

# East Tennessee Writer

## Bob Cumming Pays Tribute to a Great Kentucky Writer:

### James Still, 1906-2001

Most of you know that James Still, the great Kentucky novelist, short story writer, and poet, died on Saturday, April 28, 2001, just 69 days short of his 95th birthday. Lee Smith had warned me that he was very ill, so I was not surprised at his passing, but that does not lessen the impact. James Still has often been called "The Dean of Appalachian Writers" but he was more than that; he was so unique in the way he approached his craft, that those of us who had known him for some years are convinced that we will not see his like again. The first of his 13 books was a book of poetry, *Hounds on the Mountain* (1937), followed by his legendary novel, *River of Earth* (1940). His last book, *From the Mountain, From the Valley: New and Selected Poems*, edited by Ted Olson, is due out from University of Kentucky Press this month.

On Tuesday, May 1, I traveled with my son, Beto, and George Scarbrough to Hindman, KY, to attend James Still's funeral. This was not a sad affair. The funeral, planned to the last detail by Mr. Still himself, and billed by him as a "celebration", was certainly that. There were reminiscences from Teresa Bradley (Mr. Still's lovely daughter), and many important Appalachian writers and scholars, including Loyal Jones, Lee Smith, Wilma Dykeman, Gurney Norman. After the ceremony James Still was laid to rest with full military honors (WWII, Army Air Force) on a hillside overlooking the May Stone Building on the Hindman Settlement School Campus. And then the congregation gathered in the dining hall of the Settlement for a meal and conversation. It was really good to visit with old friends in the Appalachian writing community at "The Forks of Troublesome Creek" and to reflect on our good fortune for having personally known James Still.

The writers and friends present on this occasion represented different generations. George Scarbrough had corresponded with James Still for 40 years and just had won the "James Still Award for the Writing of the Appalachian South," from the Fellowship of Southern Writers at the Chattanooga Conference on Southern Literature. James Still, who was mentally alert to the end of his long life, was delighted that the award had gone to his old friend. George remarked that the celebration brought to him a sense of closure that he could not have achieved in any other way. On the other end of the age spectrum a number of schoolchildren and younger writers who will, in time, come to represent the region, were present. Silas House, a rural mail carrier who has attended the Appalachian Workshop in Hindman and whose debut novel, *Clay's Quilt*, was recently published by Algonquin to enthusiastic national critical acclaim, was there to remind us that the literary heritage of this region is still in good hands. It was a day to remember.

Photo by Fred Brown



## June 7 Program to Feature Poetry Contest Winners

Donna Doyle, Katherine Smith, and Connie Green, winners of the Libba Moore Gray 2001 Poetry Competition, will read their work at the June 7 meeting of the Knoxville Writers' Guild at 7 p.m. at the Laurel Theater. See inserted pages 4 and 5 for the winning poems and additional information.

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Ethiopia? When Jo Ann Pantanizopoulos got hooked on the web, it was good news for the Knoxville Writers' Guild. Here she tells how she maintains the highly visible web site: [www.knoxvillewritersguild.org](http://www.knoxvillewritersguild.org)



Jo Ann  
Pantanizopoulos,  
keeper of the  
Knoxville Writers'  
Guild Web site

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“Although I spend the greater part of each day spelling out my name for people, I do have some time left over to work on the Guild’s web site!” says Jo Ann Pantanizopoulos, flashing her brilliant, infectious smile. Jo Ann maintains the Guild’s growing web site. As a board member in 1998, she suggested the Guild go online. At first, it was located on the KORRNET server, but last

year, the Guild purchased the domain name of [www.knoxvillewritersguild.org](http://www.knoxvillewritersguild.org) and decided to place it with the Esper Systems, a local internet provider.

“We are able to advertise our programs and our publications to Knoxville and the world,” Jo Ann says, “During the month of March, we had hits from as far away as Ethiopia and Singapore.”

By routinely adding the Guild’s web site to all the major search engines on the internet, the Guild’s name is assured of appearing in the list of results when people use keywords, such as **writers, writing, Knoxville, Tennessee Prize, or writing contests** in their searches.

Jo Ann also maintains the web site for the Division Street campus of Pellissippi State Technical Community College where she works as the coordinator of the Educational Resources Center and previously taught English. “I attended an html workshop a few years ago that the college offered, and I got hooked!” she says.

“The thing I like the most about “doing” web pages is that I’m always learning something new!” For example, this year’s member survey is now available online and the Guild’s archived newsletters can be viewed in pdf format—just as they actually appear in print format.

“But nothing in the web site could exist if the Guild’s board and newsletter editor didn’t supply me with activities information, book reviews, photos, and ideas—it’s a team effort,” Jo Ann says.

Despite her tremendous contribution to the projects and visibility of the Knoxville Writers' Guild, Jo Ann believes she has received a lot of inspiration in return. “Belonging to the Guild energizes me and keeps me writing. I recently had an essay published in *Breathing the Same Air*, and I submitted poetry to a contest last week,” Jo Ann says.

Jo Ann is married to Yanni Pantanizopoulos and has four children: Vera, Antigone, Niko, and Alexia; a son-in-law, Koudou; and a cat, Persephone.

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Check out the web site at the above address.

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*“I spend the greater part of each day spelling out my name for people..”*

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*The Knoxville Writers' Guild meets the first Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Laurel Theater, located at 16th and Laurel Streets, two blocks off Cumberland Avenue. Refreshments are served. Meetings are open to the public, and a one-dollar donation is requested.*

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# What's Up with Local Writers

Because most writers work in relative isolation, we want to advertise our members' successes. If you have a success, no matter how small, please email the editor at [jmd531k@msn.com](mailto:jmd531k@msn.com) or write down the information on the accomplishments sheets being distributed at Guild meetings each month Here's the scoop for May, 2001:

**Carol Smucker** is co-author of *Nursing the Spirit*, to be published by the American Nurses Assn. in July, 2001.

**Scott Baer** is in the process of writing a novel.

**Wendy Smith** writes a monthly article about Rottweilers for Suite 101.com.

**Michael Knight** has recently placed a story in *Virginia Quarterly Review*.

**David Joyner** has published fiction in *New Millennium Writings*.

**Jeanne McDonald** and **Fred Brown's** book, *The Serpent Handlers*, has been chosen as one of the three best religious books of 2000 in the Independent Publisher Book Awards for the year 2001.

**Mary Tebo** wrote a natural history column for the *Tallahassee Democrat*, commented for public radio and is now involved with the short story group in the Guild.

**Linda Behrend** has published "East TN Journeys: The Photographs of Fred W. Behrend," in "Now and Then: the Appalachian Magazine," Spring 2001.

**Pamela Schoenewalt** has published widely here and abroad, has won the Chekhov Award for Short Fiction and the Cindy Golden Eagle for video production. She has stories appearing in the upcoming *New Millennium Writings* and the *Iron Horse Literary Review*.

**Caroline Norris** has a new poetry book out--*A Small Price to Pay: Poems from East Tennessee and Beyond*.

**Connie Green** has been teaching workshops on poetry and writing for young people.

**Tom Mayer** is writing and directing a video documentary on silent films, shot in upstate New York.

**Yolanda Lea** has written "Cruising World Poetry: Knoxville Brew Anthem to a Scruffy City."

**Ronald D.Haun** has just sent out a murder mystery to a publisher.

**Alan Sims** has just completed his first novel.

# Summer Workshops Will Feature Classes by Local Writers, Songsmiths, Poets

An exciting lineup of instructors has been recruited for the Knoxville Writers' Guild Summer Workshops, now in its third year. Unless otherwise noted, workshops will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Division Street Campus of the Pellissippi Community College.

R. B. Morris, Knoxville blues musician and poet, will lead classes on three evenings. "What Is a Song?" will be his topic on June 12; "Song Craft" is the topic for June 13; and "The Music Biz" will be discussed on June 14.

Other instructors and classes will be held as follows: (Because some last-minute scheduling changes have been made, refer to the enclosed brochure for correct times and dates.)

Don Williams: "Writing for Publication," 6/14

Paul Harrill: "Fiction Writing," 6/18

Jack Neely, "Usable History," 5:30-8:30, 6/19

Brian Griffin, "Discovering Stories," 6/20

Don Williams, "Writing for Publication," 6/21

Bucky Carter, "Comics and Cartooning," 6/25

Marilyn Kallet, "Advanced Poetry Writing," 5:30-7:00 and "Dreaming Deep," 7:30-9:00. 6/26 and repeated on 6/28 and 7/10

Bucky Carter, "On-line Entertainment Publications," 6/27

Candance Reaves, "The Elements of Writing Poetry," 7/9 and "Critiquing and Revising Poetry," 7/10

Brian Griffin, "Creating Place in Short Stories," 7/11

Candance Reaves, "Polishing and Submitting Poetry," 7/12

John Reaves, "Getting the Words Right," 7/16

Ina Hughs, "Making Up the Past," Part I, 7/17 and Part II, 7/19

Brian Griffin, "How Conflict Works in Short Stories," 7/18

Doris Ivie, "Symbols in Your Life," 2:30-4:30, 7/23 and "Pilgrimage to Personal Truth" (see brochure for times) and "Pilgrimage and Symbols" 7/25 (see brochure for correct times)

Annabel Agee, "Guided Autobiography" (see brochure for time), 7/24 and "Interviewing Elders," 3:00-5:00, 7/26

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**SURVEY:** The KWG is currently distributing a survey to help discover what the writing community would like to see added to the programs, contests, and projects of the Guild. If you have not already done so, please go to the Guild's web site and fill out a survey form electronically. We appreciate your participation:

[www.knoxvillewritersguild.org](http://www.knoxvillewritersguild.org)

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## 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: John Reaves; Vice President: Julia Auer; Secretary: Kim Trevathan; Treasurer, Lonnie Butler; President Emeritus: Jack Reese; VP Emeritus: Michael Gillespie; Newsletter Editor: Jeanne McDonald; Webmistress: Jo Ann Pantanizopoulos.

**Board Members:** Julia Auer, Marybeth Boyanton, Jeannette Brown, Alison Conde-Jaenicke, Brian Griffin, Jacqueline Kittrell, Michael Knight, Judy Loest, Flossie McNabb, Elaine Oswald, Kim Trevathan, Penny Tschantz, Allen Wier, 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; e-mail should be addressed to [jmd@utk.edu](mailto:jmd@utk.edu)

Web address: [www.knoxvillewritersguild.org](http://www.knoxvillewritersguild.org)

To change or correct your mailing address, email [vgr300z@infi.net](mailto:vgr300z@infi.net)

*East Tennessee Writer*

## Vicars Will Read in July

The Writers' Guild July 5 program will feature Angie Vicars, reading from her first published novel.

## Sign up for Workshops:

See article and brochure inside this newsletter for summer workshop classes to be offered by the Guild.



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To join the Knoxville Writers' Guild, complete the form below and mail to P.O. Box 10326, Knoxville, TN 37939, along with annual dues of \$20, \$15 if you are a student. Membership entitles you to participate in study groups, receive Guild discounts on books and merchandise, and monthly issues of the newsletter. For questions about dues or change of address, email [vgr300z@infin.net](mailto:vgr300z@infin.net)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

*For questions about dues, or to change your mailing address, e-mail [vgr300z@infi.net](mailto:vgr300z@infi.net)*

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**Knoxville Writers' Guild**

**P.O. Box 10326**

**Knoxville, TN 37939**



