

# Texas Institute of Letters



*July/August/September 2014 Newsletter*

**Texas Institute of Letters website:** <http://www.texasinstituteofletters.org/>

## Judges named for TIL's 2014 literary contests

Twenty-four judges—three for each category—have been named. They will have the always daunting task of selecting finalists and winners for the Texas Institute of Letters' 2014 literary contests. And it's time for authors to submit their entries.

More than \$20,000 annually are awarded in these contests.

Eligibility for consideration is limited to those who were born in Texas or who have lived in the state for at least two consecutive years at some time in the past, or whose entry has subject matter that substantially concerns Texas.

Non-returnable entries for each category should be sent directly to each judge at the address listed below no later than Dec. 31, 2014. Envelopes must be marked "TIL Contest." Only works published in 2014 are eligible. Finalists will be named several weeks prior to TIL's annual spring banquet. Winners will be revealed at the banquet.

**Jesse H. Jones Award for Fiction (\$6,000)**  
**and Steven Turner Award for First Fiction (\$1,000)**

*(Judges listed below handle both categories. Books submitted for the Steven Turner Award for First Fiction will also be considered for the Jesse H. Jones Award for Fiction. It is possible for the First Fiction winner to also win the Jesse H. Jones Award.)*

Christine Granados (chair)  
608 Tanya Street  
Fredericksburg, TX 78624

Anita Bunkley  
26306 Opal Hollow Lane  
Cypress, TX 77433

John Blair  
141 Pluma Ct.  
San Marcos, TX 78666-1846

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

Joe Holley (chair)  
309 Bomar  
Houston, TX 77006

Rod Davis  
402 Francis Dr.  
College Station, TX 77840  
Rod Davis

Judyth Rigler  
1735 Avenida Alturas, NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87110-4944

**Ramirez Scholarly Book Award (\$2,500)**

Jerry Thompson (chair)  
5201 University Blvd.  
Laredo, TX 78041

Lonn Taylor  
P.O. Box 1738  
Fort Davis, TX 79734

Charles Ealy  
400 Honeycomb Ridge  
Austin, TX 78746

**Helen C. Smith Memorial Award for Poetry (\$1200)**  
**and Bob Bush Memorial Award for First Book of Poetry (\$1000)**  
(Judges listed below will handle both awards.)

Norma Cantu (chair)  
University of Missouri, KC

Hagg Hall 204 G  
5120 Rockhill Road  
Kansas City, MO 64113

Pattiann Rogers  
7412 Berkeley Circle  
Castle Pines, CO 80108

Betty Adcock  
817 Runnymede Rd.  
Raleigh, NC 27607

**H-E-B Young Adults Book (\$500); H-E-B/Jean Flynn Children's Book (\$500); and Denton Record-Chronicle Best Children's Picture Book (\$500)** (Judges listed below will handle these three awards.)

Kathi Appelt (chair)  
1907 Comal Circle  
College Station, TX 77840

Russell L. Martin III  
Director, DeGolyer Library  
Southern Methodist University  
Dallas, Texas 75275-0396

Xavier Garza  
6310 Madeleine Dr.  
San Antonio, Texas 78229

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

Laura Wilson (chair)  
10621 Strait Lane  
Dallas, TX 75229

Ellen Temple  
5030 Champions Drive  
Lufkin, TX 75901

Allen Birkelbach  
6012 Bogard Dr.  
The Colony, TX 75056

**Edwin "Bud" Shrake Award for Short Non-Fiction \$1,000)**

C.W. Smith (chair)

6521 Malcolm  
Dallas, TX 75214

Carmen Tafolla  
1109 W. Craig Pl.  
San Antonio, TX 78201

George Getschow  
6931 Red Bud Dr.  
Flower Mound, TX 75022

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

Greg Garrett (chair)  
2013 Baylor Centennial Professor  
Professor of English  
Baylor University  
Waco TX 76798-7404

Jane Roberts Wood  
567 N. Gibbons  
Argyle, TX 76226

William Seale  
1250 County Road 101  
Jasper, TX 75951



## **Council chooses Lawrence Wright for upcoming Lon Tinkle Award**

The Texas Institute of Letters has selected acclaimed Austin writer Lawrence Wright as winner of its Lon Tinkle Award for an outstanding career in letters that has brought honor to the state. The award will be presented at TIL's annual spring membership meeting on the weekend of April 10-11 in Houston.

Wright was selected for that honor by TIL's council and past presidents at Sept. 13 meeting at the Texas State Cemetery in Austin. Lon Tinkle was a longtime book editor at the *Dallas Morning News*, professor of comparative literature at Southern Methodist University, and prominent member of TIL.

Winning awards is not new for Wright. His book, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, published by Knopf in 2006, won the Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction and many others. It has been published in some twenty-five languages. *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief*, published by Knopf in 2013, was nominated for the National Book Award and won the Investigative Reporters and Editors Award. His most recent book is *Thirteen Days in September: Carter, Begin, and Sadat at Camp David*, published by Knopf.

Wright's literary career encompasses far more than non-fiction. He is author of a novel, *God's Favorite*, published in 2000, and of a one-man play entitled "My Trip to Al-Qaeda" in which he played himself during a six-week run at the Culture Project in Soho in New York City. He has credits as a screenwriter, and he has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1992.

TIL's Houston meeting will be at the Hilton Hotel on the University of Houston campus. The annual awards banquet on the evening of Saturday, April 11, at which more than \$20,000 in prize money will be presented to winners of the TIL literary contests, will be open to the public. Further information may be obtained at the TIL website: <http://www.texasinstituteofletters.org/>.



## **A message from our president**

Last month, the TIL Council held its meeting in the Reception Room of the Texas State Cemetery, across I-35 from the state capitol in Austin. As TIL President, the choice for the meeting place was mine, so I had the pleasure of logging all the witty comments as the Council members filed in for the meeting. But I let the aura of that historic preserve do the response for me. It's not so much the names like Ann Richards, General Albert Sidney Johnston, and Stephen F. Austin that caught their attention as it was to see the great writers of Texas — J. Frank Dobie, Walter Prescott Webb, Thomas Calloway "Tom" Lea, and others. Texas reveres the memory of its literary giants as "Honored Texans" among the generals, the governors, and military heroes. If you've never strolled through this magnificent park like setting, take a few moments to visit the Texas State Cemetery and Museum. See it online at <http://www.cemetery.state.tx.us>

The TIL Council agreed to sponsor a TIL Booth at the Texas Book Festival on Saturday and Sunday, October 25 and 26 at the state capitol. We'll have a table in Tent #4 on the corner of Colorado and 11th Street. If you plan to attend the Texas Book Festival, plan to stop by and visit. We offer a place at our book signing table for TIL members with recent books. There's no charge for this, nor is there a charge for any TIL members who want to volunteer to staff the TIL Booth for an hour or two. E-mail or call me to be scheduled in 2-hour shifts any time during the 2 full days of the Festival. The only caveat is that we cannot sell books on the TBF book list. See the TBF online at [www.texasbookfestival.org](http://www.texasbookfestival.org)

And finally, the TIL 2015 Awards Banquet will be held at the University Hilton on campus at the University of Houston. We had to change the date, so please make a note of the new date for the week-end of April 10 and 11 for the reception and our prestigious awards banquet in 2015. And remember, we secured the standard room rate of \$109, so plan on a fun week-end among the finest friends, artists, and writers in Texas.

Sincerely,  
Andrés Tijerina  
President



## **Minutaglio, Davis garner two book awards**

### ***PEN and Writers' League of Texas prizes for Dallas 1963***

TIL's Bill Minutaglio and Steven L. Davis have won the PEN award for research nonfiction and the 2013-2014 Writers' League of Texas award for non-fiction for their book, *Dallas 1963*.

The book is an account of the hectic affairs, political climate, and assortment of characters leading up to the assassination of President Kennedy in that city.

Minutaglio, a long-time TIL member, teaches journalism at the University of Texas. Davis, TIL's vice president, is curator of the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University in San Marcos. The PEN award will be presented on Nov. 11 at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills, California.

Another TIL member, Lawrence Wright, was named a finalist in the Writers' League of Texas award for non-fiction for his book, *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood & the Prison of Belief*.

Yet another TIL member, Sarah Cortez, was a finalist in the poetry competition for her collection, *Cold Blue Steel*.

The Writers' League of Texas awards formerly were known as the Violet Crown Book Awards. First-place winners receive a \$1,000 cash prize.

See <http://m.statesman.com/weblogs/the-reader/2014/sep/03/minutaglio-davis-win-pen-award/> for more information on the PEN awards.



## How to nominate new TIL members

*Nominations are now open for new members. Please clip or copy and use the attached form to nominate any person you believe should become a member of TIL. Keep in mind that nominee are not to be aware of their nomination to avoid embarrassment in case they are not approved.*

*Please read and follow the guidelines and procedures, and send in your nominations to VP Steve Davis, who will compile and prepare the nomination files for the Council.*

*Thank you for your diligent review of the literature and helping us to identify these deserving and most highly qualified nominees for membership in the Texas Institute of Letters.*

*Andrés Tijerina  
President, TIL*

Here's how it works. While the procedure is somewhat lengthy, it is not very complicated. Those making the nominations must follow the procedures described below. Please use the attached form to nominate any person you believe should become a member of TIL.

**Keep in mind that no nominee is to be aware of his or her nomination.** Not all nominees are approved, and this avoids embarrassment.

1. The Council discussed placing a limit on the number of nominees a member could submit each year, simply because of the burden of processing many lengthy submissions. In the end, the Council decided not to do this. However, the Council **highly recommends you limit the number of nominations you make to no more than two.** If there are more than two people whom you believe should be members, you should either spread your nominations out over several years or enlist the aid of other members to nominate people you think should be members.
2. **This is very important.** Create a separate packet of information for each person you nominate. This packet must include a completed nomination form, a list of major works, a letter of nomination, a seconding letter, and a sample or samples of the nominee's writing. This packet should be sent to the Vice President, who coordinates the nominations. It would be helpful if this material could be scanned, preferably in PDF format, and sent in digital format to the Vice President. Please be sure that all material is clearly legible. Please **DO NOT** make multiple nominations in a single letter or make multiple seconds in a single letter. With the number of

nominations we are now receiving, this simply places too great a burden on the members of the Council to keep everything straight.

3. Complete the nomination form. Try to include as much contact information as possible, including phone numbers and e-mail addresses.
4. A new feature of the form is a place for you to state the eligibility of the nominee. TIL's by-laws state: "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." If the nominee currently lives in Texas, please state where and for approximately how long. If the person was born here, please state that. If the person has "some substantial connection or affiliation" with Texas, please state that.
5. Spend some time composing the letter of recommendation. Make a meaningful argument for membership. The seconding letter can be a simple statement of a second, but the letter of recommendation should be well thought out.
6. We highly recommend that you spend some time selecting the writing sample or samples. The writing samples are often the make it or break it element of the nomination. They should represent outstanding work. Samples typically should be published work, and there should be a citation of some sort listing where the work was published. Again, take care that you create a clear scan or copy of the sample, that none of the pages are cut off, and that the pages are in order.

Incomplete nominations or nominations received after the deadline will not be considered.

Your help in adhering to these guidelines will ensure that the new member process will proceed effectively.

Send your nominations to our Vice President, Steve Davis, who has the job of compiling the packets and submitting them to the Council for approval by a four-fifths vote of those who are present at our January meeting. Then the successful nominations are submitted to the full membership for approval by a majority vote.



## ***New Member Nomination Form***

All nominations should be made in confidence. The nominee must not know of his/her nomination. Deadline: **November 3, 2014.**

☐ Person Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Home address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Telephone number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Eligibility for membership \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ TIL member making the nomination \_\_\_\_\_

☐ TIL member seconding the nomination \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Date submitted \_\_\_\_\_

Items to be included with the nomination form:

- ☐ Letter outlining the reasons for the nomination.
- ☐ List of major works, awards, etc. Do not send a vita.
- ☐ Ten to fifteen pages of published writing by the nominee.

This form and the additional items should be sent—electronically if possible—to:  
Steve Davis at his email address: sdavis@txstate.edu

If you are unable to submit your material electronically, you may mail it to him at this address:

Steve Davis  
Wittliff Collections  
Texas State University  
San Marcos, TX 78666



## Michael Adams' Paisano Ranch Report

At last UT has received \$39,000 from the Lorenz family in order to restore the land they destroyed out at the ranch. This is not enough to do what needs done, but it's out of our hands. I'll supervise the restoration project that will probably begin sometime in January. It will take a year or two to get rid of the invasive species that the Lorenz family introduced onto our property when they built a sand-filled road that ran inside our fence-line.

For a few weeks this summer, the University once more considered selling the ranch to the county who would turn it into a conservation easement. In the end, they were not inclined to do it, so, though delayed, I continued on my master plan for the ranch.

Sadly, we lost the large iconic tree next to the house. Rotten at its base. However, as I write, there is a landscaping crew working around the ranch house. We're putting in new drought-resistant sod, a few plants, and beginning in November, two more trees.

Our ad in *Texas Monthly* will be coming out in the October issue. It's aimed at restoring the ranch, which, as many of you know, is over-run with cedar (ash-juniper, to be precise), mesquite, and a host of weeds and dead shrubs. This will be a very long project, but we're taking the first step.





# **TIL to have booth at Texas Book Festival**

## ***Members asked to sign up for two-hour sessions***

The Texas Institute of Letters again will have a booth for the annual Texas Book Festival in Austin this Oct. 25 and 26 on the west side of the state capitol building.

TIL members will be presented in the booth for two-hour sessions to meet the public and to display some of their past works. They also will be able to sell their books to the public. (Exception: books being featured in this year's official program will be sold only at the official book store.)

TILpresident Andres Tijerina is now compiling a schedule for members' appearances. Those interested—and all are encouraged—should contact Andres at his office phone, 512.223-8137, or his email at andrest@austincc.edu.

## ***Carl Seale, TIL member Jan Seale's husband***

Carl Seale, the husband of TIL member Jan Epton Seale, died on Wednesday, September 10, after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease. A prolific composer, even in the latter stages of this disease, Dr. Seale's classical compositions enriched cultural life in the Rio Grande Valley for more than forty years. He served as conductor of the Valley Symphony Orchestra, taught music at the University of Texas Pan American where he retired as Professor Emeritus, and conducted the choir of the First Presbyterian Church of McAllen.

In the 1980s, Governor Dolph Briscoe appointed Dr. Seale to the Good Neighbor Commission. In this role, he aided the start-up of musical education programs across the border and guest-conducted Mexican orchestras in a number of cities. His musical compositions have been preserved in the Special Collections Library at the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg.

In recent years, Carl attended many TIL events with Jan. His presence at future events will be missed by many TIL members, and we wish to express our condolences to the entire Seale family.



## **News about our TIL members**

**Our man in Manhattan—Sergio Troncoso** (he grew up in east El Paso)—has received a tremendous honor. The Ysleta public branch library, the part of town Sergio grew up in, has been named in his honor. The vote by the El Paso city council was unanimous. Sergio had just three days advance notice for this tremendous honor, but as he has informed us, he managed to get there in time for the noteworthy event. "I was grateful, and a bit flabbergasted," Sergio

reports. His mother Bertha, his brother Oscar, the mayor of El Paso, and the city council were there for picture-taking. Congratulations, Sergio, on this very distinctive and significant recognition. Sergio's reminiscence: <http://sergiotroncoso.com/essays/eptimes/03-0413/>

And while we're on the subject, Sergio's novel, *The Nature of Truth*, a philosophical thriller set at Yale, has been published in a revised and updated edition by Arte Publico Press. Moreover, he and **Sarah Cortez** co-edited the international anthology of essays entitled *Our Lost Border: Essays on Life Amid the Narco-Violence* (Arte Publico Press) which won the International Latino Book Award for Best Latino-focused Nonfiction Book (Spanish or Bilingual). The essays are about how the unique bi-national, bi-cultural life along the United States-Mexico border has been disrupted by drug violence. The award is given by Latino Literary Now.

**Rod Davis's** new novel, *South, America*, which has been called "a triumph of Southern noir," (<http://roddavisauthor.com/>) was published by NewSouth Books in May and has received several good reviews from *The Dallas Morning News* and other publications. Signing events have been held in Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio to date. His book will be featured at the Louisiana Book Festival, the Alabama Writers Symposium, and others in months to come.

**Carolyn Osborne and husband Joe** spent two weeks in England in June. She reports they slogged up and down sheep infested hills in the Cotswolds, then "recuperated by spending five days in London. After "too much exercise," they went to London for five days. I have a new short story collection, *Where We Are Now*, coming out this September from Wings Press. It's a loosely connected group of stories about one family, the Moores, a highly fictionalized version of characters in my mother's family from the early 1900s to the present. Various members move from Tennessee to Texas to New Mexico, though I have no idea where they actually are now.

**Ron Tyler**, retired director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, received the lifetime achievement award from the Center for the Advancement and Study of Early Texas Art (CASETA) at its spring 2014 meeting in Austin.

**Broke, Not Broken: Homer Maxey's Texas Bank War**, by Broadus A. Spivey and **Jesse Sublett**, tells the story of Homer Maxey, a Lubbock civic leader and businessman, as he fought an epic 15 year legal battle against a Lubbock bank and dozens of the most powerful people in West Texas, alleging fraud, conspiracy and other scandalous allegations. TTU Press was all set for a mid-May 2014 pub date when Sublett phoned and yelled "Stop the presses!" He had just received a message from Glenna Goodacre office. Glenna, who is Maxey's daughter and a world renowned sculptor, had made courtroom sketches during the trial back in 1969. Long feared lost, the sketchbook had at last been found. TTU held up publication while blank spaces in the book were found and sketches inserted. The book, with many photos and Glenna's sketches, was officially released on June 15. Book signings are currently scheduled for Austin, Lubbock and Santa Fe, with more to come.

**Gary Lavergne**, whose book, *A Sniper in the Tower*, published in 1997, was the first non-fiction work to describe that tragic day in Austin when Charles Whitman went to the top of the Tower and began shooting pedestrians below, has added a new and interesting but non-written "chapter" to the episode.

One of former Marine's targets was 18-year-old Claire Wilson, who happened to be eight months pregnant at the time. Using a high-powered rifle, Whitman shot the expectant mother in the stomach. She survived, but the unborn baby did not.

Until recently, it was not even known, even to Claire, where the unborn baby's remains were buried. But Gary took it upon himself to find out. He discovered that the unborn infant was buried in a section of Austin Memorial Park Cemetery in an unmarked plot.

With Claire Wilson's approval, Gary and his family purchased a headstone for the site marked "Baby Boy Wilson" (just as identified in the cemetery's records) and had it placed there. "I try not to get involved in the lives of people I write about, but I couldn't help it in this case," he said.



## 2014-15 Dues, Banquet Reservations Form

Please print this form and send it with a check for your 2014-15 dues to the address below. You may also send your payments--\$50 per person—for the April 11, 2015 annual meeting in Houston.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

**TIL dues for fiscal year 2014-15 (if you've not yet paid them)** \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00

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

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

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

**April 11, 2015 Banquet Tickets, \$50 per person** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**James Hoggard, 111 Pembroke Lane, Wichita Falls, TX 76301.**

## **TIL Officers**

**President,** Andrés Tijerina, Austin

**Vice President,** Steve Davis, San Marcos

**Secretary,** Darwin Payne, Dallas

*- also past president*

**Treasurer,** James Hoggard, Wichita Falls

*- also past president*

**Recording Secretary,** Betty Wiesepepe, Richardson

## **Council Members**

Rico Ainslie, Austin, second term ends April 2016

Sarah Cortez, Houston, first term ends April 2016

Rolando Hinojosa-Smith, Austin, second term ends April 2016

Russell L. Martin III, Dallas, first term ends April 2016

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

Jerry Thompson, Laredo, first term ends April 2016

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