

friends of WILLIAM STAFFORD

A Newsletter For Poets & Poetry
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Celebrating Bill's Birthday in Los Padres National Forest

by Sulima Malzin

*We called it the chaparral, / folded, easily draped
and softly a comfort / over that land egg-beatered
out of rock. / It lapped over our cliff / and rested
like an evening of shade above / the breaks of the
river; / a soft statement of greenness, down all /
the hills, / in wide forgiveness, a layer of dew and
night / that never moves on: ...*

Thus begins the chapter entitled "The Battle of Anapamu Creek" from *Down In My Heart*. It was a copy of this chapter that Paul Willis, a Professor of English at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, first sent to the U.S. Forest Service in Los Padres National Forest in Santa Barbara last year. He wondered if they might be interested in hosting a poetry reading to celebrate William Stafford's birthday on the site of the old Los Prietos Civilian Public Service Camp where Stafford had served between 1943 and 1946.

The celebration reading, held on January 27th, was originally planned for outdoors, but when the first major rainstorm of the season came blowing in that morning, the Forest Service generously opened their nearby ranger station to give the reading a roof. Willis and the other organizers, along with some 35 people who made the half-hour drive from Santa Barbara over San Marcos Pass in windy, foggy conditions, gratefully crowded into a conference room for what Willis described as "a warm and engaging time," with featured readers Perie Longo and Jackson Wheeler, long-time Stafford family friend, poet Glenna Luschei, and other members of the audience sharing poetry and stories.

Los Prietos was originally built as a Civilian Conservation Corps facility in the 1930s, then used during the war as a Civilian Public Service Camp, and after that as a camp and school for troubled boys. A few years ago the original buildings were torn down, leaving no evidence of Los Prietos, except for the chaparral, while the boys' school continued in newer facilities across the road. *continued on 3*

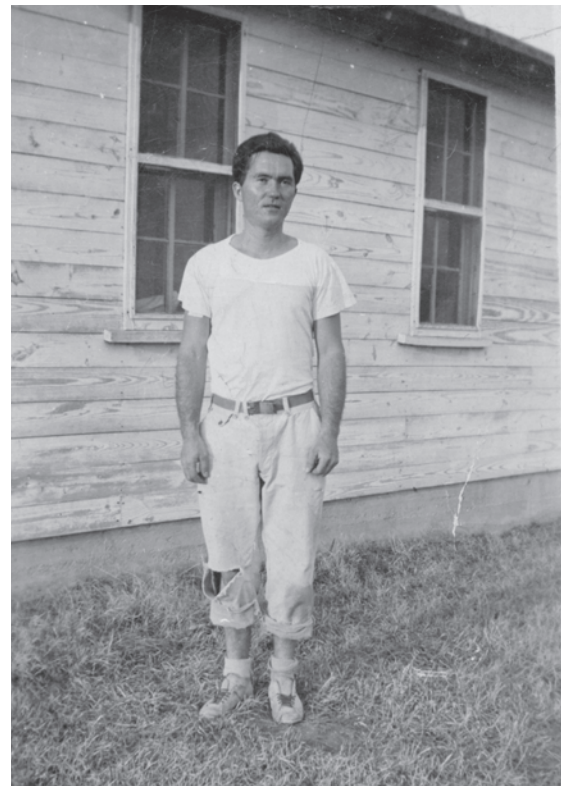


Photo courtesy of Stafford Archives

Friends of William Stafford is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness of poetry and literature in the spirit of the legacy, life and works of the late award-winning poet William Stafford.

Old Photos Stir New Interest in Los Prietos

By Paul Merchant

Three of the old photos featured in this newsletter were sent to the Los Padres Ranger Station in response to Paul Willis's request for materials to help create an exhibit being set up in conjunction with the Birthday Reading at the site of the old Los Prietos Civilian Public Service Camp for Conscientious Objectors,

The photo of **WILLIAM STAFFORD IN TORN TROUSERS** that accompanies the front page article is not dated and has no annotations to identify its location. But this plain unidealized portrait in tattered work clothes, standing in front of a wooden barrack building, represents the CPS experience in an almost iconic way. And the photographer has caught something determined in Stafford's expression, attentive, slightly questioning, prepared for hard labor, and holding back the smile playing at the edge of his mouth.

REPORT FROM



THE ARCHIVES

ROLL CALL AT LOS PRIETOS was captioned "Fall in, men . . ." by Stafford. Some of the more hard-boiled Forest Service personnel tried to impose military parade etiquette on the COs, only to have their orders subtly ignored. During this roll call, one man has sat down, while the tall one at the center, arms folded, regards with amusement the foreman calling out assignments. Is Stafford the one near the left edge of the photo with his hat tilted back on his head? If so, his stance is characteristic: out of the front row, slightly removed from the main action, but observing it with close concentration.

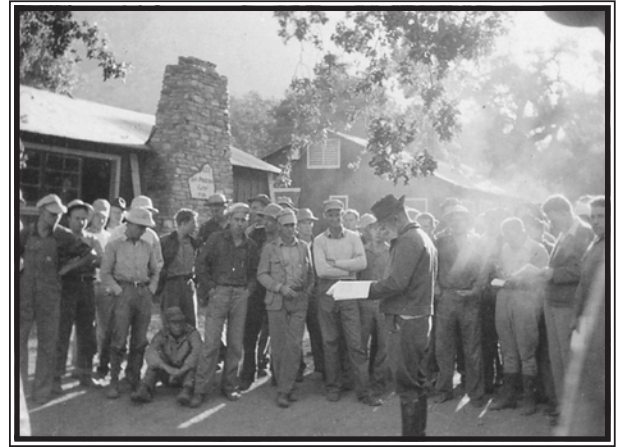


Photo courtesy of Stafford Archives

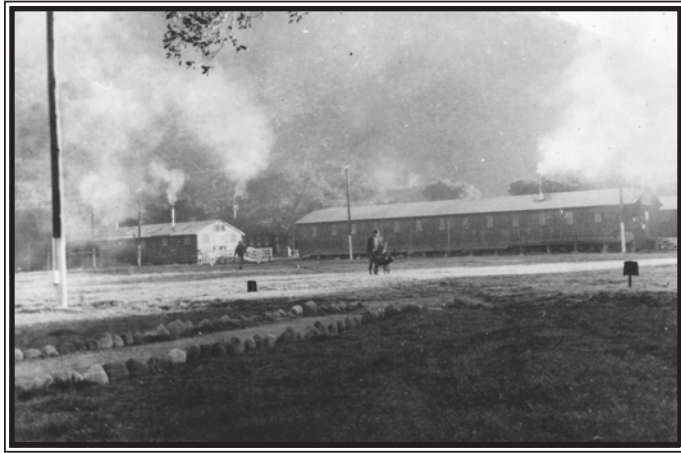


Photo courtesy of Stafford Archives

"**MARCH MORNING AT LOS PRIETOS, 1943,**" sent to Stafford by his friend, Tom Polk Miller, shows a smoky scene of the camp near Santa Barbara. Stafford annotated the photograph "March Morning, (Tom hauling wood for library)". Beyond the buildings rise the wooded hills where the COs worked at their Forest Service road-building and snag clearance. Miller and Stafford were separated when Miller was sent to Cascade Locks before being accepted into William Everson's fine arts camp at Waldport. (Stafford also applied for transfer to Waldport but was turned down: "We don't want all the trouble-makers in one place.") Miller's vivid account of Portland street celebrations at war's end was taken over almost verbatim into the chapter, "The End of the War," in Stafford's *Down In My Heart*. The Miller and Stafford families kept up a lifelong friendship.

BILL & DOROTHY STAFFORD WITH DAN FORCE AT BELDEN CAMP, 1944 was annotated by Stafford with the quirky note: "Dorothy Stafford black cap peeking Belden, Calif July 1944." The Staffords had married on April 8, 1944, and Stafford was transferred with the whole Los Prietos contingent on May 6 to Belden camp on the Feather River in northern California's Plumas National Forest. The CO accompanying the newlyweds in this relaxed (presumably Sunday afternoon) scene is their best man, Dan Force.



Photo courtesy of Stafford Archives

It is good to think that poems and images from more than 60 years ago can still resonate in the lives of foresters and contribute to the education of troubled boys, thanks to the imagination and curiosity of a local professor.

Celebrating Bill's Birthday in Los Padres National Forest

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The site of the old camp, in a canyon at a place where the road fords the Santa Ynes River, has been turned into a lovely riverside picnic area called the First Crossing Day Use Area, and it was here that Ranger Larry Griffith suggested the reading event might be held. District Ranger Linda Riddle and staff archaeologist Diana Dyste Ansuere became increasingly excited about the possibility of a full-fledged exhibit in the Visitor's Center's new exhibit hall - an interpretive event that might include old photos of the camp from the Stafford Estate Archives and other memorabilia.

Willis and the rangers decided to meet with the English teacher at the boys' school and invite her students to participate in the event, as well. "Most of the boys come from gangs," explained Willis, "and the camp/school staff are trying to teach them about resolving conflicts without violence. We figured a little bit of William Stafford might be helpful in this effort. After all, they may feel they have more in common with Stafford than some of us, in that they are confined in the same place he was." As it turned out, the boys were not able to attend the reading, but a unit on William Stafford was created for their English classes in January and may become a permanent part of the curriculum.

When Paul Willis first met Paulann Petersen at a Portland book event in mid-2005, neither had any idea how this story would unfold. Paulann, who coordinates the annual Stafford birthday events and is always on the lookout for new celebration sites, naturally asked if he would be interested in hosting one in Santa Barbara. A lover of Stafford's poems for twenty years, Willis was very open to the idea.

What he hadn't realized, he said, until he read Kim Stafford's *Early Morning*, was that he and his family, as they hiked and camped many times in the area, had passed the very place where Bill served during World War II. When he read *Down In My Heart*, Willis knew exactly where he wanted the event to be held, and by August he had made his initial contacts.

Putting it all together was no small task, but as is so often the case with events that focus on William Stafford and his work, a great spirit of generosity prevailed. With funding from Westmont College and California Poets and Writers, advertising help from The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and a citizen's group called the Los Padres Forest Watch, as well as the dedicated work of Rangers Riddle and Griffith, and archaeologist Ansuere, it all did come together, even in the rain.

During the afternoon Paul Willis read a very warmly received tribute from Kim Stafford recounting his parents' meeting at the camp and he closed the reading with his own poem, "American Heroes," recalling the deaths of William Stafford and James Doolittle, the American pilot responsible for dropping the first bombs on Japan (see page 7). "I only heard Stafford read a couple of times," he said, "but his generosity of spirit was and is important to me. I suppose that hosting this reading became a way of thanking a man who has offered some neighborly presence and encouragement."



Dear Paul and Friends at Los Prietos:

The concrete outlines where the barracks stood at Los Prietos recall a time of witness and hope in another war, another century now, where my father and his friends fought fires, built roads, and planted trees for the future of the world in 1943.

... This is the place where William Stafford met my mother, Dorothy Hope Frantz. She had accompanied her minister father to the camp where he preached and she performed a skit. My father asked her to take a walk in the hills above the camp ... soon one of them began to recite a line from an obscure story by Willa Cather; the other completed the line, and that was that. Two homesick Midwesterners had found each other.

She went back to Los Angeles, and sent him a telegram: "After long thirst, a draught of perfect good." The message was blocked by the war-time censor, who suspected it might be code. It was. They married shortly after.

We Staffords are grateful to all who served at Los Prietos then and to those who remember the stories now and preserve the place.

... let us say to each other as we share words for human reconciliation, "After long thirst, a draught of perfect good."

Be well.
Kim Stafford



Tea in the Park on a Sunny Afternoon

Last September, several students of the Skyline Tea School, along with their *Soshu* teacher, June Moriyasu, (far right) gathered inside the circle of Stafford Stones at Foothills Park in Lake Oswego, Oregon for a unique experience – an outdoor tea ceremony. There was a large thermos of hot water, and each student had created and brought with them their own box of implements, known as a *chabako*, as well as mats to kneel on. The consensus was that the occasion had been “totally wonderful.” Moriyasu said the park, the sculpture, the words, the river, and the tea combined to provide the group with much delight and inspiration, and she looks forward to repeating the experience now that spring has arrived.



Photo/Linda Nelson

From “How Stafford Taught the Faculty” by Jim Bertolino

“... I arrived in the faculty lunch room just in time to settle in across the table from Stafford and watch him prepare his meal.

Never pausing in his conversation, he carefully unfolded a brown paper bag that looked as if it had been transporting lunches for years, spread a single napkin over the table and, one by one, placed half a piece of cold toast, part of a dried sweet roll, half an apple whose flesh had turned brown, and an inch-thick cube of yellow cheese, in an arrangement on the paper. I imagined a Buddhist garden with an austere confluence of gravel and stones. He proceeded to take tiny bites, beginning with the toast, then going to the cheese, followed by apple. He made several rounds in this fashion, chewing slowly and with apparent satisfaction, keeping the morsel of sweet roll for last. His beverage was half a glass of water.

The other professors, with their hot soup, their cloth napkins, their opulent sandwiches and heady coffee, were transfixed. No one commented on Stafford’s lunch, yet I believe we were all affected by his Kansas Zen version of the Tea Ceremony. ...”

Stafford Stones

Small monoliths
inscribed,
Stafford’s poetry
stands
on the riverbank –
the Willamette,
fast-flowing,
brimming with
rain and mud.

Paeon to nature
and spirit,
they speak amid
the honking of geese,
cacophony of crows
and turbulence
of daily matters.

This circle of stones
sends signals
rising
above the din
then settling
down in the heart.

LEAH STENSON



Note of Appreciation



From time to time Friends of William Stafford receives special gifts. Sometimes they come in the form of “rounding up” a renewal check, with the extra money contributed for general use. Other times checks are clearly marked to support a special project, or in honor or memory of a particular person. FWS deeply appreciates all of these gifts and wishes to acknowledge those received thus far in 2007.

Gary Lehman and Cynthia Johnson, Elizabeth Johnson, Bess Harter, Joseph Soldati, for General Use. Ceil Huntington, for *How the Ink Feels* traveling broadside exhibit, Verlena Orr in memory of Dennis Bleything, and Nancy Hutchins in honor of retired board member, Betty Barton.



From the Chair

by Shelley Reece

Imagine a publishing party with the poet's godfather, mother, father, a rabbi, relatives, and many friends present, but not the poet herself. The missing poet would be Emma Howell, author of *Slim Night of Recognition* (Eastern Washington University Press, 2007), who died

almost six years ago as the result of a swimming accident in the province of Bahia, Brazil.

Emma was twenty, a college student at Oberlin who grew enamored of Afro-Brazilian culture and took six months off for study in Brazil. By then, she had studied Latin, Greek, Spanish, and Portuguese, and she had placed poems in *The Dial*, *Playing With A Full Deck*, and *Rain City Review*. Of poets who died young, some names occur first: John Keats, Sylvia Plath, Percy Shelley. What more would they have left us if they had lived longer? The same question occurs immediately with Emma Howell.

After her death, Emma's parents, Chris Howell and Karen Checkoway, sorted through her computer, notebooks, and poems from workshops. With support from Carlos Reyes, Emma's godfather, they assembled and designed *Slim Night of Recognition*, a collection of poems written from age 15 until two days before her death. Chris, a poet and editor, wrote a Foreword that offers up his own joy and grief, as well as a clear look at Emma's life and art. Karen designed the cover, with a poignant graphic of Edward Hopper's *Rooms by the Sea*. Emma may have been young, yes, but as a poet she was mature, an adept already in full flight.

She acknowledged and worked from other poets: "It is the Morning of the Day of Bleach," dedicated to Galway Kinnell; "After *Traveling Through the Dark*," in response to William Stafford; and "The Country of Absence," a translation of Gabriela Mistral. While Emma acknowledged these predecessors, her words and music were in her own voice. It takes only a few lines to see that: "I dreamed me a mercy box and its weight in gold" or "How far we fall is directly proportional/ to how much we've grown" or "I look through all my skin/ and find these new countries. . . ."

Short of reading the poems, there is no way to feel the nuance and range of her work. I have space here to say just a few words about a single poem, one that challenges the imagination of William Stafford in "Traveling Through The Dark," perhaps his best recognized work. As you may remember, Stafford's speaker pushes a dead pregnant doe with a live fawn inside her over the edge of a road and into a river.

In her eighteen lines, Emma imaginatively looks at the choice he made in light of what he could have done. She circles his choice four times in four stanzas, beginning "You could have cut open the

cold girl," "You could have cut open the full girl," "You could have cut open the unlucky girl," and "You could have cut open that old girl," varying the first line of each stanza and making it more vital by repeating not "deer" or "doe," but "girl." Maybe her incisive look becomes more intimate and artful than Stafford's.

For Chris Howell, following the path of his daughter's work to its inevitable end was "excruciating" - his word. Karen Checkoway's cover design carries visually that same message of love and grief over their lost child. Still, one consolation remains for us all: *The Slim Night of Recognition*, Emma Howell's thirty-eight poems in her unique voice.

After Traveling Through the Dark

You could have cut open the cold girl,
let her size drop
from the life humming against her
and rolled her, empty, into the river.

You could have cut open the full girl.
She left you a token, being so
in the middle of things, under your lights.
She meant, stopping there, to give you a chance.

You could have cut open the unlucky girl,
pulled out a breath and saved yourself.
There would have been work in the warming
of your mouth around charity and that hot new thing.

You could have cut open that old girl.
But you pushed the whole affair into the river,
took your inheritance early
and rushed into the light: speed of your unburdened life.

She waits now in the cold, her deep burn
glowing through the dark.

EMMA HOWELL

"I have never experienced anything like the respect and affection people expressed for Stafford's work – the openness, generosity, and sense of community..."

ANN CAMERON, FIRST-TIME GUEST - CHILDREN'S AUTHOR AND NEW FRIEND

Stafford Birthday Events Warm 2007's Icy Heart

Despite howling winds, swirling snow and arctic temperatures, William Stafford's birthday was again celebrated throughout the country during the month of January. In some cases, severe weather caused rescheduling of some events. Large and small groups of Stafford fans found their way into libraries, bookstores, coffee shops, churches, and even one national forest, to honor the poet who was so many things to so many people during the nearly 80 years he wandered gently on the earth.

Many of those who organized and hosted repeat events reported a deepening of the fellowship they felt. And often, there was Bill's recorded voice or his image on a video bringing his presence even closer.

Among the readers at **THE WRITER'S CENTER IN BETHESDA, MARYLAND**, was Linda Pastan, recent recipient of the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize for Lifetime Achievement, whose friendship with Stafford began when he was at the Library of Congress. "Whenever I feel the slightest touch of writer's block," she said, "I start reading his poems, and since they always seem to be talking to me, I am able simply to talk back. A poem always follows." After reading a number of Stafford's poems, she read one of her own, as yet unpublished, entitled "Witness: for William Stafford." Pastan has graciously given us permission to print it first in this newsletter (see page 9).

In **BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON**, host Jim Bertolino shared his brief essay, "How Stafford Taught the Faculty." Its closing paragraph reads: "William Stafford was a generous man. He was an artist and teacher whose vision was truly holographic – everything he did was a manifestation of the path he danced, the way of seeing he became and became. We may be a society that has lost its ability to detect wisdom, but if, in desperation and danger, we regain that ability, Stafford will be there, always."

One of the best moments of the **HERMISTON, OREGON** gathering, according to host Pam Steele, was the surprise appearance of a retired military officer and Umatilla Army Depot official reading one of Stafford's more overt anti-war poems. "That is why I keep on doing this," she said – "small joys."

Two especially interesting items were reported from **ASHLAND, OREGON**, where there was a crowd of 100+ Rogue Valley residents overflowing the library at Southern Oregon University. A woman named Susan told of going to Ashland High School in February of 1993 to hear Stafford give a poetry reading. She remembered noticing the students lounging in their seats until he began to talk about the power each of them had to become a writer, then watched them straighten up and begin to lean forward as he engaged them. Kirk, a young man recently relocated to Oregon, heard the birthday

event announced on public radio and came right over. He spoke of how his father and Bill became friends in the CO Camp, and both moved their families to San Jose when they got out. He said he treasured the memories of frequent hikes he and his dad, along with Bill and son Brett had taken in the mountains near San Jose. When Kirk was drafted for the Vietnam War, he applied for and was granted CO status, largely, he felt, because of the letter Bill Stafford wrote on his behalf.

At the **ALBANY, OREGON** event, an elderly gentleman produced copies of a Stafford poem written for his brother and sister-in-law, Keith and Shirley Browning of Lewiston, Idaho, founders of Confluence Press. Kim Stafford remembers the deck at the Brownings' house *overlooking hills to the south and serving as a classic location for talk about poetry on many occasions ...*

Out by Keith and Shirley's

Back door people, ones who borrow a wrench
or wedge; animals next door – heifers,
a sheep or two, an unemployed hen;
old arrangements about whose turn
it is to prop up the mailboxes; a truck
disabled and snuggled into the hedge
for someone to fix sometime; friends
who can be insulted; customs and celebrations,
ways to keep from knowing; indulgences
from God, Who defends us all, to be various
and neither win nor lose: neighbors.

*Dear Keith & Shirley & Alf
My notes contain many
remembrances - I treasure them
a few above
lovingly
Bill Stafford*

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At other **OREGON** events, some people read for the very first time. At **WELCHES**, a big guy from Texas new to the idea of reading poetry read from the broadside "To Shuman Heink," not once, but twice, *just because everyone loved it so much*. At the **TIGARD** Library, a lovely woman who had always wanted to read but could never

muster up the courage, was moved to share her favorite, "A Ritual to Read to Each Other," because of the warmth and acceptance she felt from the audience. And In **WEST LINN**, poet host David Hedges' brother, Cap, not only read publicly for the first time, but purchased the broadside as well. To see which one it was, read his poetic response to that question on page 9.

In **TOPEKA, KANSAS**, the inaugural event at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship was attended by six brave souls who came out in a blizzard to share conversation and poetry. Host Dennis Bosley said he was moved to tears as he reflected on his own life while reading Stafford's "The Farm on the Great Plains." The group has already chosen next year's date and Dennis has given copies of *The Darkness Around Us Is Deep* to middle schoolers at the Fellowship.

At the **MILWAUKIE, OREGON** reading, Sue Reece, a professor of English at Portland State University, spoke of her meeting with the Irish poet Seamus Heaney, who quipped "So you're from Oregon. I hear they had a great poet there..." and then went on to express his sadness at not having met Stafford while he was alive.

In **LINCOLN CITY**, on the **Oregon** coast, Friend John Fiedler hosted the second annual birthday event just three days before his first child, Hazel Jane, was born. About 40 guests shared Stafford poems and reminiscences and three of the featured readers were high school students.

On **BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON**, the party was attended by about 35 guests and featured two home-baked birthday cakes. Host Neil Baker reported *a stronger sense of community than previously ... maybe because this is the fifth year and the event is becoming an island fixture.*



Photo/MEHope

American Heroes September 1993

Two men have died, pilot and poet: James Doolittle,
first to bomb the Japanese, and William Stafford,
who spent the war in Western work camps.

For each, it came down to a small group of volunteers:
enough men to fly sixteen planes from the carrier *Hornet*;
and Quakers and Mennonites enough to fill a barracks on Forest Service land.

You can still see them in flight suits upon the deck, Pacific light shining
off their earnest faces; or up before dawn, collected in the common room
to read the scriptures, to write poems, silent in the kerosene glow.

By all accounts, the bombing did not amount to much –
a few small fires, a severing of an ear from the high priest's servant.
It was the fact of the blow, the swinging of the sword, that heartened us.

And in the alternative service camps, I have not heard
that Stafford completed his best work. If he were Shakespeare
we might call these years of the war his lost years.

Jimmy Doolittle and his men were forced to land in occupied China;
some returned, some not. For the rest of his life, to the stir of pep bands,
the retired General waved to us at half time on Veterans Days.

Traveling through the dark of those mornings, Bill Stafford
arrived in Oregon. Then, flying about the country, he set soft fire
to our ears at a myriad of campus readings.

Who helped win the war? Who brought peace?
To whom, exactly, must we be grateful? Two men have died;
it makes you want to think hard for both of them, for all of us.

PAUL WILLIS

*Ben Kerns was one of the featured readers at the **KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON** County Library birthday celebration. Following nearly an hour and a half of sharing poetry, the "largest-ever" group sang Happy Birthday and then continued discussing poets, poetry, and William Stafford's legacy while enjoying sparkling cider and cupcakes.*

FWS Board Welcomes New Treasurer



Photo/Ed Einowski

Sue Einowski

It seems fitting that our new treasurer, Lifetime Friend, Sue Einowski, will be taking Betty Barton's place on the board. Betty, who retired her position at the end of 2006, has known Sue for twenty years, from back when they and Dorothy Stafford were members of the Reed College Women's Committee. The three have remained good friends over the years.

Sue's first contact with William Stafford came when she attended his poetry reading in Ann Arbor back in the seventies. She had no idea then that years later, during the course of a dinner party at their home, Bill, and Sue's husband Ed, would be lying under her grand piano trying to figure out how it was made.

Although Bill and Dorothy were friends of the family, Sue says she didn't really know William Stafford the teacher until after his death. She and her children, Sarah and Jeff, were spending time at the Institute for Community Leadership, an organization that uses

poetry and the principles of Martin Luther King, Jr. to focus on personal character transformation. In their words, "If you can get up and read your poetry to your peers, you can do anything."

Lately the new treasurer has enjoyed taking poetry classes at Lewis & Clark's Stafford Studies program led by Ann Staley and Paulann Petersen. She says that working with these two wonderful FWS teachers, and Shelley Reece, who was also in attendance, made it impossible for her to turn down the chance to participate more in our organization.

Sue comes unusually qualified to serve as Treasurer to FWS. Not only a "recovering attorney" (when she and Ed moved here some 20 years ago, they agreed she would never have to take another bar exam), she also has an advanced certificate from the Center for Management of Nonprofit Organizations. In addition, Sue has also become a Reiki Master with a practice at *Opening to Life*, a healing center in Northeast Portland.

With her tendency to think outside the box, Sue hopes to make her tenure on the board interesting for all involved and to help further the mission of the Friends of William Stafford. Welcome, Sue Einowski.

FWS Board Needs Your Input

The board of Friends of William Stafford is exploring the most effective ways to communicate within our organization. We are interested in your responses to the following questions, and welcome any additional thoughts you might wish to share.

- (1) Would you like to see the newsletter supplemented by posting current events and more writing and photos of interest to Friends and others on our website?
- (2) Would you appreciate receiving emails notifying you of special events such as the recent NPR "All Things Considered" feature on William Stafford?
- (3) Would you rather receive your newsletter in your mailbox or as an electronic transmission?
- (4) Would you enjoy an annual literary journal featuring the work of Friends and other scholarly writings about William Stafford's life and work?

Your responses to this informal poll will be of immense value to the board. You may write to FWS at our postal address, P.O. Box 592, Lake Oswego, OR 97034, communicate with us through the website, www.williamstafford.org, or email the newsletter editor directly at sulimama@gmail.com. Thank you.

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"After *Traveling Through the Dark*" by Emma Howell, reprinted from *Slim Night of Recognition* (Eastern Washington University Press, 2007) with permission of Chris Howell and Karen Checkoway.

"Out by Keith and Shirley's," written April 21, 1978, was first published in the Chariton Review, and collected in the Honeybrook Press collection, *Brother Wind* (1986). Reprinted with permission of the Estate of William Stafford.

"American Heroes, September 1993" by Paul Willis, reprinted with author's permission.

"Witness: For William Stafford" by Linda Pastan, reprinted with author's permission.

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"That Poem by William Stafford" by Cap Hedges reprinted with author's permission.

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Poems for Bill

Witness: For William Stafford

We follow your simple seeming words
to a complicated place where truth

is refracted in a rainbow of light
and on a hundred surfaces – that pregnant deer

rolled down the canyon; the swimmer
to whom we too entrust our lives;

the open and closed faces
of mother, or teacher, of friend.

If it is the journey that matters,
as you insist, it will continue,

and those who discover your poems,
as if they were newly painted

on the cave wall, will still be
disturbed and comforted.

LINDA PASTAN

That Poem by William Stafford

is entitled Any Morning.
Thank you for reminding me.
I went to find it and there it was
On the desk in the den where I had dropped it
Like some fond memory
All tucked away
Just waiting to be retrieved
To be enjoyed once again.
Must be what poems are for.

CAP HEDGES

MOONLIGHT

*You are now under the protection of the United Nations
... I will never abandon you.*

UNPROFOR COMMANDER PHILIPPE MORILLON

This time, the truck, the dirt road,
the field is in Srebrenica.

He is packed in a battered flatbed
with other men
old, young
whimpering in fear.

The truck lurches a few kilometers
down a back road.
Five hauled out. Five shots.
A few more kilometers,
Four dragged out. Four shots.

Again, the truck comes to a halt.
A boot on his rump pushes him out.

His wrists tied,
he lies face down,
hears gunfire,
tastes blood, perhaps his own.

Crabgrass marks the man's face.
His nostrils are forgetting
how to take in air.

The moon is full
and cannot lie.

In all directions it stares
at human beings past sorrow,
and now this man,
the weight of his silenced body
pressing into the unfurrowed field.

WILLA SCHNEBERG

NEWS, NOTES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

The third iteration of **WILLIAM STAFFORD STUDIES** will happen **JULY 16-20** at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. The week-long workshop is designed as an invitation to teachers K-college to practice with generative materials for writers. Participants will read and write together as they learn about Stafford's life and work using "The Suitcase Project," a hand-built wooden suitcase, filled with resource materials and teaching strategies such as audio and video tapes and Stafford's teaching cards, which teachers may sign-on to use in their own classrooms starting this fall. For more information or to register, please call 503-768-6162 or email nwi@lclark.edu.

HOW THE INK FEELS, our traveling broadside exhibit, is currently gracing the library at Humboldt State University in Arcata, California. If you are visiting in that area anytime before June 4th, be sure to stop in. For more particulars, visit <http://library.humboldt.edu>.

FWS member and award-winning poet **WILLA SCHNEBERG**, was a featured presenter at the **SIXTH ANNUAL WILLIAM STAFFORD SYMPOSIUM**, *Millions of Intricate Moves*. Schneberg, who worked for the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia in 1992, spoke of "The Contemporary American Poet as Witness." She closed with her soon-to-be published poem, "Moonlight," which appears on page 9.

Join! THE Friends of William Stafford

in time to participate in the

**2nd Annual Friends of William Stafford
POETRY POTLUCK PICNIC**

An afternoon of sharing poetry,
food, and fellowship with Friends
and their families

SAVE THE DATE!

SUNDAY, SEPT. 16 1:00-4:30 PM
LAKE OSWEGO'S FOOTHILLS PARK

WWW.WILLIAMSTAFFORD.ORG

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the **SECOND ANNUAL POETRY & POTLUCK PICNIC IN THE PARK**. **Sunday, September 16, 2007**. Watch for details on our website, www.williamstafford.org and in the summer issue of this newsletter.

And speaking of summer, the **FOURTH ANNUAL FWS POETRY READING HONORING WILLIAM STAFFORD** will be held at the Lake Oswego Public Library on Thursday, June 21 at 7 p.m. The event is organized by board member Patricia Carver and co-sponsored by FWS and the Library. David Hedges will host the reading and featured readers will be poets Maggie Chula and Leah Stenson. Free and open to the public, there will be refreshments, and Stafford broadsides will be available for purchase. Please join us as we celebrate poetry and the arts, William Stafford and summer.

FWS BOARD CONTRIBUTES TO LITERARY ARTS OREGON WRITERS' ENDOWMENT. In 2006, Literary Arts, Oregon's leading source of financial assistance for writers and independent publishers, received a \$50,000 challenge grant from the John Gray Family and the Oregon Community Foundation to establish the Oregon Writers' Endowment (OWE), an entirely new and permanent source of annual support. To date, over \$150,000 (\$100,000 more than required) has been raised and the fund continues to grow, mostly with modest donations from the Oregon writing community itself. Because the OWE is so aligned with our mission, the Board of Trustees of the Friends of William Stafford is pleased to support the fund with a \$300 contribution. To learn more about the Oregon Writers' Endowment, a permanent funding source for Oregon writers, please visit www.literary-arts.org.

A SHORT RETROSPECTIVE ON THE STAFFORD SYMPOSIUM FROM FWS MEMBER ABAYOMI ANAMASHAUN, who teaches at the University of Nevada. "I came to the symposium wanting to celebrate William Stafford. I got much more. After the lectures, the writing sessions, the open forums and the exhibits, I felt infinitely attached to the cause of the living and distant from the narrow ideologies often espoused in this country. I have since come to believe that sometimes the word *other* is a dangerous convenience. I came away renewed, open, and wanting to *be of good heart*."

"The Chinese say a great teacher is like the sun. Bill Stafford seemed a teacher of the firmament. Rather than sunning us from above he pushed us up from underneath, reminded us that our roots were intertwined ... He was there at all the important times in my life. Now with a gathering of the tribe at Los Padres we can be uplifted in our roots and honor our poet of the firmament."

GLENN LUSCHEI, READING FROM HER ESSAY
"GATHERING THE TRIBE"



BECOME A Friend of William Stafford

MISSION OF FWS

IN THE SPIRIT OF WILLIAM STAFFORD, we are committed to the free expression of literature and conscience. We seek to share Stafford's work and advance the spirit of his teaching and literary witness. We strive to provide ongoing education in poetry and literature in local schools and communities in ways that will encourage and enrich a broad spectrum of readers and writers. In doing so, we hope to contribute to William Stafford's legacy for generations to come.

WHY JOIN?

BY JOINING THE FRIENDS OF WILLIAM STAFFORD, you become part of an international community of poetry lovers and writers with broad access to other poetry organizations and events. As a Friend, you'll receive a subscription to our triannual newsletter, filled with poetry and poetry news. In addition, your contribution provides vital funding for our traveling broadside exhibit, *How The Ink Feels*, supports the annual William Stafford Birthday Celebration Readings, maintains our web site, www.williamstafford.org, and helps initiate new projects. We always welcome your volunteer services.

To join the Friends of William Stafford, renew your friendship, or make a donation, please fill out this form and mail to: FWS, P.O. Box 592, Lake Oswego, OR 97034. Checks payable to "Friends of William Stafford."

JOIN OR RENEW:

(Please check ALL appropriate boxes)

- New Renewal Gift
- Standard Annual \$25 Lifetime \$150
- Student \$10 Retired Annual \$10

Please add \$5.00/year outside the U.S.

DONATE:

Support FWS with an additional donation!

- Donation amount: \$ _____
- Donation for general use
- Donation for specific purpose: _____

FWS is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. Donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Name* _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Country** _____

Email _____ Phone () _____

May we list this information (or any part of it) in a "friends-only" directory of which you will receive a copy? _____

*If this *friendship* is a gift, please add your name and address on the line below so that we may send an acknowledgement to the recipient and to you. **If you reside outside the United States, please add any additional postal codes we may need to ensure that you receive your mail.

Giver's Name & Address: _____

How did you hear of FWS? _____

Volunteer opportunities: Organize poetry readings in your community; Event help; Distribute posters/flyers; Publicize events; Other (describe): _____

New Annual Friends Jan.-April 2007

- Deborah Akers
- Joshua Baker
- Richard Brown
- Ann Cameron
- Angie Chuang
- Barbara Drake
- Esther Elizabeth
- Charlotte Fox
- Diane Herrmann
- B.G. Hicks
- Steven Hind
- Whitney C. Johnson
- Elsie A. Lockhart
- Liz Nakazawa
- David Parker
- Sandra Sakurai
- Maria Shine Stewart
- Victoria Wheeler

New Lifetime Friends Jan.-April 2007

- Martha & Jerry Gatchell
- William Gray
- Kathleen LaMear
- Candace Morgan
- Nan Narboe
- Lex Runciman
- Mark Thalman
- Charlotte Tufts



FRIENDS OF WILLIAM STAFFORD NEWSLETTER

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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 P.O. Box 592 Lake Oswego, OR 97034

SP7

The Farm on the Great Plains

A telephone line goes cold;
birds tread it wherever it goes.
A farm back of a great plain
tugs an end of the line.

I call that farm every year,
ringing it, listening, still;
no one is home at the farm,
the line gives only a hum.

Some year I will ring the line
on a night at last the right one,
and with an eye tapered for Braille
from the phone on the wall

I will see the tenant who waits –
the last one left at the place;
through the dark my Braille eye
will lovingly touch his face.

"Hello, is Mother home?"

No one is home today.

"But Father – he should be there."

No one – no one is here.

"But you – are you the one...?"

Then the line will be gone

because both ends will be home:

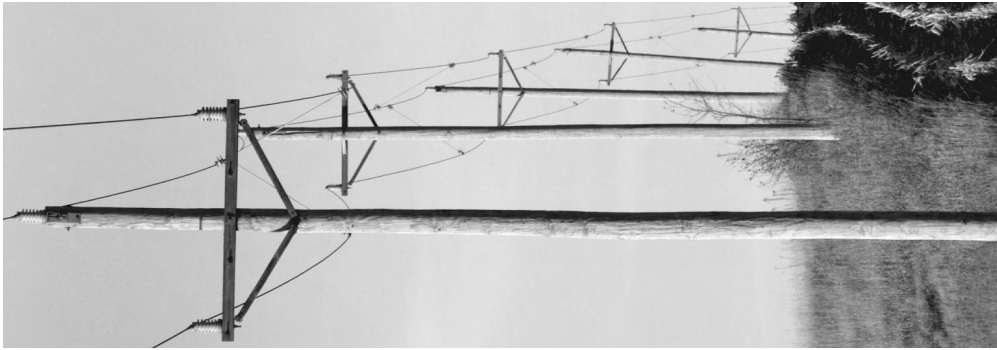
no space, no birds, no farm.

My self will be the plain,

wise as winter is gray,

pure as cold posts go

pacing toward what I know.



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friends of **WILLIAM STAFFORD**

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treasurer: p. 8

Please notify sender of change of address