

Texas Institute of Letters



October/November/December 2010
Newsletter

Annual Meeting Location, Dates Announced

TIL's annual meeting returns to Dallas this year, taking place April 29-30 at the Radisson Hotel Central Dallas, 6060 N. Central Expressway.

The Radisson Hotel Dallas Central is conveniently located within walking distance of Mockingbird Station, an entertainment complex featuring restaurants, retail, a movie theater, nightlife, and more. Guests at the hotel can also walk to SMU (Southern Methodist University) and the DART rail station. The hotel offers guests use of a business center, fitness center, and shuttle service to Dallas Love Field Airport.

Please use the form at the end of this newsletter to remit 2010-2011 dues and to make your reservations for the banquet.

Rooms are available at a special TIL rate of \$92 per night. You can book a room on-line at: www.radisson.com/dallastx_centralexpy

Enter the dates of your stay. Press the "get room rates" button on the page. On the page that appears next, there will be several fields on the right-hand side under the heading "Search for Special Rates." In the field labeled "Promotional Code," type TXIL10, then press enter. This should display the special TIL rate. You also can call the hotel at 1-800-333-333 and request a group reservation for Texas Institute of Letters. To get the TIL rate, reservations must be made by March 29.

Directions are available at the hotel's Website:

<http://www.radisson.com/dallas-hotel-tx-75206/txdalcen>

Friday, April 29 – The annual reception will take place at the Texana Room, DeGolyer Library, SMU, from 6 to 8 p.m.

The Texana Room is an inviting wood-paneled refuge filled with books – many of them rare – about Texas. The room contains a huge and magnificent original oil portrait of Sam Houston. Those who are hearty can walk to the Texana from the Radisson; for the less adventurous, the Radisson has agreed to provide a free shuttle. Or you can drive there. It's about ten blocks from the hotel on the SMU campus.

Saturday, April 30 – All of Saturday's events will be at the Radisson, including readings by new members, pre-banquet cocktail hour, and annual banquet, at which contest winners will be announced. The cost of the banquet is \$50 per attendee.

Council Vote On New Members Slated

The TIL Council will meet January 22 in Dallas, where, among other business, new member nominations will be considered.

The TIL by-laws state the following about membership qualifications:

"Members shall have been residents of Texas for at least two years at any time prior to nomination and have some substantial connection or affiliation with the state through their work. Members shall be practicing writers who have demonstrated substantial literary achievement in their genres. In rare instances, persons who are not practicing writers may be considered for membership."

These discussions generally get at the heart of our purpose as an organization, which is "...the stimulation of interest in Texas letters, the recognition of distinctive achievement in the field, and the promotion of fellowship among those especially interested in the literary and cultural development of the state."

The council must approve these nominees by a four-fifths majority vote of those in attendance. Those approved will be submitted to the entire membership for approval following the January 22 meeting. New members will be installed at TIL's annual meeting.

President's Message

Here, dear members, is some news I know you've been waiting for — there will be FREE parking at our hotel for our April 30, 2011, annual awards banquet and meeting.

And, what's more, we have a reasonable rate for our rooms--\$92 per night—at a very conveniently located hotel, the Radisson on N. Central Expressway just east of the SMU campus.

Not enough?

Okay, let's try this.

Our Friday evening reception (April 29) will be in the very handsome Texana Room in SMU's DeGolyer Library. This wood-paneled room is lined on all sides with important books on Texas, and it is dominated at one end by the huge life-size portrait of Sam Houston painted by the noted Henry Arthur McArdle in 1902 and given to SMU by James T. DeShields in 1929. This painting was in storage for many years away from public view, but it has been restored recently to its original luster and it's worth a trip to Dallas to see. (You'll recall McArdle's twin paintings that hang in the state capitol, Dawn at the Alamo and The Battle of San Jacinto.) Just outside the Texana Room there will be a rather extensive exhibit from the papers of Horton Foote, who left them to SMU. This reception, 6 to 8 p.m., promises to be one of our finest.

Now, back to the hotel. Its location would be hard to beat. It's a short walk to the multi-screened Angelica Theater, which regularly shows the best movies around. The Angelica is in the trendy Mockingbird Station featuring restaurants, smart shops, and the DART light rail station which whisks you to downtown Dallas and places of interest that include the Sixth Floor Museum. Some might want to walk to the SMU campus from the hotel, but they tell us they'll provide bus transportation there for our Friday night reception. Just up Central Expressway is NorthPark Center, always an attraction for out-of-town visitors.

For more details about the hotel and reservations, see the story elsewhere in this newsletter.

Meanwhile, our judges are busy reading entries for our 2010 literary contests. The deadline for entries, postmarked by Jan. 9, 2011, is rapidly approaching. Three finalists in each of the contests will be named in our next newsletter.

Darwin Payne

Member News

William Hauptman's new play, *The Great Unknown*, opened as part of the New York Musical Theatre Festival 2010 this fall. The musical concerns the legendary exploits of one-armed Civil War veteran John Wesley Powell as he leads a daring expedition down the Colorado River to the Grand Canyon in 1869. Hauptman, who collaborated with Roger Miller on *Big River*, wrote the play's book while Jim Wann composed music and lyrics. ★★★ **James Hoggard** has just learned that his most recent collection of translations of poems by Oscar Hahn (b. 1938, Chile), *Ashes In Love* (Host Publications, 2009), has been named by *Poetry International* (San Diego State Univ.) as one of the notable books published in 2008 -- 2009. ★★★ **Carlton Stowers** has written *Staubach: Portrait of the Brightest Star*, published by Triumph. ★★★ **Paul Ruffin** has a collection of poems entitled *Paul Ruffin: New and Selected Poems*. It's the fifth installment in the Texas Poet Laureate Series from TCU Press. ★★★ The late **Elmer Kelton** is no longer with us, but he's still producing: the ninth novel in his Texas Ranger series, *Texas Standoff*, has been published by Forge. It was one of two Kelton books pending publication when he died. ★★★ The *Oxford American* included **Jan Reid's** *Texas Tornado: The Times & Music of Doug Sahm* in its listing of "Books We Love: In which we editors gush about some music books (old and new) that have knocked our respective socks off." The editors also lauded the University of Texas Press for its "track record of putting out terrific music books." Sahm's son, Shawn, collaborated with Reid on *Texas Tornado*. Reid lately has been conducting signings for his new novel, *Comanche Sundown*, published by TCU Press. ★★★ "Needless to say, I'm very honored and pleased." That was **Bryce Milligan's** reaction to the *Huffington Post* in-depth profile of Wings Press in November. The prestigious online magazine had praised Wings in an earlier edition, but in November it went further, praising the "plucky San Antonio independent literary press" for its "uncanny ability" to pick up major literary awards. The article is interspersed with videos, including one of **Carolyn Osborn** reading from her novel, *Uncertain Ground*, and a short feature on the 50th anniversary of **John Howard Griffin's** *Black Like Me*. About her own appearance, Osborn said: "Mine was supplemented with short YouTube films Joe O'Connell took when I was talking to two of his classes, last year's and this year's Danish students, who come to ACC for a semester plus members of his writing class. I didn't realize I was such a blabber mouth and wild hand waver till I caught myself on film." Here's a link: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/anis-shivani/small-press-spotlight_b_784444.html ★★★ **Don Carleton's** *Conversations With Cronkite* has been published by the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History/University of Texas Press. The book is an oral history drawn from a series of interviews Carleton conducted with his long-time friend, the late television journalism legend Walter Cronkite. Cronkite grew up in Houston and was a UT graduate. Presidential historian Douglas Brinkley calls *Conversations With Cronkite* a "riveting and revelatory book filled with invaluable insights on American journalism." ★★★ In November, **Jane Roberts Wood** enjoyed a huge turnout in Dallas for a signing for her new novel, *Out the Summerhill Road*, published by UNT Press. Barnes & Noble has picked up the book for national distribution. ★★★ In February, the Free Press, a division of Simon & Schuster, will publish **Laura Furman's** new story collection, *The Mother Who Stayed*. She's also announced she will be retiring from the University of Texas at Austin English Department in January. ★★★ **T. Lindsay Baker** continues teaching history and directing the W.K. Gordon Center for Industrial History at Tarleton State University. In January 2010 university President F. Dominic Dottavio appointed him to serve as the editor of the Tarleton State University Series on

Humanities in the Southwest at the Texas A&M University Press, assuming the role held for many years by another TIL member, **Tom Pilkington**. In late March 2010 Baker delivered to the Texas A&M University Press the manuscript for his next book, *A Gangster Tour of Texas*, and he now is working on research for two additional books on aspects of the history of U.S. Highway 66 for the University of Oklahoma Press. In November, Baker gave the banquet program for the annual Center for Big Bend Studies Conference at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, speaking on "The 1927 Stanton Frame-up: Slaying Innocent Men for a Bounty." ★★★ **Clay Reynolds** has edited and written the introduction for a collection of Ned Buntline's Western dime novels. *Hero of a Hundred Fights* is scheduled for publication in June 2011 by Union Square Press. He also has recently seen publication of two articles pertaining to publishing and the teaching of writing. The article on teaching appeared in *The Vocabulary Review*. Here's a link: <http://www.vocabula.com/>. The other appeared in *Round Up Magazine*, published by the Western Writers of America. ★★★ Larry Thomas was featured at the Museum of Printing History in Houston on November 18. He read selections from his poetry collection, *Dark Pearls*, published by LaNana Creek Press (Stephen F. Austin State University) in April of this year. ★★★ **Judy Alter**, trying to keep up with changing publishing trends, has posted her short story collection, *Sue Ellen Learns to Dance* (Panther Creek Press, 2006) on Kindle and Smashwords and plans to put her 1988 Spur Award-winning novel, *Mattie* (Doubleday), up soon. ★★★ The Amon Carter Museum of American Art Board of Trustees has announced the retirement of **Ron Tyler** as director of the museum. Tyler will serve as director until April 1. "During Ron's tenure, we have seen our collection grow through valuable acquisitions of American art," said Ruth Carter Stevenson, president of the board. "Our educational programs and online offerings have also exponentially expanded, and we have undergone extensive renovation and updating of the physical facilities. As we move into our 50th anniversary, the museum is positioned as a leader among art museums. Dr. Tyler has left a tangible legacy, and we are grateful for his leadership and vision." In retirement, he plans to complete three books he began prior to accepting the directorship in 2006. ★★★ **Mike Cox** received the A.C. Greene Literary Award at the 10th annual West Texas Book & Music Festival in Abilene on Saturday, Sept. 25. Cox was honored for his body of work, some 17 books to date, including an acclaimed two-volume history of the Texas Rangers and several collections of historic Texas photos. The award is named for author, columnist and Abilene native **A.C. Greene**. Past winners of the Green Award include **John Graves**, **Elmer Kelton**, **Walt McDonald**, **Jane Roberts Wood**, **Liz Carpenter**, and **Don Graham**. ★★★ From **Robert Flynn** comes this: "Is doing the right thing the right thing to do? Riley O'Connor did what he was taught was right. When he told his story his listeners agreed he had done the right thing and hoped they had the courage to do the same. But Riley was not convinced and became the feared and respected Jade: Outlaw. Then he met a woman who could prove he did the right thing but she did what everyone knew was the wrong thing and refused to confess it." His *Jade: Outlaw* is now available at Amazon on Kindle. ★★★ **Andrew Hudgins** saw his *American Rendering: New and Selected Poems* published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt this year. ★★★ **Rainer Schulte** gave the Polykarp Kusch Lecture "Life as Translation" at the University of Texas at Dallas during the Spring semester 2010 and received the Linda Gaboriau Translation Award 2009 at The Banff Centre, Canada, for "his significant contribution to the art of literary translation and to literature in North America." ★★★ **Mylène Dressler's** novels *The Deadwood Beetle* and *The Floodmakers* were released in Kindle editions this summer, and her blog *American Stories Now* was recognized by *Creative*

Nonfiction Magazine (Issue 39) for the best in literary blogging. She's also launched a new retreat for writers, The River of Words, along the Colorado River in the beautiful canyon country of southern Utah. Here's a link: www.riverofwordsretreat.com. ★★★ Gary Lavergne's been busy promoting his new book, *Before Brown: Heman Marion Sweatt, Thurgood Marshall, and the Long Road to Justice*, which concerns the "hurricane" of reaction that arose when Sweatt attempted to enroll in the University of Texas' law school. The book made the cover of the *Chronicle of Higher Education Review* in November, "easily a highlight of my career," Lavergne said. Here's a link: <http://chronicle.com/article/Diverse-in-the-Heart/125413/>. ★★★ When Lone Star icon Don Meredith died in early December, the *Texas Tribune* and the *New York Times* turned to **Gary Cartwright** to pen a remembrance. Cartwright covered the Cowboys and Meredith for several Texas newspapers in the 1960s, sometimes offering up highly critical opinions of both. Yet he and Meredith developed a friendship that endured for decades. "Don Meredith was one of the great athletes of our time," Cartwright said of the Dandy One, "but more than that he was a uniquely diverse talent — actor, singer, poet, wit, philosopher — correctly celebrated as much for his good humor and generous, live-and-let-live personality as for his ability to make magic on the field."

TIL OFFICERS

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

Send news for the next TIL Newsletter to Kip Stratton: <mailto:tilsecretary@yahoo.com>

2010-11 Dues, Banquet Reservations Form

Please print this form and send it with a check for your 2010-11 dues to the address below.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-Mail _____

TIL dues for fiscal year 2010-11 (if you've not yet paid them) _____ \$50.00

Paisano Fund _____

Fred Whitehead Memorial Endowment Fund _____

Scholarly Book Award Endowment Fund _____

O. Henry Award Endowment Fund _____

Stanley Walker Award Endowment Fund _____

April 30 Banquet Tickets, \$50 per person _____

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.