

Texas Institute of Letters



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DOUBLE ISSUE

Newsletter

Annual Banquet and Reception Update

We're just days away from TIL's annual meeting and banquet in San Marcos. Pre-meeting activities kick off at 6:30 p.m. on April 3 with "Writing Beyond Borders" at the Wittliff Collections. Four distinguished authors, including three TIL members, will discuss the past, present, and future of Latina/o literature – in a world where writers are frequently moving beyond traditional borders and boundaries. Featured will be TIL members **Tino Villanueva**, **Sarah Cortez**, and (moderator) **Carmen Tafolla**. Also featured will be filmmaker, playwright, and writer **Severo Perez**. A book signing will follow; books will be available for purchase courtesy of the University Bookstore.

You can still pay your 2013-2014 dues and make reservations for the banquet, but please do have your check in the mail by Thursday, March 27. Please use the form at the end of this newsletter to make a payment.

Attendees are asked to **RSVP** to thewittliffcollections@txstate.edu.

More information is available here:

<http://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/exhibitions-events/events.html>

An early bird event at 2 p.m. on Friday, April 4, to which TIL members are invited will be a Q&A session with one of America's most exciting authors, **Sherman Alexie**. He is the author of, most recently, *War Dances*, a collection of stories and poems from Grove Press, and *Face*, a book of poetry from Hanging Loose Press. He is the winner of the 2010 PEN/Faulkner Award, the 2007 National Book Award for Young People's Literature, the 2001 PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story, and a Special Citation for the 1994 PEN/Hemingway Award for Best First Fiction. *Smoke Signals*, the film he wrote and co-produced, won the Audience Award and Filmmakers Trophy at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival. He lives with his family in Seattle. This Lindsey Literary Series event is sponsored by the Burdine Johnson Foundation and the Wittliff Collections, Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center, and Department of English.

Transportation from the banquet hotel to this event will not be available. Here is a link with information concerning directions to and parking at the Wittliff Collections:

<http://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/about/visit.html>

Transportation will be provided to the reception from the host hotel to the Wittliff Collections and back for our reception that begins at 6 p.m. on Friday, April 4. Our special guest that evening will be **Renato Ramirez**. Mr. Ramirez and his family are now the donors sponsoring TIL's Scholarly Book Award. I hope you will make every effort to be there. Among other things, he is a master of the lively art of *la declamación*, the oral poetry tradition of the border. We're very excited to say that Mr. Ramirez has agreed to give us a short sampling of his performance art at the reception.

As was the case last year, our friends at the San Marcos Convention & Visitors Bureau will provide transportation from the hotel to the Albert B. Alkek Library on the Texas State campus, which is home to the Wittliff Collections. The bus will leave from in front of the Embassy Suites between 5:30 and 5:45 p.m. It will depart from the Wittliff Collections to

return to the hotel at 8 p.m.

Our host hotel is the Embassy Suites San Marcos, Hotel, Spa, and Conference Center, in San Marcos, the same place we met last year. All events on Saturday, April 5, occur there. It is located adjacent to the famous outlet malls south of the San Marcos business district. It is a high-rise (at least relatively speaking) on the east side of the I-35 and hard to miss. Following are the directions the hotel staff most recommends:

From Austin

Take **I-35** South toward San Marcos. Exit at the **McCarty Lane Exit (Exit 201)**. Take a left on McCarty Lane.

From San Antonio

Take **I-35** North toward San Marcos. Exit at the **McCarty Lane Exit (Exit 201)**. Take a right on McCarty Lane.

From Houston

Take **I-10** West to **U.S. 183 North** to **SH-80** (also known as the San Marcos Highway). Take SH-80 west to **I-35** South. Take the **McCarty Lane Exit** off I-35.

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, this year's meeting will be dedicated to the memory of **John Graves** – a major literary figure, a long-time Council member, a TIL President, and a TIL Fellow. We also will take a few moments to recognize **Rolando Hinojosa-Smith** for receiving the National Book Critics Circle's 2013 Ivan Landrof Lifetime Achievement Award, which he accepted in New York on March 13. Also, **Jan Reid** will receive TIL's Lon Tinkle Award during the banquet program.

The banquet on Saturday, April 5, will begin at 7 p.m., with a cocktail reception commencing in the hallway outside the banquet room at 6 p.m. During the afternoon of that Saturday, we will have the traditional readings by new members, beginning at 3 p.m. Also,

the San Antonio Book Festival will be taking place on that Saturday, and we're hopeful members might be able to make the short drive there to take in some of the events during the day.

Schedule for 2014 TIL Meeting and Banquet

Thursday, April 3

7 p.m. – Panel: *Writing Beyond Borders*

Moderated by **Carmen Tafolla**, Wittliff Collections

Friday, April 4

3 p.m. – Q&A with **Sherman Alexie**, Wittliff Collections

6 p.m. – Reception

Hosted by the Wittliff Collections And Texas State University

Performance by **Renato Ramirez**

Saturday, April 5

3 p.m. – New members introduction, readings

6 p.m. – Cash bar

7 p.m. – Banquet

All April 5 Events at the Embassy Suites

Ramirez To Fund Scholarly Book Award

By Andrés Tijerina

TIL Vice President

Mr. **Renato Ramirez** and his family are now the donors sponsoring TIL's Scholarly Book Award. Renato is currently the CEO of the fastest growing bank in South Texas, IBC-Zapata, and he is well known in Texas business circles. But beyond that, he is a great civic leader, a patron of the arts and humanities, and a true son of the Texas soil.

Renato earned his B.S. degree from Texas A&M University where he was a collegiate wrestling champion, and his M.B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin. He taught finance for over 15 years at the University of Tennessee, Louisiana State University, and Laredo State University.

Renato Ramirez is President and CEO of IBC Bank-Zapata in South Texas and an astute businessman and a philanthropist who is passionate about helping the less fortunate with his time and financial support. He has made significant donations to schools including the Mary Help of Christian School in Laredo, the Harmony Academy of Science in Laredo, and to the Sacred Heart Orphanage in Laredo. His accolades include his being selected as "Mr. South Texas" for 2014 by the Washington Birthday Celebration Association in Laredo, President of the Republic of the Rio Grande by the Webb County Heritage Foundation, LULAC Sports Hall of Fame, the Texas Bankers Association Cornerstone Award in 2013, and Mexican American Legislative Caucus Latino Leader of the Year. He currently serves on the board of directors of the Texas Civil Rights Project in Austin, the Alamo Public Telecommunication Council in San Antonio, and the Futuro Media Group in New York.

Most recently, Renato directed the private fund drive for the Tejano Monument at the state capitol in Austin. The \$2 million 12-year project was his pet project, as it reflected his love of the Texas ranching tradition. Renato is horseman knowledgeable of the traditions of *charreada*, and regularly rides and ropes on his own expansive ranch in Zapata.

Above all, Ramirez is a master of the art of *la declamación*, the oral poetry tradition of the border. It is performed with great expression and verve. He is scheduled to recite "A Mi

Nieto” by Delfín Sánchez Juárez for his performance of the art at the TIL reception on Friday, April 4.

President’s Message

My copy of **William H. Vann’s** history of TIL’s first 30 years – handsomely published by **Bill and Sally Wittliff’s** Encino Press in 1967 – once belonged to **Bud Shrake**. Bud’s son, **Ben Shrake**, found it while he was closing down his dad’s house after Bud’s death and thought I might want to have it. Ben thought right. It’s one of my treasures. This evening, though I had scores of other pressing matters to tend to, I took a break to reread some sections of it. Once again, I was reminded of what an interesting history TIL has – and how much we have to be proud of.

For instance, in 1938, a woman, the poet **Karle Wilson Baker** from Nacogdoches, became TIL’s second president. Two years later, **Rebecca Smith**, the English professor from TCU who championed Southwestern literature and female writers, became our fourth president. In 1944, the poet **Lexie Dean Robertson** from Rising Star was the third woman in a six-year span to be named president. Somewhere along the line, Baker was selected a fellow of the institute, the first woman to be chosen as such. This was a remarkable accomplishment for these women in that time and place. That this occurred in our organization is something that should be a source of pride for us.

But as I thumbed through Vann’s book, I was reminded of areas of concern that we’ve had to face as well. For instance, Baker was indeed an early fellow, but decades passed after her death with no other women being recognized as such. In fact, so much time had passed that when the council named **Carolyn Osborn** a fellow a couple of years ago, we thought she was the first woman ever to get that honor.

An appendix in Vann’s book lists all the TIL members, past and present, through 1966. I studied the list and found just one Hispanic surname. It belonged to **Carlos Eduardo Castañeda**, the esteemed UT scholar, born in Mexico, raised in Brownsville, from the first

half of the 20th century for whom the university's main library is named. What Vann's list illustrates is that TIL was for far too long the realm primarily of Anglo men.

At the conclusion of the April banquet, the biennial rotation of TIL officers will occur. My good friend **Andrés Tijerina**, an amazing scholar and author from whom I've learned so much about life and history these past years, will become president. I can say with confidence that for the first time TIL will have a president who knows first-hand what it was like, from a Tejano perspective, to take part as a migrant worker in Texas cotton harvests; what it was like to grow up in West Texas at a time when there were towns with just one store that would cater to Mexican-Americans; and what it was like to deal with white cops in Lubbock who did not care much for people whose skin was, from their perspective, too brown or whose last name had too many vowels. I can also say we're past due in having such a president, and I'm delighted Andrés will be our new leader. He'll do a great job. I'm also delighted that **Steve Davis** will be vice president and that **Darwin Payne**, one the best secretaries and best presidents TIL has ever had, is coming out of retirement to become our "new" secretary. Rounding out the team will be treasurer **Jim Hoggard** and recording secretary **Betty Wiesepepe**. This crew will serve us well.

– *W.K. (Kip) Stratton, TIL President*

Member News

Dave Parsons has been honored in Conroe with a bust depicting him in the downtown Founders Park, commemorating Dave's years of Chairmanship of the Conroe Commission of Arts & Culture, founding the Montgomery County Literary Arts Council, and receiving the Texas State Arts Award of 2011 Texas Poet Laureate. Dave reports, "My first reaction was: I'm not dead yet?" He adds, however, "I am very grateful and proud of the unique honor. The bust was done by noted Texas sculptor, Craig Campobella and Dr. Gary Gibbs,

Executive Director of the Texas Commission on the Arts came down to do the unveiling...very hard to get my head around...pun intended.”

Sergio Troncoso’s novel *From This Wicked Patch of Dust* was shortlisted runner-up for the PEN/Texas Southwest Book Award. Judge Miroslav Penkov said: “Effortlessly, with elegance of style, Troncoso weaves a tapestry of lives, of human beings who by the end of the book feel not just real, not just intimately close, but undeniable, inescapable, a part of ourselves.” Another recent book, *Our Lost Border: Essays on Life amid the Narco-Violence*, co-edited with **Sarah Cortez**, won the Southwest Book Award from the Border Regional Library Association.

This April, **Pat Mora** and her daughter **Libby Martinez**, will publish their first co-authored children’s books, *I Pledge Allegiance* (Knopf) and *Bravo, Chico Canta! Bravo!* (Groundwood Books, English and Spanish editions). This April is the 18th Anniversary of the national family literacy initiative El día de los niños, El día de los libros/Children’s day, Book Day, founded by Pat.

Dan Jenkins has exciting news: “Pub date is March 4 for my “journalism memoir” titled HIS OWNSELF (from Doubleday). I had never written a memoir before and found it difficult to keep myself out of it.”

Ben Rehder’s novel *The Chicken Hanger* (TCU Press) was recently named the winner of the Philosophical Society of Texas’s 2013 Award of Merit for a book of fiction. Ben’s novel was also a finalist for the TIL’s Jesse H. Jones Award in 2013.

Judy Alter reports from Fort Worth: “I had a book signing for the print edition of my latest Kelly O’Connell Mystery, *Danger Comes Home*, on Saturday, Feb. 1 from 7-9 a.m. and Mon. Feb. 3, from 5-7 p.m. at Fort Worth’s Old Neighborhood Grill. The next Blue Plate Mystery, *Murder at the Tremont House*, launches as an e-book on Feb. 27, with print to follow, and the next Kelly O’Connell, *Deception in Strange Places*, is due in August 2014. I’m busily trying to write the sixth Kelly O’Connell but find so much gets in my way—book reviews, blogs, talks, grandkids. Life is busy but oh-so-good.”

Jerry Craven's novel *Women of Thunder* will be published by TCU Press in the fall, 2014. It is a sequel to his 2013 novel, *The Wild Part*. He serves as director of Lamar University Press, which currently takes submissions by invitation only; among those invited to submit are TIL members.

Joe Lansdale has been on a well-deserved roll. The new film based on his novel, *Cold in July*, was a smash hit at the recent Sundance Film Festival and is gearing up for nationwide release. Hot on the heels of that news is a report that Bill Paxton has signed on to direct a film adaptation of one of Joe's best-loved novels, *The Bottoms*, set in 1930s east Texas. And while Joe was basking in the glow of these well-deserved successes, his daughter **Kasey Lansdale** was tearing up the stage, performing in Nashville with John Carter Cash and others.

Jan Reid won the TIL's Lon Tinkle Award for career achievement, which will be presented at our annual meeting in San Marcos. More good news for Jan: his biography *Let the People In: The Life and Times of Ann Richards* won the Philosophical Society of Texas' 2013 Award of Merit for a book of nonfiction. Jan spoke about the Texas governor to the American Association of University Women, which is endowing a noteworthy scholarship in her honor. His essay about the lifelong friendship of football stars Bobby Layne and Doak Walker and his tribute to John Graves appeared on the publications website of the University of Texas alumni, ably edited by **Stephen Harrigan's** daughter **Dorothy Guerrero**. He has contributed new essays to anthologies on subjects that include the Rio Grande, the rise and fall of Congressman Tom DeLay, the nature of intertwined research of his historical novel *Comanche Sundown* and the biography of his friend **Ann Richards**, and the songwriting of **Lyle Lovett** and **Robert Earl Keen**, whom he's nicknamed the Cosmic Aggies. Jan says his new novel is "getting there."

Elizabeth Crook has a new novel, *Monday, Monday*, to be published by Sarah Crichton Books of Farrar, Straus and Giroux in late April. The story begins with Charles Whitman shooting from the UT tower in 1966--the first mass shooting of civilians on a campus in American history. It follows three students who are caught up in the massacre, and their

ensuing relationship that eventually entangles them in a forbidden love affair, an illicit pregnancy, and a vow of secrecy that will span forty years. **Steve Harrigan** says the massacre is “painted with harrowing exactitude” and calls the book “brilliant and beautiful.” **Sarah Bird** calls it “an eloquent love story born from an act of random violence” and says it is “subtle, startling, and wise.”

TIL Fellow **Bill Wittliff** has teamed up again with **Robert Duvall**. The two veterans from the original *Lonesome Dove* television miniseries came together to make a movie from Wittliff’s script, *Night in Old Mexico*. The film recently premiered at South by Southwest in Austin and received effusive reviews.

Dallas 1963 by **Bill Minutaglio** and **Steve Davis** was named an Amazon Best History Book of 2013, one of the Top Nonfiction Books of 2013 by *Kirkus*, an “Essential” JFK book by the *Daily Beast*, and a best book of the year by the *New Republic*, *Kansas City Star*, and *Seattle Times*. The authors report that they spoke to literally dozens of people during their whirlwind tour that carried them from Detroit to St. Louis to Tulsa.

Don Graham has recently signed with St. Martin’s for a book on the making of *Giant*.

Fran Vick wrote to share the following news about **James Hoggard**: “Very good review of Jim Hoggard’s *The Devil’s Fingers and Other Personal Essays*, Wings Press, in the February 2nd Sunday edition of the *Dallas Morning News*, calling the book, “excellent essays set in Texas, Cuba, Paris, London, Iraq and other places, and he has a fine eye for events and detail. . . . he knows how to approach ‘those portions of the world that are inside us yet beyond us. . . .’”

Francis E Abernethy has a new book out. He wrote the text, did the research, and did many of the layouts for the new Stephen F. Austin University Press title, *Let the River Run Wild!*, an 11x14 book of photographs of life on the Neches River from where it comes out of the ground in Van Zandt County to where it empties into the Gulf at Sabine Lake in Jefferson County. **Adrian Van Dellen** was the photographer.

Mark Busby did a reading and book signing of his new novel, *Cedar Crossing*, at the Wittliff Collections, Texas State University. Also at the Wittliff, he moderated a discussion with TIL members **Bill Minutaglio** and **Steve Davis** about their new book, *Dallas 1963*.

T.I.L. Vice-President **Andrés Tijerina** is co-director with T.I.L. Member **Emilio Zamora** of the Tejano Handbook of Texas Project which aims to increase the number of essays on Tejanos in the *Handbook of Texas*. Once the project is completed, Andres and Emilio will propose to co-edit the new *Handbook of Mexican American Texas*, to be published by the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA). They held a session at the Annual Meeting of the TSHA on March 6, 2014 at the Wyndham Riverwalk in San Antonio where they formally announced the project, funded jointly by the Tejano Monument, Inc. and the TSHA.

Lisa Sandlin's short fiction in *A&U: America's AIDS Magazine* won their Christopher Hewitt Award for fiction, Aug 2013, and her detective story, "Phelan's First Case," published originally in *Lone Star Noir*, was chosen for the Akashic Books Best-of anthology, *USA Noir*, 2013.

Larry D. Thomas was selected the final judge for the 2014 Blue Horse Press (Los Angeles, CA) Poetry Chapbook Competition. For five years, the press has published the distinguished *San Pedro River Review*, an international print journal of poetry and photography.

Ron Tyler has had a busy year since his retirement as director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth. He published the lead article on American Western Art during the first decade of the twentieth century in the Denver Art Museum's *Decades: An Expanded Context for Western American Art, 1900-1940*; an article on Alfred Jacob Miller's *Portrait of Antoine* in *The Journal of the Walters Art Museum*; an article on western exploration in a book on the U.S. Congressional *Serial Set: Its Make-up and Content* (ProQuest); and has a forthcoming essay on Texas art in the catalog for a traveling exhibition of J. P. Bryan's collection of Texas art (TCU Press). He is currently working to complete a book on 19th century lithographs relating to Texas.

Robert Bonazzi reports that Wings Press will publish his new book this fall: *Outside the Margins, Literary Commentaries*. 300 pages of essays & reviews of everyone from Neruda,

Vallejo, John Howard Griffin & Thomas Merton to such TIL members as **Naomi Shihab Nye**, **Bryce Milligan**, **Dave Oliphant** and **James Hoggard**. Essays from *World Literature Today*, *National Catholic Reporter*, *Texas Observer*, and columns from the *San Antonio Express-News*.

Jane Roberts Wood reports: "This is not news, but I'm having the best time with a short story. Like *New York Times* cross word puzzles, every word has to fit."

T. Lindsay Baker, who lives on a farm in Hill County and holds an endowed chair and teaches history at Tarleton State University, has been staying busy. He chaired the Soeurette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translation of a Book published in 2012 or 2013 for the TIL. One of the participants in the May 2013 TIL-sponsored educational study tour to Cuba, Baker spoke in January at the Dora Lee Langdon Cultural and Educational Center in Granbury, Texas, on "Following the Trail of Ernest Hemingway across Cuba." He will speak as a panel member in a session celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Junior Historians Program at the annual meeting of the Texas State Historical Association in March. Baker currently is preparing a book comprised of heretofore unpublished black-and-white historic photographs of roadside businesses along U.S. Highway 66 drawn from historic production files that survive from the Curt Teich postcard company of Chicago now preserved in the Archives of the Lake County Historical Society in Wauconda, Illinois.

David Lee's new book, *Last Call*, will be out from Wings Press this February.

Carolyn Osborn shares a bit of publication news: My personal essay called *Going to Texas* was published in a University of North Carolina journal, *Southern Cultures*, winter issue. Basically it's about the vast differences between living in Nashville, TN and Gatesville, TX and how one adapts. Another essay, *The Galapagos*, subtitled *A Booby Tour*, will come out in the *Antioch Review's* spring 2014 issue. An unreasonable desire to see blue-footed boobies in their natural habitat led to a semi-disastrous trip.

Gerald Duff's new novel, *Memphis Mojo*, has just been published by Lamar University Press.

Lonn Taylor checks in from Fort Davis: “I have a new book of essays, *Texas People, Texas Places: More Musings of the Rambling Boy*, coming out from TCU Press in March. It is designed and illustrated with woodcuts by **Barbara Whitehead**. The essays are derived from the “Rambling Boy” weekly columns that I write for the *Marfa Big Bend Sentinel*. I have also started writing a bi-monthly column for *Texas Monthly* about significant Texas artifacts in Texas museums. The first one, in the February issue, was about Santa Anna’s silver chamber pot, which is in the Sam Houston Memorial Museum in Huntsville.

Frank de la Teja, director of the Center for the Study of the Southwest at Texas State, has just published a co-edited volume with **Tim Matovina** of Notre Dame University, *Recollections of a Tejano Life: Antonio Menchaca in Texas History* (University of Texas Press, 2013). The book for the first time makes available the complete memoirs in a critical annotated and edited edition. On April 5, 2014, Frank and the Center are hosting a one-day symposium: “Lone Star Unionism and Dissent: The Other Civil War Texas.” The symposium will take place at the Wittliff Collections and is free to the public. More information available on the Wittliff and Center Web sites. Frank is also co-hosting with San Jacinto Battleground Conservancy this year’s Battle of San Jacinto Symposium on April 12. This year’s theme is “The Tejano Side of the Texas Revolution.” Details and registration materials can be found on the Conservancy’s Web site:

www.friendsofsanjacinto.com/San%20Jacinto%20Battleground%20Symposiums.

Finally, Frank is working with the Supreme Electoral Court of Mexico on a dual language edition of the proceedings of the Constituent Congress of Coahuila y Texas (1824-1827), including the state constitution of Coahuila y Texas of 1827. The project is part of a larger effort by the Court to publish the original constitutions of all the Mexican states.

Barbara Whitehead has been staying busy: “Recently I have designed numerous books including *The Harness Maker’s Dream* by **Nick Kotz**, *Cedar Crossing* by **Mark Busby**, and *Many Rivers to Cross* a novel by **Tom Zigal**. I created the original cover artwork for Tom’s book; both were featured at the Texas Book Festival this fall. I have just finished three linocut illustrations for **Lonn Taylor’s** *Texas People, Texas Places* that will come out in March. The cover has the same portrait I created for *Texas My Texas* but in new colors. This

November past was the opening of the new Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum in Cuero Texas. I drew, cut & printed many linocut illustrations for the display story boards. A number of TIL members added their creative talents in the video and displays.”

Christopher Cook’s newest collection of novellas and stories entitled *Langues de feu* was published in February by Editions Payot & Rivages in France. The French publisher also renewed its contract to continue publishing his novel *Voleurs* for another five years.

Greg Garrett shares a wealth of news: He published his fourth novel, *The Prodigal* (co-written with the late **Brennan Manning**), with Zondervan/HarperCollins in November, and it quickly went into a second printing, sold foreign rights, and made a book club sale. The book, which is set in the Texas Hill Country, launched at Austin’s BookPeople at an event sponsored by Real Ale Brewing; Greg says he is still finishing off the last of the Fireman’s #4! In the fall, Greg taught a class on point of view for the Writers League of Texas, spoke at the University of Detroit-Mercy, and did a speaking and signing tour in Europe that took him to the American Library in Paris, the American Cathedral in Paris, Kings College in London, and Magdalene College at Cambridge. He is currently finishing up a nonfiction book on religion and culture for Oxford University Press due out in November of this year. The topic is the afterlife--a subject upon which he is certainly not personally expert, but Greg is exploring how our ideas about death and what follows death are shaped by the books we read, and the other stories we consume in film, television, and other forms of culture. Greg is also writing shorter pieces on politics, culture, religion, travel, and food for *Huffington Post*, *Patheos*, and *OnFaith*.

TIL’s **George Getschow** is the Mayborn’s writer-in-residence and director of the Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Conference, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.

The conference will be held July 18-20 at the Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center in Grapevine. The theme of the conference is “Narrative on the Cutting Edge: Writing about Science, Technology, Medicine and Innovation. Speakers include TIL members **Lawrence Wright**, who won the Pulitzer Prize for *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, **Mimi Swartz**, an executive editor of *Texas Monthly* and author of *Power Failure, The Inside Story of the Collapse of Enron*. Wright, whose latest book, *Going*

Clear, was named one of *Time* magazine's "top ten" books of 2013, is the Mayborn's Saturday night keynote speaker. Other TIL members speaking are **Rico Ainslie** and **Bryan Burrough**. Fridays keynote is David Quammen, contributing writer for *National Geographic* and author of twelve books, including *The Song of the Dodo*, a science-cum-travel book on the evolution and extinction of species, and *Spillover*, a work on the science, history, and human impacts of emerging diseases. Sunday's keynote speaker is Sheri Fink, the Pulitzer Prize winning author of *Five Days at Memorial*. TIL President **Kip Stratton** serves as one of the Mayborn's jurists for its national book writing competition. For information, visit themayborn.com.

Janice Shefelman writes that she and her husband, Tom, have a new book coming out--but not in America. "Our picture book biography, *I, Papa Haydn*, will be out from a publisher in Seoul this spring in the Korean language - but not in English. This is a new experience for my illustrator-husband and me. Though I submitted it to publishers here, no one accepted. Then I sent it to the same Korean publisher who bought the foreign rights to our *I, Vivaldi*, and did a beautiful job. Three days later I received an acceptance. Tom and I can only hope an American publisher will buy the foreign rights. After all, there is already a translation! To me this eager acceptance says something about Korean parents. They want their children to learn about Western high culture. What do American parents want?"

Angela Shelf Medearis writes to say, "I don't know if you're aware of the SCRIBES ROOM honoring members of TIL at the Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort in Bastrop, but I wanted to send along some information about this fabulous retreat for the newsletter. Lost Pines would be a lovely place to hold a TIL conference meeting, or the perfect cure for writer's block. I plan to return and stay in the Litton House the next time I have a book project to complete. Litton House offers the best of the Resort amenities combined with the solitude, quiet, and peaceful surroundings one needs to finish a project or as a restful retreat."

Finalists Announced for Literary Awards

The judges for the 2013 TIL literary awards have completed their work and finalists have been announced for twelve literary awards. The cash prizes accompanying the awards total more than \$21,000. Winners will be announced at the TIL banquet in San Marcos on Saturday, April 5. Finalists include:

JESSE JONES AWARD FOR FICTION (\$6,000)

Rick Bass, *All the Land to Hold Us* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt); Philipp Meyer, *The Son* (Ecco Press); Tom Zigel, *Many Rivers to Cross* (TCU Press).

CARR P. COLLINS AWARD FOR NONFICTION (\$5,000)

Jeff Guinn, *Manson: The Life and Times of Charles Manson* (Simon & Schuster); Nick Kotz, *The Harness Maker's Dream: Nathan Kallison and the Rise of South Texas* (TCU Press); John Taliaferro, *All the Great Prizes: The Life of John Hay, from Lincoln to Roosevelt* (Simon & Schuster); Lawrence Wright, *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief* (Knopf).

STEVEN TURNER AWARD FOR FIRST FICTION (\$1,000)

Nan Cuba, *Body and Bread* (Engine Books); Kelly Luce, *Three Scenarios in Which Hana Sasaki Grows a Tail* (A Strange Object); Mario Alberto Zambrano, *Lotería* (Harper).

RAMIREZ AWARD FOR SCHOLARLY BOOK (\$2,500)

Raul Coronado, *A World Not to Come: A History of Latino Writing and Print Culture* (Harvard University Press).

HELEN C. SMITH MEMORIAL AWARD FOR POETRY (\$1,200)

Bruce Bond, *Choir of the Wells* (Etruscan Press); Lance Larsen, *Genius Loci* (University of Tampa Press); Pattiann Rogers, *Holy Heathen Rhapsody* (Viking).

BOB BUSH MEMORIAL AWARD FOR FIRST BOOK OF POETRY (\$1,000)

Frances Hatfield, *Rudiments of Flight* (Wings Press); Stacy R. Nigliazzo, *Scissored Moon* (Press 53); Sasha West, *Failure and I Bury the Body* (Harper Perennial).

H-E-B/JEAN FLYNN CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD (\$500)

Sherry Garland, illustrated by Layne Johnson, *Voices of Pearl Harbor* (Pelican Publishing); Xavier Garza, *Maximilian and the Mystery of the Bingo Rematch* (Cinco Puntos Press); Patricia Vermillion and Kuleigh Smith, *Texas Chili? Oh My!* (TCU Press).

H-E-B AWARD, YOUNG ADULTS BOOK (\$500)

Kathi Appelt, *The True Blue Scouts of Sugar Man Swamp* (Atheneum Books)

EDWIN "BUD" SHRAKE AWARD FOR SHORT NONFICTION (\$1,000)

John MacCormack, "Life on the Shale," *San Antonio Express-News*; Jessica Wilbanks, "On the Far Side of the Fire," *Ninth Letter*.

KAY CATTARULLA AWARD FOR SHORT STORY (\$1,000)

Bret Anthony Johnston, "To a Good Home," *Virginia Quarterly Review*; Edward McPherson, "Reunion 1938" *Epoch*, Paul Christensen, "My Beautiful Life," *Agni*.

FRED WHITEHEAD AWARD FOR DESIGN OF A TRADE BOOK (\$750)

Bill Brammer for *Hometown, Texas*, by Karla K. Morton (TCU Press); Ann Giangliulio for *Remember Dippy* By Shirley Reva Vernick (Cinco Puntos Press); Lindsay Starr for *Two Prospectors: The Letters of Sam Shepard and Johnny Dark*, edited by Chad Hammett (University of Texas Press).

SOEURETTE DIEHL FRASER AWARD FOR BEST TRANSLATION OF A BOOK (\$1,000)

David Bowles, *Flower, Song, Dance: Aztec and Mayan Poetry* (Lamar University Press); Johnny Byrd, Luis Humberto Crosthwaite's *Out of Their Minds* (Cinco Puntos).

New Members Announced

The TIL will be inducting eleven outstanding new members this year. You'll get a chance to meet these writers (and hear them read from their work) at our annual meeting on April 5.

New members are:

Alan Lee Birkelbach

A native Texan, Birkelbach is a poet and children's book author. He was the poet laureate of Texas 2005 and is the author of nine volumes of verse in addition to his children's books. Finalist for TIL's 2011 Children's Book Award; nominated for Pushcart, Spur, and Wrangler Awards.

Pamela Colloff

Three time winner of TIL's O Henry Award for magazine journalism, 16-year veteran writer and editor at *Texas Monthly*. Winner of the National Magazine Award (magazine journalism's equivalent of the Pulitzer) for "The Innocent Man" in 2012. Numerous other nominations and awards.

Max Evans

Widely recognized author of "modern Westerns," born and reared in West Texas; writes about a fictional landscape, the Hi Lo Country, that includes Far West Texas. Author of numerous books, including *The Rounders*, *The Hi Lo Country*, and *Bluefeather Fellini*. Numerous awards.

Gene Fowler

Gene Fowler began performing and writing for theater during the Johnson Administration. He has appeared professionally at the Kennedy Center, Fort Worth's White Elephant Saloon, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, the San Antonio Rodeo, and the Nashville Network. His books include *Border Radio*, *Crazy Water*, and *Mavericks*.

Christine Granados

Author of six books, including *Brides and Sinners in El Chuco* as well as biographies for young adults. Published journalism in *Texas Monthly*, *Texas Observer*, *Evergreen Review*, and several newspapers. Editor of *Moderna* and *Hispanic* magazines. Winner of several awards.

Diana Lopez

Author of three young adult novels published by New York publishers and one novella. Stories published in *Chicago Review*, *Sycamore Review*, and elsewhere. Alfredo Cisneros Del Moral Award and William Allen White Award for Children's Books. Appears on NPR's *Latino USA*.

Domingo Martinez

Author of National Book Award finalist *The Boy Kings of Texas*, national bestseller, optioned by Selma Hayek's production company. Standalone segment of *The Boy Kings* was a finalist for a Pushcart prize. Also written for *The New Republic* and other magazines.

Steven Saylor

Native Texan, University of Texas graduate, author of 13 historical novels and more than 60 essays and short stories. (New novel in February from St. Martin's.) Translated into seven languages. Taken part in documentaries appearing on the History Channel.

William Seale

Native Texan, nationally recognized historian. Author of *Texas Riverman* and several books about historically significant homes and guidebooks. Editor of the journal, *White House History*. Appears regularly on C-Span as an expert historian.

Ann Weisgarber

Long-time Texas resident, won TIL's Turner Award for *The Personal History of Rachel DuPree* (Pan Macmillan). Also won Orange award for first fiction. Second book is *The Promise*, set in Galveston, already long-listed for the 2014 Orange award.

Lowell Mick White

Author of two novels and 27 short stories. Finalist for TIL's Turner award. Published poetry in various journals. Former Dobie Paisano Fellow – volunteered to help with program numerous times since. New novel, *Professed*, forthcoming.

David Marion Wilkinson

UT grad, author of four novels, *Not Between Brothers*, *The Empty Quarter*, *Oblivion's Quarter*, and *Where the Mountains Are Thieves*. Co-author of bestselling *One Ranger*, with Joaquin Jackson. Currently works in script development and pre-production of cable dramatic series.

TIL OFFICERS

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Vice President, Andrés Tijerina, Austin

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Robert Compton, Garland, second term ends April 2014

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

Karla Morton, Denton, first term ends April 2015

Jan Reid, Austin, second term ends April 2015

Carmen Tafolla, San Antonio, second term ends April 2015

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

Send news for the next TIL Newsletter to Steve Davis. You may send items to admin at [texasintstituteofletters.org](mailto:admin@texasintstituteofletters.org). Substitute the symbol @ for the word “at”.

2013-14 Dues Form, Banquet Reservation 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 _____

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TIL dues for fiscal year 2013-14 _____ \$50.00

Paisano Fund _____

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April 5 Banquet Tickets, \$50 per person _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

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

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76308.**

Please have your payments mailed by Thursday, March 27!

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