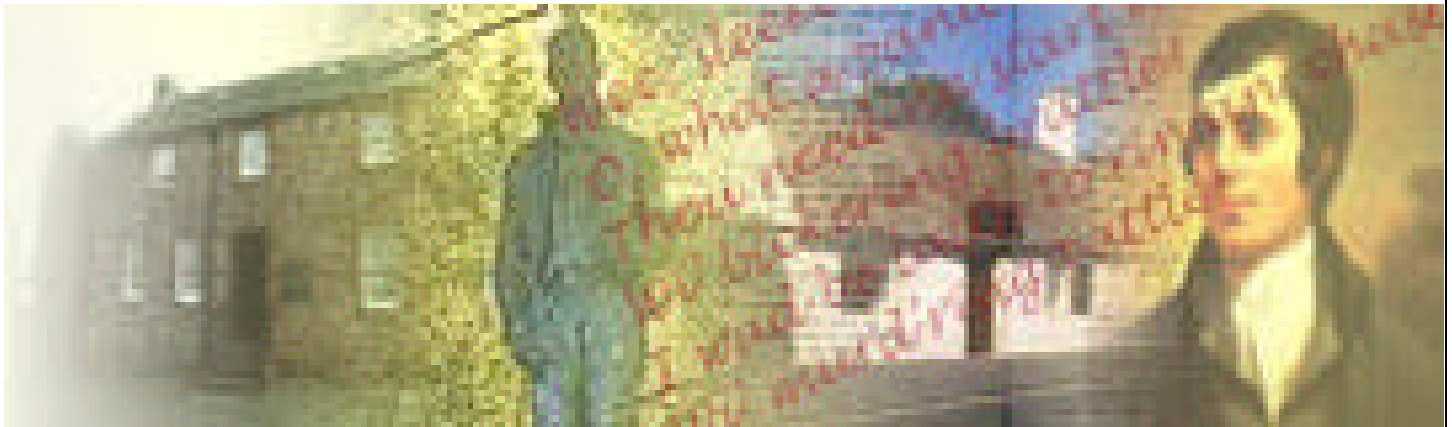


East Tennessee Writer

Newsletter of the Knoxville Writers' Guild
Volume 11, Number 1, January 2003



January 2 will be Robert Burns Night

Bathanti to Read Feb. 6



Award-winning poet,
author, and play-
wright Joseph
Bathanti will read
from his works at the February 2003
meeting of the Knoxville Writers' Guild.

Currently a visiting professor at UT,
Bathanti won the Carolina Novel Award for
2000-2001 for his first novel, *East Liberty*,
and is the author of four books of poetry.
One, *This Metal*, was nominated for the
National Book Award and won the 1997
Oscar Arnold Young Award for the best
book of poems by a North Carolina author.

Bathanti's play, "Afoto," won the Wachovia
Playwrights Prize and The Playwrights
Fund of North Carolina prize.

At the January 2 meeting of the Knoxville Writers' Guild, winners of the third annual Robert Burns Poetry Award/Terry Semple Memorial Contest will read their prize-winning poems. The program will begin at 7 p.m. at the Laurel Theater in the University area, 16th and Laurel.

Established in 2000 by Marybeth Boyanton in memory of her late husband, Terry Semple, the contest is for poetry on the subject of heritage, broadly defined. It might be the general impact of one's heritage on the discovery of self, or a celebration of ancestry, ethnicity, community, region or the mix of cultures in our society.

The first prize is \$200, plus two tickets to the Scottish Society of Knoxville's Robert Burns Night Celebration on Jan. 26, 2003. Two \$50 awards of excellence will go to the runners-up. One \$50 prize for a poem regarding Celtic heritage will be made by the Scottish Society of Knoxville.

Winners will also be recognized at the KWG Gala Awards in April. The program is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.



The Writing News



Pull out the old Trench - coat: there's work to do!

Read, Register, and Release

(Adapted from a CNN news report)

Folks at BookCrossing.com might have stumbled onto a way to turn the world into a virtual lending library-- something that would have made Benjamin Franklin, proponent of the first public library in the United States--very pleased. The Open Source software movement popularizes the notion that "information wants to be free," but Franklin originated the idea of a public library where ideas could be accessible to anyone, not just people with the means to buy books. BookCrossing.com, a free service that bills itself as the "karma of literature," wants to spread the joy. Its like joining a book club on line, except, in concert with the idea that books and ideas belong to everyone, members follow the "3 Rs of BookCrossing: Read, Register and Release." They use a numbering system to record and track their books, and then they "release them into the wild."

BookCrossers can leave books marked with a BookCrossing registration label anywhere (stickers often admonish, "Don't sell this book!") Coffee shops and restaurants are obvious sites, but adventurous types also leave books at bus stops, on trains and in airports. It turns into something of a scavenger hunt.

Then, on the Web site, BookCrossers post where they have dropped off each book. There, you can search by book, by drop location or by member, or choose the browse feature "gohunting." This is where karma comes in. It is a cross between "if you love something, set it free," and "cast your

bread upon the waters." Or, as Mary Hobbie, a BookCrosser from Atlanta, Georgia, put it, "The thrill of someone finding one of your 'released' books is the biggest deal ... I just like to know someone has found one of my books ... and then watch them release it and follow where the book goes." Children can be BookCrossers, too. One 8-year-old uses the site to store book reports and also leaves his books on playgrounds and other places kids will find them. Teachers sometimes use the site to read and release children's books as well.

For Sandra Krecioch, BookCrossing is a political act. She says the main value of the site for her is "becoming exposed to books that are not part of the big hype being pushed by large publishers." She likes finding books by smaller authors who have a hard time getting recognition.

The Internet facilitates the community, and though that might exclude those who can't get online, anyone, with or without Internet access, may find books that have been released into "the wild."

Theresa Levy, another BookCrosser, writes about the book trading that goes on with people who backpack or sail around the world, stopping at Internet cafes to log on during their travels. She plans to send a batch of registered books on her sister's next trip.

The idea, if it catches on, could turn the world into a library without walls, a virtual lending library with an online catalog.

Whether it catches on or not, BookCrosser Maryanne Stahl says, "The important thing is passing on works you love. Spreading the words."

So put on your trenchcoat and dark glasses, release your fondest book into the wild, and set it free.



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By JULIE AUER



It is still two weeks to Christmas as I write this column, but by the time it finds its audience, I will have gained at least five pounds and suffered through a series of massive hangovers. Despite the near constancy of holiday revelry, I will have forced myself to write whenever I had a night off, and I will have spent weekend afternoons lying on my sofa, alternately moaning and perusing copies of the *New Yorker*, *National Geographic*, and sundry vanity magazines. And by the time the New Year actually rolls around, I will eschew the

tradition of making a resolution in favor of refocusing on getting back to the business of work, writing, and winter.

And there she is, staring me down like a disapproving old woman, girded and bundled up for January's promise of cold and desolation, the post-holiday Blue Lady. Maybe that's why we party so much all season long, from Thanksgiving to New Year's: we know she's waiting for us, in her patient condescension, ready to whip us back into line. We obey her, and time is why. Time as we have invented it rolls over into a new solar rotation, and we find that as good a time as any to pull ourselves together and behave like decent human beings again, driven to productivity and creativity.

Maybe it's why I'm drawn to Russian literature just after the New Year, and inspired to write little vignettes about people named Vanka and Vassily, trudging through the frozen steppes after having been thrown off a train to Vladivostok. And frankly, that's how I view the months between the holiday season and the advent of the spring: the year's badlands, lorded over by the Blue Lady, a time when it's best to stay inside, both in our homes and in ourselves.

There are still a few occasions for feasting and merriment in these stark winter months, and we'll give you one January 2: our annual celebration of the poet Robert Burns, who was born in January. And we'll take your contest entries in poetry, fiction, and essay, which you should be working on since there's nothing else to do. The deadline is the end of January, just when the crocuses start coming up.



What's Up with Local Writers

Walt Barger, author of *Dark Sails in the Twilight: Select Poems*, along with **Lindy Thomas**, author of *Peavire Creek*, a Civil War historical fiction, will be signing books at Books-A-Million, 8513 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, on Jan. 25, 3-6pm.

Linda Parsons Marion is interviewed by husband **Jeff Daniel Marion** in the new book *Her Words: Diverse Voices in Contemporary Appalachian Women's Poetry* (Felicia Mitchell, Ed., UT Press, 2002). Featured are 20 interviews and critical essays by writers including Kay Byer, George Ella Lyon, Jo Carson, Nikki Giovanni, Lynn Powell, and Betsy Sholl, in addition to Marion. The book is available at Barnes & Noble.

If you would like to write a book review for the newsletter, please send a review of 200 words and a one-line bio and e-mail to jmd531k@msn.com

The Guild's **Genre Writing Group** is looking for writers who write in a "genre" - i.e., science fiction, mystery, romance, western, etc. Now is the time to form a group dedicated to reviewing and promoting your work. **David Booker** is the new group coordinator. Contact him at talltalestogo@hotmail.com

Members' Directory Out

The Knoxville Writers' Guild's current members' directory is now available. Members who live out of town and cannot attend a meeting can order a copy by e-mail (schoene@aztec.lib.utk.edu) or leave a message (865 974 3004), but due to mailing costs and lack of secretarial staff, only out-of-county members can have copies mailed to them. Directories can be acquired from Pamela Schoenewaldt at meetings.

KWG Writing Contests Schedule for 2003



The Knoxville Writers' Guild sponsors the following annual literary contests with more than \$2000 in prizes for poetry, fiction, and essays! Enter as many of these contests as you like:

Peter Taylor Prize for the Tennessee Book Award (ongoing; not open to members or employees of UT)

Robert Burns Poetry Award: Terry Semple Memorial Prize (Deadline Dec. 15)

The following contests will share a deadline of January 31 each year.

Libba Moore Gray Poetry Prize

Leslie Garrett Fiction Contest

Young Writers Prize in Poetry

Essay Contest (Theme this year is "Love and Death")

Read winning entries from recent contests at www.knoxvillewritersguild.org

General Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to **all** KWG contests. However, see specific guidelines under each contest heading for individual exceptions or additions.

1. Contests open to residents of Tennessee above the age of 18 with the following exceptions: Members of the KWG board of directors are excluded from all KWG competitions. Previous 1st prize winners cannot enter the contest they won. Also, see Specific Guidelines under Young Writers Prize for age and locale exceptions .
2. Contestants may enter more than one contest simultaneously, and may make multiple submissions to the same contest unless stated otherwise (see each contest's Specific Guidelines).
3. All deadlines are Jan. 31, except for the Robert Burns Poetry Award, which is December 15, 2002, postmarked.
4. Winners and runners-up will be announced at our March Awards Gala. (Details announced in Jan.). Include SASE for list of winners.
5. Include a cover sheet with each entry, clearly designating the contest you are entering. Include name, address, phone number and email address (optional) on cover sheets only. Each entry must be accompanied by a cover sheet. Do not put name or other identifying information on the entries themselves. (They will be coded, by number, for judging).
6. Manuscripts will not be returned; keep copies.
7. See below for descriptions of individual contests, deadlines, judges and any specific rules peculiar to individual contests.
8. Some of these contests charge a \$15 entry fee. Most provide one free submission per contest for KWG members. Guild membership is \$25 per year; \$20 for students. To join, make checks payable to 'KWG.' For more information, visit the KWG webpage at www.knoxvillewritersguild.org.
- 9. All work must be original and previously published works will not be accepted.**



Taylor Prize 2000 Finalist Has Book Chosen by WVU

***Oradell at Sea* by Meredith Sue Willis. Vandalia Press 2002. \$22.50 (c).**

The first original novel to be published under the Vandalia Press imprint for creative West Virginia writing will be Meredith Sue Willis's *Oradell at Sea*, a book chosen as a finalist in the Peter Taylor Prize for the Novel, sponsored by the Knoxville Writers' Guild and the University of Tennessee Press.

This contemporary novel, which is due out in September, takes place in two main settings: on a cruise ship and through flashbacks to the narrator's fictional West Virginia hometown. The transitions from present to past are well done and help the reader see how this now wealthy woman came to her current view of the world and show why she has such difficulty in handling the present crisis.

Vandalia press publishes works of interest to the general reader, including fiction, poetry, non-fiction and commentary on many subjects with a particular focus on the culture of West Virginia and Appalachia.

Guild Plans 2nd Annual Gala April 5

The Knoxville Writers' Guild is making plans for its second annual gala on Saturday, April 5, 2003, at the Holston Hills Country Club.

The idea of the annual gala is to present an opportunity to honor both a long-time local writer and winners of the various competitions sponsored by the Guild. Last year's honoree was *News-Sentinel* writer Carson Brewer. Writers will read from their prize-winning works. There will also be music and food.

Don Williams, vice-president of the Guild, is the coordinator for the event. Those working on his committee are Laura Still, Judy Loest, Marybeth Boyanton, Don Webster, and Kay Newton.

Emporium Arts Center to be New Home for Guild

The Emporium, a downtown Knoxville Building being renovated by entrepreneur David Dewhirst, will be the new home of the Knoxville Writers' Guild business office.

The building, located at the corner of Jackson Avenue and Gay Street, will be home to an artists' community, the pulse of arts and culture in the city. Besides the Writers' Guild, which will move in sometime in March 2003, two other parties have made commitments to have their galleries housed in the building. The KWG office will be used for Guild projects and as a meeting place for small groups. It will contain a computer and filing cabinets for Guild records.



George Garrett



Doris Betts



Alan Cheuse



John Casey

Distinguished Authors Lend Expertise to Taylor Prize Judging

This year's judge for the Peter Taylor Novel Competition is John Casey, author of *Spartina*, which won the 1989 National Book Award for fiction. In his newest book, *The Half-life of Happiness*, (1999) Casey brings us another family portrait. Casey is the fourth judge selected to review finalists' manuscripts submitted for the Taylor Prize. All judges have been figures prominent in the literary field.

George Garrett judged the 2000 contest. Mr. **Garrett** holds a BA from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and an MFA in Creative Writing from Vermont College.

He is the author of thirty books—novels, story and poetry collections, biographies, criticism, essays, and dramas—and he is the editor of eighteen other books.

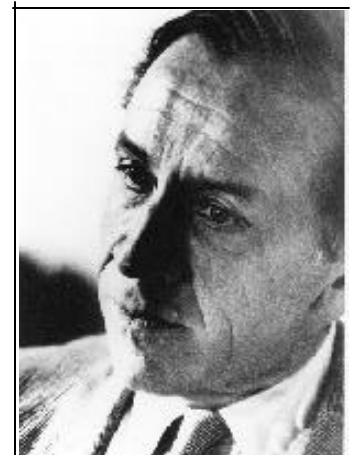
Doris Betts judged the contest in 2001. Ms. Betts, Alumni Distinguished Professor of English at the University of North Carolina, is the author of ten books of fiction, including *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Heading West*, *Souls Raised from the Dead*,

Alan Cheuse judged the 2002 contest. He is a novelist, story writer, journalist, and author, among other books, of *The Grandmothers' Club* and *The Light Possessed* and *Lost and Old Rivers*, and the memoir *Fall Out of Heaven*. He serves as book commentator for NPR's evening news-magazine "All Things Considered."

After a bevy of readers appointed by Brian Griffin, coordinator of the Peter Taylor Project, reads through hundreds of manuscripts, those considered best are given to the judge, who chooses one as the winner and often recommends runners-up for publication by various presses. Rules for the Peter Taylor competition can be found at the KWG web site, www.knoxvillewritersguild.org. Members of the Guild and UT staff are ineligible for the contest.

Sarah Van Arsdale has won the 2003 contest with her novel, *Blue*, which will be published by the University of Tennessee Press. She holds a BA from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and an MFA in Creative Writing from Vermont College. Her first novel, *Toward Amnesia*, was published by Riverhead/Putnam in 1996.

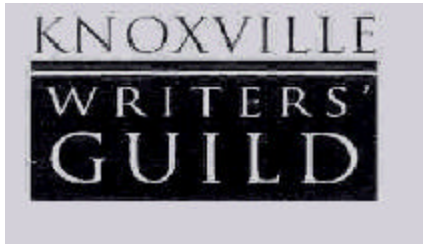
Peter Taylor



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 Theater. **Officers:** President: Julie Auer; Vice President: Don Williams; Secretary: Kim Trevathan; Treasurer: Laura Still; Hospitality: Kay Newton; Publicity: Marybeth Boyanton; Membership database: Rip Lydick; President Emeritus: Jack Reese; VP Emeritus: Michael Gillespie; **Newsletter Editor:** Jeanne McDonald; **Webmistress:** Jo Ann Pantanizopoulos. **Board Members:** Marybeth Boyanton, Robert Boyd, Catherine Crawley, Robert Lydick, Kay Newton, Caroline Norris, Pamela Schoenewaldt, Laura Still, Marlene Taylor, Inga Treitler, Kim Trevathan, Stacy Jones Waller, and Don Williams. Dues are \$25, \$20 for students. The KWG does not discriminate against any person because of race, age, gender, handicap or country of national origin. Send e-mail messages to editor, jnc531k@msn.com, or to president Julie Auer at hildegard@earthlink.com **web:** www.knoxvillewritersguild.org; for address changes or corrections, e-mail ripot@hotmail.com

Please remember that dues are now \$25; \$20 for students.



**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 \$25, or give the form and your check to any board member of the Guild. Dues are \$20 for students. Membership allows you to participate in study groups, receive discounts on books and Guild merchandise, and monthly issues of the newsletter.

**A Happy
New
Year!**



Name _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____

Email Address _____

Web Site _____