delta country." With a boost from Rick, they might just make it! ★★★ This may be a first for a TIL newsletter, a classified ad! **Carolyn Banks** offers this treasure: "I have a copy of *This Bitterly Beautiful Land: A Texas Commonplace* for sale. This is a very special book edited by **Al Lowman** and illustrated with **Barbara Whitehead's** woodcuts. It has been signed by both Barbara and Al, both TIL members. It was one of 275 copies published by Roger Beacham (aka William Holman) in 1972 on handmade paper. I would sell it reluctantly for \$975." Carolyn has been conducting an ongoing series of workshops, "Comedy Central Texas," for Upstart, a nonprofit media arts organization in Bastrop. The Saturday afternoon classes focus on writing short comedy skits. If produced, these will be shown in December at Upstart's third annual Off-Kilter Xmas Fest and on Bastrop Community Access Television. The class began in April and thus far two shorts, one by Elgin writer Kirsten Dodge and another by

Bastrop writer Janet Spencer have been produced, with a third by Austin writer Patti Willingham scheduled. ★★★ Here's an update from **Sergio Troncoso**: "The two books I published in 2011 have won a few awards. *From This Wicked Patch of Dust* won the Silver Medal in the Nautilus Book Award for Fiction, and an Honorable Mention in *ForeWord's* Book of the Year Award for Multicultural Fiction. *Crossing Borders: Personal Essays* won the Bronze Award in *ForeWord's* Book of the Year Award for Essays, and second place in the International Latino Book Award for Best Biography in English. An essay about my father in that collection was nominated for a Pushcart Prize." ★★★ **Betty Wiesepepe** has a new book, a literary biography, coming out from University of Texas Press on 12/12/12. The title is: *Winifred Sanford: the Life and Times of a Texas Writer*. ★★★ T. Lindsay Baker's most recent book, *More Texas Stories I Like to Tell My Friends: The Tales of Adventure and Intrigue Continue from the History of the Lone Star State* is in press and scheduled for release at the Abilene Christian University Press in September 2012. This is the second of two volumes drawn from Baker's self-syndicated Texas history newspaper column. T. Lindsay spoke at the national meeting of the Association of Living History, Farm, and Agricultural Museums in Dallas on 10 June 2012 on the subject, "Guiding Visitors to Heritage Tourism Sites," and he led convention participants on a day-long motor coach tour of historic sites associated with 1930s Dallas gangsters Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker. Baker continues to teach history as the W.K. Gordon Endowed Chair at Tarleton State University, while he also directs its W.K. Gordon Center for Industrial History of Texas at the Thurber ghost town seventy miles west of Fort Worth. ★★★ **Pat Carr** reports: "My new novella, *The Radiance of Fossils*, just came out with Main Street Rag Press, and my first novel, *The Grass Creek Chronicle*, has just been republished in a third edition with El Amarna Publishing. I did a three-day writing workshop at Yale in June and will be doing a weekend fiction workshop in New York City (for the International Women's Writing Guild) in October." ★★★ Your cyber-deficient Secretary awaits the October publication of *Let the People In: The Life and Times of Ann Richards* (University of Texas Press) in the early going received a starred review from *Booklist*, and *Library Journal* concluded: "This book, which maintains a brisk pace and is filled with characters found only in the heart of Texas politics, is an indispensable addition to any collection specializing in Texas or state politics or feminist political figures." Meanwhile, in April an excerpt from **Jan Reid's** novel in progress was the only prose chosen for the first issue of the promising online quarterly *Northern Liberties Review*. (Poets, essayists, photographers, they want you, too. [NorthernLibertiesReview.com](http://NorthernLibertiesReview.com)) The novel in progress is a love story and thriller amid the Basque separatist strife in Spain and France.

★★★ **Dave Parsons** reports: "I was thrilled to learn my last book, *Feathering Deep*, was chosen by the *Houston Chronicle* as one of 20 or so books with Texas connections to consider purchasing in their "Bookish Picks" article <http://blog.chron.com/bookish/2011/12/bookish-picks-2011-texas-titles/>, I believe, resulting in my book making the Poetry Foundation's National List of Top Selling Poetry Books at number 15:

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/features/books/contemporary/2012-01-08...>great to see several other TIL member books in the *Chronicle* article, including, **Jimmie Killingsworth** and **Sarah Bird**. I have had a wonderful (and humbling) year traveling the state to poetry venues, libraries, and schools as Texas Poet Laureate...I am happy to report that poetry is alive and well and growing in Texas...what a wonderful experience discovering fine and generous poets and poetry lovers every stop I made. I also was proud to represent Texas at the National State Poet Laureate's Conference in New Hampshire. As 'icing on my cake,' TCU Press should have released my new collection of *New & Selected Poems* by the time this newsletter is out. Life is good in Corn-row, Texas." ★★★ **Bob Compton** writes: "Wait no longer — the winners have been chosen. For you writers out there. Lessons from the masters, not. 'Since 1982 the English Department at San Jose State University has sponsored the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest, a whimsical literary competition that challenges entrants to compose the opening sentence to the worst of all possible novels. The 2012 Grand prize winner: *"As he told her that he loved her she gazed into his eyes, wondering, as she noted the infestation of eyelash mites, the tiny deodidids burrowing into his follicles to eat the greasy sebum therein, each female laying up to 25 eggs in a single follicle, causing inflammation, whether the eyes are truly the windows of the soul; and, if so, his soul needed regrouting."* All winners can be found here: <http://www.bulwer-lytton.com/2012win.html> ★★★ **Dominic Smith** is a visiting writer at Rice University for the academic year 2012-13. ★★★ **Deborah Paredes** hosted a successful CantoMundo writing retreat for Latina/o poets in July and completed a writing residency at the Hedgebrook Foundation for Women Writers in August. Last spring, her sestina was published in *Crab Orchard Review*. She has two poems in the September issue of POETRY magazine, one of which was featured on the *Poetry Daily* Website. She can be heard reading and discussing these poems on the *Poetry Foundation* podcast at <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/features/audio?show=The%20Poetry%20Magazine%20Podcast>. ★★★ And, finally, the **Leon Hale** update: The former TIL Council member has acquired hearing aids and, when not napping, is detecting phone rings nicely, in case anyone wishes to talk to him at 713-850-7642. Leon also received, for his 91st birthday, an iPhone (713-647-1744) but has not yet learned to operate the damn thing!

### **TIL OFFICERS**

**President**, W.K. (Kip) Stratton, Austin

**Vice President**, Andrés Tijerina, Austin

**Secretary**, Jan Reid, Austin

**Treasurer**, James Hoggard, Wichita Falls

**Recording Secretary**, Betty Wiesepape, Richardson

### **TIL COUNCILORS**

Rico Ainslie, Austin, first term ends April 2014

T. Lindsay Baker, Rio Vista, second term ends April 2013

Robert Compton, Garland, second term ends April 2014

Steve Davis, San Marcos, first term ends April 2013

Rolando Hinojosa-Smith, Austin, first term ends April 2014

Kate Lehrer, Washington, D.C., second term ends April 2014

Ann McCutchan, Denton, first term ends in April 2014

Carmen Tafolla, San Antonio, first term ends April 2013

<http://www.texasinstituteofletters.org/>

Send news for the next TIL Newsletter to Jan Reid: [tilsecretary@yahoo.com](mailto:tilsecretary@yahoo.com)

**2012-13 Dues Form**

Please print this form and send it with a check for your 2012-13 dues to the address below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

TIL dues for fiscal year 2012-13 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00

Paisano Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Fred Whitehead Memorial Endowment Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Scholarly Book Award Endowment Fund \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \_\_\_\_\_

*Make check payable to **Texas Institute of Letters** and send with the form to:*

**James Hoggard, Dept. of English, Midwestern State University, 3410 Taft, Wichita Falls, TX 76308.**

[Return Home](#)