

Texas Institute of Letters

January/February/March 2009

Finalists named for TIL's 2008 literary awards

Judges in eleven separate categories have selected finalists for the 2008 literary Texas Institute of Letters awards. Winners will be announced and cash prizes totaling \$21,700 will be presented at TIL's April 18 annual meeting at the Hilton Waco Hotel. (*See the last page of this newsletter for registration material and dues payment.*)

The finalists, all of whom have met the minimal two-year residency in Texas requirement, live across the nation. Winners will receive awards ranging from \$500 to \$6,000. They are as follows, with finalists listed in alphabetical order.

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

Adam Braver. *November 22, 1963*, a novel. Tin House Books.

Thomas Cobb. *Shavetail*, a novel. Scribner.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, a novel. *The Palace of Illusions*. Doubleday.

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

David McGlynn. *The End of the Straight and Narrow*, short stories. SMU.

Andrew Porter. *The Theory of Light and Matter*, short stories. University of Georgia.

Ann Weisgarber. *The Personal History of Rachel DuPree*, a novel. Macmillan New Writing.

Carr P. Collins Award for Best Book of Non-Fiction (\$5,000):

Alan Govenar. *Texas Blues: The Rise of a Contemporary Sound*. Texas A&M.

Brendan M. Greeley Jr., ed. *The Two Thousand Yard Stare: Tom Lea's World War II Paintings, Drawings, and Eyewitness Accounts*. Texas A&M.

Pekka Hämäläinen. *The Comanche Empire*. Yale.

Most Significant Scholarly Book (\$2,500):

Samuel Brunk. *The Posthumous Career of Emiliano Zapata: Myth, Memory, and Mexico's Twentieth Century*. Texas A&M.

William C. Foster. *Historic Native Peoples of Texas*. University of Texas.

James M. Smallwood. *The Feud that Wasn't: The Taylor Ring, Bill Sutton, John Wesley Hardin, and Violence in Texas*. Texas A&M.

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

James Allen Hall, *Now You're the Enemy*. University of Arkansas.

Betty Adcock, *Slantwise*. Louisiana State University.

Bruce Bond, *Blind Rain*. Louisiana State University.

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

Kerry Neville Bakken, "Indignity," *The Gettysburg Review*, Spring 2008.

Dagoberto Gilb, "The Last Time I Saw Junior," *Boston Review*, March 2008.

Katherine L. Hester, "Little Man," *Brain Child*, Spring 2008.

O. Henry Award for Magazine Journalism (\$1,000):

Rick Bass, "Mary Katherine's First Deer," *Gray's Sporting Journal*, Sept./Oct. 2008.

Pamela Colloff, "Exile on Main Street," *The New Yorker*, Oct. 13, 2008.

Karen Olsson, "Before and After," *Texas Monthly*, Dec. 2008.

John Spong, "Untitled Mike Flynt Project," *Texas Monthly*, March 2008.

(Continued from previous page)

Stanley Walker Award for Best Work of Newspaper Journalism Appearing in Newspaper or Sunday Supplement (\$1,000):

Todd Bensman and Guillermo Contreras, *San Antonio Express-News*, "Texas Deadliest Export," Nov. 30, Dec. 14 and 21, 2008.

Susan Carroll, *Houston Chronicle*, "Elusive Justice," Nov. 16, 17, and 18, 2008.

Michael Grabell and Diane Jennings, *Dallas Morning News*, "Private Family, Public Feud," Feb. 10, 2008.

Austin Public Library Award for Best Children's Book (\$500):

Susan Stevens Crummel, *Ten-Gallon Bart and the Wild West Show*, Marshall Cavendish.

Pat Mora, *Join Hands*, Charlesbridge.

Pamela Porter, *Yellow Moon, Apple Moon*. Groundwood.

Benjamin Alire Saenz, *The Perfect Season for Dreaming*. Cinco Puntos.

Austin Public Library Award for Best Young Adult Book (\$500):

Anne Estevis, *Chicken Foot Farm*, Arte Publico/Piñata.

Jo Harper, *The Birth of the Fifth Sun*, Texas Tech.

Varian Johnson, *My Life as a Rhombus*, Llewellyn Worldwide.

New writers approved for TIL membership

Fifteen distinguished writers have been added to the roster of the Texas Institute of Letters. The new members were recommended by the TIL Councilors at a January meeting in Waco, and afterwards all were approved by a vote of the full membership by mail or e-mail ballot.

Those who accept their bid to be members will be introduced at TIL's April 18 banquet in Waco. They also will read excerpts from one of their published works in the afternoon.

They are:

Gregg Cantrell, Fort Worth. Historian, Texas Christian University. Works include biography, *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*.

Mike Cochran. Fort Worth. Author and journalist. Author of *Texas vs. Davis* and *Claytie: The Roller-Coaster Life of a Texas Wildcatter*.

Steve Davis, San Marcos. Author, Texas State University. Works include *Texas Literary Outlaws: Six Writers in the Sixties and Beyond*, and forthcoming biography of J. Frank Dobie entitled *A Liberated Mind: The Life and Times of J. Frank Dobie*.

Claudia Guadalupe Martinez, *The Smell of Old Lady Perfume*, Cinco Puntos.

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

Barbara Whitehead, *Traces of Forgotten Places* (by Don Collins), TCU.

Mary Ann Jacob, *The Two Thousand Yard Stare: Tom Lea's World War II Paintings, Drawings, and Eyewitness Accounts* (Edited by Brendan M. Greeley Jr.), Texas A&M.

Bryce Milligan, *Holy Tortilla and a Pot of Beans* by Carmen Tafolla, WingsPress

Soeurette Diehl Fraser Award for Translation (\$1,000):

Reginald Gibbons for *Sophocles, Selected Poems: Odes and Fragments*, Princeton.

Marian Schwartz for Mikhail Bulgakov's *White Guard*, Yale.

Aaron Prevots for *Return to Calm*, poems by Jacques Réda, Host.

Chitra Divakaruni. Author of five novels, two short story collections, three young adult novels, three poetry collections, and editor of an anthology. University of Houston creative writing program faculty member.

Jim Donovan, Dallas. Historian and literary agent. Author of *Custer and the Little Big Horn* and *A Terrible Glory*.

Chris Ellery, San Angelo. Poet and English professor, Angelo State University. Author of two books of poetry and co-translator of collection of Syrian short stories.

David Haynes, Dallas. Novelist and director of creative writing program, Southern Methodist University. Novels include *The Full Matilda*.

Jerome Loving, College Station. Professor of English at Texas A&M at College Station. Works include biographies of Theodore Dreiser, Walt Whitman, and Emily Dickinson.

(Continued from previous page)

Dave Parsons, Montgomery County. Poet and founder of Montgomery County Literary Arts Council Writers in

Performance Series. Works include *Editing Sky* and *Color of Mourning*.

Barbara Ras, San Antonio. Poet whose works include collections entitled *Bite Every Sorrow* and *One Hidden Stuff*. Also director of Trinity University Press.

Geoff Rips, Austin. Novelist, short story writer, and poet. Former editor, *Texas Observer*.

Benjamin A. Saenz, El Paso. Novelist, short story writer whose works include *Carry Me Like Water* and *In Perfect Light*.

Amilcar Shabazz, Amherst, Mass. Historian whose works include *Advancing Democracy*, winner of T.R. Fehrenbach Book Award. Director Afro-American Studies at University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Carmen Tafolla, San Antonio. Poet, short story writer, and author of books for children. Her works include *Sonnets and Salsa*.

Larry D. Thomas, Houston. Poet laureate, State of Texas, 2008. Nine books of poetry.

Two new councilors to take office

Historian **T. Lindsay Baker** and novelist **Emily Fox Gordon** have been appointed to two-year terms as TIL councilors. They replace outgoing councilors **Jim Sanderson** and **Jane Roberts Wood**, and will take office at the April annual meeting in Waco. Baker holds the W.K. Gordon Endowed Chair in Texas Industrial History and is the director of the W.K. Gordon Center for Industrial History of Texas at Tarleton State College. He is the author of numerous books, especially on Texas, on such topics as windmills, ghost towns, and Indians.

Gordon is a novelist and essayist who lives in Houston.

Horton Foote: Rest in Peace

Horton Foote's recent passing at the age of 92 brought a flood of memories from TIL members. **Joe Holley** wrote an outstanding obituary for the *Washington Post* that we passed along to the membership. Here are a few responses from members.

David Farmer: "You probably know that Horton's archive of manuscripts, correspondence, photographs, and theatre programs is at DeGolyer Library [at SMU]. I can't remember when I first met him in his Greenwich Village apartment to begin discussions about his papers, but I knew at the time other institutions were hoping he would give them the nod. Russell Martin will be able to tell you when the papers came to SMU, but they were there by the time Ron Davis [SMU historian and TIL member] alerted me to a visit by Gregory Peck who was being recognized with a Meadows Award. From Horton's collection we

brought together an exhibit that included his annotated copy of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, photographs from the production showing Gregory Peck in his memorable role, and other related material. Ron brought Peck to DeGolyer after the award ceremony down at the Meadows School of the Arts, and he was touched to find what Horton had preserved and delighted it had come to SMU.

Kay Cattarulla: "What a fabulous man. What a career! We shouldn't ever forget Horton."

Carolyn Osborn: "Foote was a gentleman in every way—mannerly, kind, always approachable."

Shelby Hearon: "He lived such a long, good, productive life."

Jane Roberts Wood: "Horton told me in November that he enjoyed living with Hallie [his daughter] and her husband. He said they took care of him without in any way taking away his humanity. A little later in our visit, he said he missed his wife, especially in the middle of the night when an answer to some problem with his writing came. He said he would always wake her up and tell her because, 'She never minded.'"

Betty Wiesepape: "I did hear about Horton's death, and it made me sad. I attended Horton's classes at Sewanee Writer's Conference in the early 90s, and he agreed to let me interview him. This was when I was working on my research for *Lone Star Chapters*. We struck up something of a friendship and exchanged a couple of letters after that time. I didn't know him well, but I developed great respect for him. By the way, he told me that although he was a member of TIL, he never quite got over what "they" did to Katherine Anne Porter. He knew KAP because her sister was an actress in some of his early plays. I asked him at one point how a small town Texas boy from Wharton happened to end up in New York. He said he went to New York to become an actor and found out that he wasn't very good at it. Then we both laughed. After the sadness passed yesterday, I smiled and thought—what better way to go out of this world than at the age of 92, working on the production of yet another play. Despite his medical problems, Horton remained active and productive to the very end of his life. Would that we could all go out like that.

News of Members and Others

Bryce Milligan reports that new member **Carmen Tafallo**'s new book, *The Holy Tortilla and a Pot of Beans: A Feast of Short Fiction*, just won the Tomas Rivera award for Mexican American young adult lit. And her children's book, *That's Not Fair / No es justo*, just went into its third printing—and it is not a year old yet. She's had a whole host of awards this year.

(Continued from previous page)

William H. Goetzmann has done it again—published another important book that likely will reshape our thinking about the forces that shaped the American mind and culture (*Beyond the Revolution: A History of American Thought from Paine to Pragmatism*, Basic Books). He shows, with sweeping scope, that American civilization was the product of the world's ideas, a fusion of differing thoughts and philosophies, transmitted and transformed by great thinkers, creators, and intellectuals. As such, Bill's new book is much broader than the Frederick Jackson Turner idea that it was the frontier that peculiarly shaped the Americans. Here's what Howard R. Lamar of Yale says about the book: "[*Beyond the Revolution* is] the most complete, wide-ranging, readable, and insightful account of American intellectuals we have ever had. It deserves to be recognized as a major classic history of American intellectuals to be read by every thinking American." Bill already holds Pulitzer and Francis Parkman prizes for his historical work; now likely comes another significant one.

Out past president, **Fran Vick** has been named one of four winners of the University of Texas at Austin's 2009 Pro Bene Meritis Awards for her outstanding service to the College of Liberal Arts. She and the other winners (Leslie Blanton, Maureen Decherd, and Sidney Monas) will be honored at an April 16 dinner at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum. Fran, who earned a B.A. in English at UT in 1958, has been a leading advocate of Texas authors and literature, and she was director and founder of the University of North Texas Press.

Presently, she is president of the Texas State Historical Association. Fran's most recent book publication was as editor of *Literary Dallas* (TCU Press.)

Speaking of presidents, our own **William V. Davis** of Baylor University has been named winner of the New Criterion Poetry Prize for "a book length manuscript of poems that pay close attention to form." He was chosen for this honor by a panel of critics and poets headed by Richard Wilbur. The prize carries both a monetary award and book publication. In consequence, his book, *Landscape and Journey*, will be published later this year by Ivan R. Dee in Chicago.

Mea culpa: I should have listed **Joyce Roach** as one of the many TIL authors represented in the new TCU Press publication, *Notes from Texas: On Writing in the Lone Star State*, edited by W.C. Jameson.

Our noted member and western historian **Robert M. Utley** ("Old Bison") is moving from Austin to Scottsdale, Arizona, and says that in this new relaxed mode in a Life Care facility he must become an "inactive" member.

Joe Nick Patoski, one of our several TIL members who calls Wimberley home, has won the 2009 TCU Texas Book Award for his biography, *Willie Nelson: An Epic Life*. The award is presented biennially by the Friends of the TCU Library for the best book about Texas. Books published in 2007 and 2008 were eligible for the award, which will be presented to Joe Nick on March 19 on the TCU campus.

About our April 17-18 Waco annual meeting

***Make reservations at the Hilton Waco before April 3 for special rate of \$113.05 plus tax. Call 1-800-234-5244 or 1-254-754-8484. Ask for TIL rate.**

***Send in \$50 per plate for the annual dinner at 7 p.m. on Saturday, April 18. See the form on the next page.**

***Remember to attend the Friday night reception at the Dr Pepper Museum, 300 S. 5th Street, Waco, from 6 to 8 p.m.**

***Saturday's banquet will be preceded by new members' readings in the afternoon and a 6 to 7 p.m. cash bar.**

***If you haven't already done so, don't forget to pay your 2009 dues. You can do it on the same check with your banquet reservations.**

**Please use this form for remitting your dues and contributions for 2009,
and for April 18 banquet tickets.**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-Mail _____

TIL dues for the year 2009 _____ \$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 18 banquet tickets, \$50 per person _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Make check payable to Texas Institute of Letters and send to:

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

TIL OFFICERS

President, William Virgil Davis, Waco, William_Davis@baylor.edu

Vice President, John Miller Morris, Austin, jmorris@utsa.edu

Secretary, Darwin Payne, Dallas, dpayne@smu.edu

Treasurer, James Hoggard, Wichita Falls, james.hoggard@mwsu.edu

Recording Secretary, Betty Wiesepape, Richardson, Betwx@aol.com

TIL COUNCILORS

Ty Cashion, Huntsville, first term ends in April 2010

Fritz Lanham, Houston, second term ends in April 2011

Frances Neidhardt, Sherman, first term ends in April 2010

Jim Sanderson, Beaumont, second term ends in April 2009

Jan Seale, McAllen, second term ends in April 2011

W.K. (Kip) Stratton, Round Rock, first term ends in April 2010

Andres Tijerina, Austin, first term ends in April 2010

Jane Roberts Wood, Argyle, second terms ends in April 2009