



Stafford Studies: Experiencing the Gift

By Sulima Malzin

Open your mind and let the wind pass through those corridors where minutes equal centuries. Stand here. It's real. You'll hear it. (WS) journal entry, July 12, 1993

On the morning of July 12, 2004, these words greeted us, nine eager students, all writers, some teachers, as we arrived on the Lewis & Clark College campus to immerse ourselves in the Northwest Writing Institute's five-day summer program titled "Stafford Studies."

The registration packet included Stafford's poem, "The Gift," and a copy of a 1969 lecture, "Today's Poets and the Language of Everyday Life," which begins with the line: "Talking along in our not quite prose way, we all know it is not quite prose that we speak..." Both pieces have invited us to trust ourselves, to become fully engaged in the give and take of real communication, and to write! write! write! The poem chides us about time and how we choose to use it, and the lecture warns of the hidden pitfalls and bonuses in both the language of poetry and in ordinary life. "When you make a poem," Stafford tells us, "you merely speak or write the language of everyday life. You always fail to some extent, since the opportunities are infinite." He invites us to "lower our standards" and lets us know on the first page that he "is willing to be judged unorthodox."

The required text will be *The Way It Is*, Stafford's collected poems published in 1998, but we will be receiving other materials as we go along, all of which we are instructed to read with pen in hand, marking anything we might puzzle over or disagree with.

The Gift

Time wants to show you a different country. It's the one that your life conceals, the one waiting outside when curtains are drawn, the one Grandmother hinted at in her crochet design, the one almost found over at the edge of the music, after the sermon.

It's the way life is, and you have it, a few years given. You get killed now and then, violated in various ways. (And sometimes it's turn about.) You get tired of that. Long-suffering, you wait and pray, and maybe good things come—maybe the hurt slackens and you hardly feel it any more. You have a breath without pain. It is called happiness.

It's a balance, the taking and passing along, the composting of where you've been and how people and weather treated you. It's a country where you already are, bringing where you have been. Time offers this gift in its millions of ways, turning the world, moving the air, calling every morning, "Here, take it, it's yours."

William Stafford

Ann Staley, NWI instructor and fellow FWS board member, is leading the group, along with another teacher and poet, Wendy Swanson. Describing herself, not as a Stafford scholar, but as one whose teaching and writing have been deeply affected by the work of William Stafford, Ann designed and developed the curriculum in collaboration with Wendy, as well as Kim Stafford and the William Stafford archivist, Paul Merchant. She looks forward, she tells us, "to discovering and celebrating more about the quiet river of the world mapped by this remarkable writer."

During the week, we will watch a series of videos and pore over copies of a sampling of Stafford's handwritten journal entries. We will learn new ways to play with poetry and language, engage in conversation with Paul Merchant and Kim and Dorothy Stafford, and spend our evenings reading

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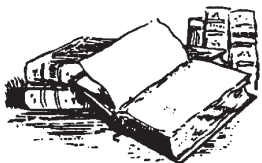
Photo/Kit Stafford

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Stafford's Early Writings Showed Promise of Poetry to Come

Report from the Archives



By Paul Merchant

A poet's formative years are always of interest. William Stafford has written eloquently (in the autobiographical first essay in *You Must Revise Your Life*, and in "Sometimes, Reading" in *Crossing Unmarked Snow*) about his family's love of literature, and about the magnetic pull of libraries for a young Kansan filled with

curiosity. His first poem, however, "White Pigeons," a sad meditation composed in the spring of 1937, is set outdoors, opening and closing with an image of migration:

*The trumpet call, the haunting cry of aching land
-A wild goose passing?*

The typescript has a rare authorial annotation: "Written in study hall, the last semester at K.U. The first time I really tried to express poetry. Published in a little magazine in New Mexico." How many characteristic touches are found on this early page: personification of the landscape; the prevailing mood derived from the animal world; that inimitable mix of melancholia and alert observation; and not least, the acquisition of a publisher for this very first poem.

At that time, in his early twenties, his ambitions were not only in poetry. He was also writing stories, alive with descriptions of local characters and scenes, under the guidance of Professor Margaret Lynn at Kansas. The archives contain seven stories from the 1930s, and two dozen prose pieces from the '40s and early '50s. Of these, the most successful ("Answer, Echoes," and "The Osage Orange Tree") were both published in 1959. While he never entirely abandoned the short story, by the time he had finished his doctoral work at the University of Iowa, he was a poet. His 1953 thesis was a collection of poems, *Winterward*.

A more radical early experience, more profound even than that of small-town libraries and classes at Kansas and Iowa, was that of being thrown into the company of other conscientious objectors in Civilian Public Service camps in Arkansas and California between 1942 and 1946. His book *Down in My Heart* (recently reissued by OSU Press with a preface by Kim Stafford) gives a vivid sense of the intellectual ferment of the camps. These twelve thousand men were some of the nation's most inquiring minds, placed by their pacifist beliefs in an environment as investigative as any university. The archives show twenty poems from the Kansas years 1937 to 1941, but over two hundred from

the war year 1942 to 1945, followed by a steady average of fifty or sixty poems a year for the rest of the decade.

If the camps sharpened his perceptions and moral awareness, and taught him the lifetime discipline of early morning writing, it was at Iowa that William Stafford became a poet of professional habits. Here he began to preserve his daily writing in manuscript (over twenty thousand surviving pages between 1950 and 1993) and to type and send out his poems according to an ingenious tracking system. Of the twenty thousand or so daily poems, he typed and submitted about six thousand—now readable for the first time in chronological order at the archives—of which the majority were published in a variety of journals, from the most prestigious to the most fugitive. Of these published poems, around two thousand were gathered in his fifty or so collections. It was a juggling act, keeping track of the submissions and publications ("an average of fifty were in the mail to editors all through the fifties, sixties, and seventies") but few fell to the ground. One poem (titled, ironically in the circumstances, "When you go anywhere") appeared in *A Glass Face in the Rain* and again in *An Oregon Message*, but this was a rare lapse. He was careful about copyrights, and generous to editors, celebrated and unknown. The wonder is that he had time to meditate and write, to teach, and to manage his voluminous correspondence.

By the time he had served his apprenticeship in Depression-era Kansas, in the alienated war years, and in the gentler purgatory of graduate work, William Stafford was already forty years old. He entered the Eisenhower period as a seasoned poet, established in the best journals, and (after some academic travels) was settled as a professor at Lewis & Clark College. No one, not even he, could have known that the door on fame was about to swing open.

Stafford Symposium January 22

The Northwest Writing Institute will host the fourth annual William Stafford Symposium from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, January 22 at Albany Quadrangle in Smith Hall at Lewis & Clark College, Portland.

The program will be presented by English Department faculty member Mary Szybist and her students; Peter Cookson, Dean of the Graduate School; Paul Merchant and Vince Wixon, and Kim Stafford and Ann Staley. The symposium will consider Stafford's writing and editing process, writing poetry in response to his poems, and writing and discussion, in the spirit of William Stafford. The symposium is free and open to the public, with attendance limited to the first 100 people who contact Patty Brooks at 503-768-6161, or email her at pbrooks@lclark.edu.

Stafford Studies ...

Continued from Page 1

from *You Must Revise Your Life*, *Writing the Australian Crawl*, *Crossing Unmarked Snow*, and *Down In My Heart*. We will talk a lot, write a lot, and think a lot. We will question and argue. We will ponder. We will become immersed.

We begin with writing, then introductions. Diverse in age, experience, philosophy, we are all eager to know more about William Stafford. Some teachers speak of their love of teaching and its accompanying frustrations. We look to Stafford for guidance.

So, when a student speaks or writes I lean forward, entering the language from my side, understanding; for that is my job ... Whatever society may do, it is outside our relationship; we are together, associating toward any little next increment and welcoming it, being artists together. (WS) “A Priest of the Imagination” from *You Must Revise Your Life*.

Later that day, watching our first film, *William Stafford: The Life Of The Poem*, we are invited to examine Stafford’s creative process. We begin to see that while the poem is created by the poet, the poem’s life is created by the reader, as (s)he enters the experience of it. In this portrait documentary, produced by FWS members Mike Markee and Vince Wixon, we learn how Stafford deals with themes common to his work—the experience of childhood (“Reading With Little Sister”), the role of wilderness (“Over the Mountains”), and close observation of the world (“Things I Learned Last Week”). We see what prompted these poems, how they emerged from his journal, and some techniques Stafford used to shape them in ways that satisfied him.

Kim Stafford brings us closer to the spirit of the poet who embodied both the small town family man and the quintessential wanderer; the man who lived his life and wrote his poems with both curiosity and conviction; always willing to suspend certainty and celebrate unpredictability, knowing that a different wind may arrive someday. Kim shows us his father as one who listened deeply, spoke quietly, and always encouraged his students to write not just good poems, but to write inevitable poems!

By the time Paul Merchant arrives, we are delving into passages and chapters from *Down In My Heart*, Stafford’s accounting of his years in the camps for conscientious objectors during World War II. We want to probe deeper into the mystery that was William Stafford and what it might have been like to live one’s life as a pacifist. Paul, who is perhaps more intimately acquainted than anyone with the thousands of pages of Stafford’s writing, challenges us to consider the paradoxes that made up Stafford’s life and work. He points out a note that says, “You might be able to motivate people more easily with provocation than reassurances.” He asks if we think of Stafford as more “easy and congenial” or more “spiky and tricky?” Someone wants to know “... if he was so resistant to accepting praise, and so not want-



Photo/Nan Atzen

Stafford Studies leaders Wendy Swanson and Ann Staley

ing to assert his will over others, what was the following journal entry about? It looks like notes for his acceptance of the National Book Award. ***About poets: Most people don't realize the stupendous attempts we think we are making—to overwhelm by rightness, to do something peculiarly difficult to such a perfect pitch that we catch the universe, understand it, ride it, and live. Think of the discrepancy now, between this overwhelming impulse and the role given in society to poets. No wonder they sometimes act humble, like versemakers, and sometimes act godlike, like criminals!*** (WS) August 6, 1959.

This session seeds a rich and ongoing dialogue. We are moved to read more, and our pondering is reflected in the next morning’s writing. Almost before we know it, our week together is ending. Emerging from “that quiet river of the world mapped by this remarkable writer,” it is almost time to go out and explore it.

On our last day, we get to visit with Dorothy Stafford, who graciously shares family stories. She reads to us from a little book called *Lost Words*, a privately published volume of direct quotes from the four Stafford children’s early years, collected by their parents. The preface begins with words from Dorothy.

“When a baby emerges from the cocoon of infancy to become a butterfly of awareness and discovery, it is the ability of language that makes it happen. Children come to realize the magic and power of words ... No longer is the child a cooed-over pet, but now is a person with a tool, ready to unlock the unexplained mystery in the ever-opening world.”

And so it is for us. Having come to realize more of the magic and power of words, we gather up our tools, say our farewells and head out into the summer sunshine, hoping to unlock some of those still-unexplained mysteries in our own ever-opening world. The gift is ours to keep.

An Explication on Stafford's 'Father and Son'

By Erland Anderson

Editor's Note: Friends of William Stafford Lifetime Member, Erland Anderson, has had three of his explications on Stafford poems published in The Explicator, an online magazine for students that is a division of Heldref Publications. In Winter 1996, (Vol. 54, Issue 2) it was "Father and Son," then in Spring (Vol. 54, Issue 3), "Ask Me," and in Fall of 2003 (Vol. 62, Issue 1), "Aunt Mabel." Dr. Anderson, who joined FWS in 2001, teaches at Moorpark College in Ventura County, California. We appreciate permission to reprint his work.

A responsive reading of a short poem such as "Father and Son," from *Stories That Could Be True*, provides an excellent example of the pleasures and thought-provoking challenges to be found throughout the works of the great American poet, the late William Stafford. Essentially a description of a kite in eight, roughly four-beat lines, containing two interrupted, but well-sustained sentences, the poem is short enough to quote in full.

*No sound – a spell – on, on out
where the wind went, our kite sent back
its thrill along the string that
sagged but sang and said, "I'm here!
I'm here!" – till broke somewhere,
gone years ago, but sailed forever clear
of earth. I hold – whatever tugs
the other end – I hold that string.*

—William Stafford

With simplicity and directness, Stafford has constructed his two, off-rhythmic sentences so that they vibrate and tug at various meanings. The poem begins in silence, then in a pause and/or a mystery ("a spell"), but immediately focuses on the movements of a kite string as they relate to the relationship between the kite and the person(s) holding the string. There is a sense of a narrative, too, even in the details of the description, since the undulating rhythm of the words suggests a kite taking off (uncertainly at first), then (mysteriously or miraculously) finding a way to keep rising higher, "where the wind went," while the string is unreeling over time. That the relationship is felt as a personal one is emphasized with a touch of humor by having the kite say, "I'm here/I'm here."

But some meanings "sag" or jump around a bit when the sentence flow is interrupted by dashes. It might be the string that "broke somewhere," but it's certainly the kite that "sailed forever clear/of earth." (or perhaps "the spell" has done both.) And the poem ends with a further ambiguity in which the speaker holds onto "that string," whatever it is that remains at the other end, or, perhaps, he holds onto whatever else provides him with a similar tug. And of course, these multiple meanings may be appropriate in different ways.

These ambiguities most likely go unnoticed, however, in a first reading, as the reader takes in this description and tries to relate it to the title. At first, the homespun surface of the poem lulls one into a sense of intuitive appropriateness. What more likely thing for a father and son to share than the thrilling experience of getting a kite airborne and the eventual loss of the kite either to a broken string or some other minor catastrophe?

But upon reflection, the poem seems to invite the comparison of the kite to either the father or the son (or both?). In these versions or suggested narratives, the fact that the kite "sailed forever clear/of earth" might indicate that the father's death (or the son's) was like a sudden break, leaving the "I" of the poem (either as son or father) below on earth holding onto a string that no longer "sang." Their relationship was active while the wind blew, providing at first a "spell" without "sound" (suggesting, if I may be so bold, a typically masculine nonverbal rapport); then, always following the "wind," it had its ups and downs without ever losing the "thrill" of its presence until the sudden arrival of death.

Or perhaps the comparison is not with the death of a loved one, but of an earlier break in their rapport (suggested most strongly by "gone years ago," though this phrase may only signal the distance in time of the loved one's death or of the remembered experience of flying the kite together). A secondary meaning of the word "broke" (moneyless, poverty-stricken) might also hint vaguely at another kind of emotional loss in their rapport. In any case, the speaker (and the reader as well?) is left holding the string—but with the sense that something there still "tugs" and is worth holding onto. Stafford seems to be saying that personal relationships such as these are very complicated and, even with all their entanglements, very important to our emotional lives.

Some critics may find fault with these kinds of ambiguity, but the sketchiness of the poem does quite miraculously what further narrative details or clarified references would only mar: it lets the reader work at getting the "kite" airborne and finding the many appropriate parallels in human interactions. In fact, "Father and Son" is a perfect illustration of William Stafford's strongly held belief about the process of writing (and reading) poetry, which he felt was best described in William Blake's quatrain from *Jerusalem*: I give you the end of a golden string: Only wind it into a ball, it will lead you in at Heaven's Gate built in Jerusalem's wall.

The message is a paradoxical warning to explicators. Holding onto the "golden string" of related meanings in such poems as "Father and Son" leads to many earthly revelations, if not heavenly ones, but pulling too hard can rend the fabric. The trick is to be receptive to the tugs coming from the other end of the line by holding on gently but with heightened awareness and sensitivity.

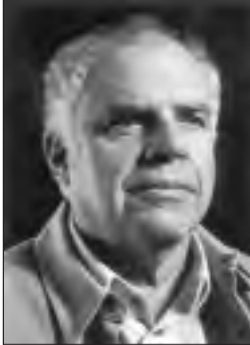
So the next time people question why you enjoy poetry explication, tell them to go fly a kite.

Adios and So Long

When parting, Bill Stafford usually said, “Adios,” though occasionally he said, “So long.” And you had the feeling you would see him again. More likely you hoped to see him again soon. “Adios” and “So long” are words that make departures seem less permanent.

As Stafford explains in “Why I Say Adios”:

From the Chair



Joseph Soldati

From their wide, still country words descend, carrying their small, consistent slant; and sometimes, usually near the end, one of them hints a glimpse of that silent country far away. ...

He continues,

There are these visits behind all talk, deep, temporary gulfs where the abode for all passing things looms. We may hurry past these; we may be jaunty and skip along, subject, predicate, object; but sometimes we let a proportion word in — “So long,” we say, “Vaya con dios,” “God be with you,” “Goodby!”— and the distance beyond the stars deepens again.

(“Why I Say Adios,” *A Glass Face in the Rain*, New York: Harper, 1982, p. 52.)

But poets never really say “Goodby,” even when they are no longer among us. Their poetry continues to greet and make friends with new readers while longtime readers continue to read and reread their work, maintaining the old friendship.

We may have recently met the poems of Ted Kooser, Rita Dove, W.S. Di Piero, and Molly Peacock, but we have also renewed our camaraderie with the work of Hafiz, Garcia Lorca, Yehuda Amichai, and Gwendolyn Brooks. We have made room on our bookshelves for the former, taken down and dusted off the latter. Greetings, new friends and old.

And what is this organization, the Friends of William Stafford, but an “introducer” of poetry to new readers, and a maitre d’ to guide old friends familiar with the poets back to the poems? Greetings, new friends and old.

Now the time has come for me to bow out as Chair of the Board of Trustees of FWS. My by-laws-specified five years as Chair ends this January, and I’m back to being a supporting player when the new Chair Shelley Reece takes the spotlight. With Shelley, FWS is in for another long run with, I predict, continuing growth, grant acquisitions, and new programs and direction, while maintaining the successful programs and mission that have garnered the organization so many accolades.

Shelley will discover, as I did, that FWS members are loyal and supportive, and that the FWS Board members are highly competent, dedicated, and diligent, not to mention delightful to work with.

Here I want to thank former Board members Ceil Huntington and Bob Hamm, and FWS members Joan Maiers and David Rutiezer for their work in various capacities over the years. Thanks also to Jeff Cronn for his expert legal advice and assistance; to Pierre Rioux for his financial support of the BroadSides project and his good advice and warm friendship; to artist-printer Doug Stowe for his time, given freely and graciously, to print the BroadSides; to Brian Booth for his behind-the-scenes guidance; and to Dorothy Stafford for her gentle kindness and support.

Thank you, members of FWS for your cooperation, and for your support of and participation in our programs.

My words of gratitude to my fellow Board members will always be inadequate in comparison to the hours and hours of work they have done to make FWS the superb literature advocacy group that it is. Nevertheless, I want to try.

Thank you archivist Martha Gatchell for keeping our history safe and intact. Thank you former Chair Patty Wixon for, among other duties, overseeing the new BroadSides project and for your good counsel. Thank you Rich Wandschneider for sharing your rich experience with non-profits; you have taught me much.

Thank you Patricia Carver, former Newsletter editor and current major liaison with Lake Oswego, Stafford’s town. And thank you Don Colburn and Shelley Reece, the Board’s current ad hoc specialists; you do what the rest of us can’t.

Thank you Sulima Malzin, editor, Helen Schmidling, publisher and design specialist, and Dennis Schmidling, technical consultant—all of whose expertise makes this a truly fine newsletter. Thank you Nan Atzen for being in charge of the inventory and the selling and mailing of BroadSides. Thanks again to the Schmidlings for overseeing the membership roles, and Dennis, for designing and maintaining the website that now gets more than 1,500 hits per month.

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Friends of William Stafford Holds First Annual Board Retreat

On Sunday, September 12, 2004, the FWS Board of Trustees held its first annual All-Day Working Retreat in Portland with all but one member in attendance.

The extended time (meetings usually last three hours) allowed the board to prioritize and discuss in depth a number of upcoming projects being considered.

One of the decisions made at this meeting was that FWS members should have the opportunity to purchase the new Broadside Portfolio, "The World Speaks Everything To Us," before it is offered to the public.

Adios ... From the Chair

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Thank you Nancy Winklesky for maintaining, storing, shipping, advertising, and generally keeping track of our broadside exhibit, "How The Ink Feels." Because of your efforts this exhibit has been placed in venues coast-to-coast.

Thank you Paulann Petersen for your untiring commitment to stage and direct the January Stafford Birthday Commemorative Readings—now held in at least five states and other readings sponsored by FWS.

Thank you Betty Barton, treasurer; your fiscal acumen allows FWS to function. Thank you Ann Staley, secretary; your minutes are comprehensive, accurate, and most readable—if you only knew how much the Chair relies on them!

Thank you again Shelley, for agreeing to occupy this Chair for the next five years. We're in good hands.

Thanks, Bill. Adios.



FWS Annual Meeting

The Friends of William Stafford will hold its annual meeting on Friday, January 28, at 1:30 p.m. in the meeting room of the West Linn (Oregon) Library. The board will meet at that time, and will welcome any and all FWS members who may wish to attend.



Friends of William Stafford Board at Annual Retreat

Front from left, Helen Schmidling, Sulima Malzin, Paulann Petersen, Shelley Reese, Joe Soldati;
Back: Don Colburn, Nan Atzen, Rich Wandschneider, Nancy Winklesky, Patricia Carver, Ann Staley, Dennis Schmidling, Patty Wixon and Betty Barton. Missing: Martha Gatchell.

This beautiful portfolio includes all seven of the Stafford poems that have been made into broadsides over the years, and is available for \$280 plus \$10 shipping. If you haven't ordered one yet, and wish to, you may still do so online.

A major item on the Retreat agenda was the board's unanimous election of Shelley Reese to succeed Joseph Soldati as Chairman of the Board. Joe has served with dedication and enthusiasm in the position for the past five years. He will remain on the board and

Shelley will assume his new duties in January.

Winter Food For Thought

Editor's Note: Each of the following quotes is taken from the book, *Every War Has Two Losers: William Stafford on Peace and War*.

"Many a road, sure of a destination, sets off and gets lost from a goal that even if found would be a mistake." (p. 67)

"Why are there nations you don't like? That is a fiction you are responding to ... Your feeling has been created, and created by interests you might do well to analyze." (p. 40)

"All that happens in our time osmoses into our art: any war with its blend of aggression and fear and special kinds of 'justice,' for instance, will color all else." (p. 66)

"Nietzsche saw that the life preservers the righteous clutched were made of lead." (p. 67)

"Listen to me: listen slow: In – this – war – again – humanity – lost." (p. 135)

"Certain threads will stretch a long way, become tangled, hardly noticed. But never be broken." (p. 58)

"Mistakes you make are guides for where to go; snowflakes the storm brings are shelter from its cold." (p. 53)



2005 William Stafford Birthday Events



Photo/Michael Markee

Freedom

Freedom is not following a river.
Freedom is following a river,
 though, if you want to.
It is deciding now by what happens now.
It is knowing that luck makes a difference.

No leader is free; no follower is free—
 the rest of us can often be free.

Most of the world are living by
creeds too odd, chancy, and habit-forming
 to be worth arguing about by reason.

If you are oppressed, wake up about
four in the morning: most places,
you can usually be free some of the time
 if you wake up before other people.

- Bill Stafford

Join Us As We Celebrate The Spirit of William Stafford

Each year, the Friends of William Stafford rolls out the red carpet to celebrate the late poet's birthday (January 17, 1914) with a full month of Birthday Celebration Readings. These events are held in communities throughout the country, and each year more are added. Free and open to the public, they offer old friends and new a chance to share in the spirit of William Stafford. Invited guest poets read first, followed by an open mike, during which members of the audience are invited to read their own favorite Stafford poem or share a memory. If you are new to the poetry of William Stafford, you may just enjoy hearing it for the first time. You can also learn more about us and sign up for a free newsletter. We look forward to sharing this time with you and welcome your feedback at www.williamstafford.org.

Willamette Corridor Events

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 7 P.M.—PORTLAND

Looking Glass Book Store, 318 SW Taylor, Portland. Hosted by Joanna Rose. Featuring Steve Arndt, Patricia Bollin, Joanne Mulcahy, BT Shaw, Tom Spanbauer, Suzanne Sigafos, and FWS Board Member Paulann Petersen.
Contact: lookingglassbook@qwest.net

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 7:30 P.M.—PORTLAND

Annie Bloom's Books, 7834 SW Capitol Highway, Portland. Hosted by Judith Barrington. Featuring Herman Asarnow, Gerry Foote, Jane Glazer, Paula Lowden, Carlos Reyes, Kelly Sievers, and FWS Board Member Sulima Malzin.
Contact: books@annieblooms.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 2 P.M.—LAKE OSWEGO

Willow Room, Clark Commons, Marylhurst University, Highway 43 south of Lake Oswego. Hosted by Joan Maiers. Featuring Ron Bloodworth, Linda Hathaway Bunza, Elizabeth Domike, Richard Harris, Barbara LaMorticella, Sage Ricci, Claire Sykes, and FWS Board Member Ann Staley.
Contact: jmaiers@yahoo.com

TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 7-8:30 P.M.—LAKE OSWEGO

Lake Oswego Library, 706 4th, Lake Oswego. Hosted by Maggie Chula. Featuring Judith Arcana, Brian Doyle, Diane Holland, Bill Howe, Beverly Partridge, Dianne Stepp, and FWS Board Member Pat Carver. Contact: bbaars@ci.oswego.or.us

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 7:30 PM—PORTLAND

West Hills Unitarian Universal Fellowship, 8470 SW Oleson Road, Portland. Hosted by Sulima Malzin. Featuring Doug Marx, Wendy Swanson, Linda Besant, Larry Overmire and FWS Board Member Nan Atzen.
Contact: Sulima Malzin, sulimama@aol.com

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 8 P.M.—PORTLAND

Mountain Writers Center, 3624 SE Milwaukie, Portland. Hosted by Lisa Steinman. Featuring Leanne Gabel, Mike Langtry,

Sarah Lantz, Bob McFarlane, Dan Skach-Mills, Mary Szybist, and FWS Board Member Joseph Soldati.
Contact: pdxmws@aracnet.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 2 P.M.—PORTLAND

Multnomah Central Library, US Bank Room, 801 SW 10th Ave., Portland. Hosted by Greg Simon, with guest of honor Dorothy Stafford. Featuring Brian Booth, Jim Carmin, Ursula Le Guin, the Satori Men's Chorus, and FWS Board Member Joseph Soldati. Contact: markridi@multcolib.org

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 7 P.M.—PORTLAND

Broadway Books, 1714 NE Broadway, Portland. Hosted by Peter Sears. Featuring Howard Aaron, Marianne Klekacz, Diane McDevitt, Vern Rutsala, Barbara Stafford, Joe Wheeler, and FWS Board Member Don Colburn.
Contact: bookbroads@aol.com

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 7-9 P.M.—PORTLAND

Smith Center, Room 238, 1825 SW Broadway, Portland State University, Portland. Hosted by Sydney Thompson. Featuring Brian Christopher, Jerry Harp, Quigley Provost-Landrum, Doug Spangle, Primus St. John, Laura Winter, and FWS Board Member Shelley Reece. Contact: litac@pdx.edu

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 7 P.M.—WEST LINN

West Linn Library, 1595 Burns, West Linn. Hosted by Harold Johnson. Featuring Kelly Lenox Allan, Diane Averill, Michael Cowger, Jessica Lamb, Andrew MacArthur, Dan Raphael, and FWS Board Member Helen Schmidling.
Contact: lmeadows@ci.west-linn.or.us

SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 2 P.M.—PORTLAND

Belmont Library, 1038 SE 39th Ave., Portland. Hosted by Willa Schneberg. Featuring Lois Baker, Sara Halprin, Rodger Larson, John Morrison, Verlena Orr, Jim Shugrue, and FWS Board Member Don Colburn. Contact: stevea@multcolib.org



Outer Portland Metro Events

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 2-4 P.M.—BEAVERTON

Beaverton City Library, 12375 SW 5th St., Beaverton. Hosted by Karen Braucher. Featuring Tom Bremer, Angie Chuang, Donna Prinzmetal, Clem Starck, Penelope Schott, and FWS Board Member Joseph Soldati.

Contact: Karen Braucher, braucher@portlandia.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 9, 2 P.M.—WELCHES

Starting at Hoodland Branch Library, 68256 E. Highway 26, Welches, then moving to Wy'east Book Shoppe & Art Gallery at the Rendezvous Center, 67149 E. Highway 26, Welches. Hosted by Sharon Wood Wortman. Featuring Barbara and Joe Adams, Joshua Baker, Sherrie Cole-Kalar, Nan Hunt, Gary Miranda, Rita Ott Ramstad, and FWS Board member Joseph Soldati.

Contact: Sharon Wood Wortman, sharon@bridgestories.org

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 6:30-8:30 P.M.—SILVERTON

Silver Creek Coffee House, 110 N. Water St., Silverton. Hosted by Steve Slemenda. Featuring FWS Board Member Paulann Petersen. Contact: Kelley Brassaw, kbrassaw@chemeketa.edu

TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 7:30 P.M.—MCMINNVILLE

Austin reading Room, Nicholson Library, Linfield College, 900 SE Baker Ave, McMinnville. Hosted by Lex Runciman. Featuring FWS Board Member Nan Atzen.

Contact: Lex Runciman, lruncim@linfield.edu

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 7 P.M.—TIGARD

Tigard Public Library, 13500 SW Hall Blvd., Tigard. Hosted by Carolyn Moore. Featuring Robert Davies, Bruce Morris, David Rutiezer, Cassandra Sagan, Laura Weeks, Doreen Gandy Wiley, and FWS Board Member Dennis Schmidling.

Contact: Carolyn Moore, jocularatrix@mac.com

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 7 P.M.—OREGON CITY

Literary Arts Center, Roger Rook Hall 220, Clackamas Community College, 19600 S. Molalla Ave., Oregon City. Hosted by Kate Gray. Featuring Janice Gould, Jim Grabill, Tsune Tateoka, Steve Wallin, Mimi Wheatwind, and FWS Board Member Nancy Winklesky.

Contact: Kate Gray, rowpo@hevanet.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 2 P.M.—VANCOUVER, WA

Vancouver Community Library, 1007 East Mill Plain Blvd., Vancouver, WA. Hosted by Sally Anderson and Arnie Dyer. Featuring Bob Bureker, Mark Martin, Don Orange, Gerard Smith, Wendy Thompson, Den Mark Wichar, and FWS Board Member Betty Barton.

Contact: Betty Barton, GBartonGsb@aol.com

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 2-4 P.M.—OREGON CITY

Oregon City Library, 362 Warner Milne Road, Oregon City. Hosted by David Hedges. Featuring Walt Curtis, Molly Robison, Dan Sisco, Virginia Euwer Wolff, and FWS Board Member Nancy Winklesky. Contact: David Hedges, 503-655-1274.

Events Around the Country

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 8 P.M.—LA GRANDE, OR

Wee Mama's Sandwich Shoppe, 224 Fir Street, La Grande, Oregon. Contact: Greg Johnson, 541-663-0878,

benbrowns@webmail.bmi.net

SUNDAY, JANUARY 9, 4 P.M.—LOUISVILLE, KY

First Unitarian Church, 809 S. Fourth Street, Louisville, Kentucky. Contact: Pam Steele, 502-876-4255,

hillgirl_2@yahoo.com

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 7:30 P.M.—FRAMINGHAM, MA

Borders Books, Framingham, Massachusetts.

Contact: bg Thurston, bgt@rcn.com

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, NOON—LONGVIEW, WA

Lower Columbia College Student Center, 1600 Maple Street, Longview, Washington. Hosted by Deborah Brink. Featuring Amy Fleury and Bill Yake.

Contact: Joe Green, jgreen@lcc.ctc.edu

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 7:30 P.M.—BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA

Bainbridge Island Library, Bainbridge Island, Washington. Hosted by Neil Baker.

Contact: Neil Baker, njeffbaker147@aol.com

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 7 P.M.—LONGVIEW, WA

Longview Public Library, 1600 Louisiana Street, Longview, Washington. Hosted by Karen Dennis and Deborah Brink. Featuring Amy Fleury and Bill Yake.

Contact: Joe Green, jgreen@lcc.ctc.edu

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 7 P.M.—MEDFORD, OR

Jackson County Library Medford Branch, Medford, Oregon.

Contact: Mitzi Miles-Kubota, wurdnurd@mind.net

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 3 P.M.—ANN ARBOR, MI

Hopwood Room, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Contact: Meredith Martin, martinmz@umich.edu

Continued on Next Page

Events Around the Country

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 7 P.M.—WENATCHEE, WA

Gallery 76, Wenatchee Valley College, Wenatchee, Washington.
Contact: Derek Sheffield, dsheffield@wvc.edu

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 7 P.M.—MONMOUTH, OR

Western Oregon University Campus, Hamersly Library, Room 107, 345 N. Monmouth Ave., Monmouth, Oregon.
Contact: Michele Price, 503-838-8493 pricemv@wou.edu

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 7 P.M.—MADISON, WI

Avol's Bookstore, 315 W. Gorham St., Madison, Wisconsin.
Contact: Ron Czerwien, avols@mail.chorus.net

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 2 P.M.—SEASIDE, OR

Seaside Public Library, Discovery Room, 60 N. Roosevelt Drive, Seaside, Oregon. Contact: Susan Firghil Park 503-738-4340, spark@freedomnw.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 4 P.M.—ENTERPRISE, OR

Fishtrap, the Coffin House, Enterprise, Oregon. Contact: Rich Wandschneider, rich@fishtrap.org

TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 7:30 P.M.—SEATTLE, WA

Richard Hugo House, 1634 Eleventh Ave., Seattle, Washington.
Contact: Arlene Naganawa, arlene_naganawa@msn.com

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 7-8:30 P.M.—NORTH BEND, OR

North Bend Public Library, 1800 Sherman Ave., North Bend, Oregon. Contact: Scott Gallagher-Starr, 541-756-0400 sagallagherstarr@lycos.com

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 7:30 P.M.—ASHLAND, OR

Hannon Library, Southern Oregon University, Ashland, Oregon. Featuring Anna Beauchamp, Joyce Epstein, Lawson Inada, Mitzi Miles-Kubota, K. Silem Mohammad, and Vince Wixon.
Contact: Patty Wixon, vpwixon@opendoor.com or Mary Jane Cedar Face, Cedarface@sou.edu

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 10 A.M.-NOON—CORVALLIS, OR

Corvallis Benton County Library, 645 NW Monroe St., Corvallis, Oregon. Writing workshop led by Roger Weaver.
Contact: Linda Gelbrich, lindaw@exchangenet.net

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 2-4 P.M.—CORVALLIS, OR

Corvallis Benton County Library, 645 NW Monroe St., Corvallis, Oregon. Reading featuring Anita Sullivan, Charles Goodrich, Marilyn Johnston and Roger Weaver.
Contact: Linda Gelbrich, lindaw@exchangenet.net

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 10:30 A.M.—KLAMATH FALLS, OR

Klamath County Library, 126 S. 3rd St., Klamath Falls, Oregon.
Contact: Klamath County Library, 541-882-8894 or Mary Hope, fish_trappe@yahoo.com

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 3 P.M.—MADRAS, OR

Rodriguez Annex, Jefferson County Library, 134 SE "E" Street, Madras, Oregon. Hosted by Johnny Stallings. Featuring Jarold Ramsey. Contact: Johnny Stallings, johnnystallings@madras.net

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 2-4 PM—ONTARIO, OR

Malheur County Library, 388 SW 2nd Ave., Ontario, Oregon. Hosted by Pat Bradshaw and Phil Mahaffery.
Contact: Pat Bradshaw, malheurlibrary@yahoo.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 4-5:30 P.M.—EUGENE, OR

Tsunami Books, Eugene, Oregon. Hosted by Martha Gatchell.
Contact: Martha Gatchell, 541-836-2532.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 2 P.M.—BEND, OR

Deschutes Public Library, Administration Building Conference Room, 507 NW Wall St., Bend, Oregon. Hosted by Kake Huck. Featuring John Brown, Stephen Ledyard, Peter Lovering, Ellen Santasiero, and Kit Stafford.
Contact: Judith Montgomery, jhm@bendcable.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 2-4 P.M.—SALEM, OR

Anderson Room, Salem Public Library, 585 Liberty St. SE, Salem, Oregon. Hosted by Eleanor Berry and Janet Markee.
Contact: Eleanor Berry, eberry@wvi.com or Janet Markee, janetmarkee@mac.com

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 7 P.M.—KIRKLAND, WA

Kirkland Parkplace Books, 348 Kirkland Parkplace Shopping Center, Kirkland, Washington.
Contact: Laura Gamache, lgamache@blarg.com

SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 1-3 P.M.—BETHESDA, MD

The Writer's Center, 4508 Walsh St., Bethesda, Maryland. Featuring Laura Fargas, Judith McCombs, and Ethelbert Miller.
Contact: Martin Dickinson, dickinson@eli.org

MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 7:30 P.M.—SEATTLE, WA

Elliott Bay Books, Seattle, Washington. Hosted by Peter Aaron.
Contact: Karen Maeda Allman kmallman@elliottbaybook.com

For more information, contact: Paulann Petersen 8403 SE 11th Ave. Portland, OR 97202 503-236-5229 or paulann@paulann.net.

William Stafford Was a Fan of New Poet Laureate Kooser



University of Nebraska-Lincoln Publications and Photography

Ted Kooser

Ted Kooser, recently chosen to replace Louise Glück as U.S. Poet Laureate, had more in common with Bill Stafford than their midwestern roots. Bill spoke highly of him, according to Dorothy Stafford, and they corresponded from time to time. Like Stafford, Kooser was fiercely committed to writing and says, “I got in the habit of getting up at 4:30 or 5 every morning to write before I went to work.”

A retired vice president of Lincoln Benefit Life Insurance Company, Kooser is a visiting English professor at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and has published ten books, including *Winter Morning Walks: One Hundred Postcards to Jim Harrison*, which won the Nebraska Book Award for Poetry in 2001. His latest collection, *Delights & Shadows*, came out this year. The Koosers, (his wife is Kathleen Rutledge, editor of the *Lincoln Journal Star*) live in the small town of Garland.

The Library of Congress and the Poetry Foundation have formed a partnership to co-sponsor Kooser’s recently announced project as the new Poet Laureate. *The American Life in Poetry* project will offer a weekly newspaper column carrying that title, that will feature a poem chosen and introduced by Kooser. The column will be distributed free of charge to any newspaper who wishes to have it.

Kooser, whose wife and son both work in journalism, feels that in recent years, poetry, once very popular in newspapers, has all but disappeared, “even though,” he says, “poetry has remained a perennial expression of our emotional, spiritual, and intellectual lives, as witnessed by the tens of thousands of poems written in response to September 11 and circulated on the internet.”

“Now I’m hoping to convince editors,” he says, “that there could be small place in their papers for poetry; that it could add a spot of value in the eyes of the readers. And best of all, it won’t cost

In January

Only one cell in the frozen hive of night
is lit, or so it seems to us:
This Vietnamese café, with its oily light,
its odors whose colorful shapes are like flowers.
Laughter and talking, the tick of chopsticks.
Beyond the glass, the wintry city
creaks like an ancient bridge.
A great wind rushes under all of us.
The bigger the window, the more it trembles.

Ted Kooser

a penny. I want to show the people who read newspapers that poetry can be for them, can give them a chuckle or an insight.”

According to the Washington Post, “The businessman-turned-bard writes straightforward verse about stars and cows and office secretaries and everything in between.”

The Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, in announcing their choice of Kooser in August said, “Ted Kooser is a major poetic voice for rural and small town America and the first Poet Laureate chosen from the Great Plains. His verse reaches beyond his native region to touch on universal themes in accessible ways.”

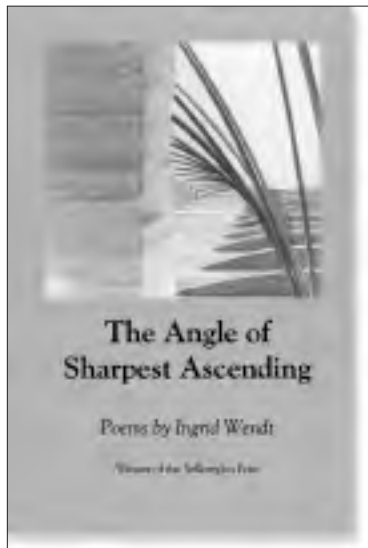
And now a word from one of our National Advisors

“We will all die soon enough. Why not take the short time we have on this delicate planet and figure out some really interesting things we might do together? I beg you, as your distant Arab cousin, as your American neighbor, listen to me. Our hearts are broken, as yours may also feel broken in some ways we can’t understand, unless you tell us in words. Killing people won’t tell us. We can’t read that message. Read Rumi. Read Arabic poetry. Poetry humanizes us in a way that news, or even religion, has a harder time doing. A great Arab scholar, Dr. Salma Jayyusi, said, “If we read one another, we won’t kill one another.” Read American poetry. Plant mint. Find a friend who is so different from you, you can’t believe how much you have in common. Love them. Let them love you. Surprise people in gentle ways, as friends do. The rest of us will try harder too. Make our family proud.”

from “Letter from Naomi Shihab Nye, Arab-American Poet: To Any Would-Be Terrorists”

Ingrid Wendt's Poetry Wins Prizes

In 2003, FWS member Ingrid Wendt's most recently published book of poems, *The Angle of Sharpest Ascending*, (WordTech Editions) was awarded the Yellowglen Prize, and her forthcoming book, *Surgeonfish*, has won the Editions Prize, with a cash award of \$1,000 and publication in 2005.



Wendt tells the story of how, a few weeks before William Stafford's death, she had been part of a reading in his honor, by poets with work in the anthology titled *Stafford's Way*. Following the reading, she says, "Bill told me he'd been called upon to review an anthology of poems of witness, and he said that he wished one of the poems I'd just read had been in that anthology.

Those words have encouraged and strengthened me as I've continued to write poems which try to faithfully witness the ways in which world events affect people's lives."

The Angle of Sharpest Ascending is a haunting suite of poetic sequences in which the text and accompanying artwork deals with memory and memorial in post-Holocaust Germany. In a deeply personal way, it explores the burdens of guilt and sorrow borne by today's generations of Germans and German Americans as it addresses the universal nature of suffering.

12

Everything connects: chance meetings across years and hundreds of miles: fractals of waves and the cast off industrial wastes. Paintings. Sculptures. Steel and concrete.

Slivers of glass, the sand it has come from returning back to itself. Rust blossoms on train tracks, let us help it along. Paint crumbles, books curl and disintegrate.

Tenderly let us recognize all parts of memory, what we have been given, what we would rather deny, tenderly let us lay them to rest. Just today

I found a new book of poems, the table of contents ordered most recent to past: reverse climax: the poet knowing Everything we are has brought us to this place. Let us know this and go on.

Ingrid Wendt

"I like to think," the poet muses, "that I have, to the best of my ability, followed Bill's steady example in poetry as in life, risking controversy by searching for truth, justice, reconciliation and compassion."

For more about Ingrid Wendt and her work, check our newsletter archives for January 2002 at www.williamstafford.org (Member Profile) or visit www.ingridwendt.com.

W.S. Merwin receives \$200,000 Lifetime Achievement Award

The Lannan Foundation of Santa Fe, New Mexico recently chose four novelists, two poets and two nonfiction writers to receive \$925,000 in awards and fellowships for their work.

Among them was W.S. Merwin, who as part of his recognition for lifetime achievement will receive \$200,000. Merwin is a National Advisor for the Friends of William Stafford and his poem, "Paper," is part of the traveling broadside exhibit, "How The Ink Feels."

W.S. Merwin, who has been an illuminating fixture in the world of poetry and translation for five decades, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1971 for his collection, *The Carrier of Ladders*, and was named Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress in 1999. He will appear in Portland on March 29, 2005 as part of the Portland Arts & Lectures' Poetry Downtown series.

Liberal, Kansas High School Renamed for Stafford, Fairchild

On October 16, 2004, the day the Liberal City Commissioners officially dubbed "William Stafford and B.H. Fairchild Day," the Liberal High School Library became the Stafford-Fairchild Library in a ceremony honoring two famous graduates: nationally known poets William Stafford and B.H. "Pete" Fairchild. A little over 30 years separated their departures from Liberal High School and both poets earned their graduate degrees from the University of Kansas, as well.

University of Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway, known for his biography of African-American novelist

Zora Neal Hurston, was the main speaker. He was joined by ArVel White, the high school's head librarian responsible for petitioning the school board to consider renaming the library,

At Fourth and Main in Liberal, Kansas, 1932

An instant sprang at me, a winter instant,
a thin gray panel of evening. Slanted
shadows leaned from a line of trees where rain
had slicked the sidewalk. No one was there –
it was only a quick flash of a scene,
unplanned, without connection to anything
that meant more than itself, but I carried it
onward like a gift from a child who knows
that the giving is what is important, the paper, the ribbon
the holding of breath and surprise, the friends around,
and God holding it out to you, even a rock
or a slice of evening, and behind it the whole world.

William Stafford

and by Fairchild and Kim Stafford.

Fairchild lives in Claremont, California and teaches English at the University of California at San Bernardino. He read poems that spoke to growing up in Liberal around his father's machine shop. Fairchild's fourth book of poems, *Early Occult Memory Systems of the Midwest*, won the National Book Critics Circle Award for poetry in 2002. "It's always an honor to be associated with William Stafford," Fairchild said. "He was not only a great poet, he was a great American."

Kim Stafford, who spoke of his father's fondness for Kansas, read from his father's work and commented, "I wish he could be here. But, you know, I think he is."

News, Notes & Opportunities

HOW THE INK FEELS, our touring broadside exhibit, will be at Central Oregon Community College in Bend, Oregon during the month of April. The exhibit is available for booking during May and June. Please contact Nancy Winklesky via our website, www.williamstafford.org, if you know of a venue where it might be placed.

OREGON LITERARY ARTS' WRITERS IN THE SCHOOL (WITS) PROGRAM will accept applications until July 1 from writers interested in teaching for WITS. Established in 1996, WITS is a comprehensive writing program that cultivates young readers and writers and supports Oregon authors through residencies in Portland public high schools. For more information, you may call 503-277-2583 or email elizabeth@literary-arts.org.

IMAGINING AMERICA: ARTISTS AND SCHOLARS IN PUBLIC LIFE, is a national consortium of colleges, universities and cultural institutions. Based at the University of Michigan, the movement is dedicated to linking university artists and humanists with the communities they serve through collaborative arts and humanities projects. Their website is www.ia.umich.edu.

FWS NATIONAL ADVISORS MAXINE KUMIN AND W.S. MERWIN will be part of the Portland Arts & Lectures' Poetry Downtown series. Kumin, who won the Pulitzer Prize in 1973 for *Up*

Country, will be featured on Thursday, April 21, 2005. W.S. Merwin will appear on March 29, and U.S. Poet Laureate, Ted Kooser, will be reading on March 17. For more information, contact www.literary-arts.org.

OREGON STATE POETRY ASSOCIATION (OSPA) has announced it will hold its Spring Conference in Portland on April 16. Entries for the spring poetry contest are being accepted through February 26. For categories and details, go to www.oregonpoets.org.

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"Freedom," "At the Un-National Monument along the Canadian Border," and "At Fourth and Main in Liberal, Kansas, 1932" and "A Message From The Wanderer," copyright 1973, 1975, 1977 and 1998 by the Estate of William Stafford. Reprinted from *The Way It Is: New & Selected Poems* with the permission of Graywolf Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota. "The Gift" reprinted by special permission of Confluence Press, Lewiston, Idaho. "In January" is reprinted from *Delights & Shadows*, Copper Canyon Press, 2004, by permission of the author. "12" From "II: Suite for the Spirit's Geometry," in *The Angle of Sharpest Ascending*, reprinted with the author's permission.

News, Notes and Opportunities

OREGON PEACEWORKS, in an effort to inspire the expression of visions of peace through the written word, is sponsoring its first annual Oregon Peace Poetry Award, open to all U.S. residents age 18 and over. The contest theme is based on Oregon PeaceWorks' vision: *Peace is more than the absence of war. Peace embraces an active, nonviolent approach to problems, an understanding that all people have a right to share the resources of the earth and a commitment to fair play and a role for every person in the decisions that affect their lives.* Entries should reflect positive visions of peace, human rights, and the human spirit. Cash prizes will be awarded and honorable mentions will be given. Judges will be a committee of noted regional poets appointed by Oregon PeaceWorks. Entries must be postmarked by January 15, accompanied by an entry fee of \$8 for up to three poems. For full submission guidelines you may call 503-585-2767 or visit www.oregonpeaceworks.org

WINTER FISHTRAP will focus on "The Tender Age: Remembering Childhood and Nurturing Children," February 25-27 at Wallowa Lake in Eastern Oregon. Each February since 1992, Fishtrap has gathered 50 writers and activists for a weekend centered on writing and public policy. This year's theme will focus on participants' remembered experiences as children and parents as it explores the opportunities and special challenges facing children growing up today. Guides will include children's advocate Tina Kotek and writers Craig Lesley and Brian Doyle. As always, Winter Fishtrap welcomes writers and people who are not primarily writers, but who have a passionate interest in the theme. For complete details call 541-425-3623 or visit www.fishtrap.org.

DIVIDE, THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO'S JOURNAL OF WRITING AND IDEAS seeks fiction, poetry, personal and critical essays, art, and interviews relevant to the theme, "Art and Politics." Visit www.colorado.edu/journals/divide for a full description of theme and submission particulars. Reading period continues through March 31.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS' first annual writing contest for summer study abroad will waive fees and pay for airfare for winners to study this summer in France, Spain, or Italy. One winner will be announced in each of the following genres –

poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction. Submission deadline is January 17. Go to www.uno.edu/lowres, or call 504-280-7457.

LANGUAGE, WRITING, POLITICS, POETRY AND SHORT STORIES is the title of a weekend workshop to be led by the legendary Grace Paley, February 4-6 at Rowe Conference Center in Rowe, Massachusetts. A self-described "combative pacifist," Paley is the daughter of Russian immigrants and a member of the War Resisters' League, who visited Hanoi during the Vietnam War

and has been arrested for civil disobedience many times in many places. Her work reflects her heritage, her politics, and the small joys and tragedies of the individual and the family. For details call 413-339-4954 or you may register online at www.rowecenter.org.

THE POETRY FOUNDATION, in addition to awarding this year's \$100,000 Ruth Lilly Prize for Poetic Excellence to Kay Ryan, held a gala awards dinner in Chicago, in which two new prizes were given.

The Neglected Masters Award, (\$50,000) is for "a significant American poet whose work has

been under-recognized." It went to Samuel Menasche, 79, who lives in Greenwich Village and has written poetry for more than 50 years, going "practically unrecognized, except as a sort of eccentric cult figure, the last West Village bohemian," said critic Danielle Chapman. The \$25,000 Mark Twain Award for Humorous Poetry was given to well-recognized former poet laureate, Billy Collins, who in commenting that writing witty poems is as hard as writing any other kind, said "Humor is like a disobedient dog. You call its name and it runs in the other direction."

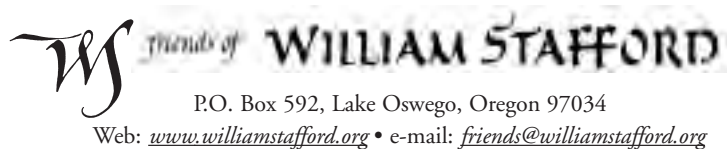
In 2002 the foundation, as *Poetry Magazine*, received \$100 million (that's six zeros) from the estate of pharmaceutical heiress Ruth Lilly. They are still determining how the money might best be used; or as Program Director Stephen Young puts it—"how this money can become not just a gift to us, but to the art." Future plans include a recitation contest for high school students to be modeled after the national spelling bee, introduction of another contest next year, and a web site that would not only be a huge archive, but would steer people to poems they could use for particular occasions. To learn more about the Poetry Foundation, visit their website at www.poetrymagazine.org, and see our related article about Ted Kooser on page 7.

At the Un-National Monument along the Canadian Border

This is the field where the battle did not happen,
where the unknown soldier did not die.
This is the field where grass joined hands,
where no monument stands,
and the only heroic thing is the sky.

Birds fly here without any sound,
unfolding their wings across the open.
No people killed - or were killed - on this ground
hallowed by neglect and an air so tame
that people celebrate it by forgetting its name.

William Stafford



MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide ongoing education in literature, particularly in poetry, in a way that will encourage and enrich a broad community of readers and writers. In the spirit of William Stafford's gifts as a teacher, we are also devoted to the free expression of literature and conscience. We seek ways to share his work and advance the spirit of his teaching and literary witness. We direct our work toward education in local communities, to contribute to the poet's legacy for generations to come.

BECOME A FRIEND OF WILLIAM STAFFORD

William Stafford's work ended with his death in 1993, but through the Friends of William Stafford, his gifts as a teacher continue. He traveled widely in pursuit of the free expression of literature and conscience. We continue to spread his work by advancing the spirit of his teaching in "a plain unmarked envelope passing through the world," By becoming a Friend of William Stafford, you will be contributing to his legacy for generations to come. Lifetime or annual donation includes:

- Newsletters that let you know about activities of Friends of William Stafford
- A forum to promote poetry in your community
- Opportunities to volunteer for Friends of William Stafford projects
- A network of other poets, writers, and poetry organizations

Your donations support our newsletter and web site and the traveling broadside exhibit, *How The Ink Feels*, as well as the reading, writing and enjoyment of poetry.

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 (Check any you're interested in)

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Help with Refreshments/Set-up

Distribute Posters/Flyers

Publicize Events

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Nancy Hutchins
Paulann Petersen

New and Renewing Friends
August-December 2004
Maxine Kumin
Cathryn E. Laird
Joan A. McLaren-Henson

Thank You, Members!

Don't forget to renew your donation!
Use this form or renew online at
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Your transaction is secure.

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 Please email comments, letters, news, and information on poetry events, awards, etc. to: news@williamstafford.org
 or mail to:
 Friends of William Stafford,
 PO Box 592
 Lake Oswego, OR 97034

A Message From the Wanderer

Today outside your prison I stand
and rattle my walking stick: Prisoners, listen;
you have relatives outside. And there are
thousands of ways to escape.

Years ago I bent my skill to keep my
cell locked, had chains smuggled to me in pies,
and shouted my plans to jailers;
but always new plans occurred to me,
or the new heavy locks bent hinges off,
or some stupid jailer would forget
and leave the keys.

Inside, I dreamed of constellations—
those feeding creatures outlined by stars,
their skeletons a darkness between jewels,
heroes that exist only where they are not.

Thus freedom always came nibbling my thought,
just as—often, in light, on the open hills—

you can pass an antelope and not know
and look back, and then—even before you see—
there is something wrong about the grass.
And then you see.

That's the way everything in the world is waiting.

Now—these few more words, and then I'm
gone: Tell everyone just to remember
their names, and remind others, later, when we
find each other. Tell the little ones
to cry and then go to sleep, curled up
where they can. And if any of us get lost,
if any of us cannot come all the way—
remember: there will come a time when
all we have said and all we have hoped
will be all right.

There will be that form in the grass.

William Stafford

Please notify sender of change of address.

Poet Laureate Ted Kooser, Page 7

Stafford Was A Fan of

☐ ☐ ☐

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An Explication on Stafford's

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2005 William Stafford Birthday Events

SPECIAL INSERT ...