WS READINGS IN APRIL

APRIL 13 Writer Friends of the San Antonio Public Library and Poetry Society of America are co-sponsoring a "Tribute to William Stafford" on Tuesday, April 13, 1999, at 6:00 pm, in the San Antonio Public Library, Main Branch, at 600 Soledad, San Antonio, TX. Naomi Shihab Nye, one of the event organizers, will be reading along with several others, including Amy Adams, Paulette Jiles, Bruce Snider, Dorothy Stafford, and Barbara Stanush. Admission is free.

APRIL 25 Friends of the Library and the Marylhurst University Alumni Department will host a reading with the theme "In the Spirit of William Stafford" on Sunday, April 25, 1999, 8:30 pm at Borders Books in Tigard, OR. The public is invited.

PLACE YOUR POEM ON THE WEB
The Spring Calendar 1999 sent out by Poetry Society of America tells of the opportunity for poets to use the web. The excerpted article follows:

Poetry on the Web
Workshop your poems on-line with poets from around the world. Send colorful audio-visual Poetry in Motion postcards to your friends via e-mail. Find out What's American about American Poetry? Visit the PSA web site at www.poetrysociety.org for all this and more! Created as a forum for those who love poetry, the on-line workshop allows you to post your own poems and discuss them with your peers, talk about your favorite poem or poet, or engage in a conversation on critical issues in poetry today.

FWS members may also link to the PSA website on www.wmstafford.org.

Poetry Teaching Ideas
Ideas for making poetry more fun for students on Teachers & Writers web site: www.twc.org or the web site of the Academy of American Poets at www.poets.org.

TWO POETS JOIN FWS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Paulann Petersen and Joseph Soldati are the newest Friends of William Stafford Directors.

PAULANN PETERSEN has three books of poems: Under the Sign of a Neon Wolf (Confluence Press, 1989); The Animal Bride (Trask House Books, 1994); and Fabrication (26 Books, 1996). Her poetry has also been widely published in magazines, such as New Republic, Poetry, Poetry NW, and Hubbub. Petersen was raised in Portland and taught in Klamath Falls for twelve years before becoming a Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford. She has won several publishing awards including two Caroline Kizer Awards. She is a popular writer-in-residence for the Oregon State Poetry Association program which brings poets to rural communities. Petersen currently teaches at West Linn High School in a classroom with a William Stafford name plate over the door. Her Creative Writing students have won public acclaim for their poetry, and have read their work at many events.

In the mid-1970's, JOSEPH SOLDATI gave readings with William Stafford in Lewiston, ID, Pendleton, OR, and several other locations for Columbia River Watch, an organization of scientists, artists, environmentalists, and others concerned with the Columbia River and how it influences all parts of life in the NW. While other poets also read in the series, it was driving together from town to town for programs with titles such as, "The River Within Us," and "Looking at the River," that solidified the friendship between the two men. Soldati was raised in North Carolina, had a tour of duty in
ORCAS ISLAND, WA, HOSTS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
from FWS member Anne Hay's letter about the gathering at the Orcas Island Library on January 17, 1999 [W. Stafford's birthday]
The ambiance was perfect for the sharing of his poems—a wet rainy day outside, and pleasant booklined shelves around us. Ted Braun did a splendid job of drawing people together, his own reminiscences of Bill sparking those of others. Sally Bryan, a published poet, read a poem about Stafford by Robert Bly, and Alan Lichter read one he had written about Stafford after his last visit here. The rest of the poems read were favorite Stafford poems from the audience. We had people here on Orcas from Guemes, Lopez, Shaw, and San Juan Islands, as well as La Conner on the mainland.

(JOSEPH SOLDATI cont. from page 1)
Viet Nam, lived in Switzerland and Austria, and has had a dozen extended visits to Italy. Soldati is English Professor Emeritus at Western Oregon University where he taught for twenty-six years and served as co-editor of Calapooya Collage. His most recent book of poems is Making My Name (Mellon Poetry Press, Lewisburg, NY, 1992). Since then he has co-edited with Eduardo Gonzalas Blína a book of poems in two languages, O Poetry! Oh Poesía! Poems of Oregon and Peru (WOU and Cuadernos Trimestrales de Poesía, Trujillo, Peru, 1997). Soldati appears in literary publications throughout America, including Hubbub and California Quarterly. He's currently working on a book of essays.

CELEBRATION IN WEST LINN, OR
excerpts from report by Patricia Conover West Linn Tidings, West Linn, OR, Thursday, February 11, 1999:

Rain and wind whipped around guests as they entered the West Linn Public Library the night of Jan. 29 for a birthday celebration for William Stafford. ...For the third year, a celebration in his honor was hosted by Paulann Petersen, poet and West Linn High School teacher. ...About 50 people attended, their ages ranging from 20 to 85. ...Poets and friends were invited to read their favorite Stafford poems. Harold Johnson, poet and teacher whose work has appeared in several anthologies, read "Allegiances"—"because of its prescience," he said. "I met him in 1978 at a writing project at the University of Oregon. I remember being held up in New York and reading his book, Writing the Australian Crawl, twice. I wrote him a letter, and he wrote back. That is how our ongoing dialogue began."...Petersen stated, "Stafford talks about his desire to meet each person as a separate, luminous being. Bill's poems meet the reader; that's why they resonate the way they do. ...His poetry speaks in an authentic voice which enlightens us in unexpected ways, a voice that endures."

Comb and Rake

The comb that we love, of all combs, is a rake through our private beach, giving a voice through missing teeth to all the things one hopes to find in the sand next to horseshoes, aluminum tabs, and sand ants thrilled by the sight of a claw.

The rake that we love, of all rakes, is a comb through our private grove, singing at perfect intervals of all the things one hopes to be divine, here, among human tongues rusting in fire, bearing the singed hair and beard.

Of all names, the name we most love mocks an unsaid name we did not love—in the smallest possible space, cast upon a screen encircled by a naked moon at the center of a solar system where there is only you and me and someone else.

Marvin Bell

from Iris of Creation (Copper Canyon Press, 1990). Bell's new New and Selected Poems will be published by Graywolf Press in 2000. Marvin Bell is a National Advisor for FWS.
CALL FOR ENTRIES FOR NATIONAL POETRY PROJECT

Robert Pinsky, Poet Laureate of the United States, asks people all over America to submit their favorite poem, a first step in building an audio and video archive of people saying aloud their favorite poem. Clip out this submission form and send it THIS WEEK to

ROBERT PINSKY
THE FAVORITE POEM PROJECT
CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
236 BAY STATE ROAD
BOSTON, MA 02215

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SUBMISSION FORM

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The Favorite Poem Project is Robert Pinsky's special undertaking as Poet Laureate of the United States—to create an audio and video archive of many Americans saying aloud their favorite poems. The project creates a record of how the nation speaks, and what we do with our faces and voices, which is an act of poetry. It celebrates our love of poetry, which is a vital art, and that American poetry, from the time of Whitman and Dickinson, has been one of our great gifts and national treasures. For the purposes of the project, poems loved by Americans are "American" poems. A reader may choose Robert Browning or William Shakespeare—or even a poem written in another language—whether in Yiddish, Spanish or Greek, accompanied by an English translation. The project will emphasize the shared emotional and aesthetic response of speaking aloud a particular poem with a particular reader, expressed in the voice, in the word, through the boundaries of the poem.

Volunteer Sign Up

Check areas you would like to participate in as a volunteer.

- Mailing (apply address labels and stamps)
- Organize poetry readings as a service to libraries and schools.
- Organize William Stafford Gatherings in your town.
- Serve as fundraiser for specific FWS projects.

Other:

Friends of William Stafford Board of Directors: Patty Wixon, Ashland, OR; Chair; Nan Atzen, Newberg, OR; Brian Booth, Portland, OR; Martha Gatchell, Drain, OR; Robert Hamm, West Linn, OR; Ceil Huntington, Lake Oswego, OR; Paulann Petersen, Portland, OR; Shelley Reece, Portland, OR; Joseph Soldati, Portland, OR. FRIENDS OF WILLIAM STAFFORD NEWSLETTER is published quarterly. NEWSLETTER articles also appear on FWS website: www.wmstafford.org. Send inquiries and correspondence to Friends of William Stafford, P.O. Box 592, Lake Oswego, OR 97034 or e-mail: friends@wmstafford.org.
Take Hold

If there is nothing before you, take hold of it. You may be fortunate or not. Place it deep in your pocket regardless. It is a possession as no other.

When you are to leave and have made all your preparations; when you are ordered to declare all your possessions, reach in to the dark pocket.

This is a symbol traveler, a parable perhaps. Nothing is as whole as the space in the air you pass through. And it is yours. If you will take hold of it.

Merrill Leffler

from Take Hold by Merrill Leffler (Dryad Press, Takoma Park, MD, 1997). Leffler studied with Myra Sklarew, Un of MD, where he was introduced to William Stafford's work. Both Sklarew and Leffler are FWS members.

Bill Henke, FWS member from Upland, CA, writes on a recent trip, "There is a Borders Books in Singapore with at least four Stafford books! How is that for reaching out into the world?"