

# W <sup>THE</sup> 2013 ILLIAM STAFFORD

## ❁ BIRTHDAY EVENTS ❁

*Readings and Celebrations Around the World*



PHOTO BY ILKA KUZNIK

*This is the banner from Poet's Letters: The Correspondence of William Stafford, an exhibition held at the Multnomah County Central Library. The exhibition overlapped with the Sand Mandala Project, in which Tibetan Buddhist monks drew a sand mandala picturing universal compassion. The culmination of the project was to pour the colored sand into the Willamette River. Stafford's words at the bottom of the poster are "There is no way for a moving body, or mind, to avoid making mistakes. And staying still might be the worst mistake of all."*

F R I E N D S O F W I L L I A M S T A F F O R D

## Glimpses from a Poet's Letters: The Correspondence of William Stafford

Naomi Shihab Nye to WS, Oct. 31st, 1983

Everywhere I go, I hear good news of you! Sometimes it's as if poets leave the little bread-crumbs chain...in Karachi, Pakistan / your old friends...Then a student writes of your recent reading at Cody's in Berkeley ("His poems filled my heart and tears filled my eyes")... Then Leonard Nathan writes of a good meal with you... Then Abilene Texas writes saying you'll be there in February, can I come? And I say yes indeed, if he's going to be there, I'll be there, you bet! So, I look forward to February & all the notices of you which may pass my way between now & then. Did you finish your home in the woods?



WS to Francis Wolle, University of Colorado English Dept., July 17th, 1951

As you may have supposed, the idea of an oath bothered me, just in itself; and it is probably no news for me to report that I haven't seen or heard of one that accomplished its purpose for the state or improved the morals of teachers. There is something basically threatening, a kind of "credere, obbedire, combattere" sloganish atmosphere about the whole thing, that upsets almost everyone on the dotted-line end of the oath. But, as I say, this is probably no news to anyone around a university.

I looked at the Colorado oath, and could almost sign it; I even went so far as to formulate a statement that, when attached to the oath, could make me an honest man and a signer. That statement is enclosed as of possible interest to you (you said you liked to read about people and their facing of unusual situations); but I realize now that even with this qualification I could not sign. The oath itself is just too blunt an overriding of individual participation in our social life, and in its growing; no matter how careful an explanation I attached to the oath, its very existence would tend to quell a political openness which seems to me of value.

There are several sad things about the situation. First, the decision not to sign collides with my liking for Colorado, and my feeling of gratitude for the patience and understanding you have shown. Second, the decision does not carry any dividend of righteous feeling, for I know very well that many more righteous have made other decisions, and the situation is discouragingly complex. Also, we both know that the Colorado position was for me so marginal, as you put it, that I don't have the solace of making any fine gesture.

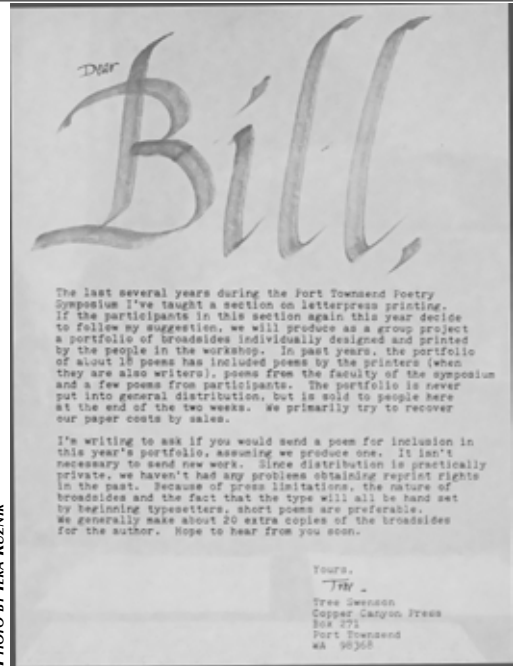


PHOTO BY ILKA KUZNIK

A letter from Tree Swenson of Copper Canyon Press asking Bill to contribute to an anthology.

WS to John Haines, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1993

By the way, a Forest Service district in Washington has asked me to write short passages for each of seven interpretive sites they are refurbishing up; the sites are along the Methow River, over in the Okinogan country (My hesitation about the spelling of that name reminds me—on page three, three lines from the bottom, in your Muir paper there is a typo, I think: than it was.) Anyway, I am going to visit those sites en route to The Great Mother conference near Billings in the first half of June. (I can hear your "Great Mother!—Bill is slumming again....")

"Teaching Poetry"—Gary Snyder to WS, March 29th, 1967

To teach poetry as it should be taught you'd have to start with Paleolithic hunting magic and the masked animal dancers. But, shortcutting that, young people (or just people who are alive?) are interested in two things: sex, and states of consciousness. Love, and magic. This is what poetry is about.

Teach the poems of the past using the strongest, sexiest poems in the tradition—and where the sexuality is made tricky, or the language is double; explain: to make sure students get the point. Their aroused interest will take it from there.

Teach far-out poets like Christopher Smart, or John Skelton, or Blake, and let the high and wild imagination come through. From there, the interested mind will find its own delight in probing the dryer[sic] measures and more intellectual side-trips of a Mat[t]hew Prior or Dryden.

In actual fact poetry is very much in the front of the spiritual and social revolution taking place in the United States. Youngsters are aware of this, but their teachers aren't. Teachers of English literature should find out what their students are listening to—Bob Dylan, The Jefferson Airplane, Ed Sanders, Tolkien—and then begin to teach.

# Readings and Celebrations Around the World Honoring the Spirit of William Stafford

## IN THE PORTLAND METRO AREA

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2 PM—BEAVERTON

Beaverton City Library, 12375 SW 5th St., Beaverton. [www.beavertonlibrary.org](http://www.beavertonlibrary.org). Hosted by FWS Board Member Leah Stenson. Featuring Constance Hall, Rosemary Lombard, Christopher Luna, Fred Melden, Toni Partington, and Steve Williams. Contact: Linda Fallon [lfallon@beavertonoregon.gov](mailto:lfallon@beavertonoregon.gov) 503-526-2676 or Leah Stenson [leahstenson@comcast.net](mailto:leahstenson@comcast.net)

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2-4 PM—MILWAUKIE

Milwaukie Ledding Library, Pond House, 2215 SE Harrison (adjacent to the Ledding Library), Milwaukie. Hosted by Greg Chaimov and Tom Hogan. Featuring Gail Barker, Mary Dettmann, David Filer, Brett Kelver, Susanna Lundgren, Ron Rasch, Ron Talney, Jamie Wilks, and FWS Board Member Paulann Petersen. Refreshments will be served. For information and to sign up for this event, please contact Greg Chaimov [gchaimov@comcast.net](mailto:gchaimov@comcast.net) or Tom Hogan [tomhogan2@comcast.net](mailto:tomhogan2@comcast.net) or 503-819-8367.

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2-4 PM—WEST LINN

West Linn Library, 1595 Burns, West Linn. Hosted by David Hedges. Featuring Tiel Aisha Ansari, Linda Appel, Jean Bennett, Rachel Pass, Scottie Sterrett, Marilyn Torsen, Virginia Euwer Wolff, and FWS Board Member Nancy Winklesky. Contact: Rebecca Mayer [rmayer@westlinnoregon.gov](mailto:rmayer@westlinnoregon.gov), Librarian Cheryl Hill [chill@westlinnoregon.gov](mailto:chill@westlinnoregon.gov) or David Hedges [david@hedges.name](mailto:david@hedges.name)

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 4 PM—VANCOUVER, WA

Cover to Cover Books, 6300 NE St. James Road, Suite 104B, Vancouver, WA. Hosted by Christopher Luna. Featuring FWS Board Member Tim Barnes. Contact: Christopher Luna [christopherjluna@gmail.com](mailto:christopherjluna@gmail.com) or Cover to Cover 360-993-7777

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 4:30 – 5:30 PM—MILWAUKIE

Kairos-Milwaukie UCC, 4790 SE Logus Road, Milwaukie, hosted by Portland Fellowship of Reconciliation and Kairos-Milwaukie UCC, *William Stafford in Song and Dance: A Work in Progress*, presented by Carolyn McDade, composer of *Spirit of Life* (Massachusetts) and the Portland-based Deep the Love Sacred Circle. Contact: Joanie McClellan, [503-777-2467](tel:503-777-2467) or [joanmcclel@aol.com](mailto:joanmcclel@aol.com). Directions: <http://www.kairosucc.org/html/map.html>.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 11:45 AM-1:45 PM—MILWAUKIE

Kairos-Milwaukie UCC, 4790 SE Logus Road, Milwaukie. Co-hosted by Oregon Fellowship of Reconciliation, Kairos-Milwaukie UCC, and Betty and Bob Balmer. Featuring Carolyn McDade (Massachusetts), Dawn Waring (Canada), Paige Polcene (California), Joanie McClellan (Portland), Rick Skidmore (Portland) and FWS Board

Member Emerita Sue Einowski. Encore showing of “Every War Has Two Losers.” A Birthday Celebration of food and beverages precede the screening in the Kairos Milwaukie Circle Room. The film will be shown in the Sanctuary at 12:30 PM. Invited Special Guest: Dorothy Stafford. There will be a brief discussion following the film and open-microphone poetry reading of your favorite poems. Kairos Community Forums & Occasional Speaker Series encourage the exploration of topics related to the pursuit of justice and peace, as well as a wide array of issues that promote greater understanding of diversity and difference of opinions. Contact: Joanie McClellan, [503-777-2467](tel:503-777-2467) or [joanmcclel@aol.com](mailto:joanmcclel@aol.com). Directions: <http://www.kairosucc.org/html/map.html>.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 7-9 PM—PORTLAND

Stonehenge Studios, 3508 SW Corbett Ave., Portland. Hosted by FWS Board Member Leah Stenson. Featuring cellist and composer Daniel Sperry who will recite Stafford poems accompanied by original cello compositions. An open mic will follow. Attendees are encouraged to bring a Stafford poem or share an anecdote about the poet during the open mic. Contact: Leah Stenson [leahstenson@comcast.net](mailto:leahstenson@comcast.net)

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2 PM—HILLSBORO

Hillsboro Main Library, 2850 NE Brookwood Parkway, Hillsboro. Hosted by Mark Thalman. Featuring Tim Applegate, FWS Board Member Barbara Drake, Lars Nordstrom, Susan Munger, Liz Nakazawa, Mary Jane Nordgren, Darlene Pagan, Penelope Scambly Schott, Joe Schrader, Mary Slocum, and Joseph Soldati. Featured poets will be reading the poems in order from Stafford’s award winning book *Traveling Through the Dark*. Contact: Hillary Garrett [hillaryg@ci.hillsboro.or.us](mailto:hillaryg@ci.hillsboro.or.us) 503-615-6500 or Mark Thalman [markthalman.com](http://markthalman.com)

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 7-9 PM—PORTLAND

In Other Words Feminist Community Center, 14 N Killingsworth, Portland. Part of the Figures of Speech Reading Series. Hosted by Constance Hall and Steve Williams. Featuring Leanne Grabel, Steve Sanders, and FWS Board Member Leah Stenson. Bring poems inspired/in tribute/or in the style of Wm. Stafford for our open mic. (1 poem or 2 pages max please.). This event will include poetry prompts, & cookies. Contact: Steve Williams [slw1057@hotmail.com](mailto:slw1057@hotmail.com) or go to [www.figuresofspeechpdx.wordpress.com/about](http://www.figuresofspeechpdx.wordpress.com/about)

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—LAKE OSWEGO

Lake Oswego Library, 706 4<sup>th</sup> St., Lake Oswego. Hosted by FWS Board Member Bill Howe. A celebration of William Stafford’s birth-

cont. on p. 4

## IN THE PORTLAND METRO AREA (CONTINUED)

cont. from p. 3

day, his legacy, and of the vibrancy of the arts in Oregon, featuring readings by his gifted widow Dorothy Stafford, daughter Barbara Stafford-Wilson, friend and Oregon's current Poet Laureate Paulann Petersen, and his archivist Paul Merchant. Contact: Alicia Yokoyama, [ayokoyama@ci.oswego.or.us](mailto:ayokoyama@ci.oswego.or.us) or Bill Howe [wjhowe@gevirtzmenashe.com](mailto:wjhowe@gevirtzmenashe.com) 503-3480779

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 7 PM—PORTLAND

Miracle Theater/El Centro Milagro, 525 SE Stark St., Portland. The third William Stafford Birthday Reading sponsored by Los Portenos, Portland's Latino writers' group. Hosted by Cindy Williams Gutierrez. Featuring Frank Delgado, Catherine Evleshin, Joann Fariás, Joaquín López, Octaviano Merecías-Cuevas, Emma Oliver, Olga Sanchez, Juan Antonio Trujillo, and FWS Board Member Susan Reese. In their 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Stafford Birthday Reading, members of Los Portenos will read their original poetry and prose written in response to a William Stafford poem. Audience members are invited to bring a favorite Stafford poem to share. Contact: Cindy Williams Gutierrez [cindy@grito-poetry.com](mailto:cindy@grito-poetry.com)

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 6-8 PM—OREGON CITY

Literary Arts Room, Roger Rook Hall, RR220, Clackamas Community College, 19600 S. Molalla Ave., Oregon City. Hosted by Elisabeth Miles and Trista Cornelius, Third Monday Authors' Evening Group, and CCC. Featuring Carl Clapp, Ryan Davis, Kate Gray, Rose Lefebvre, Sue Mach, Jeff McAlpine, and FWS Board Member Nancy Winklesky. Refreshments will be served. Open Mic: People will share one or two poems by William Stafford, and, if they want, a poem of their own in the tradition of William Stafford, or an anecdote or remembrance about him. For information and to sign up for this event, please contact Trista Cornelius at [tristac@clackamas.edu](mailto:tristac@clackamas.edu) or Elisabeth Miles at [bethiem@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bethiem@sbcglobal.net).

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 6-8 PM—VANCOUVER, WA

Community Room, Cascade Park Community Library, 600 NE 136th Ave., Vancouver, WA. Hosted by Christi Krug. Featuring David Benedictus, Tom Kinzie, Jenney Pauer, and Joanna Rose. Contact: Christi Krug, [c.krug@comcast.net](mailto:c.krug@comcast.net), 360-213-6989 or librarian Teresa Torres [ttorres@fvrl.org](mailto:ttorres@fvrl.org)

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—OREGON CITY

Oregon City Library, 606 John Adams Street, Oregon City. Hosted by Christine Delea. Featuring Lyssa Tall Anolik, Karen Braucher, Cindy Williams Gutierrez, Diane Holland, David Rutiezer, Laura Weeks, and FWS Board Member Nancy Winklesky. Contact: Library Director Maureen Cole [mcole@orc.org](mailto:mcole@orc.org) 503.657.8269 ext 1010 or Christine Delea [christinedelea@cs.com](mailto:christinedelea@cs.com)

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—PORTLAND

Broadway Books, 1714 NE Broadway, Portland. Hosted by Joanna Rose. Featuring Stevan Allred, Margaret Chula, Donna Prinzmetal, Suzanne Sigafos and FWS Board Member Don Colburn. Con-

tact: Joanna Rose [joannarose@earthlink.net](mailto:joannarose@earthlink.net) or Sally MacPherson [cw-hidbey@comcast.net](mailto:cw-hidbey@comcast.net)

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2-4 PM—PORTLAND

Blackfish Gallery, 420 NW 9th, Portland. Hosted by Robin Bagai and Willa Schneberg. Featuring Francis Payne Adler, Constance Hall "M," Philip Kenney, Emily Pittman Newberry, Mark Owens, and FWS Board Member Emerita Sue Einowski. Contact: Willa Schneberg, [snowmntn@comcast.net](mailto:snowmntn@comcast.net), 503-248-4136

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 6:30 PM—LAKE OSWEGO

Moonstruck Chocolate Café, 45 S. State Street, Lake Oswego. Hosted by Joan Maiers. Featuring FWS Board Member Patricia Carver. Bring a Stafford story or poem written by William Stafford to share. Contact: Joan Maiers, [jmaiers@yahoo.com](mailto:jmaiers@yahoo.com) or Moonstruck Chocolate Café 503-697-7097

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 22<sup>ND</sup>, 7-9 PM—PORTLAND

Eliot Chapel, First Unitarian Church, 1011 SW 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue (corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Salmon), Portland. Hosted by FWS Board Member Tim Barnes. Featuring Deborah Buchanan, Leanne Grabel, Michael McGriff, Paul Merchant, Karen Reyes, and Steve Sander. Scheduled readers will offer a reading, a way of understanding more richly, the Stafford poem they have selected and/or offer some thoughts on his work and their relationship to it. An open mic will follow in which readers are encouraged to share a Stafford poem meaningful to them and perhaps say a few words about why this is so. The dynamic duo of Sander and Grabel will also perform some Stafford poems on vocals and keyboard. Contact Katie Radditz 503-228-6389 ex.17 [krad-ditz@firstunitarianportland.org](mailto:krad-ditz@firstunitarianportland.org) or Tim Barnes [tim.barnes63@gmail.com](mailto:tim.barnes63@gmail.com) 503-232-4437

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23<sup>RD</sup>, 7 PM—PORTLAND

Annie Bloom's Books, 7834 SW Capitol Hwy, Portland. Hosted by FWS Board Member Susan McKee Reese. Featuring Barbara Drake, Valentine Freeman, Lisa Galloway, Tom Hogan, and Anmarie Trimble. Please come to a celebration of what would have been the 99th birthday of William Stafford and bring a favorite William Stafford poem to share. Contact: Susan Reese [sgreese@pdx.edu](mailto:sgreese@pdx.edu) or [books@annieblooms.com](http://books@annieblooms.com)

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 7:30-8:30 PM—PORTLAND

University of Portland, Buckley Center 163, University of Portland, 5000 N. Willamette Blvd., Portland. Hosted by Herman Asarnow. Featuring Judith Arcana, Eren Ergenbright, Sara Guest, Erik Larson, Kirsten Rian, and FWS Board Member Bill Howe. Contact: Herman Asarnow, [asarnow@up.edu](mailto:asarnow@up.edu)

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—PORTLAND

Smith, (333 SMC), Portland State University, 1825 SW Broadway, Portland. Hosted by FWS Board Member Emeritus Shelley Reece. Featuring FWS Board Member Don Colburn. Contact: Shelley Reece [reeces@pdx.edu](mailto:reeces@pdx.edu)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 3 PM—LAKE OSWEGO**

Holy Names Heritage Center, 17425 Holy Names Drive, Lake Oswego. (Take the Mary's Woods exit off Hwy 43 and head one block east.) Hosted by Joan Maiers. Featuring FWS Board Member Patricia Carver. Bring a Stafford story or poem written by William Stafford to share. Contact: Joan Maiers, [jmaiers@yahoo.com](mailto:jmaiers@yahoo.com) or Holy Names Heritage Center 503-607-0595

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2 PM—PORTLAND**

Multnomah Central Library, US Bank Room, 801 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Ave., Portland. Hosted by FWS Emeritus Board Member Joseph Soldati. Featuring Greta Blalock, A. Molotkov, Penelope Scambly Schott, Scot Siegel, Laura D. Weeks, Wendy Willis, and FWS Board Member Jim Scheppke. Contact: Joseph Soldati [jasole@comcast.net](mailto:jasole@comcast.net) or Lee Catalano [leec@multcolib.org](mailto:leec@multcolib.org)

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2-4 PM—TIGARD**

Tigard Public Library, 13500 SW Hall Blvd., Tigard. Hosted by FWS Board Member Tim Barnes. Featuring Judith Barrington, Sue Einowski, Tim Gillespie, George Staley, and Primus St. John. Scheduled readers will offer a reading, a way of understanding more richly, the Stafford poem they have selected and/or offer some thoughts on his work and their relationship to it. An open mic will follow in which readers are encouraged to share a Stafford poem meaningful to them and perhaps say a few words about why this is so. Contact: Tim Barnes [tim.barnes63@gmail.com](mailto:tim.barnes63@gmail.com) 503-232-4437 or Sarah Jesudason [Sarah@tigard-or.gov](mailto:Sarah@tigard-or.gov)

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 29<sup>TH</sup>, 7-8:30 PM—VANCOUVER, WA**

Barnes & Noble, 7700 NE Fourth Plain Boulevard, Vancouver, WA. Hosted by Shawn Sorensen. Featuring Ken Arnold, Kirsten Rian and FWS Board Member Don Colburn. Come celebrate William Stafford with a round table discussion, author readings, open mic and the largest selection of poetry titles in town. Come on up or by for a poetry event in the thriving and growing Vancouver art/literary scene. Contact: Shawn Sorensen [crm2679@bn.com](mailto:crm2679@bn.com)

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 29<sup>TH</sup>, 6:30-7:45—PORTLAND**

Kenton Public Library, 8226 North Denver Ave, Portland. Hosted by Tom and Margot Lavoie. Featuring Herman Asarnow and FWS Board Member Tim Barnes. Come to one of the last Stafford celebrations of the month and hear Herman Asarnow read. Share a favorite Stafford poem and then read at the open mic to end the night and bring down the curtain on this year's events. Contact: Thomas Lavoie [thomas.lavoie44@gmail.com](mailto:thomas.lavoie44@gmail.com)

**Richard Hugo to WS, Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1978**

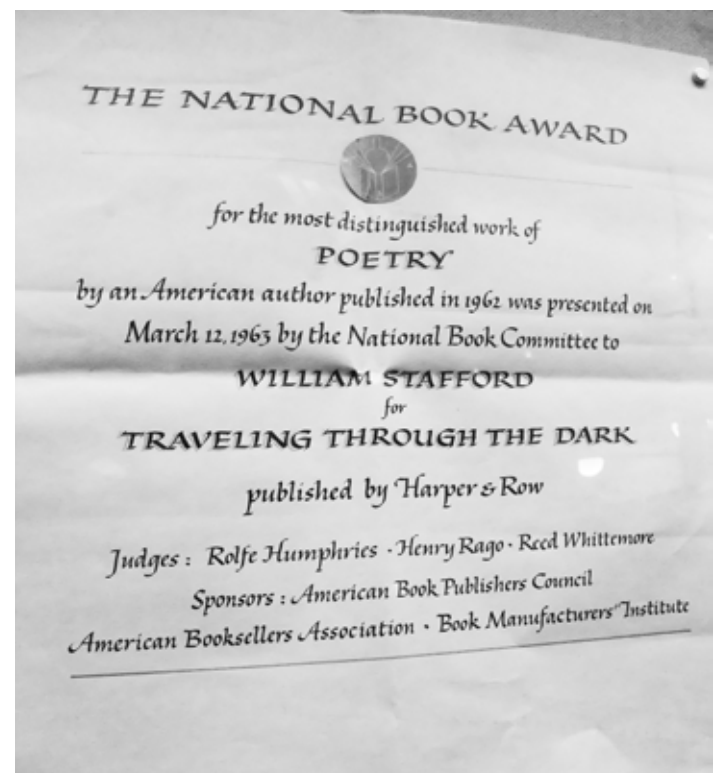
One thing you'd love here is the soft voices of the Gaels. The doctor who lives in our village, a beautiful man, got so passionate one night talking about something, he threw a book on the floor, but softly, and his voice never raised a bit, yet we could all feel the depth of his feelings—my lord, I've just described a Stafford poem.

**WS to Kirk Polking, Managing Editor of *Writer's Digest*, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1963**

Receiving the National Book Award for poetry this year was a surprise; but once I adjusted to the idea I found it all purely exciting and enjoyable—the TV appearances, the press conference, the sociability before and after the award ceremonies, the chances to talk with editors and reviewers and with other writers including the award winners in fiction and non-fiction—J.F. Powers and Leon Edel. And of course there was the money.

Once the excitement was over and I settled down to stare at my shabby, continuing attempts in writing, I did have a few qualms:—would I dare to be reckless now, in submitting as usual my current hopefuls? My immediate attempt was to suppress such considerations and to decide to go on as before, pushing into the mail whatever occurred to me, and hoping that editors would continue to do what they have so steadily done before: reject, for their sake and mine, whatever did not seem to them worth publishing! I believe the writer should follow his best impulses, his most rewarding subjects and styles, in his work; and that he should then do his best to keep from being either presuming or unduly humble in sending out his product. The writer writes; the editor selects. Both make many mistakes, but our trust is that by and large good writing will find worthy readers.

So—with my feet back on the ground, and under my desk where they belong—I turn to the job, but I take time to send my respects and my best wishes to other writers. May they get their fair share when awards rain down again!



*This is the certificate Stafford received at the National Book Award ceremony on March 12th, 1963.*

PHOTO BY IKA KUZNIK

## IN THE GREATER NORTHWEST

### SATURDAY JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 12 PM—KENO, OR

Keno Branch Library, 15555 Highway 66, Keno, Oregon. Hosted by the Keno Library. Contact: Mary Hope [kenostaff@co.klamath.or.us](mailto:kenostaff@co.klamath.or.us) 541-273-0750

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2 PM (MTN. TIME), ONTARIO, OR

Community Library, 388 SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Ontario, Oregon. Host: Phillip Mahaffey, English Department, Treasure Valley Community College. Contact: Doreen Jones (Ontario Community Library) [541-889-6371](tel:541-889-6371) or Phillip Mahaffey [pmahaffe@tvcc.cc](mailto:pmahaffe@tvcc.cc) 541-881-5912

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 4 PM—SEATTLE, WA

Green Lake Branch Seattle Public Library, 7364 E Greenlake Dr. N, Seattle. *PoetsWest* tribute to William Stafford. Open mic. Bring your favorite Stafford poem to read. Hosted by J. Glenn Evans. Contact J. Glenn Evans [206.682.1268](tel:206.682.1268) or [JGE@poetswest.com](mailto:JGE@poetswest.com)

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 3 PM—WALDPOR, OR

Waldport Community Center, 265 Hemlock St., Waldport, Oregon. Hosted by Drew Myron and friends of the Waldport Public Library. Join the worldwide birthday celebration honoring the life and work of the late William Stafford, Oregon's most famous poet. Oregon Coast writers will read a Stafford poem, as well as their own. Audience members are invited to share a favorite Stafford poem. Contact: Drew Myron [dcm@drewmyron.com](mailto:dcm@drewmyron.com)

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2 TO 4 PM—HOOD RIVER, OR

Columbia Center for the Arts, Hood River, Oregon. Hosted by Barbara Young, sponsored by CCA. Both Stafford and Stafford-inspired personal poems will be read with time for audience members to read, as well. Contact: Barbara Young, [541-490-1996](tel:541-490-1996), [barby@gorge.net](mailto:barby@gorge.net)

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2 PM—WELCHES, OR

Wy'east Book Shoppe & Art Gallery at the Rendezvous Center, 67149 E. Highway 26, Welches, Oregon. Hosted by Lindy Delf and Tony Wolk. Featuring: poet Ed Edmo, singer/songwriter Suzan Lundy, and FWS Emeritus Board Member Sharon Wood Wortman. Contact: Sandra Palmer 503-622-1623 or Lindy Delf [lindydelf@gmail.com](mailto:lindydelf@gmail.com)

### MONDAY, JANUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>, 6 PM—HERMISTON, OR

Room 136, Blue Mountain Community College, 980 SE Columbia Drive, Hermiston, Oregon. Hosted by Pam Steele. Contact: Pam Steele 541-571-8722 [Patricia.Steele@hermiston.k12.or.us](mailto:Patricia.Steele@hermiston.k12.or.us)

### MONDAY, JANUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA

Bainbridge Island Public Library, 1270 Madison Ave., Bainbridge Island, Washington. Hosted by David Hecker. Featuring John Davis, Gayle Kaune, Peter Quinn, and Nancy Rekow. After introductory remarks, the host will present a power-point presentation of photographs of the William Stafford mural on a downtown building at Hutchinson, Kansas. Each of the four panel members will then present on their contacts with William Stafford as students and workshop

attendees, and how he influenced their writing and poetry teaching. Last will be readings by host, panel members, and audience of favorite poems by or about William Stafford. Contact: David Hecker [dah-sojourner@comcast.net](mailto:dah-sojourner@comcast.net) or Reference Librarian, B.I. Public Library 206-842-4162

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 7-8:30 PM—NEWPORT, OR

Newport Public Library, 35 NW Nye Street, Newport, Oregon. Co-sponsored by Willamette Writers Coast Chapter. Hosted by Dorothy Mack. Featuring Linnea Harper and Dan Stein. Attendees are encouraged to bring their favorite Stafford poems to share. Contact: Dorothy Mack [dmack@centurytel.net](mailto:dmack@centurytel.net)

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 5:30 PM—ENTERPRISE, OR

Fishtrap House, (Coffin House), 400 E. Grant St., Enterprise, Oregon. Featuring Cameron Scott and FWS Board Member Rich Wandschneider. An evening potluck and reading to kick off our wintertime writer-in-residence program and celebrate William Stafford's birthday. Please bring a dish to share for the potluck at 5:30, the reading will begin around 6:30. Contact: Ben Hayes [ben@fishtrap.org](mailto:ben@fishtrap.org)

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 6:30-7:30 PM—LINCOLN CITY, OR

Driftwood Public Library, 801 SW Hwy 101, Lincoln City, Oregon. Co-hosted by John Fiedler and Ron Sears. A reading of Stafford poems by audience members and by featured readers, who will also share brief original poems in the spirit of William Stafford. Contact: John Fiedler [541-994-8178](tel:541-994-8178) [johnfiedler@embarq-mail.com](mailto:johnfiedler@embarq-mail.com) or Ron Sears [541-921-2217](tel:541-921-2217)

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—MCMINNVILLE, OR

Austin Reading Room, Nicholson Library, Linfield College, 900 SE Baker Ave, McMinnville, Oregon. Hosted by Lex Runciman and FWS Board Member Barbara Drake. Featuring a mix of students and local people reading. Public participation warmly invited. Bring a Stafford poem, prose passage, or anecdote, and a poem of your own to share if you wish. Contact: Barbara Drake [bdrake1@frontier.com](mailto:bdrake1@frontier.com) or [whyte@linfield.edu](mailto:whyte@linfield.edu)

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—ASHLAND, OR

Hannon Library, Meese Meeting Room 309, 1250 Siskiyou Blvd., Southern Oregon University, Ashland, Oregon. The public is invited to attend this free event honoring the late Oregon Poet Laureate. Hosted by Friends of Hannon Library and Friends of William Stafford. Composer Todd Barton will open this celebration by performing his piece composed for the Cavani String Quartet in 1996 to accompany a quartet of William Stafford poems. Poet Linda Barnes will read the four poems. Todd Barton, Oregon Shakespeare Festival Resident Composer for forty-three years and Director of Composition Studies at Southern Oregon University, is the composer of over 250 scores for theater productions and over one hundred commissioned concert works. Among his film and video scores are *William Stafford: The Life of the Poem* and *Lawson Fusao Inada: What It Means to Be Free*. Other featured poets for the event include Jean-

nette Cappella, Bruce Barton, Richard Lehnert, Liz Robinson, and Jay Schroeder. Audience members are invited to bring a favorite William Stafford poem to read. For further information about the William Stafford event contact Michelle Schuster at SOU, [541-552-6835](tel:541-552-6835).

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—BELLINGHAM, WA**

Village Books, 1200 Eleventh Street, Bellingham, Washington. Hosted by James Bertolino. William Stafford Tribute Event: An Evening of Poetry. Village Books will host a poetry reading celebrating Oregon's late poet laureate, William Stafford. One of the best-known and loved American poets, Stafford served as Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress, received the National Book Award for *Traveling Through the Dark*, and taught for many years at Lewis & Clark College in Portland. He grew up in Kansas, was a conscientious objector during World War II, and was widely admired for his generosity. Contact: Christina Claassen, Village Books [events@villagebooks.com](mailto:events@villagebooks.com) or James Bertolino [jim@jamesbertolino.com](mailto:jim@jamesbertolino.com) [360-398-7870](tel:360-398-7870)

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 6 PM—KLAMATH FALLS, OR**

Klamath County Main Branch Library, 126 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Klamath Falls, Oregon. Hosted by Klamath County Library. Contact: Mary Hope [541-850-2091](tel:541-850-2091) or Christy Davis [541-882-8894](tel:541-882-8894)

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 6:30-9:00 PM—BURNS, OR**

The Bakery (previously The Rock Wall Studio), an art exhibit and performance studio—the studio is up a flight of stairs, 255 North Broadway, Burns, Oregon. Hosted by Sue Kovar, owner of The Bakery. Featuring Harney Basin Writers group members Peg Wallis, Lorna Cagle, Debra Raymond, Susan Kovar, Kate Marsh, and Marjorie Thelen. The public is invited to attend this free event, and refreshments will be served. The upstairs studio is above The Children's Barn, and is the site of frequent Coyote Cinema showings and other artistic events. Several writers will read a poem by the late Oregon Poet Laureate followed by one of their own poems written in the spirit of Stafford's work. Members of the audience are invited to read one of their favorite Stafford poems. Contact: Kate Marsh, [copelandmarsh@centurytel.net](mailto:copelandmarsh@centurytel.net), [541-573-7204](tel:541-573-7204)

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 3:20-5 PM, & 7 PM—LONGVIEW, WA**

Longview Public Library, 1600 Maple, Longview, Washington, 98632. Hosted by Northwest Voices (Lower Columbia College & Longview Public Library). Featuring Alice Derry presenting a workshop at Lower Columbia College from 3:30-5 pm, followed by a public reading at the Longview Public Library at 7 pm as the keynote speaker for the annual William Stafford Birthday Celebration. Cake and punch are provided by the library for guests, and there will be an "open-mic" time for Stafford fans and budding poets alike to share Stafford poetry or their own work. Contact: Danielle Skulke [dshulke@lcc.ctc.edu](mailto:dshulke@lcc.ctc.edu) or Longview Public Library [360-442-5300](tel:360-442-5300)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 1 PM—OLYMPIA, WA**

Columbia Room, 416 Sid Snyder Ave SW, Legislative Building, Olympia, Washington. Hosted by Alex Hays. Featuring Chris Bayley, Mark Lindquist, and Sam Reed. We will be celebrating the life of poet William Stafford. A basic outline of the events includes: a)

Time to Mingle with other patrons of the arts b) Introduction — Alex Hays c) Featured Readers — Poems will be read by several local authors (they will be provided with some of Stafford's poems, or they can choose their favorite Stafford poem to read) d) Conclusion — Alex Hays. Contact: April Sanders [april.sanders@abhays.com](mailto:april.sanders@abhays.com); [253-961-2230](tel:253-961-2230)

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2 PM—SALEM, OR**

Anderson Room A, Salem Public Library, 585 Liberty St SE, Salem, Oregon. Hosted by Janet Markee. Featuring Alice Derry, Marilyn Johnston, and FWS Board Member Jim Schepcke. The program will open with HOW THE INK FEELS, then the readings, and then audience participation of sharing favorite Stafford poems. Contact: Janet Markee [janetmarkee@mac.com](mailto:janetmarkee@mac.com)

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 25<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—SUNRIVER, OR**

Trude' S. Pozzi Education Center, Sunriver Nature Center & Observatory, 57245 River Road, Sunriver, Oregon. Hosted by Sunriver Nature Center. Featuring Jim Anderson, Peter Lovering, and Alex Weiss. The program will include introductory comments about Stafford and his influence on American poetry, followed by invited readings of Stafford works and original poems by readers. Eighth grade students of from 3-Rivers School in Sunriver who have participated in a workshop on Stafford Poetry will be invited to share some of their own work or a favorite Stafford poem. Open readings by audience members will round out the program. There will be light refreshments provided. Contact: Jay Bowerman [frogs1@sunriversnaturecenter.org](mailto:frogs1@sunriversnaturecenter.org), [541-593-8302](tel:541-593-8302). Directions: <http://www.sunriversnaturecenter.org>

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 1 PM—CORVALLIS, OR**

Corvallis-Benton County Library, 645 NW Monroe St., Corvallis, Oregon. Hosted by FWS Board Member Emerita Linda Gelbrich. The theme for this year's celebration is "What is Poetry?" We will begin with the DVD of "The Life of the Poem," followed by a short workshop led by Linda Varsell Smith, with time to write from the inspiration of Stafford's video and his poems related to poetry. Featured readers will include Eleanor Berry and Be Davison Herrera. They will address the theme as well as read from Stafford's work. Audience participants will be invited to read a favorite William Stafford poem as well as one of their own related to the theme. Contact: Linda Gelbrich [bindaw@exchangenet.net](mailto:bindaw@exchangenet.net) [541-754-7198](tel:541-754-7198)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 4 PM—EUGENE, OR**

Tsunami Books, 2585 Willamette St., Eugene, Oregon. Hosted by Jerry Gatchell and FWS Board Member Martha Gatchell. Featuring John Daniel. Contact: Tsunami Books [541-345-8986](tel:541-345-8986).

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 7PM—MT. ANGEL, OR**

Mt. Angel Abbey Library, Mt. Angel, Oregon. Silverton Poetry Association Stafford Celebration Event. Hosted by Efrain Horna Diaz. This year we will celebrate what William Stafford called "circling around our truth." Everyone is invited to listen and to read the poetry of William Stafford. Those who knew Stafford are especially invited to share. Special attention will be given to the poet's relationship

cont. from p. 7

with grief. A few of his poems will be read in other languages. Refreshments served. Contact: [kelly.morehouse@gmail.com](mailto:kelly.morehouse@gmail.com)

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 1:30 PM—MOLALLA, OR**

Molalla Public Library, 201 E. 5th St., Molalla, Oregon. Hosted by Larry Anderson and Kate Gray. Sponsored by the Molalla Writers Group. Featuring Larry Anderson, Brian Biggs, Maureen Cole, Kate Gray, Carol Hausholder, Steve Slemenda, and Esther Wood, who will read Stafford and Stafford-related poems followed by reader and audience discussion of his work, life, stories, anything else of pertinence. Guests are warmly invited to read their own work and/or related poems. Those not interested in reading poems may sit back and enjoy! The film, "Traveling in the Dark" will be shown, with a short discussion to follow. Contact: Kate Gray, [Kateg@clackamas.edu](mailto:Kateg@clackamas.edu).

## AROUND THE COUNTRY AND THE WORLD

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 6:30-8:30 PM—GEORGETOWN, TX**

Cianfranni's Coffee Shop on the Square, Georgetown, Texas. Hosted by Mike Gullickson, who will portray William Stafford and read some of William's poems. The theme is "A Ritual To Read to Each Other." Contact: Mike Gullickson, [poetkind@yahoo.com](mailto:poetkind@yahoo.com)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 7:30 PM—PACIFICA, CA**

Flory's Book Company, 2120 Palmetto Ave., Pacifica, California. Hosted by Bob Walker and Sherri Rose-Walker. Contact: Bob Walker and Sherri Rose-Walker 650-738-0261 or Flory's Book Company 650-355-8811 [FloreysBookCo@yahoo.com](mailto:FloreysBookCo@yahoo.com)

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM—BURLINGTON, VT**

Morgan Room of Aiken Hall, Corner of Maple and Summit Streets, Champlain College, Burlington, Vermont. Hosted by Jim Ellefson. Featuring: Erik Eskilsen and Bill Everts. Bill's birthday begins our "Under the Influence" reading series for our so-called spring semester. By April, we'll celebrate the birthdays of six others. On 1/17, readers will present a Stafford poem, talk about the influence on her/his work--and then present an original poem. Our evening will go on in a clunky democratic fashion until everyone has had a chance. Contact: Jim Ellefson [ellefson@champlain.edu](mailto:ellefson@champlain.edu) 802-865-6406

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 4 PM—NEW YORK, NY**

Fifth-Floor Milstein Chapel of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, Columbia University Medical Center, in New York City. Hosted by Joel Nightingale Berning, Chaplain. Within one of Manhattan's largest hospitals, patients, family members, and staff will be welcomed in the spirit of Stafford to share their favorite poems, relate poetry to healing and coping with illness, and develop a poetry community among each other. For security reasons this celebration is restricted to NYP staff, patients, and their families. Contact Joel Nightingale Berning at [job9122@nyp.org](mailto:job9122@nyp.org) or 212-305-5817..

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 6 PM—PRINCETON, NJ**

Princeton Art Museum, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jer-

## WS to Gerald Burns, Aug. 23rd, 1966

Many things call for response in your letter, and I feel inadequate on most of them. I can say that you are marvelously accurate in your hazarding that "Glimpses in the Woods" was a kind of Roethkian rejection of Roethke: in a not-too-sharply focused was [way?] I was aware of that all the time in that poem. Many of my too-easy phrases which you convincingly tag (and I do prevalently realize the weakness of) have become almost a necessary part of my way of writing, like being reckless, or being willing to touch the earth, rather than insisting that I am a bird. By the way, I did once meet Roethke, and had a quick talk of great immediacy and understanding, even though I found him disquieting. He suffered from his standing and his exalted relation with his worshipper[s] around him, even while he had a craving for what they offered. It was a strange way to live, I thought.

sey. Hosted by Meredith Martin. Contact: Meredith Martin [mm4@princeton.edu](mailto:mm4@princeton.edu)

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 11 AM—TIFFIN, OH**

Herbster Chapel, Heidelberg University, 310 East Market, Tiffin, Ohio. Co-hosted by President Rob Huntington and Professor Bill Reyer. Open to the broader Tiffin and Seneca County community, the event will focus on a theme, Social Activism, which seems so appropriate for Mr. Stafford. As with each year, students, staff, and faculty will be invited to participate in a democratic manner. Contact: Bill Reyer [wreyer@heidelberg.edu](mailto:wreyer@heidelberg.edu) 419-448-2048

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 22<sup>ND</sup>, 9:30-11:15 AM—CARSON CITY, NV**

Prison Chapel, Northern Nevada Correctional Center, Carson City, Nevada. Facilitated by Shaun Griffin. For twenty-three years, Shaun Griffin has been leading a writing workshop for the inmates in this correctional center. He says, "There will be a handful of us gathered to read and remember Bill on that day. We will read Bill's poems, some of his essays, and remember, through his many words, the depth of his gift to all of us. I always tell my guys at the prison to 'lower your standards and keep writing...' after Bill's example." Contact: Shaun Griffin [shaungrif@aol.com](mailto:shaungrif@aol.com)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2 PM—SANTA BARBARA, CA**

7<sup>th</sup> annual gathering at First Crossing Day Use Area, Los Padres National Forest, Paradise Road, Santa Barbara, California. This site has no address, but is just across the road from Los Prietos Boys Camp, 3900 Paradise Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105. In case of rain, the reading will be moved a mile down the road to Los Prietos Ranger Station, 3505 Paradise Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105. Hosted by Paul Willis. Featured readers: Paulann Petersen, Poet Laureate of Oregon, and Mark Sargent, Provost of Westmont College. Program Note: This reading will take place on the exact site of the Los Prietos Civilian Public Service Camp where William Stafford was stationed during WWII. We will be dedicating an outdoor informational display on Stafford and the CPS Camp. Further Program Note:



Earlier in the day, Paulann Petersen will be giving a Stafford-based poetry-writing workshop from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm at the nearby Los Prietos Ranger Station, 3505 Paradise Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105. This workshop is free and open to the public. Furthest *Program Note*: The Forest Service has waived the requirement of an Adventure Pass for those attending the day's events. Contact: Paul Willis 805-565-7174 [willis@westmont.edu](mailto:willis@westmont.edu)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26TH, 11:30-3 PM—SAPPORO, JAPAN**

Koorakuen Hotel, Nishi 8 Chome, Oodori, Chuoku, Sapporo, Japan. Hosted by Yorifumi Yaguchi. Several persons will read poems of William Stafford both in English and Japanese, including Kim Stafford's poem "Bell & Fire." This is included in "Farewell to Nuclear, Welcome to Renewable Energy, A Collection of Poems by 218 Poets". This book was published a few months ago. The poems in it are both in English and Japanese. Contact: Juichi Matsuda. Mazda 1193@ybb.ne.jp

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3<sup>RD</sup>, 7 PM—MARRAKESH, MOROCCO**

American Language Center, 3 Impasse du Moulin, Gueliz, Marrakesh, Morocco. Hosted by Joseph Green. Featuring students in the ALC Writers' Club. Contact Joseph Green [greens\\_tossed@yahoo.com](mailto:greens_tossed@yahoo.com)

## Gerald Burns to WS, Nov. 28th, 1966

If anything was needed to drive your reputation home to me, it was seeing Bly, Kinnell & Kizer read their favorite Stafford poems after you left. By now you'll have heard about it—Bly "The Farm on the Great Plains," Kinnell "Passing Remark," Kizer "Thinking for Berky" & "Traveling through the Dark."

We've printed acres of Stafford," she said.

Bly apologized for reading without having heard you read; he really cared. Said you're the greatest poet to come out of Kansas for the next 400 years. Hope he has that record & you're on it.

I thought at the time I heard Creeley that his delivery would be most useful to have heard, but tried silently it doesn't help that much. Bly may have been the most unpredictable in advance; Duncan useful. All by the way of sliding into something ~~from almost ashamed to say~~—your reading was the most effective of any—& like your poems there was no moving parts to it, no way of telling how you did it. I say "ashamed" because around here it's likely to sound like hero worship. Hall is genial & fuzzy, with just the right reserve, boyish relish. Kizer cocktail high school flash – delightful. Duncan still in Oz. (Doesn't he look more like the Wizard of?) Bly unbelievable. Kinnell OK, enjoying himself. Creeley the only poet without platform distance—he treats an audience as if it's just people he's talking to, & groans his poems to whoever'll listen, a brilliant reading. Even Eberhart made me happier with his stuff.

But you—how do you do it. I figure maybe a poet who takes a camera to a reception is a man to watch. And darned if you don't do everything like that. No question of role, hence no particular mannerisms. Just a man reading poems. Amazing. If I were reporting the conference I'd have to note what you do at the end of a poem. You grin.

You look integrated, is all.

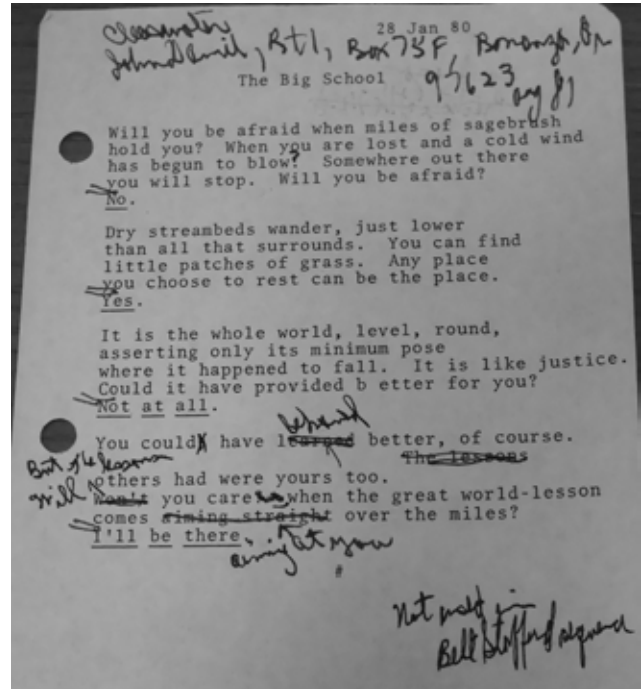


PHOTO BY IKA KUZNIK

This poem was written in response to Marvin Bell but was not included in their collaborative books, *Segues* and *Annie-Over*; this editor is not sure from which manuscript it was omitted.

### The Big School

Will you be afraid when miles of sagebrush hold you? When you are lost and a cold wind has begun to blow? Somewhere out there you will stop. Will you be afraid?

No.

Dry streambeds wander, just lower than all that surrounds. You can find little patches of grass. Any place you choose to rest can be the place.

Yes.

It is the whole world, level, round, asserting only its minimum pose where it happened to fall. It is like justice. Could it have provided better for you?

Not at all.

You could have believed better, of course. But the lessons others had were yours too. Will you care when the great world-lesson comes aiming at you over the miles?

I'll be there.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

## WS to Kenny and Jean Johnson, May 1st, 1987 (poem enclosed)

Workers of the world! It is Mayday and time to celebrate all of us heroic, retired workers. It occurred to me to write you a note on this our-size paper, even though we are hoping to see you both soon at the big party out at Sisters.

Anyway, I have been thinking what a disastrous decline there is at the old college. I was up there a couple of days ago, to fend off a writer who wanted to come out to our house to talk....And as I looked around, as I sniffed around the department, as I traversed the shabby-looking crowd of students lounging with their gum (and who knows what else) in the library, I thought about the shining exemplars we were compared to the present dolorous bunch.

In the department, the new secretary hardly knew me. The big, odd-looking professor slouching the halls was apparently a new "addition" to the halls. My mail slot was pitifully empty, that used to be glorious with invitations to have dinner with book salesmen. Remember those days when they had expense accounts?

Well, I came home to our hideaway and thought about our band of survivors, and thought I would write to you when a worthy piece of paper came along, which just did as I shuffled through things here in the garage-office preparatory to taking off tomorrow for Indiana and then Phillips-Exeter Academy in New Hampshire (gone a week for this pair of goodies).

Our lives are snug now, and we can avoid all except occasional glimpses of the decline of the world around us. Here at home we have been working on the yard, reading our books (I have just finished *The Scarlet Letter* and began on *Mosses from an Old Manse*, feeling sort of mossy myself anyway), and—for me—writing a few bits now and then. I'll load in at once this morning's accretion to the pile of mss accumulating for our attic unless some alert editor nabs these gems that keep arriving in my head.—

### In Any Country

It happens this way all the time:

Someone swam near, in that restless water.  
You have to be quiet and wait, then speak  
as if casually. Most of the time, for awhile,  
the current carries you sort of together  
and you don't much care, for awhile.

This time, it was night. The others were gone,  
or drowned; anyway, only the waves  
made any difference as they came and went  
with their many unread messages, telling  
the despair of all who have no purpose in life.

And someone swam near, so alone, so still,  
that the waves hesitated before they went on,  
and the night paused. It was my time.  
After, long after that night, now has come  
demanding the story I have just told.

It happens this way all the time.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

## WS to Kenny Johnson, Aug. 6th, 1970

One night at our house you posed a tough question for me. You took a stand that said one should accept his nature or preferences or principles, and do his thinking in terms of some kind of stand or commitment. I had always held lurking in my mind the idea that in my thinking I should try to erase my self—be ready to follow any thinking, including other people's, and not have any commitment at all, if possible.

Down at Haystack 70 we had a discussion about such an issue, and I realized your posing of the issue had lurked along in my thinking. Somewhere out on the edge of my stance, my way of seeing the world and myself, there is an allegiance that is almost like religion, maybe much like religion: it is the acceptance of one extreme belief—belief in the imminence [sic] of the world as provider of guidance for creatures with sense (sensibility). Experience will bring us more than we now have. Hence, I must be variable, not principled (except for this one principle of steadfast waveriness).

## John Haines to WS, Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>, 1968

I enjoyed your poems. You're one of the few who have anything to say these days.

*Happy 97th Birthday,  
Dear Dorothy!*



PHOTO BY MIKE MARKEE

Dorothy at the 1993 Portland Poetry Festival, which was dedicated to William Stafford.

### Permissions

Letters, poems, and graphics from *Poet's Letters: The Correspondence of William Stafford*, an exhibition held in the Collins Gallery of the Multnomah County Central Library from Nov. 1st to Dec. 16th, 2012, are used with the permission of the Estate of William Stafford.

The line drawings of William Stafford are used by permission of the artist, Barbara Stafford.

### Errata for issue 17.2 of FWS Newsletter:

**On page 3:** The last word of Shaun Griffin's essay "Looking for William Stafford on the Yard" is missing. The final sentence should read, "Above all Stafford taught us to pay attention: the poems cannot wait." **On page 5:** The last sentence in "Host and Organizer, David Hecker" has the wrong date. The sentence should read, "David sent along the accompanying graphics of the poster and the bookmark that were a part of the 1994 event."



friends of **WILLIAM STAFFORD**  
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Special Birthday Celebration Issue



Glimpses from the Poet's Letters



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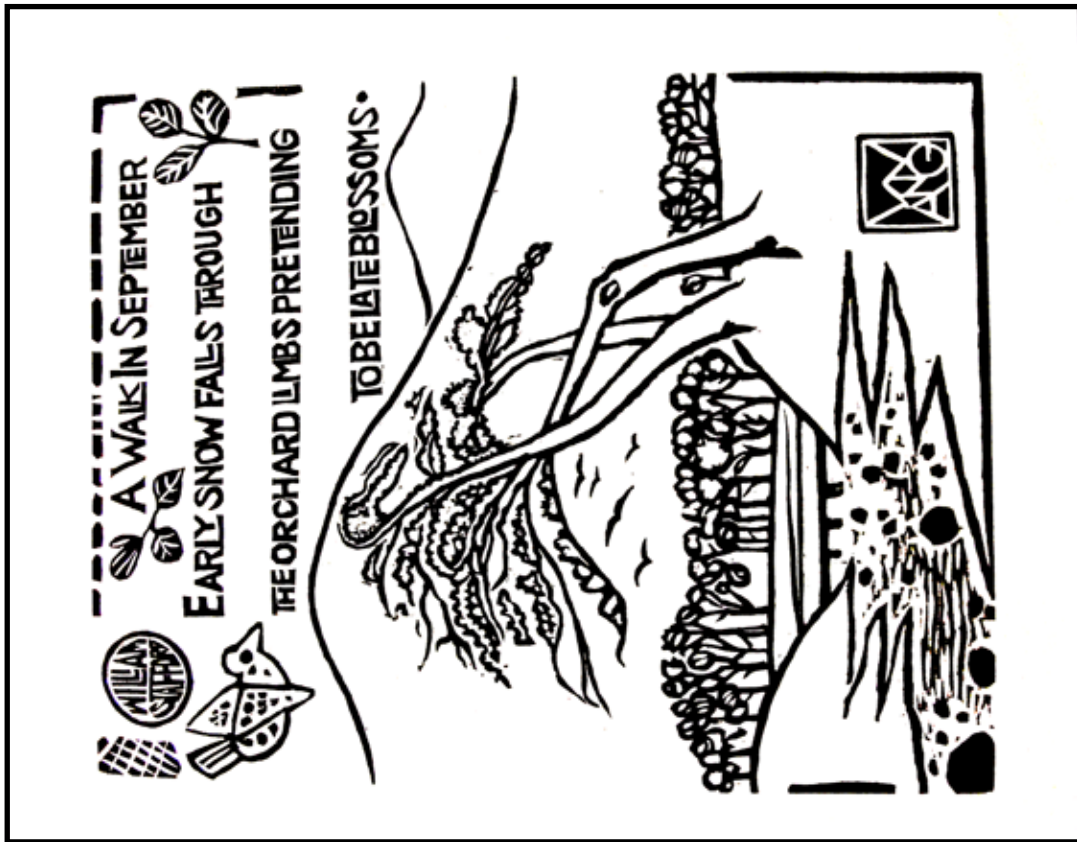


PHOTO BY ILYA KUZNIK

This broadside was done by printmaker and Chinese scholar, Wang Hui-Ming, and is part of Poet's Letters, an exhibition of Stafford's correspondence held at the Multnomah County Central Library in November and December, 2012.