

Chaparral updrafts

from the
California Federation
of Chaparral Poets, Inc.

serving California poets for over 60 years

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Richard Wilbur wins Wallace Stevens Award

Announcement was made in early November that Richard Wilbur had been selected as the recipient of the Wallace Stevens Award. Given annually by the Academy of American Poets, the \$150,000 prize recognizes outstanding and proven mastery in the art of poetry. Judges for 2003 were Alice Fulton, Glyn Maxwell, Heather McHugh, C. K. Williams, and Al Young.

Academy Chancellor and jury chair McHugh writes of Wilbur's poetry:

Clemenceau said America was the only country that had gone straight from barbarism to degeneration without the usual interval of civilization. Obviously Clemenceau didn't know Richard Wilbur.... Over and over again, since his extraordinary emergence on the stage of American poetry some sixty-odd years ago, Richard Wilbur has taken to heart the uproar of events and passions—and re-cast them in a thoughtful light. (And when Richard Wilbur turns his mind to turns of phrase, the result will be some of English's most mesmerizing music.)

Richard Wilbur was born in New York City in 1921. His books of poetry include *New and Collected Poems* (1988), which won the Pulitzer Prize; *The*

Berkeley installs Poetry Walk

A few weeks ago workers began installing 123 fifty-five-pound iron panels in the sidewalk in front of Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Each 20-inch square plaque contains one poem by an author who had some tie to the Berkeley area. The works were selected by former US Poet Laureate Robert Hass, a UC Berkeley professor of English and local expert on the poets behind the poems.

Selections included writers from other times and places, such as Shakespeare and Bertolt Brecht, because their plays had been performed at the theater; as well as Bishop George Berkeley who wrote a rather long poem which included the line "Westward the course of empire takes its way." This so captured the fancy of the founders of the University of California that they decided to name the new city after him.

Hass has numerous stories to explain nearly every poem included in the sidewalk of Addison Street between Shattuck Avenue and Milvia Street, and plans to include them in a book once the \$20,000 cost of production is raised.

continued on page ten: 'Berkeley'

Mind-Reader: New Poems (1976); *Walking to Sleep: New Poems and Translations* (1969); *Advice to a Prophet and Other Poems* (1961); *Things of This World* (1956), for which he received the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award; *Ceremony and Other Poems* (1950); and *The Beautiful Changes and Other Poems* (1947). He has also published numerous trans-

continued on page two: 'Richard Wilbur'

Long-time CFCP member B Jo Kinnick dies in Iowa

"B. Jo." Kinnick, formerly of Piedmont, CA, passed away October 8, 2003 at Waukesha Springs Health Center in Oconomowoc, Iowa at the age of 95. She was an English teacher at Oakland High School in Oakland, CA, and a member of CFCP for many years. She was a frequent winner in CFCP contests, including the Golden Pegasus award in 1980. At different times, she was affiliated with several Bay Area chapters, including Grace Ballard in Santa Barbara and Robert Frost in San Jose, both in 1990.

Her award-winning poems have been published in numerous newspapers and magazines including *The Oakland Tribune*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *English Journal* and *The Saturday Review*. Her poetry collections include *Time is the Stream*; *Miss Honky*, *The Black Flamingo* and *The Blue Guitar*; *Crying for Guyana* and *To Say That Tigers*. She co-authored an anthology of literature for high school students, *Adventures in American Literature* published by Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich as well as *Let Us Be Men* and *I Have A Dream*, published by Addison-Wesley.

She was a former President of the Central California Teachers of English and of the Diablo Valley branch of the National League of American Pen Women. Other memberships included the Poetry Society of America, the Ina Coolbrith Circle, Browning Society of San Francisco, California State Poetry Society and Plymouth Congregational Church of Oakland, CA.

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Chaparral updrafts

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Please send news and information items to the editor one month in advance of intended publication date.

For questions involving membership, either new or renewal, please contact the treasurer.

Be sure to visit our new web site:

<http://www.ChaparralPoets.org>

Renewed interest in life, work of Sylvia Plath

Sylvia Plath ended her life in 1963 — 40 years ago. Yet interest in her life and work has reached a new level of intensity with the recent release of the movie, *Sylvia*, starring Gwyneth Paltrow, and a deeply penetrating biography entitled *Her Husband: Hughes and Plath, A Marriage*, by Diane Middlebrook. Earlier this year brought a novel, *Wintering*, by Kate Moses; a memoir of Plath's last days, *Giving Up*, by Jillian Becker; an off-Broadway play, *Edge*, by Paul Alexander, and an article by Robert F. Howe in the November issue of *Smithsonian*. Hughes' *Collected Poems* is due out this fall. Perhaps part of this fascination is because both husband and wife were serious writers. Howe observed that their marriage just four months after they met, "[brought] together what would become two of the most influential forces in 20th-century English-language poetry."

"In homage to such collected works as *The Hawk in the Rain* and *Crow*," Howe writes, "[Hughes] was named poet laureate of England in 1984. In her best book of poems, the posthumous *Ariel*, and her one novel, *The Bell Jar* (1963), Plath broke through barriers of traditional form and symbolism, and unleashed personal demons with

continued on page four: "Relationship"

Richard Wilbur wins Stevens award

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lations of French plays, two books for children, and a collection of prose pieces. Among his honors are the Aiken Taylor Award for Modern American Poetry, the Frost Medal, the Gold Medal for Poetry from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Bollingen Prize, the T. S. Eliot Award, a Ford Foundation Award, two Guggenheim Fellowships, the Edna St. Vincent Millay Memorial Award, the Harriet Monroe Poetry Award, the National Arts Club medal of honor for literature, two PEN translation awards, the Prix de Rome Fellowship, and the Shelley Memorial Award. He was elected a chevalier of the Ordre des Palmes Académiques and is a former Poet Laureate of the United States. He lives in Cummington, Massachusetts.

The Wallace Stevens Award is given annually to recognize outstanding and proven mastery in the art of poetry. Established in 1994, the award carries a stipend of \$150,000. Previous recipients have been W. S. Merwin, James Tate, Adrienne Rich, Anthony Hecht, A. R. Ammons, Jackson Mac Low, Frank Bidart, and John Ashbery.

Wallace Stevens, one of the major American poets of the twentieth century, was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, in 1879. After attending Harvard University, he received a law degree from New York Law School, and worked as a corporate lawyer at the Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company from 1916 until his death in 1955. *Harmonium*, his first

collection of poems, was published in 1923, but it was only very late in his life, after the publication of *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* (1954) that his work began to receive broad attention and critical acclaim.

The Academy of American Poets was founded in 1934 to support American poets at all stages of their careers and to foster the appreciation of contemporary poetry. Through its awards program, the Academy awards well over \$200,000 each year to individual poets. These awards include the Academy Fellowship, the Wallace Stevens Award, the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize, the James Laughlin Award, the Walt Whitman Award, the Raiziss/de Palchi Translation Award, the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award, student poetry prizes at nearly 200 colleges and universities, and the American Poets Fund. The Academy also administers National Poetry Month (April), established by the Academy in 1996 and now the largest literary celebration in the world; the Online Poetry Classroom, an online resource providing free poetry lesson plans and other teaching tools for high school teachers; the Poetry Audio Archive, a collection of nearly 500 recordings dating back to the 1960s. Additionally, the Academy maintains one of the liveliest and most comprehensive poetry sites on the Internet, at www.poets.org, which provides a wealth of content on contemporary American poetry and receives 300,000 unique visitors each month.

New Chapter accepted at Board Meeting

At the October 25th meeting, the Board accepted the application for a new chapter, to be called *Poets of the Pine Cone Ridge*, and located at Cottonwood, in the Shasta County area between Redding and Chico. The Chapter consists of five regular members and two affiliate members, with prospects of several others joining in coming months.

Cottonwood is just minutes south of Redding, located along the Cottonwood Creek approximately four miles west of the Sacramento River.

The name of the chapter is embedded in the area's earliest history. During the hot summer months the indigenous "digger" pines were sought out by the migratory hunter-gatherer peoples who lived here before the coming of the Europeans. These, in part, were the

Wintu California Indians who used its seeds and parts of cones, bark, and buds as food supplements, and its twigs, needles, cones, and resin in basket and drum construction.

Indians and early settlers used the resin of Digger Pine for medicinal purposes. During California's gold rush period, from 1848 to 1860, all foothill timber, including Digger Pine, was heavily used for fuel and structural materials.

Chapter members felt that it was appropriate for the first CFCP chapter to be formed in the area to carry a name that reflects something of that early period.

A hearty welcome from CFCP members everywhere to PCR members David Lapierre, Lorenzo Domenickine, Amyre DeDeaux, Maurice Levin, and Beverly Levin.

Monthly Contest Winners

The Rime of the Ancient Motorman

A stretch of toothless trolley track invites my mind to journey back to catenaries nurturing the thumping tune of clatter-clack. The interurban train would swing through town and fields and scheduling; it winked at rain and laughed at snow and travelled over everything except the ties of time. And so my dotage grows as memories flow. Now, rust derides the streetcar track: the trolley goes as follies go.

—William Preston, Walworth, NY
First Place, August

Return

The railroad track cut through a corner of the alfalfa field trembling the grayed rambling farm house where John listened nightly to promises made by the train's wheels waking him from bone-tired chores assigned by a hard-palmed father.

At age fourteen, dazzled by his need of lights, he walked three miles, climbed into an empty box car, and no one heard from him for seven years.

At first light his father came to the barn and found John milking Ruth, the Guernsey cow. The horses had been fed, the hen house door stood open and the Dominiquers pecking at the ground. "Plowed the creek bottom acres yet?" he asked from the warm flank of Ruth. "Nope. Been cuttin' back. No help." "I'll plow it this morning," John said.

He never spoke of where he'd been or what he'd seen, but shadowed eyes said he knew where he belonged.

—Dee McCollum, Ocala, FL
Second Place, August

Summer Gift

One more drink for parched backyard blooms, one more shower for me, then I race to straighten still another room.

At the airport, no sign of Alaska Air. The mercury hovers between ninety nine and a hundred and one.

My hot, tired feet travel Between Baggage and Gate 16. For forty-five minutes, lost in uncertainty.

At last the plane, crowds of reunion faces. At last the silky-skinned, smiling baby my arms have ached for.

I embrace her sweet perfection survey this fair, wide-eyed cherub so like her dad

when he was small, then carry her until my back interrupts. We fall in love all over again.

—Phyllis Williams, Cupertino, CA
Third Place, August

CK Williams takes poetry prize at National Book Awards

C. K. Williams was recently named winner of the National Book Award for poetry for "The Singing" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), a collection that deals with aging and memory. The judges said that Mr. Williams, who won a Pulitzer Prize in 1999, effortlessly negotiated "the terrain between the eternal and the topical" and that his poems were "forged from the elegiac material of a mature life."

Other winners were Shirley Hazzard for

her novel for "The Great Fire" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), a love story set in devastated post-World War II Japan; Carlos Eire for nonfiction for "Waiting for Snow in Havana: Confessions of a Cuban Boy" (Free Press/Simon & Schuster) which evokes pre-revolutionary Cuba; and Polly Horvath for the Young People's Literature Award for "The Canning Season" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), about a little girl named Ratchet Clark who is shipped off to live in

Maine with her 91-year-old twin aunts.

The four winners, each of whom received \$10,000, were chosen from among 1,030 authors, the highest number of entrants in the awards' 54-year history. The awards were presented before a crowd of 900 writers, editors and publishers, whom Hazzard urged in her acceptance to remain aware of their immense power in the world and their consequent responsibility not to degrade the language they had been given.

Gary Snyder elected to Academy of American Poets Board

The Academy of American Poets announced in early November that Gary Snyder, Frank Bidart, and Ellen Bryant Voigt had been named to the Board of Chancellors of this New York-based organization. They join 12 other distinguished poets currently serving as Chancellors: Lucille Clifton, Louise Glück, Robert Hass, Susan Howe, Galway Kinnell, Yusef Komunyakaa, Philip Levine, Nathaniel Mackey, Heather McHugh, Michael Palmer, James Tate, and Rosanna Warren.

Gary Snyder has published sixteen books of poetry and prose, including *The Gary Snyder Reader*, (Counterpoint Press, 1999); *Mountains and Rivers Without End* (1997); *No Nature: New and Selected Poems* (1993), which was a finalist for the National Book Award; *The Practice of the Wild* (1990); *Left Out in the Rain, New Poems 1947-1985*; *Axe Handles* (1983), for which he received an American Book Award; *Turtle Island* (1974), which won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry; *Regarding Wave* (1970); and *Myths & Texts* (1960). He has received an American Academy of Arts and Letters award, the

Bollingen Prize, a Guggenheim Foundation fellowship, the Bess Hokin Prize and the Levinson Prize from Poetry, the Robert Kirsch Lifetime Achievement Award from the *Los Angeles Times*, and the Shelley Memorial Award. He is a professor of English at the University of California, Davis.

The Board of Chancellors was established

in 1946 for the purpose of electing Academy Fellows, and to advise the Academy on literary matters. Chancellors of the Academy have included Marianne Moore, W. H. Auden, Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Bishop, John Berryman, Robert Penn Warren, and James Merrill, among others.

CFCP Contest Info now Online

Again in this issue you will find contest information for both annual contests, the Junior-Senior Contest, open to all California students in grades 7 through 12, and the “regular” contest for adults. We encourage you to duplicate these information sheets and share them as widely as you can, since both contests are “open to the public.” It’s especially helpful for you to contact teachers and administrators in the junior high and high schools in your area, providing them with copies of the student announcement, since it is so difficult for us to reach every school and every teacher.

Also, we have placed the flyers online at

our web site. Interested persons may go directly to <<http://www.ChaparralPoets.org/contests.html>> where they can download a PDF version to print out for themselves. We are planning to follow that up soon with a set of tips and suggestions for teachers who may wish to offer the contest to their students but feel they need help in assisting them in their creative writing.

So here’s another place where you can help! If you have any suggestions, please contact <webmaster@ChaparralPoets.org> and share them with us! We need lots of good ideas! Watch for further developments of that web page!

Relationship of Plath and Hughes explored in book, reviews

continued from page two

a chilling candor rarely seen before or since. By doing inner battle with the expectations and limitations of her times and her gender, and by taking her own life in 1963 at age 30, Plath also became a symbol of a changing time when women’s voices would finally and truly be heard.”

Literary critics have found fertile material in comparing these recent works and in reaching back to earlier publications for explanations of their opinions.

That may be because much of the Hughes-Plath story remains conjectural, although there are indisputable facts: they first met at a party in February 1956 and married after knowing each other for only four months. Two children and hundreds of poems later, Ted Hughes had an affair. Plath, who as an undergraduate at Smith College had attempted suicide, ended her life in 1963. The timing of her suicide was such that the early feminist movement adopted Plath, not wholly undeservedly, as a martyred icon.

Yet, says Sylvia Brownrigg in her recent

New York Times review, “As was clear with the electrifying 1997 publication of *Birthday Letters*, a collection of intimate, potent poems Hughes had written to his dead wife over a period of many years, Hughes was as hypnotized as anyone else by the story of his love for Plath, their shared literary apprenticeship, the complementarity of their imaginations and the eventual collapse of their union.”

For her biography, Middlebrook scoured the written record, using material from the Hughes archives at Emory University to explore their marriage, and arriving at the conclusion that neither partner should be blamed for Plath’s suicide. “Depression,” Middlebrook concludes, “killed Sylvia Plath.”

She also contends that regardless of the state of their personal life, Plath and Hughes shared a creative alliance. Their poems echo and respond to each other even as the husband and wife grew distant — and, in Hughes’ case, even after his partner in poetry had died.

B.T. Shaw, reviewing “Her Husband” in

The Oregonian, feels that Middlebrook relies too heavily on the poems — particularly some from Hughes’ writings long after Plath’s death — “to inform the poets’ lives, to act as corrections to the public record.”

“The problem,” he says, is that “poems aren’t reliable narrators — even if they’re written, as one suspects [Hughes’] “*Birthday Letters*” or Plath’s “*Ariel*” were, at least in part, with intent to tell a version of something that happened. They may tell the truth — but they tell it slant.

“Middlebrook . . . knows that poetry says not what happened but what ought to have happened. Which makes it doubly frustrating when she turns to a poem for facts.”

Brownrigg concludes on a more positive note: “It was only after Hughes’ death that their story could come to its natural resolution, the star-crossed lovers united again beyond the grave. With Middlebrook’s wise and humane book, we can read and reappraise the couple as they lived and died, and be grateful that their words will survive long after our fascination for their biographies has dimmed.”



• Submit entries to Contest Chairperson:
 Lisabeth Shuman, 2004 Contest Chairperson
 California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc.
 2521 Meadow Rue Drive, Modesto, CA, 95355-3910

California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc.

Serving Poets for Over 60 Years

2004

Annual Poetry Contest

2004

Postmarked Deadline: January 25, 2004

☞ ☞ ☞ ☞ OPEN TO ALL POETS ☞ ☞ ☞ ☞

PRIZES: 1st prize: \$60.00 2nd prize: \$40.00 3rd prize: \$25.00

Categories	Titles are not counted as part of line limits	Line Limit
1. THEME: <i>Flight</i> , one first prize only		28 lines
2. Forms from Other Cultures (name form, specify culture), any subject		what form requires
3. Sonnet: specify form		what form requires
4. Short Poem		13 lines
5. Any Subject, any style		28 lines
6. Light Verse		24 lines
7. Nature: any subject, any style		24 lines
8. Science and Technology: any subject, any style		28 lines
9. Lois Jeannette Dalton Memorial Award: any aspect of <i>Humanity</i>		24 lines
10. Anona McConaghy Memorial Award: any aspect of <i>Friendship</i>		24 lines
11. Roscoe Fortson Memorial Award: <i>Looking Backward</i> (childhood memories in adult voice)		28 lines

RULES

POSTMARKED DEADLINE: Midnight, January 25, 2004. Members whose dues are not paid by this date will not be eligible for the competition without paying the nonmember entry fees.

ENTRY FEE: A three dollar (\$3.00) fee is required of nonmembers for each poem entered.

JUDGES: Entries will be judged by non-member professionals from the Western US.

SUBMISSIONS: All entries must be typewritten on standard white paper, one poem per page. Send 2 (two) copies of each entry. NO CARBONS. On BOTH copies in upper right hand corner, type: number and category name. On 1 (one) copy only, in upper left corner, type: your name, address, and member affiliation (use of mailing labels is acceptable, but designate chapter, member-at-large, etc.). This copy is needed for the printer, program readers and special awards judges. Submit ALL poems in ONE envelope. Use SASE for winners list which will be mailed AFTER the convention. Winners will be notified at least one month before the CFCP Convention, where prizewinning and honorable mention poems will be read and awards presented, Sunday, May 2, 2004 at the Marriott Ontario Airport Hotel, 2200 E. Holt Boulevard, Ontario, 91761. Exact time and location TBA.

EXCLUSIONS: Entries not complying with the rules will be disqualified. Submit only original poems which have never been published, printed or produced in any form, nor awarded a prize in any contest nor submitted to an editor or other contest while being considered for the CFCP awards. Only one poem may be submitted in each category. Do not submit the same poem to more than one category. Winners and honorable mentions are not to appear in publication or be entered in another contest whose awards are announced prior to May 2, 2004.

PUBLICATION: All poems remain the property of the author. However, the California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc. reserves the right to publish poems which receive recognition in their publications. Keep a copy of your submissions. No manuscripts will be returned.

SPECIAL AWARDS: Special awards are chosen by judges other than the category judges. The **Golden Pegasus Trophy** will be chosen from Member prize winners. The **Roadrunnerup Trophy** will be chosen from poems which received honorable mention. The **Beth Martin Haas Memorial Award** for a Member distinguished by excellence of service to poets and poetry will be selected by the family of Beth Martin Haas. The **Lois Jeannette Dalton Memorial Award** will be selected by Joyce Dalton Wheeler. The **Anona McConaghy and Roscoe Fortson Memorial Awards** will be chosen by judges other than the category judges.

California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc.

Annual Poetry Contest for Junior and Senior High School

Postmarked Deadline: February 24, 2004

Students: No Entry Fee

PLEASE USE FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

Entries postmarked after February 24
will not be judged!!!

RE-CHECK YOUR ENTRIES FOR ACCURACY!



Send Entries to:

Norma King Green
1819 Sycamore Drive
Fairfield, CA 94533-3769
Phone: 707-422-8072

NO PAPER CLIPS OR STAPLES, PLEASE

PRIZES: 1st prize: \$30.00

2nd prize: \$20.00

3rd prize: \$10.00

Categories

Titles are not counted as part of line limits

Maximum Line Limit

OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES 7, 8 AND 9

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Junior Serious Poem (any subject, any style or form) | 20 lines |
| 2. Junior Humorous Verse (any subject, any style or form) | 20 lines |

OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES 10, 11 AND 12

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 3. Senior Serious Poem (any subject, any style or form) | 20 lines |
| 4. Senior Humorous Verse (any subject, any style or form) | 20 lines |

OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 THROUGH 12

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 5. Special Theme: <i>Flight</i> | 20 lines |
| 6. Aileen Jaffa Memorial Award: <i>Youth's View of Humanity</i> (one \$50 award) | 20 lines |

- Teachers of winning students will receive Certificates of Recognition.
- Honorable Mention winners may receive Book awards.
- Winning poems will be published in a copyrighted booklet which will be offered for sale. However, poems remain the property of the author, to whom all rights revert.

R U L E S

1. You must be a California resident.
2. Poems must be UNPUBLISHED and NOT HAVE WON A PRIZE in another contest.
3. Enter ONLY ONE POEM IN EACH CATEGORY for which you are eligible.
4. Submit TWO COPIES of each poem.
5. IDENTIFY THE FIRST COPY of each poem in the following manner:
 - a. On the bottom, write and sign a statement that you are the sole author of that poem.
 - b. In the upper LEFT-HAND corner:

Number and Category Name
Grade in School
Author's Name
Author's Address, City and ZIP Code
 - c. In the upper RIGHT-HAND corner:

Teacher's First and Last Name
School Name
School Address, City and ZIP Code
School Phone Number and Area Code
6. The SECOND COPY of each poem must have NO identification at all (Judge's copy).

LEGIBILITY, CORRECT GRAMMAR AND SPELLING ARE IMPORTANT! Proofread carefully before submitting.

KEEP ORIGINALS OF YOUR WORK! Entries will not be returned. For a list of prize winners, send a SASE.

Winners will be notified by April 1, 2004. Non-conforming entries will not be judged. Language and themes MUST be in good taste. Decisions of the judges are final.

The Awards Ceremony will be held Saturday, May 1, 2004 at the Marriott Ontario Airport Hotel, 2200 E. Holt Boulevard, Ontario, 91761. Exact time and location TBA. The public is invited to attend.

Hugh Kenner, critic of literary modernism

ATHENS, Ga. — Hugh Kenner, the author and literary critic who argued that expatriate American poet Ezra Pound is the best English language representative of literary modernism, died November 24 at his home in Athens, at age 80.

In “The Pound Era,” perhaps the most important of his 25 monographs, the literature professor argued that Pound was the first to portray in literature the altered perception of time created by Albert Einstein’s scientific theories.

That revolution in artistic perception, he argued, was later continued by other modernists, such as James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis, Eliot, William Carlos Williams and the sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska.

Kenner’s academic and intellectual interests ranged from Irish poetry to geodesic math to comic strips and the Heath/Zenith Z-100 computer — one of which he built for himself and then wrote the user’s guide.

Kenner’s thoughts are contained in 25 books of his own, contributions to 200 other books, nearly 1,000 articles and numerous broadcasts and recordings.

Kenner’s guide to English language literary modernism was considered to be definitive. His books “Dublin’s Joyce” (1956), “The Pound Era” (1971) and “Joyce’s Voices” (1978) are perhaps his best known.

Kenner, who received his doctorate from Yale in 1950, often employed the same literary techniques in his critical writing that were used by his author subjects to define new standards by which to judge their work.

After receiving his Ph.D, Kenner was hired as an instructor at Santa Barbara College (later the University of California at Santa Barbara), where he taught until 1973. From 1973 to 1990 Kenner taught at Johns Hopkins University, where he was Andrew Mellon professor of humanities.

From 1990 until his retirement in 1999, Kenner taught at the University of Georgia.

Firestorms ravage poets’ areas of southland

Several of our members in southern California felt the effects of the recent fires raging through their areas, but we have had no reports of anyone undergoing direct property losses, for which we are thankful.

Rick Thielo reported that he and his wife were forced to evacuate for 24 hours, but returned to find their home intact. “We’ve lived here long enough that we know what we have

US poet heads prize shortlist

Billy Collins among finalists for the TS Eliot Poetry Prize 2003

The award, given by the Poetry Book Society (PBS) which was founded in England by Eliot in 1953, is regarded as one of the most prestigious in poetry.

Collins has been nominated for his anthology *Nine Horses*.

The prize was inaugurated in 1993 to mark the 40th anniversary of the society and honour its founding poet.

It has been described by UK Poet Laureate Andrew Motion as “the prize most poets want to win”.

Previous recipients have included Ted Hughes, Hugo Williams and Anne Carson.

The winner will receive £10,000, in a ceremony to take place in central London on January 19, 2004.

TS Eliot Prize 2003 Shortlist

Billy Collins *Nine Horses*

John F Deane *Manhandling The Deity*

Ian Duhig *The Lammas Hireling*

Lavinia Greenlaw *Minsk*

Jamie McKendrick *Ink Stone*

Bernard O’Donoghue *Outliving*

Don Paterson *Landing Light*

Jacob Polley *The Brink*

Christopher Reid *For and After*

Jean Sprackland *Hard Water*

Grennan receives 2003 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize

\$25,000 award for most outstanding book of poetry

The Academy of American Poets and *The Nation* magazine announced November 6 that Eamon Grennan’s *Still Life with Waterfall* (Graywolf Press, 2002) has been selected for the 2003 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize. The Lenore Marshall Prize is an annual award for the most outstanding book of poetry published in the United States in the previous year. Mr. Grennan’s book was chosen from more than 150 submissions. The jurors for the award were Judith Ortiz Cofer, Andrew Hudgins, and Robert Wrigley. Mr. Wrigley served as chair of the panel.

Other finalists for this year’s award were *Dance and Disappear* by Laura Kasischke (University of Massachusetts Press), *Starting from Sleep* by Charles Martin (Overlook Press), *The Lives of the Saints* by Suzanne Paola (University of Washington Press), *Bellocq’s Ophelia* by Natasha Trethewey (Graywolf Press), and *Skid* by Dean Young (University of Pittsburgh Press).

Of Mr. Grennan’s work, jury chair Robert Wrigley writes:

Grennan would have us know— no, would have us see, feel, hear, taste, and smell— that

to do,” he said. “We have a list of the things we most need to save, and we packed three vehicles as full as we could, and then drove away...”

Pegasus Buchanan reported that although the fire itself was a reasonably safe distance away, and they were not required to evacuate, all of their landscaping was covered with ash and debris. “Everything was gray here,” she observed.

the world, moment by ordinary or agonizing moment, lies chock-full with its own clarifications and rewards. That such rewards most often go unnoticed keeps the artists in business, so to speak, and if there is anything more likely to open us to the savor of life than poems like Grennan’s, I can’t imagine what it might be.

Eamon Grennan is from Dublin and teaches in Poughkeepsie, New York, where he is the Dexter M. Ferry Jr., Professor of English at Vassar College. His collections (published by Graywolf Press and in Ireland by Gallery Press) are *Wildly for Days* (1983), *What Light There Is* (1987), *What Light There Is and Other Poems* (North Point, 1989), *As If It Matters* (1992), *So It Goes* (1995), *Relations: New & Selected Poems* (1998), *Selected & New Poems* (Gallery, 2000), and *Still Life with Waterfall* (2002). His *Leopardi: Selected Poems* (Princeton University Press) won the PEN Award for Poetry in Translation in 1997. A special limited edition, *Renvyle, Winter* (Pointed Press), was published in 2003. A collection of his critical essays— *Facing the Music: Irish Poetry in the Twentieth Century*— appeared from Creighton University Press in 1999. His poems appear regularly in magazines on both sides of the Atlantic, including *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Poetry London*, *The New Yorker*, *The Nation*, *Threepenny Review*, and *The New Republic*. In addition to a number of Pushcart Prizes, he has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation.

A look at software that waxes sublime and subliminal

by Teresa Riordan NYT

"Inventing is about catching the wave," said Ray Kurzweil, addressing a national convention of inventors in Philadelphia. "Most inventions fail not because the inventor can't get them to work but because the invention comes at the wrong time."

Kurzweil should know. An inventor in the field of artificial intelligence, he has started and sold several companies for millions of dollars. This month, Kurzweil and John Keklak, an engineer, received a new U.S. patent for what Kurzweil calls a cybernetic poet.

Essentially, it is software that allows a computer to create poetry by imitating but not plagiarizing the styles and vocabularies of human poets.

It works something like a cyberblender. The poetically challenged, or those with temporary writer's block, can toss in rhymes and rhythms and alliterations from already written poems. These whir around a bit, then out pours a new poem.

Here is a poem the cybernetic poet wrote after "reading" poems by Wendy Dennis, a poet employed by Kurzweil: "*Sashay down the page through the lioness nestled in my soul.*"

Other poetry-generating software exists, Kurzweil said, but it is less sophisticated.

"Those are fixed, fill-in-the-blank approaches that resemble the Mad Libs game," he said. "They are not really trying to create new patterns based on a more flexible pattern structure."

Many of Kurzweil's inventions, including the cybernetic poet, are based on pattern recog-

niton. "The real power of human thinking is based on recognizing patterns," he said. The better computers get at pattern recognition, the more humanlike they will become.

Kurzweil said he knew he wanted to be an inventor from the age of 5. By the time he was 16, he had invented a computer that composed melodies based on pattern recognition.

By the age of 28, he had invented a print-to-speech reading machine for the blind that caught the attention of the composer and performer Stevie Wonder.

"We will cross the threshold where we have hybrid or nonbiological humans," Kurzweil said

by telephone recently. "Our biological thinking is fixed. But our nonbiological thinking" — by which he means machine intelligence — "will grow exponentially."

So does Kurzweil predict that his cybernetic poet will "catch the wave"?

"This is a useful aid to real-life poets looking for inspiration or for help with alliteration or rhyming," he said. "But I am not intending for it to be a huge money maker."

A version of the cybernetic poet can be downloaded free from <<http://www.kurzweilcyberart.com>>. The deluxe version is \$29.95.

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78th annual Berkeley Poets' Dinner/Contest announced

Contest information was recently released for the seventy-eighth annual Poets' Dinner/Contest, long known as the Berkeley Poets' Dinner. This contest requires the poets to be in attendance at the awards luncheon in order to receive their awards.

The Luncheon, to be held March 13, 2004 at the Holiday Inn Convention Center, 1800 Powell Street, Emeryville, will feature Guest Speaker Richard Silberg.

Contest Theme is "Strategy;" postmark deadline for all entries is January 13, 2004.

The eight categories are: Beginnings & Endings, Humor, Nature, Love, Spaces & Places, People, Theme (Strategy), and Poet's Choice.

Each submitted poem must be original, unpublished in any way, in English, not a previous prize winner or honorable mention winner. The Grand Prize and other winning poems may

be included in a future anthology. Others will be destroyed after 3/13/04. **40 line maximum, any form, any style.**

The Dorothy Tyrrell Grand Prize of \$50 will be chosen from among the top three winners in each category. In addition, each category will award a \$30, \$20, and \$15 prize and three Honorable mentions.

Mail Contest Entries to Contest Chair: Maggie Morley, 235 Kenyon Avenue, Kensington, CA, 94708-1028.

Luncheon choices include baked chicken, London broil, and meatless lasagna, at \$22 each (\$23 at the door as available). Make check to **Poets' Dinner** and mail with SASE to Richard Angilly, 1515 Poplar Avenue, Richmond, CA 94805-1662. Complete entry details are available upon request from Mr. Angilly when accompanied by a SASE.

It's time to complete your dues payments for 2004

We are nearing the end of the year 2003, and it's time to make certain we've paid our dues for the coming year, which are still just \$15 annually.

It's also important to recruit new members at this time, since dues paid now will be counted as paid through the end of December, 2004 — and they're eligible to enter the annual contest and receive all the other advantages of membership.

As usual, chapter dues are paid to the chapter treasurer, and member-at-large dues are paid to the Members-at-Large Chairman, Frances Yordan. You can use the form in this issue.

Chapters are requested to send their dues, along with an updated membership roster, to Ursula T. Gibson, state treasurer, no later than December 30. And it's gratifying to see that several new memberships have already come in!

A handy info-page

We get frequent queries as to how to join CFCP, or for a listing of the monthly contest categories and rules. This page includes both items, which provides a convenient reference source: one that can be photocopied and given to prospective new members.

Send in your poems to the monthly contest... it's where many of us first see our names in print! and the price is so minimal you can hardly afford to pass up the chance. Notice that many of the categories are open-ended enough to accept almost any type or style or subject. Look through that collection you've been holding back and see if you have something to enter.

Also, the membership year has entered the final step of the pro-rated formula, meaning that from now through the end of the year, new members can join for the rest of this year and **all of 2004!** Please think in terms of making a copy and giving this handy form to an interested friend or acquaintance. It can be completed and returned (along with a check) to your chapter treasurer, who will then send it in to the state.

Make a few copies of this page to carry with you and hand them to your friends and acquaintances. Leave a few copies at your library or on the bulletin board at the local college or university. Get the word out!

CFCP, Inc. Monthly Contests

Except where otherwise indicated, poems are limited to 28 lines

RULES

- JANUARY** — Free Verse
- FEBRUARY** — Poet's Choice
- MARCH** — Any Subject, Any Style
- APRIL** — Light or Humorous Verse
- MAY** — Poet's Choice
- JUNE** — Children, Pets or Places
- JULY** — *no contest*
- AUGUST** — Poet's Choice
- SEPTEMBER** — Any Subject, Any Style
- OCTOBER** — Any Poem 24 Lines or Fewer
- NOVEMBER** — Nature (any style)
- DECEMBER** — *no contest*

Contests are open to all poets in the United States and Canada. Each poem submitted must be typewritten on standard size paper with the contest month in the upper right-hand corner. Send ONE COPY of each poem with author's name and address in the upper left-hand corner of the reverse side. Address labels are acceptable. Multiple entries are especially welcome.

Only UNPUBLISHED POEMS and poems not previously awarded a money prize are eligible. A fee of one dollar (\$1.00) must accompany entry for each poem submitted. Send cash or make checks to CFCP, Inc. DEADLINE is the last day of the contest month. Envelope must be postmarked no later than 12 midnight of that day. *Print contest month on outside of mailing envelope.*

NOTE: *In any month wherein insufficient entries are received, those poems which were submitted will be held over and judged with the entries for the following month.*

1st prize: \$25.00 2nd prize: \$15.00 3rd prize: \$10.00

Poems will be returned only if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Allow one month after closing date of contest before sending poems elsewhere. Winning poems will be printed in the Chaparral Newsletter.

**CALIFORNIA
FEDERATION
OF CHAPARRAL
POETS, INC.**

➔ Pegasus Buchanan
mail contest Monthly Contest Editor, CFCP, Inc.
entries to 1422 Ashland Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711



YES!

I definitely want to be a member of the
California Federation of Chaparral Poets, Inc. for the year 2004.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (____) _____ FAX (____) _____

E-MAIL _____

Your membership includes all issues of the newsletter; Updrafts, free entry in the Annual Contest, Monthly Contest information, and Membership Roster every 2 years during the membership period. All memberships renew between 8/1 and 12/31 yearly. Persons joining between February 1 and July 31 will use the pro-rated formula. Memberships received between August 1 and December 31 will be extended for the following full year.

*** Those who desire to continue membership with a chapter, please remit dues to your local chapter treasurer.**

How to Become a Member

check the appropriate item:

- _____ Membership Annual/Renewal \$15.00
- _____ New Member (February 1 to April 30) \$12.00
- _____ New Member (May 1 to July 31) \$7⁵⁰
- _____ Spouse (1/2 regular member) \$7⁵⁰, \$6, or \$3⁷⁵
- _____ Junior (under 21; show proof of age) \$3.00
- _____ Donation (specify amount)

_____ I am interested in joining a Chapter in my area (name Chapter if known)

_____ I wish to join as a Member-at-Large.

_____ We wish to form a Chapter of our own (5 or more Regular Members are required to form a new Chapter) to be called _____

New Members: Clip this form and mail along with a check or money order made payable to CFCP, Inc. to: Frances Yordan, Members-at-Large Chairman, 2575 W. San Jose Avenue, Fresno, CA 93711-2733.

Berkeley builds 'walk'

continued from page one

Smiling like a proud parent, landscape architect John Roberts watched workers lay the first plaque and observed, "There's three tons of poetry out here."

Building the Poetry Walk has been largely a "labor of love" according to Mary Ann Merker, the city's civic arts coordinator, who says that "no one else has done this that I'm aware of." She, Hass, and Roberts donated their time, as did many others. It cost the city about \$46,000 for materials, paid from public art bond money, and another \$59,000 for the installation, provided by local donations.

Kinnick dies in Iowa

continued from page one

She is survived by her daughter, Marty Kinnick of Oconomowoc, sons, Paul (Liza) Kinnick of Truckee, CA and Stephen (Patty) Hackney of Chico, CA, a sister, and five grandchildren.

Burial was at Maxwell Cemetery in Maxwell, IA. In lieu of other remembrances, donations to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Oakland, P.O. Box 23203, Oakland, CA 94623 or American Cancer Society is preferred.

El Camino Chapter active

The El Camino chapter is finding its legs. Viable for a year now, its eleven members have not been idle. Four have had winning poems published in *Updrafts*. Claudia Trinka will have a poem included in the award winning *City College Journal*, and other members have been published elsewhere.

Carol Louise Moon has given readings at the Unity Church and the Universal Unitarian Society. JoAn Osborne is putting finishing touches on *Tiger's Eye*, the poetry journal she edits and publishes. Cleo Fellers Kocol read her Grand Prize Poem in San Francisco where Natica Angilly's dancers translated Cleo's poetry to music and dance at the Palace of the Legion of Honor.

November 14 Pearl Selinsky will present a session on political poetry at the Renaissance Society, CSU Sacramento. Michael Keaney has published a 2004 calendar displaying some of his poetry. A copy is available to anyone who makes a donation to El Camino's coffers. The funds will be used to involve more "poetry in the schools" through the club's outreach, started with \$40 donated by member Miles Wood.

These activities and many others have evolved since Ione Murchison resurrected the once languishing chapter and offered members a creative agenda and supportive leadership.

—Cleo Kocol

Board set to meet in Ontario January 24

The next quarterly meeting of the CFCP, Inc. Board will be held at the Marriott Ontario Airport Hotel, 2200 E. Holt Boulevard, Ontario, 91761. The telephone number is 1-909-975-5000. More complete details will be provided in the December *Updrafts*.

All state officers, committee chairs, and chapter presidents are urged to attend, since they are voting members and their input is needed in planning events for the future. In addition, all other CFCP members are welcome to attend, especially members of the local area and regional chapters.

The Marriott has been selected as the Convention hotel for 2004. We feel this is an excellent hotel with spacious meeting areas, and the Convention Committee is hard at work finalizing ideas and plans. This meeting is our final opportunity to give the Committee some guidance on ideas and specific proposals as they move forward with their planning. In addition, there are a number of other pending issues for the Board to consider.

Plan now to meet with us then! Contact Marge Voigt at <Margevoigt@aol.com> and let her know you're coming!

*Berkeley Installs Poetry Walk
Stevens Award Announced
Jr-Sr and Adult Contest Forms
New Chapter Approved
• Inside: Computer Writes Poetry?*

erving California poets for over 60 years

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