



CENTER
FOR THE BOOK
IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Center for the Book's networks of state centers and reading promotion partners extend the reach of the national center far beyond the programs it sponsors in the Washington area. The national center in the Library of Congress has established this newsletter to serve as a forum for all Center for the Book activities. We want to tell you what we are doing in Washington and around the country to support our mission of promoting books, reading, libraries and literacy.

And we want to hear about all the innovative ways you call attention to the importance of reading. Your updates can serve as year-round "idea exchanges" that augment our two in-person Idea Exchange meetings, held at the Library of Congress.

Please send your submissions to glam@loc.gov.

Idea Exchange Brings Together Veterans and New Representatives from State Centers

By Guy Lamolinara

The axiom that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts was in evidence on June 28-29, when the State Centers for the Book came together in Washington for their annual Idea Exchange meeting.

Many longtime faces were present and several new ones joined the fold of enthusiastic promoters of books and reading. "This is always an exciting time for the Library of Congress and Center for the Book staff," John Y. Cole, director of the national Center for the Book in Washington. Cole said he was also "excited" to take meeting attendees later in the day to the Jefferson Building for a visit to the Young Readers Center, which recently doubled in size in April. (The YRC officially opened last October. See *Center for the Book Newsletter September-December 2009*.)

Following self-introductions from those assembled, the group heard from Charles Trueheart, director of the Center for the Book's new reading promotion partner, the American Library in Paris, which is celebrating its 90th year. The library was started during World War I, said Trueheart, when American libraries sent a million and a half books to Paris for the soldiers. "So some high-minded people in France decided to create an American library. Its main mission is to provide a window into American literature, or any literature in English. It was also to be a showcase for American library science."

The largest English-language lending library in continental Europe, the American Library in Paris, "looks like your typical public library, but we have a different model. We are a private library and people buy memberships for about \$120 per year."

Other than that, however, the library operates much like any U.S. library, with programs and activities for its members.

"I am in a state of bliss because I am in a room of book lovers," said Malcolm O'Hagan, president of the American Writers Museum Foundation, another new Center for the Book reading promotion partner. "I have embarked with John [Cole] and a number of others on a new activity. And that is to create something that doesn't exist. ... We have museums that honor all of the arts. And we honor our baseball players, our hockey players. Rock stars. ... We honor writers in individual museums. ... But there is no place where you can see the whole arc of American literature, and see how the great works have [affected] our culture and history. And that is the mission of the American Writers Museum."

He invited everyone to go to the website of the proposed museum to fill out a questionnaire on "what you would like to see" in this museum at <http://ameri->

(Story continues on next page)



Representatives from 35 state Centers for the Book attended the annual Idea Exchange meeting on June 28-29 in the Library's Madison Building.

(Idea Exchange, from page 1)

canwritersmuseum.org/feedback.php/.

Next up was this writer, who provided a demonstration of the Read.gov and Center for the Book websites. Read.gov offers resources from throughout the Library of Congress website designed to stimulate the reading of books and to interest users in learning about the authors and illustrators who create them. “Audience” pages are geared specifically to Adults, Teens, Educators & Parents and Kids. A highlight of site is the exclusive story, “The Exquisite Corpse Adventure,” whose final episode will debut and be read by its author, Katherine Paterson, during the National Book Festival on Sept. 25. Paterson is the National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature for 2010-2011.

Attendees were invited to show off their own websites. Pennsylvania’s Karla Schmit demonstrated her state’s interactive Literary and Cultural Heritage Map. New Hampshire’s Mary Russell showed how she uses social media tools such as blogging and Facebook to promote the New Hampshire Center for the Book programs and initiatives. Her report prompted a larger discussion among the group on the pros and cons of Facebook and other tools such as Twitter. One conclusion that emerged is that people either must be “committed” to online networking or else find someone who is committed to do it for them.

Representatives from two Center for the Book contests were there to report on the state of their programs. Cathy Gourley, program coordinator for the Target Stores-supported Letters About Literature (LAL), was heartened by the 25 percent increase in entries for the 2009-2010 contest cycle. “This was the year we at LAL Central learned new post office slang, specifically ‘irks’ and ‘skids.’ During the deadline week of Dec. 7, we received about 10 mail bins – a bit more than usual. But on the Monday following our postmark deadline, waiting on the post office platform for us were two irks of mail bins, followed by a skid on Tuesday and another skid on Wednesday. Essentially, an irk is as tall, deep and wide as a refrigerator. A skid is one of those Home Depot-type carts used to move lumber out of the store. Imagine them filled with plastic mail bins and you can imagine our joy, followed by nervous anticipation of the task ahead: opening, counting, logging and then actually reading all those letters! In short, entries were up. At just under 70,000 letters, we saw a 25 percent increase in participation over the past year. We were thrilled.”

Gourley attributed the increase to a better LAL website, more publicity for the program in media articles such as a major story that ran in School Library Journal and the support of the Center for the Book and its State Center affiliates. She also acknowledged that the potential for a grant from Target for a school library was especially enticing, especially in these days of decreased funding for libraries nationwide.

(Story continues on next page)



Participants made their literature available and posters from past and current Center for the Book programs were on display.



John Cole emceed the Idea Exchange: “We are glad to see some old faces and also to see so many new ones here today.”



Pamela Michael, co-founder of River of Words, encouraged all the state centers to promote the environmental poetry and art contest.



Several focus groups were held in the afternoon.



Cathy Gourley, program coordinator of Letters About Literature, said that more than 70,000 letters were received in the most recent competition.

(Idea Exchange, from page 2)


“LAL’s increase in number of entries was not isolated to a few states. Nor was it focused on a particular competition level. Rather it was across all competition levels and, geographically, across all but eight states. This indicates that educators are becoming more aware of the program and recognize its value. We know from e-mail and cover letters that more teachers are using the lesson plans and other educational materials and, as a result, the quality of the letters also improved. More letters were on theme, for example, and were in fact reflective writing rather than fan letters.” A post-contest survey was conducted and the results are available from the LAL website.

Pamela Michael, co-founder of the River of Words (ROW) environmental poetry and art contest, came to provide highlights of the contest and foundation she co-founded with former Poet Laureate Robert Hass. She told attendees that what was formerly called the ROW Awards Ceremony is now the ROW Youth Creativity Recognition Awards because “we are honoring not just excellence in art and poetry. It is really creativity. There is a lot of interesting research in creativity going on now and there are creativity experts. It is clear that creativity is as important as knowledge acquisition in the educational process.

“And River of Words has shown itself to be a really effective way of nurturing creativity,” she continued. “Although we retain our emphasis on water and watersheds... the poems do not have to be just about water. Watershed is an area of land ... We also love it when the poems are not about water.”

The 15th annual River of Words ceremony at the Library was held the following day (see related story on page 6).

“We are finding out anecdotally, for example, that the collection we put together after Hurricane Katrina, called ‘Katrina’s Children,’ is being used in Gulf Coast states” as a way to start conversations in classroom about the hurricane’s devastating aftermath. River of Words poems have even inspired choral works, Michael said.

The remainder of the day was spent in focus groups and reporting on those groups’ meetings. A report on the issues discussed in these groups will appear in the next issue of this newsletter. 

Letters About Literature Breaks Previous Entry Record

About 70,000 Students Write to Authors Who Influenced Them

By Guy Lamolinara

If success can be measured in numbers, then the 70,000 entries in the 2009-2010 Letters About Literature (LAL) reading and writing contest are a testament to its rising popularity. The 70,000 letters represent a 25 percent jump from the previous contest cycle.

“Teachers, parents, schools and the students themselves are increasingly interested in participating in this contest,” said Cathy Gourley, the LAL program coordinator. “Not only do the students who enter benefit greatly, but there is also the possibility of the child’s school winning a grant for its library from Target.”

(Story continues on next page)

(Letters About Literature, from page 3)

Letters About Literature, a national reading and writing program that asks young people in grades 4 through 12 to write to an author (living or dead) about how his or her book affected their lives, has announced its 2010 winners.

Approximately 70,000 young readers from across the country participated in this year's Letters About Literature initiative, a reading promotion program of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, presented in partnership with Target. The number of participants was substantially higher than last year's total of 55,000.

This year's winners come from all parts of the country and wrote to authors as diverse as Francisco Jiménez, author of "The Circuit"; Laura Ingalls Wilder, author of the Little House on the Prairie series; and J.D. Salinger, author of "The Catcher in the Rye."

The top letters in each competition level for each state were chosen. Then, two National winners were chosen from each of the three competition levels: Level 1 (grades 4-6), Level (grades 7-8) and Level (grades 9-12). National winners each designate a favorite library that he or she wishes to receive a \$10,000 grant from Target. The students each receive a \$500 Target GiftCard.

The four National Honors recipients from each competition level designate a library to receive a \$1,000 Target grant; the students each receive a \$50 Target GiftCard.

Representatives from the Center for the Book were able to attend several LAL awards ceremonies. John Y. Cole, the center's director, and this writer, the center's communications officer, personally congratulated LAL participants during events in Anchorage, Alaska; Moscow, Idaho; Olympia, Wash.; Princeton, N.J.; and Baltimore.

Target sponsors Letters About Literature as part of its commitment to supporting education and early childhood reading. Target recognizes the integral role that reading plays in shaping a child's future, because reading is the foundation for lifelong learning and success. Since opening its doors, Target has given 5 percent of its income to organizations that support education, social services and the arts.

On the state level, the program is sponsored by affiliate State Centers for the Book. State and national judges include published authors, editors, publishers, librarians and teachers.

(Story continues on next page)



Anna Wichorek, a national prize winner from Anchorage, Alaska, wrote to Velma Wallis, author of "Two Old Women." Wallis (left), who lives near the Arctic Circle, traveled to Anchorage for the awards ceremony on May 17. Credit: Denielle Baldwin



Above: On the Washington state Capitol grounds (from left) Stephen Hitchcock, Reagan Nelson and Tyler Christensen celebrated their Letters About Literature awards on May 7.

Below: Austin Helminck was a national prize winner from Iowa. He wrote to Jeffrey Marx, author of "Season of Life."



National Winners

Level 1 (Grades 4-6):

- Lara Bagdasarian, 5th grade, UCLA Lab School, Los Angeles, Calif. She wrote to Francisco Jiménez, author of “The Circuit.”
- Reagan Nelson, 6th grade, Hutton Elementary School, Spokane, Wash. She wrote to Laura Ingalls Wilder, author of the Little House on the Prairie series.

Level 2 (Grades 7-8):

- Marissa Meier, 8th grade, Bios Christian Academy, Gilbert, Ariz. She wrote to John Bibebe, author of “The Magic Bicycle.”
- Siori Koener, 8th grade, Murfreesboro, Tenn. She wrote to J.D. Salinger, author of “The Catcher in the Rye.”

Level 3 (Grades 9-12):

- Anna Wichorek, 11th grade. Anchorage, Alaska. She wrote to Velma Wallis, author of “Two Old Women.”
- Kaitlyn Kressalt, 11th grade, Moscow Senior High School, Moscow, Idaho. She wrote to Dr. Seuss about a variety of his books for children and adults.

National Honor Winners

Level 1 (Grades 4-6):

- Eliana Khan, Needham, Mass.
- Imani Jackson, Jefferson City, Mo.
- Davis Klimek, Pepper Pike, Ohio
- Sydney Hodgin, Westminster, S.C.

Level 3 (Grades 9-12):

- Michael Egan, Wilton, Calif.
- Austin Helmink, Spencer, Iowa
- Amy Grant, Big Lake, Minn.
- Malli Swamy, Memphis, Tenn.

Level 2 (Grades 7-8):

- Caroline George, Limington, Maine
- Danile Flores, Cushing, Okla.
- Thanh Nguyen, Lancaster, Pa.
- Stephen Hitchcock, Woodinville, Wash.



John Cole, Center for the Book director, attended the New Jersey Letters About Literature awards ceremony at Drumthwacket, the state governor’s mansion, on May 12. During the ceremony he was presented with an award “in recognition of 30 years of worldwide eminence in behalf of libraries and literacy.” Congratulating him were (from left) Monmouth County Clerk Claire French, Monmouth County Library Commissioner Christine Saavedra, New Jersey Center for the Book Chair Renee Swartz and Freeholder Director Lillian Burry.



Also holding awards ceremonies were Utah (above), West Virginia (below) and South Carolina (right), among many other states.



River of Words Brings Wisdom of Young People to the Library of Congress

By Guy Lamolinara

“Our program involves studying the place where you live.”

So said Pamela Michael, co-founder of the River of Words Foundation, during the 15th annual awards ceremony on June 30. Former Poet Laureate Robert Hass joined her at the lectern for an event in the Jefferson Building that brings children, their parents and teachers from across the nation to Washington for a celebration of the environment and the creativity it inspires. “There is a lot of wisdom from older people, but there is another kind of wisdom that young people have, and it is very important to honor that as well,” Michael said.



Former Poet Laureate Robert Hass, co-founder of River of Words, discusses a young student's award-winning poem.



Robert Hass and Pamela Michael (at podium) have held the River of Words awards ceremony for 15 years.


John Y. Cole, director of the Center for the Book, which has co-sponsored River of Words since its founding, opened the program by polling the audience and learning that more than half of them had never been to the Library of Congress. So, being the institution's historian, he told them how they were in the world's largest library and that Thomas Jefferson's universal library was the basis for today's universal collections of the Library of Congress.

“You kids are some day going to be responsible for this beautiful land we live in,” said Hass, “we thought that if you wrote about and made art about the places where you live... that it would create some of the groundwork for a feel for the land ... to have a sense

of stewardship for it.

“What we didn't expect was how amazing the work would be. ... The reason we are here is to honor your amazing creativity.”

The remainder of the program included readings of the poems by their writers and a brief conversation with Hass on the meaning of their work. The former Poet Laureate also discussed the work of the artists, demonstrating, as he did with the poetry, an equal appreciation for the quality of the winners' work. In the end, he asked all the students to stand and be acknowledged by the audience.

For the complete list of 2010 winners and to read and view their prize-winning entries, visit www.riverofwords.org/. 

White House Library Symposium Establishes New Library Heroes

The Fillmores Take Center Stage

By John Y. Cole

President Millard Fillmore (1850-53) and his wife Abigail as new library heroes? A ringing affirmative came at “Reading in the White House,” a May 7 symposium at the Library of Congress celebrating the recent publication by Pennsylvania State University Press of “The First White House Library: A History and Annotated Catalogue,” edited by Catherine M. Parisian, assistant professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. The symposium was sponsored by the Bibliographical Society of America, the National First Ladies Library and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

The Fillmores created the first permanent library in the White House, a collection of about 200 titles along with some periodicals and government documents. “The First White House Library: A History and Annotated Catalogue,” identifies and describes these books, which were dispersed during later presidential administrations.

The symposium began with a short overview of the Fillmore library by Catherine Parisian, who emphasized that the first White House library represented “the collective mind of an age”; moreover, except for 10 lone volumes, it had been “completely dispersed and its history and contents all but forgotten.”

John Bidwell, former president of the Bibliographical Society of America and a member of the project committee, presented a copy of the catalog to Mary Regula, president and founding chair of the National First Ladies’ Library, who said the new catalog would be used to help reconstruct the library at the National First Ladies’ Library’s Education and Research Center in Canton, Ohio. Bidwell presented a second copy to William G. Allman, curator of the White House, a contributor to the volume and a symposium participant. John Neal Hoover, the current BSA president, spoke a few words of welcome and congratulated the participants on the project.

Bidwell also explained that “when Mary Regula and her associates initiated the White House Library project several years ago in consultation with book collectors, book sellers and others, there were strong indications that information about the Fillmores’ first White House Library and its contents could be found in the collections of the Library of Congress. The Library agreed to provide working space in its Rare Book and Special Collections Division for a project bibliographer, who turned

(Story continues on next page)



Catherine M. Parisian, editor of “The First White House Library,” said that the collection assembled by the Fillmores represented “the collective mind of an age.”

(White House Library, from previous page)

out to be Catherine Parisian. The Institute of Museum and Library Services very kindly funded the project and the publication of this handsome and hefty catalog.”

According to Parisian, “The most surprising part of the White House Library project, after the fact that Millard and Abigail Fillmore were the library’s founders, is how deliberate they were about selecting books for it. For example, Millard reprimanded his purchasing agent for choosing an edition of the ‘Federalist Papers’ without an index. He solicited estimates for the library and later asked for recommendations from local book sellers. He even borrowed trade catalogs to browse through as he was forming the collection. Millard and Abigail Fillmore clearly valued books as an integral part of their lives.

“President Fillmore initially intended to handle purchasing the books for the library in the Executive Mansion himself,” Parisian continued. “In fact he began

purchasing books before congressional funding for the library had been approved. On Aug. 19, 1850, he ordered Noah Webster’s Dictionary, a Bible and Alexander Keith Johnson’s ‘National Atlas’ from book seller George Crosby in Philadelphia and charged them to the account of ‘furnishing the President’s house.’ These totaled \$55.12, with the

atlas, at \$45, making up most of the amount. On Sept. 9 he made another purchase on this account: Samuel Augustus Mitchell’s ‘Universal Atlas’ from [Washington book seller] Franck Taylor for \$10.50, including the cost of a spine label, which brought the total he spent on books from the furnishings account to \$65.62.”

Parisian pointed out that Millard Fillmore’s first official purchases, made in October and November using the funds allocated by Congress “included a number of vital reference sources to which the president and his staff members would have had frequent recourse.” These included Richard S. Fisher’s “Book of the World,” Daniel Haskell and Calvin J. Smith’s “Gazetter” and Edward Waite’s “Washington City Directory.”

The first afternoon panel presentation, “Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, Books and Culture,” was chaired by Clark Evans of the Library’s Rare Book and Special Collections Division. A reference librarian with a strong interest in Lincoln, Evans noted that through the years he had become acquainted with the two scholars he was introducing “largely through serving them items from the Library’s extraordinary

(Story continues on next page)



Mary Regula and her associates initiated the project.



John Cole, Center for the Book director (far right) emceed the White House Library event, hosting participants (from left) Claudia Funke, vice president of the Bibliographical Society of America; John Bidwell, Astor curator of printed books and bindings at the Morgan Library & Museum and former president of the BSA; John Neal Hoover, current BSA president; and Hope Mayo, former president of the BSA.



Catherine Parisian began work on the White House Library project at the Library of Congress in September 2005, soon after she had received her doctorate in English at the University of Virginia. The early predictions that she would find useful information relating to the first White House library in the collections of the Library of Congress turned out to be true. In fact, her research, with help from several Library of Congress staff members, has made an important contribution to the history of the Library of Congress and its relationship through the years to the White House Library. For example, she found several books in the Library's stacks that still retained traces of having been in the Executive Mansion in 1850. More research is still needed, but her conclusions are a solid starting point.

In September 1850, President Fillmore approved an act of Congress that increased the annual appropriation for the purchase of law books to \$2,000.

Parisian now has documented, for the first time, that President Fillmore was present at the Capitol on the evening of Dec. 25, 1851, when an accidental fire in the building destroyed two-thirds of the Library's collection of 55,000 volumes, including two-thirds of Thomas Jefferson's library of 6,487 books. Moreover, she cites a newspaper article stating that Fillmore himself was part of the fire brigade that fought to bring the blaze under control.

(continued on next panel)

(White House Library, from previous page)

collection of Lincolniana, one of the largest collections of research materials by and about Abraham Lincoln in the world.”

In his paper, “Lincoln’s Presidential Reading, Douglas L. Wilson, co-director of the Lincoln Studies Center at Knox College, focused on Lincoln “as a reader” and “stories about Lincoln as a reader.” He began by acknowledging his pleasure at learning earlier in the day about “the White House Library that the Fillmores built. “Nevertheless, personally, he could not help viewing it as “the library that Lincoln actually used.” He pointed out that the stories that Americans had heard about the importance of reading to Lincoln were “mostly true.” It was “by virtue of his reading that he became educated,” that “indeed he was almost entirely self-educated.” In the end, “the many stories about Lincoln and his frequent consultation of books, both for information and as a pleasurable release from the unrelenting pressures of the presidency ... give us valuable perspective on how Lincoln grappled with his problems as president and at the same time dealt with his associates.”

Before she began her paper, “An Educated First Lady: Reading, Writing and Schooling in the White House,” Jean Baker of Goucher College, who is a biographer of Mary Todd Lincoln, publicly thanked the entire staff of the Library of Congress for “all of the help” it had given her in her research through the years. She drew an appreciative laugh when she said, “In fact, I like to think that all of my federal taxes go to the Library of Congress.” Professor Baker spoke about how the bookish Mary Todd Lincoln was certainly the “best-educated and best-read” first lady in the 19th century and exceeded many of the 20th century” first ladies’ educations. She spoke of Mrs. Lincoln’s early education and then examined her “three special intellectual roles in the White House: teacher to her sons, creator of a literary salon that met in the Blue Room of the White House during those cold Washington winters” and, most importantly, “as a reader who used books as solace and as recreation in her tormented personal life.”

Pat Krider, executive director of the National First Ladies Library, introduced the second panel, “First Ladies, Reading and Culture in the White House.

In his talk, “More Than Just Books: The Décor of the White House Library,” William G. Allman, curator of the White House, discussed the setting in the Executive Mansion in which the Fillmores placed their new White House Library. “The books were given a home on the second floor, the uppermost level of the house. The room selected was the oval drawing room, the largest room on that floor.”

In “Reading, Writing and First Ladies,” historian Carl Anthony of the National First Ladies Library, presented a historical overview of the role of the first lady, noting that the phrase itself did not come into use until the 1860s. He noted, however, that even before the phrase was coined, the “enormous pressure and unrealistic expectations” of the public on the occupant of the position both limited and affected each first lady’s “relationship to books, as well as to literature and their respective opportunities to vent their own private frustrations through the art of writing.”

Discussing “Literary Lives, Political Wives: The Importance of Reading to the Idea of the First Lady,” Nancy Beck Young of the University of Houston used historical examples to demonstrate how some first ladies have used the “supposedly safe” world of literature and the reading and writing of books “in what were anything but safe endeavors.” In other words “how literary lives were important to being successful political wives.”

(Story continues on next page)


On Jan. 23, 1852, President Fillmore approved an act of Congress appropriating \$1,200 to provide a temporary room for the Library of Congress while a new fireproof room embracing the entire western projection of the Capitol was built.



(White House Library, from previous page)

Elizabeth Tracker-Estrade of the San Francisco Public Library, a biographer of Mrs. Fillmore, began her presentation on “Abigail Powers Fillmore and the Creation of the White House Library” with an observation: The “domain of the president is the United States; the realm of the first lady is the White House.” After comparing the accomplishments of Mrs. Fillmore to previous and better-known first ladies, she highlighted the reasons for her success, with her husband, in creating the first White House Library: “The importance of libraries, reading and education in the Fillmores’ lives became the basis for their growing acquaintance with well-known authors, Abigail’s relationships with other notable and intellectual women, and the founding of the library.”

Mark Dimunation, chief of the Library’s Rare Book and Special Collections Division, introduced the final speaker, Princeton professor Sean Wilentz, a historian of the politics and Whig culture of the period, who spoke on “Mr. and Mrs. Fillmore and Their Library.”

Wilentz concluded that today’s White House library, which is “furnished in rare federal and Empire style antiques dating back to the White House’s earliest years, and filled with an entirely different, new collection of books, bears only the most generic resemblance to the parlor of books that Millard and Abigail Fillmore assembled on the second floor in 1850. But it remains the fine legacy of a too-often ridiculed president, whose love of books and family helped define him as much as the era in which he lived.” 

John Y. Cole, director of the Center for the Book and a historian of the Library of Congress, moderated the “Reading in the White House” symposium.

State Centers Sponsor Book Awards

Novelist Valerie Martin Honored with Louisiana Writer Award

Award-winning author Valerie Martin has been named recipient of the prestigious Louisiana Writer Award for 2010. She is being honored by the Louisiana Center for the Book in the State Library of Louisiana for her extraordinary contributions to the state’s literary heritage that is exemplified by her body of work. The State Library of Louisiana will host a special award ceremony this fall to celebrate both Martin and her extraordinary work.

“One of the things that Louisiana does best is to create and nurture exceptional talent in the area of arts and culture,” said State Librarian Rebecca Hamilton. “As a result, this state enjoys a rich cultural and literary heritage. Valerie Martin has drawn on her life experiences as a New Orleans native, with six of her nine novels set, in whole or in part, in Louisiana. In addition, all of her short story collections contain stories set in New Orleans,” continued Hamilton.

The Louisiana Writer Award is given periodically to recognize outstanding contributions to the literary and intellectual life of Louisiana. Past recipients include novelist and short story writer Tim Gautreaux, children’s author William Joyce, poets Yusef Komunyakaa and William Jay Smith; historian Carl A. Brasseaux; novelists James Lee Burke, Ernest J. Gaines, Shirley Ann Grau and Elmore Leonard; and scholar Lewis P. Simpson.

(Continued on next page)

(State Centers, from previous page)

“Valerie, through her enormous talent and dedication to her craft, has contributed significantly to Louisiana’s rich literary legacy. We are proud to honor her with the Louisiana Writer Award,” said Hamilton.

Martin is the author of nine novels, three collections of short stories, and a biography of St. Francis of Assisi. In 1990, her novel “Mary Reilly,” which purports to be the diary of Dr. Jekyll's housemaid, won the Kafka prize, was translated into 16 languages and was the subject of a film directed by Stephen Frears. Her novel “Property,” narrated by another voice from the past, that of a woman slave-owner in antebellum New Orleans, won Britain’s Orange Prize, was short-listed for France’s Prix Femina Etranger, and placed on the long list for Ireland's Impac award.

Acclaimed Fiction Writer John Smolens Wins 2010 Michigan Author Award

The Michigan Center for the Book has announced John Smolens – author of critically acclaimed thrillers and other forms of fiction, many set in Michigan, as the winner of the 2010 Michigan Author Award.

Sponsored jointly by the Michigan Center for the Book (a program of the Library of Michigan), Sleeping Bear Press and the Michigan Library Association, this annual award honors a Michigan writer for his or her contributions to literature based on an outstanding published body of work.

“The reason this is such a unique honor is because it comes from people who are so committed to the written word,” Smolens said. “Where would we be without it? I know I'd be lost. Books, stories, language – these are the rarest, most essential gifts. The fact that someone can walk into a public library and take one of my books down from the shelf is all the compensation I'll ever need.”

Kirkus Reviews notes, “Smolens is especially deft at capturing the rhythms of small-town life and the complexity of his ‘ordinary people.’” In January 2005, the Detroit Free Press selected “Fire Point” as the best book by a Michigan author in 2004. The Denver Post, comparing Smolens’ work to Hemingway’s, said, “Smolens also takes advantage of the Lake Superior area to great effect. . . . Smolens has done a superlative job of rendering a place and its people realistically.”

Smolens has published the novels “Cold,” “The Invisible World,” “Fire Point,” “Angel's Head” and “Winter by Degrees” and one collection of short stories, “My One and Only Bomb Shelter.” His new book, “The Anarchist,” is a historical novel that depicts William McKinley’s assassination. His short stories and essays have been in various magazines and newspapers, including Redbook, Yankee, Massachusetts Review, Virginia Quarterly Review, Writer’s Digest, Writer’s Market, the Los Angeles Times and The Boston Globe.

Oklahoma Book Awards Holds 21st Event

The 21st Annual Oklahoma Book Awards ceremony was held on April 17, 2010, at the Edward L. Gaylord-T. Boone Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum. Among the winners were David Fitzgerald, who received the Arrell Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award for his “spectacular photography that has thrilled booklovers for more than three decades.” Fitzgerald began his career as an artist and illustrator, and this background continues to inform his photography, prompting one critic to note, “the painter’s eye remains much in evidence.”

(Continued on next page)

(State Centers, from previous page)



Photographer David Fitzgerald won the Lifetime Achievement Award during the Oklahoma Book Awards ceremony for his “spectacular photography.”

The Ralph Ellison Award went to author and historian Stan Hoig (1924–2009), one of the most prolific writers of the American West. A native Oklahoman, Hoig was raised in Gage, Okla. He began his career writing articles and books on the American West in the 1950s. His first book, “The Humor of the American Cowboy,” was published in 1958 and remains in print today. Hoig published a wide variety of articles in magazines and professional journals such as the *Chronicles of Oklahoma* and *Encyclopedia of the American West*. Moreover, he published 25 books, including “The Sand Creek Massacre,” “The Battle of the Washita,” “Perilous Pursuit: The U.S. Calvary and the Northern Cheyennes” and “The Chouteaus: First Family of the Fur Trade.”

Hoig’s expertise on the American West led him to become adviser to several television productions, including the Discovery Channel’s “The Way the West Was Lost,” “Real West,” A&E’s “Southern Cheyennes” and the British Broadcasting Co.’s “Land Runs of Oklahoma.”



The complete list of winners in the 2010 Oklahoma Book Awards is at www.odl.state.ok.us/ocb/10win.htm.

Patricia Hoig, widow of noted historian and author Stan Hoig, accepts the prestigious Ralph Ellison Award in the company of Oklahoma Historical Society Executive Director Bob Blackburn (far left) and her children during the Oklahoma Book Awards ceremony.



Twelve State Centers Recently Renewed

The State Centers for the Book in Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, North Dakota, Nevada, Vermont and West Virginia recently received renewal of their applications for another three-year term from the national Center for the Book in Washington.

State centers for the book are affiliated with the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and work with the Library to promote books, reading, literacy and libraries as well as their state’s literary heritage. The initiative for a state center for the book must come from the state that wishes to establish the center. Guidance in developing the proposal (and on the coalition necessary to support it) is available from the national center, but funding, staffing and programming are responsibilities of each State Center. Once granted, the initial affiliation between a State Center and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress lasts three years. State Centers must formally request each three-year renewal. For more information visit: www.read.gov/cfb/guidelines.html.

Authors Booked for 10th National Book Festival

Internationally known authors Isabel Allende, Brad Meltzer, Katherine Paterson, Jane Smiley, Scott Turow, David Remnick and Nobel Prize winner Orhan Pamuk will be among more than 70 writers headlining the 10th annual National Book Festival, organized and sponsored by the Library of Congress, Saturday, Sept. 25, 2010, between 3rd and 7th streets on the National Mall. The event, free and open to the public, will run from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (rain or shine).

The 2010 National Book Festival will feature authors, poets and illustrators in several pavilions. Festivalgoers can meet and hear firsthand from their favorite authors, get books signed, have photos taken with PBS storybook characters and participate in a variety of activities. Some 130,000 book fans attended the festival of 2009.

A new website has been launched to celebrate “A Decade of Words and Wonder,” the theme of this 10th National Book Festival, at www.loc.gov/bookfest/. The website offers a variety of new features including a video looking back at the first decade of the National Book Festival; brief “video vignettes” from interviews with past festival authors; and easy access to website offerings from past festivals. New material will continually be added to the website, and visitors have a chance to vote for their favorites among the National Book Festival’s nearly 500 past participating authors.

“We are delighted to be celebrating this 10th anniversary of a beloved event for book lovers of all ages,” said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. “We will have a lineup of authors to thrill festivalgoers, and we are going to be offering special events all through the week going into the festival.”

The Center for the Book plays a major role in the festival, especially in the selection of authors who are invited to participate. “The Center’s long history of working with authors, not only for the National Book Festival but also through our longtime Books & Beyond authors series, has made it possible for the Library to attract many of the nation’s best authors and illustrators each year,” said John Y. Cole, director of the Center.

Allende, whose latest book is “Island Beneath the Sea” (HarperCollins), is the author of several acclaimed works, including “The Sum of Our Days” and “The House of the Spirits.” The award-winning Chilean-born writer, now a U.S. citizen, has seen her work published in 30 languages.

Brad Meltzer, whose latest book is “Heroes for My Son” (HarperStudio), is the best-selling author of such thrillers as “The Book of Lies” and “The Book of Fate.”

Beloved young people’s author Katherine Paterson, currently the National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature, will hold a reading in the Children’s Pavilion to conclude the rollicking serial story “The Exquisite Corpse Adventure,” available exclusively at www.read.gov/exquisite-corpse/. Her latest novel is “The Day of the Pelican” (Clarion Books); her other books include “Bridge to Terabithia” and “Jacob Have I Loved.”

David Remnick, editor of The New Yorker magazine, is most recently the author of a biography, “The Bridge – The Life and Rise of Barack Obama” (Knopf). He has written several other books, including “Reporting: Writings from the New

(Continued on next page)



Yorker” and “Lenin’s Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire.”

Jane Smiley, whose latest book is “A Good Horse” (Knopf) won the Pulitzer Prize for her novel “A Thousand Acres.”

Orhan Pamuk, whose work has sold more than 7 million copies worldwide in 50 languages, is a Turkish author whose body of work earned him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2006. He is the author of several works including “Snow” and “The Museum of Innocence.”

Scott Turow’s latest best-seller is “Innocent” (Grand Central), the sequel to his smash “Presumed Innocent.”

President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama, the first lady, will be honorary chairs of the event.

In observance of its 10th anniversary – “A Decade of Words and Wonder” – the festival will feature several special events during the week preceding the festival day.


The 2010 National Book Festival poster, by renowned illustrator Peter Ferguson, can be downloaded from the festival website at www.loc.gov/bookfest.

Authors and illustrators scheduled to participate in the National Book Festival will make their presentations in the Children, Teens & Children, Fiction & Mystery, Poetry & Prose, History & Biography and Contemporary Life pavilions.

- Children: Mary Brigid Barrett, Timothy Basil Ering, Jules Feiffer, Mem Fox, Margaret Peterson Haddix, Norton Juster, Pat Mora, Marilyn Nelson, Linda Sue Park, Jerry Pinkney, James Ransome, Judith Viorst and Rosemary Wells
- Teens & Children: M.T. Anderson, Michael Buckley, Suzanne Collins, Margarita Engle, Phillip M. Hoose, Brad Meltzer, Katherine Paterson, Jane Smiley, Jeff Smith and Rebecca Stead
- Fiction & Mystery: Isabel Allende, Ken Follett, Diana Gabaldon, Julia Glass, Martha Grimes, Olga Grushin, Elizabeth Kostova, Anchee Min, Karin Slaughter, Scott Spencer, Peter Straub and Scott Turow
- Poetry & Prose: Elizabeth Alexander, Rae Armantrout, Jonathan Franzen, Gail Godwin, Allegra Goodman, Chang-rae Lee, Thomas Mallon, Orhan Pamuk, Jane Smiley and Natasha Trethewey
- History & Biography: Adele Logan Alexander, Timothy Egan, Jules Feiffer, Wil Haygood, David E. Hoffman, Richard Holmes, James McGrath Morris, Nell Irvin Painter, David Remnick, Steven V. Roberts, Stacy Schiff, Evan Thomas and Gordon S. Wood
- Contemporary Life: Lidia Matticchio Bastianich, Gurcharan Das, Ree Drummond, Bruce Feiler, Jonathan Safran Foer, Spike Mendelsohn, Michele Norris, Richard Rhodes, Henry Petroski, Craig Robinson, Anita Silvey, Harold Varmus and Edward O. Wilson.

Representatives from the 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories will celebrate their unique literary heritage in the Pavilion of the States, also organized by the Center for the Book. The popular Let’s Read America Pavilion will offer reading activities that are fun for the whole family. The Library of Congress

Pavilion will showcase the cultural treasures to be found in the Library's vast online collections and offer information about popular Library programs.

The 2010 National Book Festival is made possible through the generous support of Co-Chairman of the National Book Festival Board David M. Rubenstein; Charter Sponsors Target and The Washington Post; Patrons, AT&T, Institute of Museum and Library Services, The James Madison Council, the National Endowment for the Arts and PBS KIDS Raising Readers; Contributors, Borders, Digital Bookmobile powered by OverDrive, Penguin Group (USA), ReadAloud.org, Scholastic Inc., and the Library of Congress Federal Credit Union; and Friends The Hay-Adams and National Endowment for the Humanities. Thanks also to C-SPAN2's Book TV and The Junior League of Washington. 

Center for the Book Partner to Celebrate 40th Anniversary

"Masterpiece" on PBS Has Been Airing Since 1971

"Masterpiece," the longest-running and most-honored prime-time television drama series, is celebrating its 40th year on PBS beginning January 2011. Since 1971 the program has brought to life classic and contemporary favorites such as "Little Dorrit," "Cranford," "The Forsyte Saga" and "Prime Suspect," with stage and screen superstars including Dame Judi Dench, Sir Anthony Hopkins, Dame Helen Mirren and Denzel Washington. Among countless prestigious awards, the series has received 50 Prime-time Emmys, 16 George Foster Peabody Awards, 30 BAFTAs, a Golden Globe and two Academy Award nominations.

"Masterpiece" continues to be one of the most-watched programs on PBS, reaching an average of 4 million viewers each week. In 2009 "Little Dorrit" won seven Emmys, more than any other television show, including "30 Rock" and "Mad Men."

One of next year's most eagerly anticipated television events is also the centerpiece of the 40th anniversary season. A fresh and captivating new "Upstairs, Downstairs," based on one of the most-loved and -honored television series of all time, will air in April. An enormous success worldwide, the original series won seven Emmys during its run in the mid-1970s, including Best Actress for Jean Marsh, who will reprise her role in the new three-part series as Rose, the parlor maid. Dame Eileen Atkins, the co-creator of the original program, will also star. Screenwriter Heidi Thomas ("Cranford") has set the new series in the same house, at 165 Eaton Place in 1936, during the period leading up to World War II. Tentative broadcast dates: Sundays, April 10, 17, 24, 2011, at 9 p.m. ET.

For more information, visit: www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/.



Calendar of Events

Throughout the year, the Center for the Book sponsors myriad programs on a wide range of topics. Most of the Center for the Book's programs are filmed for later Webcasting. We invite you to share this information with libraries, so they may tell their users. Webcasts are available at www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/cyber-cfb.html.

Following is the current Center for the Book calendar for 2010:

SEPT. 25 (Saturday), 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., National Mall
2010 National Book Festival

OCT. 5 (Tuesday), noon, Pickford Theater, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. John B. Hench will discuss and sign his new book, "Books as Weapons: Propaganda, Publishing and the Battle for World Markets in the Era of World War II" (Cornell University Press, 2010).

OCT. 12 (Tuesday), 3-4:30 p.m., Pickford Theater, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. Paolo Ventura will discuss and sign his new book, "Winter Stories" (Aperture Foundation, 2009). Co-sponsored with the Prints and Photographs Division.

OCT. 15 (Friday), noon, West Dining Room, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. Robert Darnton will discuss and sign his new book, "The Case for Books: Past, Present, Future" (Public Affairs, 2010).

OCT. 15 (Friday), 5:30 p.m., Mumford Room, Madison Building

National Collegiate Book Collecting symposium. Talk by book collector Carol Fitzgerald, followed by an awards ceremony.

OCT. 26 (Tuesday), noon, Pickford Theater, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. Nancy K. Loane will discuss and sign her book "Following the Drum: Women at the Valley Forge Encampment" (Potomac Books, 2008).

OCT. 28 (Thursday), noon, Mumford Room, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. W. Joseph Campbell will discuss and sign his new book, "Getting It Wrong: Ten of the Greatest Misreported Stories in American Journalism" (University of California Press, 2010). Co-sponsored with the Serial and Government Publications Division.



LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS

