VOLUME 3 NO. 4

LAKE OSWEGO, OREGON

OCTOBER 1999

LETTERPRESS BROADSIDE SHOW

OPENS NOVEMBER 7TH IN LAKE OSWEGO, OR

A nationwide traveling exhibit of broadsides of work by thirty-six contemporary writers returns to the Northwest. There will be an opening at the Oswego Heritage House, 10th Street at confluence of A Avenue and Chandler Road. November 7, 1999, 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. The exhibit called, "Like Frost on a Window - The Beauty of the Written Word" comes from a poem by William Stafford. whose work originated the exhibit. Most pieces in the exhibit were printed using manually operated letterpresses, a technique which has changed little since the Middle Ages. Many are the result of collaborations between the printer and other artists: woodcut illustrators, calligraphers, and paper-makers.

A number of Oregon writers are represented in the exhibit, including Ursula K. Le Guin, Vi Gale, Barry Lopez, Carlos Reyes, Ingrid Wendt, Ralph Salisbury, Sandra Lopez, and Kim Stafford. Several of these poets will read their work at the opening reception. A small tax deductible donation to benefit Oswego Heritage House will be accepted.

Works in the exhibit by other writers include Agha Shahid Ali, Marvin Bell, Wendell Berry, Robert Bly, Madeline DeFrees, Ivan Doig, Rita Dove, Martin Espada, Tess Gallagher, Donald Hall, Mark Halperin, Joy Harjo, Jane Hirshfield, Stanley Kunitz, David Lee, Li-Young Lee, Denise Levertov, W.S. Merwin, E. Ethelbert Miller, Howard Nemerov, Naomi Shihab Nye, Alberto Rios, Richard Shelton, Peggy Shumaker, Gary Snyder, and James Welch.

For further information contact: Nancy Winklesky Exhibit Coordinator 503-655-1443 thewinks@teleport.com

BEAUTIFUL BROADSIDE OF WILLIAM STAFFORD POEM NOW AVAILABLE

A letterpress broadside of "A Ritual to Read to Each Other" is now available through Friends of William Stafford. Doug Stow. FWS member and owner of Paper Crane Letterpress, Half Moon Bay, CA, created a 9 x12" broadside using Bookman paper and Cloister Bold type with black and rust ink runs. Purchase of a broadside will directly benefit Friends of William Stafford. Make check payable to Friends of William Stafford for \$10 plus \$3.20 for shipping. Send to Nan Atzen, 29365 NE Putnam Road, Newberg, OR 97132. Expect delivery within one week.

TEACHER IN HUNGARY SHARES POETRY OF WILLIAM STAFFORD WITH STUDENTS

Gene Brandon, who is teaching English in Zalaszentgrot, Hungary, writes, "I am reading Bill's poetry to Hungarian youth in the Ben Belogh Adam Gimnazium, Zalaszentgrot, Hungary. To honor fellow youth killed at Columbine, I read 'A Ritual to Read to Each Other."

The following responses were written by students just starting to study English, or who have had from one to four years. Some students are responding to the situation, others to the poem:

"This poem is very sad." "This is a very sad example of

our crazy world,"

"It's very sad, but I think it's true, and we must believe in each other."

"It is sad and beautiful."

"I think it's great and I agree with you!"

"We have to believe in each other, but the belief is missing."

"I'm crying."

"I think it is a good poem."

Brandon is eager for his students
"to bond with the people who
love the humanity of William
Stafford." FWS members
interested in replying to these
students may do so at the
following address:
Gene and Doris Brandon
Zalaszentgrot
Kinizsi ter #6fsz #1
8790
HUNGARY

TWO EVENTS HONOR METHOW RIVER POEMS

Two FWS members—Karen Bashkirew, Lenhartsville, PA, and Alice Lindsay Price, Tulsa, OK, write about events this past year which involve William Stafford's Methow River Poems.

Bashkirew writes, "Recently my husband and I visited the Pacific Northwest and one of our stops was the Methow Valley"...I write and read poetry and I'm deeply nourished by nature, so to find these two loves of mine so beautifully entwined was a meaningful and moving experience...this [WS's] creative braiding of nature and poetry." *Seven road signs of Stafford's Methow River Poems are permanently installed along the North Cascades Scenic Highway (#153) in Washington State.

Price describes the reading she organized in April at the Satin Rare Book Room, McFarlin Library, University of Tulsa, called "Works and Words: A Poetry Reading in Honor of William Stafford." Following speakers and poetry readers, the audience joined in a choral reading of The Methow River Poems—an especially powerful event. An added feature was a showing of Price's large painting of Sandhill Cranes with William Stafford's poem, "Watching Sandhill Cranes"

written by hand on the painting in the Japanese tradition of crane images and poems.

"POETRY IN MOTION" GAINS ATTENTION

"Poetry in Motion," begun in 1992 by Poetry Society of America, continues to spread across the county. Ten cities now participate in the program that posts poems buses, trains, and subways. This year's selection includes poems by many Friends of William Stafford in Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Eugene, OR, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland, OR, and Washington, D.C.

POEM BY FWS MEMBER READ BY GARRISON KEILLOR

Clemens Starck's poem, "Through the Haze," from Journeyman's Wages (Story Line Press, 1995) was featured on Garrison Keillor's "Writer's Almanac" in August. The poem is reproduced here with permission of the author.

THROUGH THE HAZE

Old stories, poems, the dictionary—
sure, I read books,
but forget what I read, so what good does it do?
Studying, musing, staying up half the night...
Some say it's worthwhile, but it may
just be odd.

Alone for the day in an empty house.

Hot afternoon. I fall asleep . . .
and wake up with a headache, flies still buzzing, the evening sky suffused with an eery yellow light.

The haze is so thick the hills are dim.

Things I was going to do I didn't do.

Four hours blank.

Fumbling for consciousness, half-disbelieving the clock—how remote it all seems now, the lure of literature, and the singular hope that words will clarify my life.

Clemens Starck

Look at drive-by poetry

Is drive-by poetry even possible? Funny you should ask! Not only is it possible, but ever since Adams Outdoor Advertising installed billboards featuring poetry excerpts in February 1999, they've been receiving continuous positive feedback. One woman called up, "almost teary," said sales manager Laura Schultz, "saying she wanted to tell us how wonderful the boards are and how much she appreciates the idea."

Bridget Brown, a free-lance writer in Madison, said she loves the idea of poetry out in public. "It's a meditative versus a coerciveness message; it stimulates a different part of my brain than advertising."

Jodi Cohen, business development manager at Adams, recently heard a story on National Public Radio about poetry billboards in the Los Angeles area. She suggested the concept for the Madison market to her general manager. Michelle Kullmann was excited about the idea: "I thought it would be something unique to put up, unexpected. There's absolutely no advertising-it's simply a chance to inspire people, or cause them to think about their place in the world. We're all incredibly busy in our lives, plus there's so much publicity about road rage. We thought it would be healthy to offer a small window of reflection-even if it's only for a few seconds."

The irony is that most people who have seen the boards describe the effect being more than momentary: people slow down internally, their mood improves and driving becomes more bearable. One man said what he liked most was that the billboard wasn't asking anything of him, that it was sharing something instead. Someone else said she considers the billboards "a gift." Many have been wondering who the mysterious advertiser is; assuming the poetry is being run as part of a "teaser campaign" where the punch line will eventually be revealed.

The entire Adams staff selected the four excerpts from three pages of poetry excerpts by a variety of writers. "Some people think poetry is abstract and obscure, or else too formal," Jodi Cohen explained. "That's why we choose excerpts that we hoped would be accessible to anyone. We want people to 'get it'." The poets whose work appears on the billboards are Terrence Des Pres, William Stafford, Robert Hass, Mary Oliver.

The poetry billboards are shown below.



POETRY IN MOTION: A montage of the poetry bill boards is shown above. They are located at: WI 30 east of Highway 51; 4702 E. Broadway; 2122 S. Stoughton Rd.; and 995 Applegate Rd.



Photo by Ward Wixon, Madison, WI

DENNIS SCHMIDLING JOINS FWS BOARD

Friends of William Stafford welcomes a new member to serve as Membership Chair. As a young man, Dennis Schmidling published in a wide variety of media from local television shows to national magazine articles. His love was poetry, "but I could not reconcile myself to a life without income," he says. He currently heads The DSA Group in Portland, Oregon, providing comprehensive marketing and communications services. His clients are generally headquartered in the Northwest. Schmidling's publishing background includes concept and design development for Time Life Book Publishing. His work while going to college included a "variety of wanderings"—breadman for Langendorf Bread, repair technician for Royal Typewriter, and milkman for Berkeley Farms Creamery. Dennnis also taught Theatre Arts at Diablo Valley Community College, English Literature and Theater at San Francisco State and University of California at Berkeley.

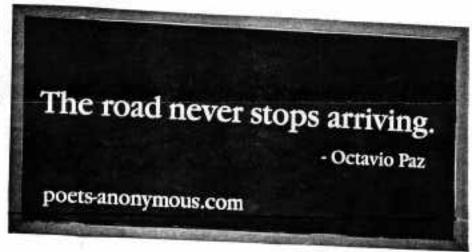
from TAB Ad Marketing brochure:

Bards Take To Boards In Los Angeles

Industry watchers have suggested dozens of products and services that are likely candidates to fill the void left by the departure of tobacco. Poetry has not been on anyone's list. And yet, last April, that's just what appeared on over 60 boards from the San Fernando Valley to the heart of South-Central Los Angeles in a media buy coordinated by Wendy Allen of Outdoor Sales.

Snippets of the works of such poets as Emily Dickinson, T.S. Eliot, Pablo Neruda, Allen Ginsburg, Charles Bukowski, Nikki Giovanni, Miriam Waddington, Octavio Paz and five others were featured in a campaign that is estimated to have cost about \$37,000 a month, according to Eller Media Account Executive Dave Kovisto. A spokesperson for the group that sponsored the campaign, Poets Anonymous, whose members prefer to remain just that, says, "We wanted to use the media for something meaningful for art."

"And that's their second big buy," says
Kovisto. "In January, the group also
paid for sixty boards. Based on the
success of that program, they decided to
run again in April, which was also
National Poetry Month. The success of
the April campaign can be measured by
the number of hits on their website,
www.poets-anonymous.com, which
appeared on the April posters."



Friends of William Stafford Board of Directors: Patty Wixon, Ashland, OR, Chair; Nan Atzen, Newberg, OR; Brian Booth, Portland, OR; Martha Gatchell, Drain, OR; Robert Hamm, West Linn, OR; Ceil Huntington, Lake Oswego, OR; Paulann Petersen, Portland, OR; Shelley Reece, Portland, OR; Dennis Schmidling, Lake Oswego, OR; Joseph Soldati, Portland, OR. National Advisors: Marvin Bell, Robert Bly, Kurt Brown, Lucille Clifton, James DePreist, Donald Hall, Maxin Kumin, Li-Young Lee, Ursula Le Guin, Chris Merril, W.S. Merwin, Naomi Shihab Nye, Gary Snyder. Friends of William Stafford NEWSLETTER is published quarterly. NEWSLETTER articles also appear on the FWS Website: www.wmstafford.org. Send inquires and correspondence to Friends of William Stafford, P.O. Box 592, Lake Oswego, OR 97034 or E-mail: friends@wmstafford.org

Friends Of William Stafford
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