

THE TEXAS INSTITUTE OF LETTERS

January, February, 2008, Newsletter

Friday night reception for annual meeting to be at incredibly rich private library

Our traditional Friday night reception for this year's April 18-19 annual meeting will be held at a spectacular private library at one of Dallas' most historic houses.

The Harlan Crow Library, a two-story addition to his home on Preston Road in Highland Park—a house at one time owned and resided in by Electra Waggoner (eccentric daughter of famed cattleman W.T. Waggoner; the Buick Electra and the town of Electra were named for her) as well as other notables—contains priceless artifacts, historic documents, 3,500 manuscripts, 8,000 rare books, and paintings by America's greatest masters.

Harlan and Kathy Crow now live in the house with their children, but they occasionally open the library for special events such as ours. This will be a rare opportunity to see it.

A small hint as to the library holdings is suggested by a recent news story about the death of Margaret Truman. Remember the stinging letter that Harry Truman wrote to *Washington Post* music critic Paul Hume in which the president threatened to give him a black eye next time he saw him because of the critical review he wrote of her singing? That's one of the letters owned by Crow.

Want to see the china that Hitler used? It's there, too.

Eisenhower's five-star helmet? Yep. Lincoln's desk, Lincoln's life mask created in February 1865, a 1493 letter from Christopher Columbus announcing his discoveries to the Spanish court, the deed to Washington's Mt. Vernon estate, a silver tankard created by Paul Revere, correspondence from all U.S. presidents from George Washington to the present, and on and on and on.

American artists? Prominent, recognizable paintings by John Singleton Copley, Gilbert Stuart, Thomas Sully, Benjamin West, Rembrandt Peale and others.

And maybe you've heard about Harlan Crow's collection of statues and busts of the world's best-known dictators.

You'll want to be there, so be sure to indicate your attendance on your registration form. Plans are to have a bus take members from the Park Cities Hilton, where we'll be staying, to the Crow mansion and library just down Preston Road.

Annual meeting returns to Dallas To Park Cities Hilton, April 18-19

TIL's annual meeting, April 18-19, 2008, once again will be held in Dallas at the Hilton Park Cities Hotel, conveniently located at the Preston Road/Northwest Highway area filled with interesting shops and restaurants as well as being down the road from NorthPark.

A special TIL rate for rooms has been obtained. Reservations must be made by March 28, and members should request the Texas Institute of Letters rate—\$129 per night for a standard king or double queen guestroom based on single or double occupancy. A limited number of rooms are available on the Executive Club Floor at the rate of \$159 per night.

Reservations may be made 24 hours a day by calling 1-800-HILTONS.

As usual, our meeting will begin with a Friday night reception to be held at the Harlan Crow Library (see details above). On Saturday afternoon new member readings will be held, followed by a cocktail hour and the awards banquet.

More details will follow in the next newsletter.

Time to pay dues for 2008

Dues for the year 2008, \$50 per member, are now payable to our treasurer, James Hoggard, Dept. of English, Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls, TX 76308.

You may also pay for your April 19 banquet tickets in Dallas with the same check. Each ticket is \$50.

See the form on page five.

Southwestern Writers Collection Acquires Cormac McCarthy Papers

The papers of Cormac McCarthy have been acquired by the Southwestern Writers Collection, a part of The Wittliff Collections at the Alkek Library, Texas State University-San Marcos.

At the core of the collection are correspondence, notes, handwritten and typed drafts, setting copies, and proofs of each of McCarthy's eleven novels. It also includes materials related to his work on the 1994 play, "The Stonemason," as well as four screenplays, including "No Country for Old Men," which McCarthy began as a screenplay in 1984 and then adapted twenty years later as a novel.

The Southwestern Writers Collection has been steadily increasing in size and status since its founding in 1986 by Bill Wittliff and his wife Sally. The collection includes also major archives of such writers as John Graves, Sam Shepard, Edwin "Bud" Shrake, Larry L. King, and Stephen Harrigan.

Archivist Katie Salzmann is currently creating the initial inventory for the McCarthy Papers and transferring materials into archival folders and boxes for permanent housing. The number of requests to access the collection is expected to be high once the processing is finished and the complete inventory of the contents is online, perhaps as early as this fall.

News of members and others

Carlton Stowers, up Cedar Hill way, was presented the 2007 A.C. Greene Literary Award at the West Texas Book & Music Festival. Carlton says: "I have no idea how I was selected for the honor. I just took it and ran before they changed their mind." Well, Carlton, our members know. You, like A.C., have distinguished yourself in so many ways in both literature and journalism.

Sandra Scofield, now living in the northern reaches of Missoula, Montana, (not forever, says she!), has a short story, "Charity" forthcoming in the journal, *Image*. Her craft book, *The Scene Book*, is new this year and doing well.

Along with prominent historians and biographers who include Lou Cannon, Richard Norton Smith, and Richard D. White, **Jan Reid** contributed a long essay on the pioneering administration of Ann Richards to *Governing the Twentieth Century*, a study of Woodrow Wilson, Huey Long, George Wallace, Ronald Reagan, and other politicians whose careers and legacies include terms as governors. The book will be published in 2009 by the National Governors Association and the University of Pennsylvania Press. Reid's latest book on popular music and culture, *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs*, has been translated and published in Japanese.

L. D. Clark's new book, *Pilgrim's Progress Redux and Other Stories*, has recently appeared from Goldminds Publishing, a new press in Kansas City, Missouri. Some of the stories enter territory seldom visited by fictionwrights, as in the reincarnation of a forgotten nineteenth-century novelist, and an adventure imagined for the Iceman, who lived in the Alps 5300 years ago. The title piece is a retelling of Bunyan's classic in modern terms. The epigraph of the volume is "Life Is a Dream and God is a Metaphor." A story comparable to these in theme and tone, "Uncertain Passage" is to be found in Amazon.com/Shorts.

Ronald L. Davis, who now lives in Wimberley, Texas, has a new book coming out in February—*Mary Martin, Broadway Legend*, from the University of Oklahoma Press. Mary, of course, grew up west of Fort Worth in Weatherford.

Missing persons: **Joan Burditt**, where are you. Anybody know of her new address? Her last newsletter addressed to 2405 W. 43rd St., Austin 78751, was returned.

Our faithful treasurer, **James Hoggard**, recently was honored with the PEN Southwest Poetry Award. Jim has translated fifteen poems and three essays in a bilingual anthology: *Poeticas de Chile / Chilean Poets on the Art of Poetry* (Santiago: Etnika, 2007).

At the same PEN meeting in Plano at which Jim Hoggard was honored, **Marshall Terry** received the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award. Marsh's new book is *The Murder of Milo* (Three Forks Press), a unique work in which Milo's death is announced on the first page.

Luise Putcamp jr. has sad news to report. On Aug. 25, 2007, her husband of sixty-three years, Robert H. Johnson, died at the age of 84. Very unexpected. Luise has moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, to be with her family. Her new address: Luise Putcamp jr., 3644 S 860 E, #60, Salt Lake City, UT 84106, telephone 801 266-2183.

Joe Holley just signed a contract with the University of Texas Press to write what seems to be the first biography of Slingin' Sammy Baugh, the old TCU-Washington Redskins football legend who chucked all the fame and fortune to become a West Texas cowboy. Joe writes: "I'm looking for people who remember seeing him play. I'm also looking for some kind of Texas journalist-in-residence arrangement next fall that would allow me to stretch my book leave from the [*Washington*] *Post*."

Andrés Tijerina's *Tejano Empire: Life on the South Texas Ranchos*, has been reprinted as a paperback by the Texas A&M University Press. The book describes the ranching culture that developed in South Texas until the 1880s by Texans of Mexican

descent. It has been described by the *Dallas Morning News* as certain to become a standard reference on Hispanic culture in the state.

Of special interest to TIL members is *Notes from Texas: On Writing in the Lone Star State*, new publication of the Texas Christian University Press. The book, edited by W.C. Jameson, contains fourteen essays by Texas writers who explore the works of major Texas writers. **Larry L. King**, **Elmer Kelton**, and **James Ward Lee** are among the contributors.

Jon McConal, long-time reporter for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, is the author of *A Walk Across Texas* (TCU Press), and the foreword is by TIL member **Tom Dodge**. McConal, accompanied by two friends, actually walked across the state, taking the less traveled byways and encountering a world that, as the catalogue description, "is now as foreign to most Americans as the Taj Mahal."

C.W. Smith is in the literary news with a new novel, *Purple Heart* (TCU Press), a novel that **Jane Roberts Wood** describes as Charlie's "finest work." The book has a World War II home-front setting loosely based on events in Beaumont in 1943 in which shipyard workers rampaged on the rumor that a black man had raped a sailor's wife. **Bryan Woolley** says *Purple Hearts* is "the best novel I've read about the home front during World War II," and that it illustrates that a lot more was going on than stories about Rosie the Riveter and the War Bond drives.

The TCU Press has been very busy, as the several items above suggest. Besides its normal fare, the press has introduced a series it is calling Texas Small Books, all of them pocket-sized, heavily illustrated, and priced under \$10. The series kicks off with three titles: *Extraordinary Texas Women* by **Judy Alter**, *Texas Country Singers* by Phil Fry and Jim Lee, and *State Fare*, "an irreverent guide to Texas Movies" by **Don Graham**.

Please send information for the newsletter to Darwin Payne, TIL Secretary, 9021 Gunnison Dr., Dallas, TX 75231. e-mail: dpayne@smu.edu.
TIL website: <http://texasinstituteofletters.org>

(Continue to next page for dues form.)

2008 Texas Institute of Letters Dues

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-Mail _____

	TIL Dues	\$50.00
	Contribution to Paisano Fund	\$ _____
	Contribution to Fred Whitehead Memorial Endowment Fund	\$ _____
	TOTAL AMOUNT	\$ _____

You also may pay for your April 19 annual meeting banquet tickets with the same check.

I will attend the banquet with ___ guests at \$50 each. Amt. Enclosed \$ _____
(Banquet reservations must be made by April 12.)

Please indicate whether you will attend the Friday night, April 18,
 reception at the Crow Library.

_____ Yes, I will attend with ___ guest(s).

_____ No, I will not be there.

Make check payable to Texas Institute of Letters and send to:
 James Hoggard, Dept. of English, Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls, TX 76308