



VOLUME 4 NO. 4

# W Friends of WILLIAM STAFFORD NEWSLETTER

LAKE OSWEGO, OREGON

DECEMBER 2000

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**TWELVE EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY TO COMMEMORATE  
WILLIAM STAFFORD'S BIRTHDATE**

Poets and readers will honor William Stafford in a series of events scheduled in twelve locations throughout Washington and Oregon, beginning January 11 and concluding January 28. **For a complete schedule, see newsletter insert.**  
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## *Only the Traveler Can Change the Journey*

is how we convince ourselves  
these days though sometimes  
we look elsewhere, think  
to reassemble you, fog-  
thrumming man fast to shift  
through four A.M. piles of poems,  
all sky and juniper, the trout  
quicksilvering the brook.  
And the question of solitude  
has always been answered  
by one pine needle  
refusing to fall. What remains:  
hard as redwood, the deep bite  
of axe. Ferns where your feet  
moved slow and far from people.  
In August the light  
lies down like an elk  
for the river, the hills, this  
earth that we touch,  
old friend, it lies down.

*(in memory of William Stafford)*

Thom Ward

*Small Boat with Oars of Different  
Size* (Carnegie Mellon University  
Press, 1999). Used with permission  
of author.

## **McKAY HIGH SCHOOL GIVES ANNUAL WILLIAM STAFFORD WRITING AWARD**

Eight years ago, Doug Wilson, McKay High School (Salem, OR) English teacher, named a graduating senior to receive the William Stafford Award for Outstanding Effort in the Area of Language Arts. The award has been presented each June since 1992 and is now sponsored by Borders Books who provides the student an award plaque and \$300. Engraved on the plaque is the last sentence of Stafford's poem, "Simple Talk." [See poem next page.]

The annual award for the McKay High School English Student of the Year is voted by English Department teachers and is based on G.P.A., courses taken, and the student's involvement with writing. Last June's winner was Caitlin Wilson, now at Oregon State University majoring in English.

Doug, in his 24th year of teaching high school, became devoted to Stafford's poetry through his students in 1992. While teaching an American Literature Honors course, with a unit on poetry from early to modern period, he assigned student teams to research and present a poet to the class. Jason Roy, Troy Bassham, and Keith Olson were the only team that selected a living poet. The students contacted William Stafford and arranged

(continued pg. 2)

## HS WS AWARD (continued from pg. 1)

to interview him at the library at Lewis and Clark College. They brought along books of Stafford poetry they'd purchased for him to sign. Their study of Stafford's work helped them develop questions for the interview and his responses provided them insight not often captured by adult interviewers. Wilson has since donated the recording of the interview to the William Stafford Literary Archives.

## Simple Talk

Spilling themselves in the sun bluebirds  
wing-mention their names all day. If everything  
told so clear a life, maybe the sky would  
come, maybe heaven; maybe appearance and  
truth would be the same. Maybe whatever seems  
to be so, we should speak so from our souls,  
never afraid, "Light" when it comes,  
"Dark" when it goes away.

William Stafford

*An Oregon Message* (Harper  
and Row, 1987). Used with  
permission of Wm. Stafford  
Literary Estate.

## POETS NOW TRAVELING IN "POETRY IN MOTION"

[Excerpted from Fall Calendar 2000 of Poetry  
Society of America]

## Poetry in Motion

Working in collaboration with MTA New York City Transit, the PSA inaugurated Poetry in Motion® in New York in 1991 and has since expanded the program to ten cities from coast to coast. This fall, poets featured in New York will include Donald Hall, Sonia Sanchez, Paul Muldoon and others. Poetry in Motion® is made possible in New York by generous contributions from Barnes & Noble, Inc.; the Manhattan delegation to the New York City Council; Council Member Margarita Lopez; Council Member A. Gifford Miller; and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Poetry in Motion® Atlanta currently features poems by Lady Orono No Sakanoé, William Stafford, Richard Wilbur and others, and is presented in association with AIGA/Atlanta, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority and The Mead Corporation.

Poetry in Motion® will re-launch in Baltimore this fall, with new poems by Michael Collier, Denise Levertov, Terrence Winch, John Yau and others, presented in association with AIGA/Baltimore and the Maryland Mass Transit Administration.

Poetry in Motion® Chicago will re-launch in the spring with a new series of poems, presented in collaboration with the Chicago Transit Authority, AIGA/Chicago, Chicago Public Library, The Chicago Community Trust, Sara Lee Corporation and in association with the Illinois Arts Council.

Billy Collins, W.S. Merwin and William Shakespeare are among the current poets featured in Poetry in Motion® Dallas, presented in association with Dallas Area Rapid Transit and Richland College/Dallas County Community College District.

Poetry in Motion® Los Angeles this fall will include Amy Gerstler, Philip Levine and Alida Rodriguez, among others, presented in association with the Los Angeles County MTA.

Poetry in Motion® continues in Philadelphia with poems by Robert Creeley, Seamus Heaney, Dorothy Parker and others, presented in collaboration with AIGA/Philadelphia and the South Eastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority.

Poetry in Motion® will return to Portland this fall, with poems by Kim Stafford, Fran Ava and Lex Runciman, among others, presented in association with Literary Arts, Inc., The Oregon Community Foundation, Tri-Met, Obie Media, AIGA/Portland and Starbucks Coffee.

Among the first poets featured in the Pioneer Valley Poetry in Motion® program, launched in March of 2000, were Elizabeth Bishop, Charles Simic and Wislawa Szymborska.

With co-sponsors Obie Media, Borderlands, AIGA and the Austin Transit Authority, the PSA is planning a special reading event to launch Poetry in Motion® Austin for November 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>.

Poetry in Motion® is also made possible by the continued support of the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and the National Endowment for the Arts.

## **SCHEDULE OF JANUARY EVENTS COMMEMORATING WILLIAM STAFFORD'S BIRTHDAY**

Dozens of poets, readers, and admirers of William Stafford's work will gather in January to honor his birthday. Paulann Petersen, FWS Events Director, says poems by William Stafford will be read by featured readers, some poets will read a poem of their own, and members of the audience will be invited to read a favorite poem by the late William Stafford. All events are free and open to the public.

### **\*\*\*VANCOUVER, WA**

#### **Thursday, January 25, 7-9 P.M., Fort Vancouver Regional Library.**

Featured Readers: David Benadictus, host; Mark Martin, Cindy Kidder, John Benson, Killian Koontz, Barbara Hamby, Cap Peck, Melinda Bell, Robert Hughes. Organizer: Betty Barton.

### **\*\*\*BEND, OR**

#### **Saturday, January 20, 2 P.M., Bend Public Library.**

Featured Readers: Jerry Ramsey and readers from 5 independent book sellers in the Bend area. Host: Kit Stafford.

### **\*\*\*EUGENE, OR**

**Wednesday, January 17, 7:30 P.M., Tsunami Books** 2585 Willamette St., phone: 541-345-8986. Those attending are invited to bring a favorite William Stafford poem to read. Refreshments will be served. This event is co-sponsored by Lane Literary Guild and Friends of William Stafford. Organizer, host: Ingrid Wendt.

### **\*\*\*SALEM, OR**

#### **Sunday, January 28, 1-4 P.M., Salem Public Library,**

Anderson Room. Featured Readers: David Barker, Abigail Brandt, Virginia Corrie-Cozart, David Lange, Janet Markee, Carolyn Miller, Lois Rosen. Hosts: Janet Markee, Lois Rosen, Abigail Brandt.

### **\*\*\*ASHLAND, OR**

#### **Friday, January 26, 7:30 P.M., Bloomsbury Books,**

290 E. Main, phone: 541-488-0299. Featured Readers: Jonah Bornstein, Alice Hardesty, Mariah Hegerty, Robert McDowell, Patty Wixon, Vincent Wixon. Host: Alice Hardesty.

### **\*\*\*SIX IN PORTLAND, OR, AREA**

Paulann Petersen will host the following WS birthday celebrations in the Portland area, with Dorothy Stafford as honored guest at each.

### **\*\*\*Thursday, January 11, 7-9 P.M., West Linn Public Library,**

1595 Burns, West Linn. Featured Readers: Pat Carver, Walt Curtis, David Hedges, Joan Maiers, Primus St. John, Nancy Winklesky. Contact: Amy Schauer, 503-656-7857.

### **\*\*\*Friday, January 12, 8 P.M., Mountain Writers Center,**

3624 S.E. Milwaukie, Portland. Featured Readers: Judith Barrington, Gerry Foote, Jennifer Grotz, Judith H. Montgomery, Willa Schneberg, Laura Winter. Contact: Jennifer Grotz, 503-236-4854.

### **\*\*\*Wednesday, January 17, 7:00-8:30 P.M., Multnomah Central Library**

801 S.W. 10th, Portland. Featured Readers: Howard Aaron, Barbara Drake, Stephen Leflar, Steve Nemirow, Greg Simon. Contact: Chantal Seely, 503-988-5578.

### **\*\*\*Sunday, January 21, 2-4 P.M., Oswego Heritage House,**

398 10th Street, Lake Oswego. Featured Readers: Bob Dusenberry, Martha Gatchell, Beverly Partridge, Shelley Reece, Joseph A. Soldati, Patty Wixon, Vincent Wixon. Contact: Susan Headley, 503-635-6373.

### **\*\*\*Tuesday, January 23, 7-9 P.M., Belmont Branch Library,**

1038 S.E. 39th, Portland. Featured readers: Lois Baker, Doug Marx, Sherron Norlen, Jim Shugrue, Lisa Steinman, Sandra Williams. Contact: Steve Armitage, 503-248-5382

### **\*\*\*Tuesday, January 30, 7 P.M., Broadway Books,**

1714 N.E. Broadway, Portland. Featured Readers: Jane Glazer, Jim Grabill, Harold Johnson, Verlana Orr, Carlos Reyes, Vern Rutsala. Contact: Roberta Dyer, Gloria Borg-Olds, 503-284-1726.



## INTERVIEW WITH DOUG STOW

*Last year, FWS Board of Directors contracted with Doug Stow, of Paper Crane Letterpress, Half Moon Bay, CA, to create two broadsides of William Stafford poems: "A Ritual To Read To Each Other" and "Why I Am Happy." In a recent phone interview, Doug had the following to say about his life as a poetry reader.*

**Q:** What triggered your interest in poetry?

**Doug:** In college I had a 10-week course in 20th Century English Poetry. We spent 6 weeks on Yeats. After that I didn't have much interest in reading poetry. Then 15 years ago, I was 35 years old and started reading some Archibald MacLeish essays, then his poetry. Then I branched out to Wallace Stevens. I knew I loved the sound of words. Then on the 100th anniversary of Edna St. Vincent Millay's birthday, a lot of her poems were suddenly around so I read them. A friend of mine said I should read William Stafford, so I checked out *Stories That Could Be True*, then *Writing the Australian Crawl* and *You Must Revise Your Life*. I read all three, some parts over several times. Then I found a video on Stafford at Powell's. I bought it -- "What the River Says" -- and watched it. So now every Stafford poem I read I hear his voice read to me. It really helps me read a poem if I hear the poet's voice in my head, especially a poet like e.e. cummings.

**Q:** What other poets are favorites?

**Doug:** Oh, lots of poets. I read whoever I can find. Lately I've really liked reading Billy Collins and Sharon Olds.

**Q:** I know you have been collecting signed books and broadsides, and 1st editions. What have you gathered?

**Doug:** William Stafford hit my cord so

strongly, he's my first through twelfth choice to collect. But I also have some nice things signed by Wendell Berry, Hayden Carruth, some others. You have to find at least one poet to light the fire, then you never stop looking.

**Q:** What prompted you to buy a letterpress?

**Doug:** I bought a used one for my wife, Margaret, for Christmas. She's an artist, and when our son was born she cut a linoleum block of his foot print. She used it for a Christmas card. Then I learned how to print doing a book of Wodehouse alphabet. Then I made greeting cards which we carry in our store.

**Q:** How did you become involved in creating letterpress broadsides?

**Doug:** I had a friend who had just bought his first used bookstore. That was in 1994. I suggested he have poetry readings and I offered to print a small letterpress broadside of a poet's poems. Then the poet could sign forty or so and give them to whoever came to the reading. It really helps bring people in to hear the poetry. Now there must be over 20 of those broadsides on the wall of the little coffee shop on the side of the bookstore. Each one's a different poet.

**Q:** What prompted you to locate in Half Moon Bay, CA?

**Doug:** We lived in San Francisco, and decided we wanted to live in a little smaller city. We thought we were big city people, but San Francisco was too big. So we were driving along when we came to Half Moon Bay. You can bypass it on Highway 101. But here it was with actually a charming Main Street about 5 blocks long. We rented a 280 sq. ft. space and decided to set up a store to sell cards, a pewter frame line, gifts, journals. Most

of our business, about 75% of it, happens between 11:30 and 2 P.M. when people come to the coffee shop next door.

**Q:** Is your son interested in poetry?

**Doug:** Yes, he's in France this semester, studying abroad. He goes to Principia College in Illinois. He's an English lit major and currently deep into Coleridge.

**Q:** Sounds like you've had some influence there. Do you feel your life has been influenced by poets?

**Doug:** I feel a strong connection to Stafford. I was also a C.O. I worked in a convalescent home in the Vietnam War. I feel that William Stafford and Wendell Berry are modern day prophets. These two men told us so much about ourselves, about leading lives of integrity. What comes out of them always rings true. William Stafford changed my life. He gave me permission to live.

### Impression

Dear William,

A paperclip-bookmark left  
in a book too long unread  
embossed itself two pages deep

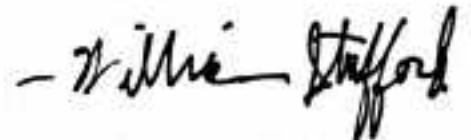
It is your poem that  
centers this impression.

Sincerely,  
Bryan Grimes

Dear Bryan,

Now I open up my book  
and pray my book mark  
has done fine.

Anyone perusing there  
will find that little loop of wire  
gouging some impressive line.



from poem exchange. Used with  
permission of Bryan Grimes.

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### NEW BROADSIDE OF STAFFORD'S "WHY I AM HAPPY" NOW AVAILABLE

Another beautiful letterpress broadside is available for sale for \$10 to raise funds for projects of Friends of William Stafford. "Why I Am Happy," the second broadside created for FWS by Doug Stow of Paper Crane Letterpress, Half Moon Bay, CA, is illustrated by Artist Barbara Stafford, Portland, OR. Its size, 9x12", is the same as last year's "A Ritual To Read To Each Other" to accommodate framing together or to alternate using the same frame. Orders for either broadside will be shipped within a week. Send check payable to Friends of William Stafford for \$10 (per broadside) plus \$3.20 for shipping (for one to two broadsides) to Nan Atzen, 29365 NE Putnam Road, Newberg, OR 97132.

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**HIGHLY PRAISED TRAVELING  
BROADSIDE EXHIBIT OPENS  
NEXT AT SOU CENTER FOR  
VISUAL ARTS, ASHLAND, OR**

FWS's letterpress broadside exhibit, "How the Ink Feels," is currently touring in the Northwest. Following an eight-week engagement at Washington State University, Pullman, the 67-piece show is on its way to Oregon. Nancy Winklesky, Exhibit Coordinator, reports that during its showing in Pullman, the gallery receptionist received numerous positive comments about the show and recorded a high incidence of returning viewers. Pullman High School art teacher, Judy Busch, said in a letter, "I took my painting class up to see the broadside exhibit today. It is beautiful... My students spent quite a long time reading and looking at it then we went into the larger art museum which had a faculty exhibit... Several students asked to go back to the broadside exhibit after they had looked at the other work. I am very determined to build the written work assignment into my other classes as well. [FWS] should be proud of the broadside exhibit. It is a gift to anyone who is lucky enough to see it!"

"How the Ink Feels" is scheduled Jan. 11 to Feb. 8 in the Thorndike Gallery, Southern Oregon University Center for the Visual Arts, Ashland. A public reception will be held Friday, Feb. 2, 4 to 6 PM, as part of Ashland's First Friday Art Walk. Coordinator for the exhibit at SOU is Dr. Edwin Battistella, Dean of Arts and Letters. Co-sponsors include SOU Departments of Arts and English, and Friends of William Stafford.

"How the Ink Feels" will then move to Rogue Community College for five weeks. According to Tommi Drake, Wiseman Galleries Director, the show will be at RCC Medford site in the new G/Ward Building, Medford, and at the Firehouse Art Gallery, Grants Pass. Local publicity will announce exhibit opening dates.

In April, "How the Ink Feels" will be on display for National Poetry Month at Chemeketa Community College, Salem,

OR. Barbara Wigginton, Chemeketa English Program Chair, is coordinating the event in Salem.

For information about scheduling "How the Ink Feels" in your community, contact Nancy Winklesky, phone: 503-655-1443; FAX 503-557-1453.



**STANLEY KUNITZ**

**The Long Boat**

When his toes slipped loose  
from its moorings, under  
the screaming of the gulls,  
he tried at first to wave  
to his dear ones on shore,  
but in the rolling fog  
they had already lost their faces.  
Too tired even to choose  
between jumping and calling,  
somehow he felt about and lost  
of his feelings, those moorings  
strapped on his remaining  
consciousness, ambition, and all  
that caring.  
He was content to lie down  
with the faculty ghosts  
in the sleep of his cradle,  
battered by the storm,  
unhappily drifting.  
Fossil! Fossil!  
To be rocked by the lullabies  
As if it didn't matter  
which way was better,  
as if he didn't know  
he loved the earth so much  
he wanted to stay forever.

**WRITERS**

James Agee, Agha Shahid Ali, Marvin Bell, Wendell Berry, Robert Bly, Madeline DeFrees, Ivan Doig, Rita Dove (U.S. Poet Laureate), Martin Espada, Vi Gale, Tess Gallagher, Donald Hall, Ursula K. Le Guin, Mark Halperin, Joy Harjo, Robert Hass (U.S. Poet Laureate), Jane Hirshfield, Richard Hugo, David Lee, Li-Young Lee, Denise Levertov, Barry Lopez, Sandra Lopez, Stanley Kunitz (U.S. Poet Laureate), Chris Merrill, W.S. Merwin, E. Ethelbert Miller, Howard Nemerov (U.S. Poet Laureate), Naomi Shihab Nye, Paulann Petersen, Carlos Reyes, Alberto Rios, Ralph Salisbury, Gary Snyder, Richard Shelton, Peggy Shumaker, Primus St. John, Kim Stafford, William Stafford, James Welch, and Ingrid Wendt.

**HOW THE INK FEELS**





**CONGRATULATIONS TO LUCILLE CLIFTON, FWS NATIONAL ADVISOR,  
FOR WINNING THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR POETRY**

[The following is excerpted from *The Newsletter of BOA Editions, Ltd.*, Volume 4, Issue 2, Fall 2000 and reprinted with permission of BOA Editions, Ltd.]

The National Book Award, one of the most prestigious prizes in the book world was announced November 15, 2000, in New York City. Lucille Clifton's book, *Blessing the Boats: New and Selected Poems 1988-2000* (BOA, 2000), received this year's award.

*Blessing the Boats* is a volume of poems selected from all of Clifton's books since 1988, along with an offering of 19 new poems. Hard-hitting and transcendent, it was already hailed as one of the poetry world's notable books of the year 2000. This summer it was a main selection of the book club of The Academy of American Poets. The following describes a reading she gave in July.

## *Clifton captivates capacity crowd at Rochester reading*

The mission of the poet, according to Lucille Clifton? "You know, that's a very good question," said Clifton. "I guess what I'm trying to do is comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

Proving that poetry can both provoke and delight, Clifton brought a capacity crowd to its feet following her *Health & Creativity* reading at Rochester Public Library's Kate Gleason Auditorium on July 10. Clifton moved nimbly from reading poems from her most recent collection, *Blessing the Boats*, to extemporaneous comments about poetry and race, how artists face and illuminate illness, and the ways in which poetry can help restore one's well-being.

For nearly an hour people in the standing-room-only



audience listened intently as the award-winning poet, breast cancer survivor and kidney recipient read poems ranging in subject matter from dialysis to family.

Many in the audience found themselves, at turns, laughing boisterously with Clifton, clapping loudly, or wiping away tears. Clifton concluded the reading by reciting her signature poem "Homage to My Hips," earning a standing ovation from the crowd.

After a brief question and answer period, Clifton sat at the back of the auditorium and signed books for nearly two hours. She took the opportunity to speak to dozens of people about their lives, the challenges they've encountered and the successes they've had with personal health and artistic issues.

**W** friends of WILLIAM STAFFORD  
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