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# East Tennessee Writer

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Newsletter of the Knoxville Writers' Guild  
Volume 9, Number 10, October 2001



## Award-Winning Poet Will Read on Oct.4

**K**athryn Stripling Byer, award-winning writer, will read her poetry for the Knoxville Writers' Guild on Thursday, October 4, at 7 p.m. at the Laurel Theater. The reading is co-sponsored by the Knoxville Writers' Guild and the UT Creative Writing Program. Her most recent honor has been the award of the North Carolina Prize for Literature.

Stripling Byer graduated from Wesleyan College and earned her MFA from the UNC Greensboro, where she studied with Allen Tate, Fred Chappell, and Robert Watson. She is the author of three books of poetry: *Black Shawl* (Louisiana State University Press, 1998); *Wildwood Flower* (1992), the 1992 Lamont Poetry Selection of The Academy of American Poets; and *The Girl in the Midst of the Harvest* (1986), winner of the the Associated Writing Programs Poetry Series Award. Her fourth volume, forthcoming from LSU Press, is *Catching Light*. She has also co-edited a book with Marilyn Kallet: *Leaving the Nest: Mothers and Daughters on the Art of Saying Good-bye*. The reading is open to the public, and refreshments will be served. A one-dollar donation is requested at the door. For further information, call Dr. Marilyn Kallet at 974-6947.

### TAYLOR PRIZE VOLUNTEERS

Screening Committee: Brian Griffin, Julie Auer, Flossie McNabb, Judy Loest, Jeannette Brown

PTP Screeners, First Round: Karyn Adams, Julie Auer, Scott Barker, Marybeth Boyanton, Jeannette Brown, Connie Green, Brian Griffin, Tim Grindstaff, Margaret Held, Cliff Honicker, Lisa Horstman, Doris Ivie, Jeannette Kelleher, Jackie Kittrell, Michael Knight, Judy Loest, Stephanie McIntosh, Flossie McNabb, Nancy Roberson, Wayne Stagg, Laura Still, Susan Thomas, Penny Tschantz, Laura Underwood, Donna Webster, Allen Wier

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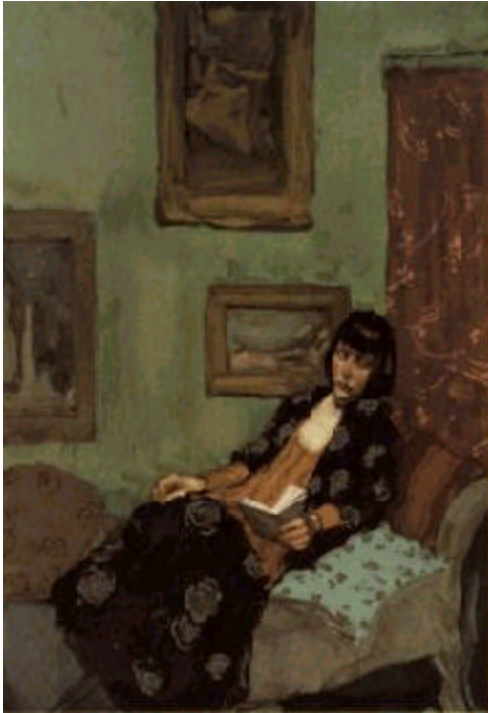
## Guild Celebrates First Peter Taylor Prize Competition Winner

**T**wo years of planning and hard work will be rewarded for members of the Knoxville Writers' Guild on Thursday, October 11, when DeWitt Henry, first recipient of the Peter Taylor Prize for the Novel, will read from and sign his winning novel, *The Marriage of Anna Maye Potts*, at the University Club from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

The project was the dream child of former KWG president Fred Brown, whose efforts with Brian Griffin and Allen Wier led to a collaboration with Jennifer Siler and the UT Press and the UT Department of English. Griffin then spearheaded the project, leading a team of Guild readers who went through hundreds of manuscripts to come up with finalists to present to the judge for the final selection. Prize-winning author George Garrett was final judge for the initial contest, and well-known southern writer Doris Betts is this year's judge. Copies of Mr. Henry's novel can be purchased at the University Club courtesy of Barnes and Noble Booksellers. KWG members will receive special invitations for the event from UT Press.

# The Writing News

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## Union Avenue

An Urban Journal Exploring Place, Purpose, Literature, Memory, and This Time

What's "Union Avenue"? Yes, it's long been a charming street in downtown Knoxville, but now it's much more than that: It's a window into the mind of one of our own Knoxville poets--Judy Loest.

"I think this is going to be key for me in making me write," says Judy. "I maybe make a paper journal entry every 6 mos—now, with the website, I have the urge to write all the time. Primarily, this online urban journal is a mind trick, a way to motivate a lazy writer to write (we'll see....); but, also, it's a means of commenting, and focusing, on the literary/artistic life in an urban setting that is not particularly conducive to the arts and, by doing so, creating an esthetic reality. Writers throughout history have been charged with naming things, believing that all things come into being when they are born in language, that the Word creates both space and time. Naming prevents something essential from passing into oblivion and is an invitation for something essential to come into being."

On her site, Judy makes reference to all forms of art--literary quotes, art that has literary themes, such as Malcolm Liepke's lithograph on the left, "Woman Reading," (Arcadia Fine Arts, NY), and she links her site to important writers' sites on the

Internet and writes stories about the current literary world, such as the recent publication of Nancy Milford's long-awaited biography of Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Savage Beauty*. She has also been active in coordinating art and literary projects in Kknoxville.

Even if Judy claims that the site is a way to motivate herself, anyone who accesses it finds a dozen inspiring and helpful links and articles. "This web site will always be a work in progress," she says. The URL is <http://www.geocities.com/jloest>

To anyone who wants to create a web site, Judy suggests referring to the following guides: "Creating Web Pages with HTML Simplified," 2nd ed., 1999, IDG Books Worldwide, Inc. "This is a beginner text beginning w/a basic intro to the Internet," says Judy. Also, "HTML for the World Wide Web: Visual Quickstart Guide," 4th ed. by Elizabeth Castro, 2000, Peachpit Press. ("This is both beginner and intermediate text. Both texts are picture-based, the only type of manual my brain will process.")

Judy adds that she used the free personal page setup at Yahoo Geocities, but that using one of the free sites means that you have to put up with ads on your site. Also, she says that you don't have to know HTML to create a webpage, that sites like Geocities have programs for diff levels of expertise. Yahoo has PageWizard with step-by-step instructions and PageBuilder, which Judy used, an element that gives the user more control over the design.

The website for learning more about Geocities is <http://www.geocities.yahoo.com/home>

Check it out. You'll find all sorts of stimulating intellectual gifts there.



# What's Up with Local Writers

**Fred Brown and Harry Moore** will be signing copies of their new book, just released from UT Press, at the 22nd annual Fall Homecoming at the Museum of Appalachia in Norris, TN, **October 11-14**. *Discovering October Roads: Fall Colors and Geology in Rural East Tennessee*, is a traveling companion for scenic fall trips, geologic history and topography, cultural history and anecdotes. The book also contains dozens of color photographs, maps, plates and figures and includes directions for trips in the Blue Ridge, Valley and Ridge, and the Cumberland Plateau. In addition, the authors will be signing books on Sunday, October 7, at Barnes & Noble from 1-2 p.m.

## Southern Festival of Books Oct. 12-14 on the Executive Plaza in Nashville

Members of the Knoxville Writers' Guild who will read their work at the festival are **Kim Trevathan, Marilyn Kallet, and Jeff Daniel Marion**. Poet **Arthur Smith**, UT English Department, will also read.

## Specialty Groups of the KWG:

**Novel Writers Group: Timothy Joseph,** joseph@esper.com

**Poetry Interest Group: Marybeth Boyanton,** kwg.pip.workshop@att.net

**Non Fiction & Memoir: Jayne Raparelli,** jayner@ccdi.net

**Writing Women: Doris Ivie** divie@pstcc.cc.tn.us

**Short Fiction: Julie Auer,** Hildegaard@earthlink.net

**Experiments in Voice, Genre, Style Group: MaryTebo,** tebo@utkx.utcc.utk.edu

Email leaders of groups for information.

Here's news from **Jennifer Watts**, one of our favorite KWG members, who worked tirelessly on the memoirs book and was an inspiration to all the seniors who attended workshops. Jennifer and two others (Rebecca Cook, and Helga Kidder) have founded the Chattanooga Writers Guild (July 11, 2001). "We now have 39 members!" Jennifer exults. "We've just held our first Guild meeting (on Sept. 11th, a tragic day for the nation, but the meeting helped to uplift those who came). We have all our events planned through December, and are planning a couple of other special events for the next couple of months (one of our members, Dr. Prem Chopra, just pulsed a book: *The Purpose and Meaning of Life*, and we are planning some events for him). We have established a newsletter, *The Chattanooga Writer* (similarly named as *The East Tennessee Writer*, I realized, after we named it . . . Helga Kidder, one of the founders came up with the name) We have our website up and running though still under development:

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

Thanks for being there for inspiration! I learned a lot from my involvement in the Knoxville Writers Guild and I'm thankful for all the wonderful meetings. . . . I'll still try to make it up there as much as I can!"

Lately, you might have noticed that **WUOT Radio** (91.9 FM) has been announcing Knoxville Writers' Guild activities. KWG is now a nonprofit supporting organization for public radio in East Tennessee. The stations annual fund drive will be held Oct. 13-20. Please indicate your support for the station by calling in a pledge. This will help support not only the station, but all the programs supported by public radio.



## Nasty Rejections Winners (Or Losers?)

(From the MR web site) The *Missouri Review* is pleased to announce the winners of our Nasty Rejections Contest. Each of the three winners will receive a two-year subscription to Review as well as a free t-shirt.

### The winners:

Lorne Singh shared a pompous and cutting rejection with us:  
Dear Writer,  
It is our job to protect our readers from mendacity and mediocrity. On this basis we advise you to find another venue in which to express your creative urges and miscellaneous viewpoints.

Joy Passanante with her short and brutal one which was hand-printed in hot pink ink on onion skin typing paper (circa 1963):  
Dear Joy, I don't like these.

C.J. Sage's rejection in painful verse:  
This is just to say  
we have taken some plums  
we found in our mail box.  
You were hoping they would  
be yours. Forgive us,  
others seemed sweeter  
or colder, more bold  
or whatever.

**Be on the lookout for our next contest, the First Lines Contest. Consult the web at [moreview.org](http://moreview.org)**

# ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK

A member's brush with tragedy by Marilyn Kallet



*(Marilyn's story ran in the Knoxville News-Sentinel on Tuesday, Sept.25)*

Relaxed, I sat with my seatbelt fastened on Delta flight 1702, scheduled to depart from LaGuardia at 9:10 on Tuesday morning, September 11th. I had been in the East Village the night before, giving a poetry reading to an actors' co-op. Now I was on my way back to Knoxville, where I was expected to teach my afternoon class in poetry writing at UT. "Ladies and gentlemen," the captain said, "We have just been informed that a plane has hit the World Trade Center, and that we will not be able to take off at this time. Please leave the plane immediately." My legs felt rubbery, yet I thought that surely this was only a temporary inconvenience. Back in the lobby, we lined up to rebook our flights out of New York. But at 9:17 an airport announcement went out: "All of the airports are closed. Proceed to the baggage claim area." The airport television sets had gone blank.

Downstairs, the luggage from every airline was coming out on the carousels, or had been piled on the floor. The Delta baggage handlers made handmade cardboard signs with flight numbers, and piled up the luggage next to the signs. Small miracle, my bags were in front. I grabbed them and made for the hotel reservation phone. The line was long. "All the hotels are booked," a woman said. Airport phones were dead. I walked outside, hoping to find a cab. Hundreds of people were gathered looking for transportation, for answers as to what to do next. Nearby, Grand Central Parkway traffic zoomed out of the city. No way to cross without being killed. Cabs rolled by our little island but would not stop—not until a man jumped out into the road waving a hundred-dollar bill. Others with wads of cash followed suit. I had only a little cash in my pocket; I had been on my way home, after all.

Suddenly the police came by and pushed us all away from the airport building out into the center aisle, nearer to traffic. As we were leaving, a bomb squad entered the terminal building. A well-dressed businessman with a cell phone asked me, "Would you like for me to get you a hotel room?" I turned to a woman about my age who was traveling with her adolescent daughter and asked, "What are you going to do?"

"I rented a car as soon as they bumped us from the plane."

"Can I go with you?" I asked this stranger. The woman looked at me, then at the man who had just asked me about a room, and said protectively, "Sure, you come with me. We'll go out to Long Island." We dragged our bags toward the Hertz rental company. For the first time in my life, I felt like a displaced person. At least I had a friend! The Hertz van finally picked us up. Ahead of us, we could see a giant cloud of black smoke. "That's it, that's the World Trade Center!" someone said. It looked as if a nuclear bomb had been dropped. "The Pentagon's been hit," someone announced. At Hertz, the lines were incredibly long. My new friend, Dina, had a magic "gold card." We got a car and headed away from the city. Dina's first plan was to head to her aunt's in Brooklyn. "What will they think about your bringing a white lady home?" I asked. "There are white people in my family," Dina said. "Don't worry."

The roads to Brooklyn were blocked off. We headed out to Long Island. On the other side of the expressway, racing by us, passed hundreds of emergency vehicles streaming out of Long Island toward the city. Dina's daughter, Tonya, who is a Fifth Grader, was scared. "I'll never trust the sky again," she said. Military planes flew overhead. Dina decided to head for her parents' house in Poughkeepsie. My sister lives in Hamden, Connecticut. We would take the ferry from Long Island to Connecticut. This lovely stranger, who was quickly becoming my friend, said she would take me right to my sister's door. But traffic on the Long Island Expressway was even more terrible than usual. By four p.m. we arrived in Port Jefferson, where the ferry departs for Connecticut. "Five hours' wait for the ferry," the officials told us. The line of cars stretched for four blocks. I called my cousin from Hauppauge, who came to pick me up. Dina chose to wait in line, determined to get to her parents' house.

I spent the night in Hauppauge, and in the early afternoon took a ferry out to Bridgeport. The Harbormaster drove a motorboat alongside the ferry on the way out of and into the harbors. An army helicopter circulated overhead. I was thrilled to see my sister, Elaine Zimmerman, who is also the Connecticut Commissioner for Children and Family. She was already beginning to prepare materials for the schools to use in talking to the children about what had happened. Bradley Airport in Connecticut was closed on Thursday. The state police said there were few planes on the ground and a short supply of fuel. So I rented a car and headed home. All along the Route 84 in New York there were blinking neon signs that said "God Bless America!" alternating with the stars and stripes of our flag. I had been an anti-war protester in Boston during the sixties, but this time out I was grateful to see those flags, along the highways, in every little town. (Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Six days after I had planned to come home, I reentered Knoxville, and there were American flags all over our suburban neighborhood. I heard Lori Tucker on the car radio doing a fund-raiser for the Red Cross in New York. I felt proud to be home. A few lines resonated in my head from a poem I had begun on the highway out of New York:

The night before the end of innocence  
the lights of Houston Street glimmered.  
The firemen had not yet mingled with the ashes.

Now there's Before and After,  
stairwells, smoke,  
relatives clutching photos,  
buckets, hand over hand,

the smell of flesh.  
Those on the highest floors had not yet  
streamed into their ending,  
unfinished, falling like love letters

they had barely begun.  
The night before the air was shattered,  
the watchmen had not begun to speak of war,  
or revenge.



### WORDS ON THE WALL CEREMONY

To honor victims of the recent terrorist attacks, Diane Hanson has asked the KWG to participate in a Words on the Wall exhibit designed by Diane, stone sculptor Julie Warren Martin, glass sculptor Richard Jolly, and some UT A&A faculty. Artists are now adding their interpret-ive pieces to the base structure, built free by Denark Construction. The sculpture is in the parking lot behind Eva's To Go on Kingston Pike, across from Parker Bros. This idea was conceived as a monument to hope and free-dom among all peoples The Guild and the UT English Dept. plan a poetry reading/open mic for next Sat. on the site at 2p.m. Nancy Brennan Strange will sing and other artists still to be announced will participate. Anyone who wishes to leave a message is asked to write his or her words on the wall. Please plan to attend or to read your poem or statement at the ceremony. Contributions for Red Cross aid to victims will be accepted.

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## Guild Member Publishes Book on Manic-Depression

Rebecca Mitchell Merriman, member of the Knoxville Writers' Guild, has just published a memoir of her 20-year battle and ultimate triumph over manic-depression. The chronicle of her illness, *Writing Out the Storm: Journal Musings of a Manic-Depressive Wanderer*, writes of her nightmarish journey from Teacher of the Year to three psychotic breakdowns so horrible she was led away, handcuffed and humming, in the back of a paddy wagon, to a psychiatric facility.

The memoir follows the story of Merriman's long journey toward healing. The text is arranged as a series of essays, mixing accounts of her life with private journal entries and honest reflections on her battle with a crippling disease. Sherry Schrock, BS, CM, Peninsula Hospital, says the author "provides much needed insight into understanding the catastrophic flalout of living with bipolar disorder and does justice in heloping to crush the stereotypes and stigmas that accompany this often misunderstood illness." The book is available from the publisher by calling Xlibris at 1-888-795-4274 or through Xlibris.com, Amazon.com, Borders.com, or local bookstores.



## 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

**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 messages should be addressed to [jmd531k@msn.com](mailto:jmd531k@msn.com) or to [jareaves@mindspring.com](mailto:jareaves@mindspring.com)

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



You're invited  
to attend  
or read at the  
Words on the  
Wall Ceremony

(See page 5 inside)

Last we forget . . .

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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.

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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 [jareaves@mindspring.com](mailto:jareaves@mindspring.com)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELE-  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E- \_\_\_\_\_

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MAIL



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Knoxville, TN 37922