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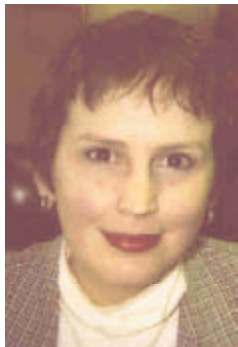
# East Tennessee Writer

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Newsletter of the Knoxville Writers' Guild  
Volume 10, Number 2, February 2002

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## Officers Elected for 2002



Julia Auer,  
President

Julie Auer, a lawyer by profession, writes short stories and essays and has had three of her pieces accepted for publication. She has won a special merit award from the National League of American Pen Women and an award for an essay from the Knoxville Writers' Guild. More recently, she was invited to read one of her essays in the Writers in the Library series at the University of Tennessee. She was elected to the KWG board of directors in 2000, served as vice president in 2001, and was named president for 2002.



Don Williams,  
Vice President

Don Williams, a founding member of the Knoxville Writers' Guild, is a prize-winning *News-Sentinel* columnist, short story writer, and editor and publisher of *New Millennium Writings*. He has published short stories in anthologies and journals, and his journalism has appeared in various newspapers and magazines, including *Poets & Writers* and *Writer's Digest*. He teaches writing classes at Christ Chapel. As founder of New Messenger Writing & Publishing, he has designed and published 17 books by various authors.



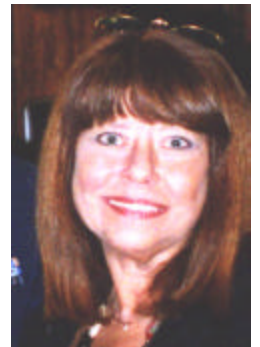
Kim Trevathan,  
Recorder

Kim Trevathan has published fiction in *New Millennium Writings*, the *Texas Review*, *New Delta Review*, and the anthology, *Walking on Water and Other Stories*. His column, "Blount Rambling" is published every other Monday in *The Maryville Daily Times*. His book, *Paddling the Tennessee River: A Voyage on Easy Water*, was published by the UT Press in Oct. 2001 as part of the *Outdoor Tennessee Series*. He has an MA in English from Illinois; an MA in journalism from the Wyoming; and an MFA in creative writing from Alabama.



Lara Still,  
Treasurer

Lara Still is a poet, actress, dental practice consultant, and USTA certified tennis umpire. She does technical writing for dental patient education and screens novels for locally based writing competitions. She will administer the Guild's **Young Writer's Prize in 2002**. Publications include *Aethlon*, *New Millennium Writings*, and *Breathing The Same Air*. She is also a member of the Knox Theatre Coalition and acted in a staged reading of *The House on Second Street* during the New Play Festival in 2001.



Marybeth Boyanton  
Publicity

Marybeth Boyanton is a native of the Texas Gulf Coast who has called Knoxville home for 17 years. She is an artist and a published poet and an asst. ed. for *New Millennium Writings*. She established the Robert Burns Poetry Award, which is now an official KWG contest. (The bio and photo of Kay Newton, Hospitality Chr., will appear in March.)

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ATTEN: WRITERS  
FEB 1 DEADLINE

Feb. 1 is the deadline to apply to sign and sell your books in the first annual EISU Celebration of Books and Authors, sponsored by EISU Library Associates, Sat., April 13, 2002. For more information, e-mail etsulib@etsu.edu

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# The Writing News:

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## Harmon Wins Taylor Prize



A. G. Harmon is the recipient of the second annual Peter Taylor Prize for the Novel for his book, *A House All Stilled*, awarded by the Knoxville Writers' Guild in collaboration with the University of Tennessee Press. Harmon was born in Houston, Mississippi, and grew up on his family's farm in Columbia, Tennessee. He received his Ph.D. in English from The Catholic University of America, his M.A. in English from The University of New Hampshire, and his B.A. from The University of Mississippi. He is a two-time nominee for The Pushcart Prize, the 1994 recipient of The Milton Center Fellowship for the Novel, and also received The Thomas Williams Short Story Award. His fiction, essays, and articles have appeared in numerous publications, including *Image* and *Logos*. He teaches Shakespeare, Law and Literature, Jurisprudence, and Writing at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

### ABOUT PETER TAYLOR:

Peter Taylor's first short story collection, *A Long Fourth and Other Stories* appeared in 1948, with an introduction by Robert Penn Warren. In the same year, he began his long association with the *New Yorker*. His work represented a departure in subject matter and in tone from the prevailing body of Southern Renaissance literature. Though most often seen in that context, he was primarily interested not in regional texture, but in how human character survived in the environment in which it found itself. Shortly before his death, he wrote his only novels, *A Summons to Memphis* and *In the Tennessee Country*.



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### Other Annual Competitions Sponsored by the Knoxville Writers' Guild

In addition to its annual Peter Taylor Prize for the Novel, in collaboration with the University of Tennessee Press, the Knoxville Writers' Guild is sponsoring more than \$2000 worth of prizes in annual literary contests. Enter as many contests as you like. The Robert Burns/Terry Semples Memorial Prizes have just been awarded (see page 5) The following contests will share a deadline of **Jan. 31**:

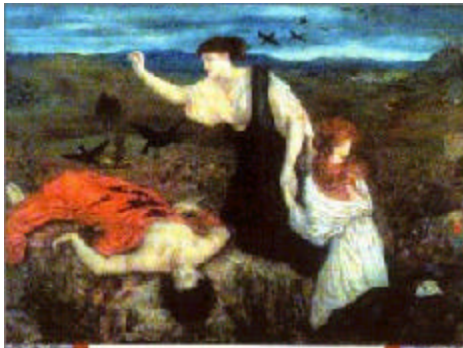
[Lilba Moore Gray Poetry Prize](#)

[Leslie Garrett Fiction Contest](#)

[Young Writers' Prize in Poetry](#)

[Essay Contest](#)

Previously published works are not accepted, and previous first-place winners are ineligible to compete in the same contest in succeeding years but may enter any others in which they did not place first. For a list of contests and complete guidelines, visit the KWG web site at [www.knoxvillewritersguild.org](http://www.knoxvillewritersguild.org)



an  
**UNKINDNESS  
of RAVENS**

poems by  
**Meg Kearney**

Foreword by Donald Hall

*Prologue to True Love:*  
*Chopin's Waltz in A Minor, Op. 34,*  
No. 2

The house is on fire,  
yet the couple keeps  
dancing. Her hand

on his shoulder, his palm  
against the small of her  
back, can't keep the music

from ending. Her filigreed  
gown is tarnished, his  
tuxedo's come unstitched.

Soon they must pass  
through the blazing door,  
follow all those others

into the indifferent  
street. Only Ashkenazy  
will remain. He will

climb onto his piano  
and lie down, ready  
to admit the house

had always been  
on fire, roof just  
about to collapse.

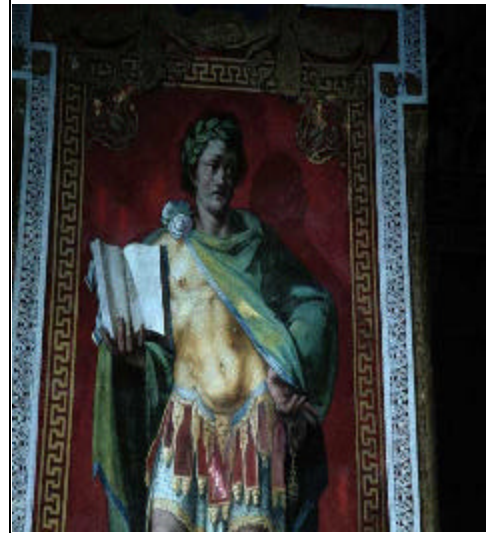
Meg Kearney  
The Gettysburg Review  
Volume 13, Number 3

# Poet Meg Kearney to Read Feb. 7

Meg Kearney, poet and assistant director of The National Book Foundation, will read her poetry at the Knoxville Writers' Guild on Thursday, Feb. 7, at 7 p.m. at the Laurel Theater. Her first collection of poetry, *An Unkindness of Ravens*, was published by BOA Editions, Ltd., in 2001.

Kearney was a recipient of the New York Times Fellowship, the Alice M. Sellers Academy of American Poets Award in 1998 and the Geraldine Griffin Moore Award in Creative Writing in 1997. In 2001 she received an artist's fellowship from the NY Foundation for the Arts. Her poetry has been published in or is forthcoming from *Black Warrior Review*, *DoubleTake*, *Passages North*, and *Tar River Poetry*. The program is open to the public. A one-dollar donation is requested.

Meg Kearney



# What's Up with Local Writers

**Judy DiGregorio** is now a monthly humor columnist for *Senior Living Magazine*. Other publication credits in 2001 include *New Millennium Writings*, *Humoresque* (webzine), *BRAVO* (Knoxville Civic Opera Newsletter), *The Writing Parent* (print version), and *For Better or Worse* Newsletter. Judy also won third place in the song-writing category at the Cookeville Writers' Conference and a Special Honorable Mention in the *ByLine Magazine* Humorous Verse Contest, Sept. 2001.

At the 19th Annual Contest of the Cookeville Creative Writers' Association, **Jack Cassell's** fiction "Dry Times" took first place. He also received the Fowler Award for "Best of Contest."

**Marilyn Kallet and Katherine Smith** will read their poetry at Writers in the Library on February 18 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the Hodges Library. Smith has recently published in *Shenandoah*, *Poetry*, and *Appalachian Life Magazine*. Her poetry has also appeared with paintings exhibited at the Women's Museum in Washington. In addition to her many other honors and awards, Kallet is the recent winner of the Robert Burns/Terry Semple Memorial Poetry Prize.

**Guild members:** The Guild's webmaster is collecting a listing of Guild member web sites to allow readers direct access to personal web pages. To include your personal web page in our listing, send it to J. Pantanizopoulos at [iosifina@town.net](mailto:iosifina@town.net)

# "Who will teach me to write?"

SYLVIA PLATH: "Writing is a religious act: It is an ordering, a reforming, a relearning and reliving of people and the world as they are and as they might be. A shaping which

does not pass away like a day of typing or a day of teaching. The writing lasts: it goes about on its own in the world. People read it: react as if to a person, a philosophy, a religion, a flower; they like it, or do not. It helps them, or it does not. It feels to intensify living: you give more, probe, ask, look, learn, and shape this: you get more: monsters, answers, color and form, knowledge. You do it for itself first. If it brings in

money, how nice. You do not do it first for the money. . . . The worst thing. . . would be to live with not writing."



ERNEST HEMINGWAY: "I learn as much from painters about how to write as from writers. You ask how this is done? It would take a day of explaining. I should think what one learns from composers and from the study of harmony and counterpoint would be obvious."



HENRY MILLER: "I invent, distort, reform, lie, inflate, exaggerate, confound and confuse as the mood seizes me. I obey only my own instincts and intuitions. I know

ALAN GINSBERG: "Follow your inner moonlight. Don't hide the madness."



ANNIE DILLARD: "Who will teach me to write? . . . The page, the page, that eternal blackness, the blankness of eternity which you cover slowly, affirming time's scrawl as a right and your daring as necessity; the page, which you cover

woodenly, ruining it, but asserting your freedom and power to act, acknowledging that you ruin everything you touch but touching it nevertheless, because acting is better than being here in mere opacity; the page, which you cover slowly with the crabbed thread of your gut; the page in the purity of its possibilities; the page of your death, against which you pit such flawed excellences as you can muster with all your

life's strength: that page will teach you to write."



WILLIAM FAULKNER: "The young man or woman writing today has forgotten the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself. . . . He must teach himself that the basest of all things is to be afraid: and, teaching himself that, forget it forever, leaving no room in his workshop for anything but the old verities and truths of the heart, the universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed--

love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice. . . . Humanity has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's, the writer's duty, is to write about these things."

(Excerpts from *The Spirit of Writing*, edited by Mark Waldman, Tarcher/Putnam, 2001)

## ANN LEWALD

Cookeville, TN  
Terry Semple Memorial  
Contest Award of Excellence

Mothers of the Plaza de  
Mayo

Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo  
wear photographs of children,  
the disappeared of Buenos  
Aires,  
around their necks  
in place of crosses,  
like holy rosaries.  
They seek news of  
the grandchildren,  
conceived in terror,  
or born to the mothers  
who gave birth and died  
on the same day.  
They march for the children  
and for the grandchildren,  
for the young woman of La  
Boca,  
her poetry censored,  
for the Indian servant girls,  
raped by fathers and sons,  
for the men selling peanuts,  
for the children peddling  
aspirin.

They pass the balconies  
where fat diners,  
tasting smoky wines,  
look down on them.  
They pass the Opera Colon,  
where once the women  
turned their backs  
on Evita Peron  
and las descamisadas.  
They pass the soldiers of  
La Casa Rosa,  
with guns pointed low,  
toward the wombs  
of the mothers.  
They pass the cafes  
of El Barrio Norte,  
smelling of dark coffee,  
of deep blood.

The eyes of the mothers  
are strangely tranquil,  
as if they have traveled  
to a place of stone.  
The mothers and grandmothers  
wait like gathering sparrows  
that return again and again.

Somewhere smiles a tango  
singer  
who might have bought violets  
for one of the mothers  
wearing crimson garments  
of carefree youth.  
Now, they all wear black,  
circling the plaza,  
like an ancient wheel  
of remembering.



## Winning Poems from the Robert Burns/ Terry Semple Memorial Prize, Jan. 2002

MARILYN KALLET  
Knoxville, TN  
Burns Award

Yom Kippur Remembrance,  
September 27, 2001

They were not love letters, they were  
people, someone's mother, another's son.  
Brave enough to leap, cheat fire,  
some of them hand in hand.  
This Yom Kippur we pray for  
their families, for those "hurt,"  
the rabbi says. Pray for the "wounded,"  
she repeats. *Mi shebaveach, l'avosaynu.*  
Bless those in need of healing.  
Are the dead past prayer?  
Does our language mock them? Do we need  
new words for images burned into our brains—  
no, "burned" is a lie.

*Yisgadal, Va yisgadash.* Praise God.  
We are the living. What

will be the legacy of our heroes, who raced  
up stairs to help others and crumbled  
under fiery rubble, under someone else's idea of  
fame? Yom Kippur, we let go  
of anger, quiet it the way we'd calm a sick child.  
We forgive, ourselves, the vague ominous world.  
Forgive God. Free will, the rabbi says.  
The ashes fall again, forgive men's hands.  
We see God in the faces of the  
rescuers, she says. I believe her.

Don't write about disaster, our poet laureate says.  
We know what happened. Tend the ordinary.  
I believe him, pull dead leaves  
from the mums. Miracle-Gro for them.  
Sunlight and fasting for us.

MARY CAMPBELL MONROE  
Chattanooga, TN  
Terry Semple Memorial Award of Excellence

Settling the Estate

After my mother's death, and my father's before her,  
it was left to me, an unwilling intruder,  
to invade her privacy. Settle her estate.

Hidden away in drawers were our gift boxes.  
Birthdays, Christmas.  
Lacy slips and panties, creamy satin, neatly folded.  
Gossamer scarves where jeweled pins and pearls  
still settled in soft tissue paper.

In moments of rare indulgence,  
she mingled our Valentine sachets  
with her sturdy underwear,  
lending a hint of fragrance to their spartan existence.

In the china cabinet, our gifts of embroidered  
napkins and tablecloths  
lay folded beside ruffled aprons, waiting for a  
company dinner.  
Like the box of exotic teas sent from China years ago.  
All waiting for a special occasion.

On the pantry shelves were balls of string,  
grocery bags to be reused,  
mayonnaise jars for canning,  
dishcloths sewn from worn towels,  
aprons and napkins cut from old shirts and skirts.  
Above the spotless old gas stove,  
spices with faded labels defied the test of time.

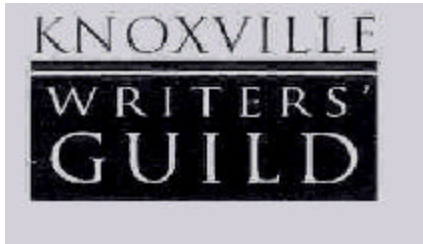
I sat at the kitchen table in the presence  
of my memories. It was her domain,  
where she often sat, poring over recipes,  
dress patterns or letters.  
Our gathering place in lean and  
good times for prayer, food, or sharing.

All of this named one word. Estate.  
One word. Encompassing her lifetime.

For months I lingered. Settled nothing.  
Just to know I could go there to feel her presence.  
To touch her life and mine.

## Knoxville Writers' Guild:

Organized in December 1992 in Knoxville, TN, to facilitate a broad, inclusive and egalitarian community among area writers; to provide a forum for information, support and sharing among writers; to help members improve and market their writing skills, and to promote writing and creativity in the wider community through education, publication, and sponsorship of writing-related public events. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at the Laurel Street Offices: President: Julie Auer; Vice President: Don Williams; Secretary: Kim Trevathan; Treasurer: Laura Still; Hospitality: Kay Newton; Publicity: Marybeth Boyanton; President Emeritus: Jack Reese; VP Emeritus: Michael Gillespie; **Newsletter Editor:** Jeanne McDonald; **Webmistress:** Jo Ann Pantanizopoulos. **Board Members:** Julia Auer, Marybeth Boyanton, Robert Boyd, Jacqueline Kittrell, Michael Knight, Judy Loest, Robert Lydick, Kay Newton, Caroline Norris, Elaine Oswald, Pamela Schoenwaldt, Laura Still, Kim Trevathan, Perry Tschantz, and Don Williams. Dues are \$20, \$15 for students. The KWG does not discriminate against any person because of race, age, gender, handicap or country of national origin. Tel: 531-8855; send e-mail messages to editor, [jmd531k@msn.com](mailto:jmd531k@msn.com) or to pres. at [hildegard@earthlink.com](mailto:hildegard@earthlink.com) web: [www.knoxvillewritersguild.org](http://www.knoxvillewritersguild.org)



**P.O. Box 10326  
Knoxville, TN 37939**

## HOW TO JOIN

To join the Writers' Guild, complete the form below and mail to P.O. Box 10326, Knoxville, TN 37939, along with annual dues of \$20. Dues are \$15 if you are a student. Membership allows you to participate in study groups, receive discounts on books and Guild-sponsored merchandise, and monthly issues of the newsletter.

### Happy Valentine's Day!

<p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>Telephone No. _____</p> <p>Email Address _____</p>
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## SCREENERS NEEDED

The Knoxville Writers' Guild needs screeners for the 2002 Peter Taylor Prize for the Novel. We are expecting at least 400 submissions to this year's competition, and we need all the help we can get. Dozens of KWG members have screened in prior years, and they have found the experience to be fun, educational – and a nice addition to their resumes.

Screening will begin in late April and will continue through June. If you like to read literary fiction and have not yet been involved in this project (which is, by the way, one of KWG's principal fundraisers), please send a letter explaining your interest and your background to Brian Griffin, P.O. Box 2565, Knoxville, TN 37901. (If you have helped in the past, we will contact you soon via e-mail.)