



The Writer's Access

September–October 2006

News from the Lane Literary Guild

www.laneliteraryguild.org

Craft Workshop – October 28

Judith Montgomery will teach a poetry craft workshop on Saturday, October 28, 10 am – 3pm at Lamb Cottage in Skinner Butte Park. Read about Judy's accomplishments in the October Windfall section. Judy is a well-known and beloved teacher, so this workshop will fill quickly. Guild members may reserve a spot by sending \$50 to LLG, PO Box 11035, Eugene, OR 97440. Non-members may attend for \$65. For more info call 685-1087.

Long-range planners mark your 2007 calendars for a poetry workshop with Kim Stafford on May 5. Stay tuned for details.

LLG Membership

Thanks to all the new and renewing members, whose dues support all the Guild's programs, and whose spirit supports so much more.

New Members

James Higgins	Ann Zeman
Teen Seckler	Lina White
Marilyn Nelson	Deanna Larson
Chris Harris	Lou Maenz

Renewing Members

Michael Hanner	Charles Thielman & Gail Parr
Laurel Fisher	
Doug & Nancy Hickey	Patty Jacobs
Richard Howorth	Howard Robertson
Rosalind Trotter	Laura LeHew
Ty Adams	Valerie Brooks
Chad Stuart	Janet Bernstein
Jenny Root	Brad Hachten
Mary McNaughton	

Angels

George Hitchcock & Marjorie Simon	Sharon Munson Carter McKenzie
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HOW TO JOIN LLG OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP
Membership in Lane Literary Guild is open to anyone. Annual membership fees are \$25 for individuals, \$35 for families, \$15 for low-income or students, and \$50 for "angels."

To find out whether you need to renew, look at the mailing label on this newsletter. Is there a neon sticker beside it saying "Time to Renew"? That's our subtle way of reminding you.

Mail checks to LLG, P.O. Box 11035, Eugene, OR 97440.

Windfall Readings

Words to Warm an Autumn Evening

Laton Carter and Penelope Scambly Schott on September 19; Judith Montgomery and Michael Strelow on October 24



Laton Carter



Penelope Scambly Schott

The nights are getting chillier, which means it's nearly time for Windfall to get readers and writers back in the one and only Bascom-Tykeson Room. The September 19 authors—Laton Carter and Penelope Scambly Schott—are two good reasons to go indoors.

Laton Carter is a native of Eugene whose work has appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Chicago Review*, *Notre Dame Review*, and *Alaska Quarterly*. His first book, *Leaving* (University of Chicago Press), won the 2005 Oregon Book Award.

In his judge's citation, Mark Doty stated: "Carefully controlled, elegantly shaped, these refreshing poems are oddly moving in their minimalist gestures. They're the work of an idiosyncratic and lively mind, and this first book—already an achievement—hums with promise."

From Orion's belt to someone practicing the clarinet, from joblessness to the prodigious migration of the bobolink, Carter's poems form surprising connections that reveal the mystery of the ordinary. The abstract nouns he often uses for titles ("Decision," "Momentum," "Interval," "Return") contain both the comfort of familiar things and the anxiety of facing them.

Carter sometimes separates time into a series of frames, pausing a passing thought or gesture long enough for it to be pondered. Even the act of being aware becomes a subject of internal debate: "Self-consciousness, alone, protracted, / is, eventually, a form of vanity. I want seeing into things / not to dislocate me." Carter's poems show us what we thought we knew in a different slant. This may be a kind of dislocation, but it's also inspiration.

Carter will appear on OPB's "Art Beat" in the spring of 2007. His second collection of poems, entitled *Patience*, is forthcoming.

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Autumn Windfalls . . . continued from page 1

Penelope Scambly Schott is the author of *Baiting the Void*, winner of the 2005 Orphic Prize for Poetry. Other books include *Penelope: The Story of the Half-Scalped Woman* (1999) and *The Pest Maiden: A Story of Lobotomy* (2004).

Schott's poems resonate with the fragility of existence. She writes about both the ordinary and the sublime with beautifully wrought imagery. In "April Again," a poem reminiscent of a Dutch still life, the poet compares a dish of fruit, ripening into decay, to her aging face. Nothing is too humble to deserve observation. In "Snail Path," whose couplets echo the slow pace of the snail, the poet writes: "Whenever I need forgiveness / I follow the path of the snail / up a stone wall." Even in a devastating poem about the homeless, one finds the power and beauty of nature. The "dipper shines over towers / and its starry ladle dribbles equally everywhere..."

Her poems have appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *Georgia Review*, *Nimrod*, and other journals and anthologies. She has received four grants from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a senior fellowship from the Fine Arts Work Center in Massachusetts, a Vermont Studio Center residency, and a Wurlitzer Foundation fellowship.

Schott lives with her husband in Portland, where she is a member of two poetry groups and teaches poetry through the distance-learning program of Edison State College in Trenton, New Jersey.



Judith Montgomery

On October 24, come hear two writers who know the value of good storytelling and sumptuous language.

Judith Montgomery's poems appear in *The Southern Review*, *Gulf Coast*, *Northwest Review*, and *The Evansville Review*, among other journals. She's been awarded fellowships from the Literary Arts and the Oregon Arts Commission, residencies from Soapstone and Caldera, and first prizes from the National Writers Union, *Americas Review*, *Red*

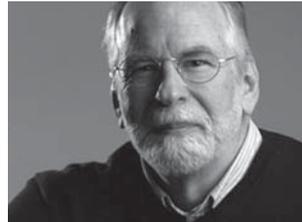
Rock Review, *Chaffin Journal*, and *The Bellingham Review*. Her chapbook, *Passion*, received the 2000 Oregon Book Award. Her second collection, *Red Jess*, came out in February 2006 from Cherry Grove Collections.

The poems in *Red Jess* envelope the reader in lush, musical language reminiscent of Gerard Manley Hopkins. These are startling poems, sad yet conveying grace and hope, poems that "miraculously radiate the possibility joy" (Nance Van Winckel).

Language and images from photography appear throughout the poems—openings and closings, exposure and enclosure, concealment and betrayal. In the end, however, it is the heart, "folded as a box," that the poet comes back to. In "At

the Metolius River, We Walk in Falling Snow," the poet and her husband are walking, alone in their separate thoughts of mortality, death. Suddenly, hearing geese crying in the dark above them, they feel a stirring of hope as they turn toward each other, their "hands a bridge to cross the coming night."

With her husband, Phil, Judith lives in Bend, Oregon, where she is poet-in-residence at Central Oregon Community College.



Michael Strelow

Michael Strelow's debut novel, *The Greening of Ben Brown* (Hawthorn Books, 2005), tells a somewhat true tale that is beyond belief. Utility worker Ben Brown turns green after an industrial accident. The mishap alters more than his skin tone, however, as he moves to the mythical town of East Leven (locals will

recognize many familiar aspects) and becomes an eco-hero who uncovers a hushed-up chemical spill. Brown's sleuthing forces the people of the town to unite toward a common goal or condemn themselves by resisting the truth. The book was a finalist for the 2005 Oregon Book Award in fiction.

Craig Lesley writes that the book is "fascinating, humorous, and wise" and that it "deserves its place on bookshelves along with other Northwest classics." Gina Ochsner says that *The Greening of Ben Brown* is "a compelling examination of community and what it means to love the land, for, as these characters teach us, there shall never be another quite like it."

Strelow has published poetry and fiction in a variety of literary magazines including *The Bellingham Review*, *Willow Springs*, *Cutbank*, *Poetry Midwest*, *Kansas Quarterly*, *Sou'wester*, *Hubbub*, *Silverfish Review*, *Mr. Cogito*, and a number of anthologies. He is working on a second novel, *The Moby Dick Murders*. A former editor of the *Northwest Review* on the UO campus, Strelow now teaches English at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, and has lived in Oregon for 32 years.

Windfall Readings are held at 7 pm in the downtown library and are sponsored by the Guild, the Library, the Friends of the Library, the Library Foundation, and the Cultural Services Division of the Lane Arts Council.

Kudos . . . continued from page 3

Amanda Powell and **Kelly Terwilliger** were the two honorable mentions for the third annual Ruth Stone Prize in Poetry from *Hunger Mountain*.

Deborah Narin-Wells gave readings at public libraries in Portland and Bend this summer, and will read at a bookstore in Sisters in September.

Adrienne Fiorella had four poems published by Howling Dog Press.

Nan Phifer taught two writing workshops at McMenamin's Kennedy School in Portland in August. The workshops were sponsored by the Northwest region of the Association of Personal Historians.

Painting with Words

by Toni Van Deusen

A longer version of this review was first published by CALYX, A Journal of Art and Literature by Women, Volume 23, No. 2, Summer 2006.

A poem is a success for me if it breaks my heart, either through the skillful use of language or in the depth of feeling it evokes. *Birds Flying Through*, Deborah Narin-Wells' new chapbook, is a success on both counts.

The book is also a tour de force, relying as it does on the extended metaphor of birds that carries from the cover art to the epigraph to the final poem's last line.

Yet it is a book about everything but birds—mostly it is about the poet's relationships with her parents, husband, child, and about the loss or anticipated loss of these beloved ones. These are perhaps the oldest themes, yet gifted writers continue to come up with new ways to talk about them, making us sense our own fragility. Narin-Wells does just that.

In "The Sky Inside You," she invokes the lyrical spirit of Li-Young Lee: "I ask myself why / I don't surrender // to eternity in your mouth. / If I dared: / the tangled leaves, the moon, // the lightning on your tongue." Other poems, such as "Miscarriage," take a more narrative stance, but the lyricism remains: "There was nothing I could do, / the sun was shining, / the air smelled innocent // but I was broken / a poor carriage, / cloth scattered and torn /

like those tattered nests / one finds in winter."

Narin-Wells employs a variety of structural and rhythmical elements, and amazing images. In "The Red Shirt," the poet speaks of her aging father's "sun-browned hands like / sparrows in your lap." In "Beginning," she looks at a photo of her husband holding their three-day-old son. The poem ends: "your hand a lit wing / to carry him through the night." And in "Again," in which she re-visions her relationship with her mother, a single statement makes us aware of what took place between them: "Let's begin this time / without anger, no / hand hard against my face...." but she uses many beautifully concrete images to show how it might have been: "Let's begin again, Mother. / Let's say I'm the empty house / you took years to fill. And this: You'll be a ship / coming in with the fog. / I'll climb the lighthouse stairs / night after night."

In the poem that really breaks my heart, "Dusting the Furniture," Narin-Wells muses about why she enjoys "this gesture / ancient and sacred." She compares herself to a nun in a convent, "happy in this given task, / direction for my soul, / so that I, even I / begin to shine."

Deborah Narin-Wells does indeed shine in *Birds Flying Through*, which is as exquisitely crafted as a Chinese brush painting.

Book Review

Birds Flying Through,
Deborah Narin-Wells.
Traprock Books,
2006. 32 pages, \$8.

Kudos to Guild Members

Gary Adams has a poem upcoming in *Red Hawk Review*. In June, he read at Mother Kali's with Doug Hickey.

Claudia Lapp and **Nancy Moody** read at Mother Kali's in July.

Laura LeHew has poems published or coming out in *Alehouse*, *Rattlesnake Review*, *Genie*, *Right Hand Pointing*, *In Our Own Voices*, and *Denali*. She won first prize in the People Before Profits contest, and was a finalist in The Mad Poets' Society contest. She has a poem coming out in the *Her Mark 2007* calendar, published by the Woman Made Gallery in Chicago, where Laura will be

reading on October 8 at the release party.

A poem by **Toni Van Deusen** is a finalist in the 2006 Strong Medicine Best Poem Contest and will appear in *Margie*, volume 5.

Hank Alley has a story coming out in *Stonetable Review*, and his article, "Arcadia and the Passionate Shepherds of *Brokeback Mountain*," will appear in an anthology on the film and story. He won the Gertrude Press 2006 Fiction Chapbook Competition and read in June at Tsunami. This August, he read at the Equity Foundation for Pride event at Mother Kali's.

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Join the Fun at the Potluck

Consider yourself invited to the Annual LLG Potluck on September 16, 3–6 p.m., at Lamb Cottage in Skinner Butte Park. Bring food or a non-alcoholic beverage to share and something to wow and amaze your friends with at the open mike (five minutes or less, please).

Feel free to bring along a few used books to trade—put those old gems back in circulation at the book-trading table, and take a few that are new to you. Leftovers will be donated to the Friends of the Library (books, not food).

Come enjoy a beautiful afternoon in the park and get caught up with your friends in the Guild. For more info, call 685-1087.

LLG Contacts

Events: Deborah Narin-Wells, calendar@laneliteraryguild.org

Membership: Toni Van Deusen, membership@laneliteraryguild.org

Windfall Readings: Cecelia Hagen & Deborah Narin-Wells, windfall@laneliteraryguild.org

Newsletter: Cecelia Hagen, newsletter@laneliteraryguild.org

Craft Workshops: Toni Van Deusen, tonivd@cmc.net

LLG Website: Laura LeHew, laura@deer-run.com

Newsletter Layout: Ling Chan, ling_c_chan@yahoo.com

Ongoing Workshops:
Fiction 1: Steven Higgins, 689-8306

Fiction 2: John Groves, 345-2732

Poetry 1: Deborah Narin-Wells, 683-2086

Poetry 2: Michael Hanner, 895-2236

Poetry 3: Gary Adams, 461-0598

Poetry 4: Laura LeHew, 683-8682

*Is it time
to renew?*



The Writer's Access is published bimonthly by the Lane Literary Guild, a not-for-profit group dedicated to fostering appreciation of the written and spoken word and providing workshops and support for writers in Lane County. Send member news, calendar events, or announcements to newsletter@laneliteraryguild.org. The LLC website, www.laneliteraryguild.org, is updated regularly. Log on to find links to Windfall readers and information about the Guild.

About The Writer's Access

Lane Literary Guild
P.O. Box 11035
Eugene, OR 97440



Readings & Events in September–October

Readings are free unless otherwise noted.

September

- 1 Amit Goswami at the Eugene Public Library, 6:00 p.m.
- 7 Novelist Charles Snellings reading from *The Hidebehind*. UO Bookstore, 7:00 p.m.
- 19 Windfall Reading Series presents poets Laton Carter and Penelope Scambly Schott. Eugene Public Library, 7:00 p.m.
- 21 Author! Author! Series at the Eugene Public Library. NPR's Maureen Corrigan reading from her memoir, *Leave Me Alone, I'm Reading*. 7:00 p.m.
- 24 Billy Collins welcomes the UO freshmen with a keynote address in MacArthur Court. Doors open at 3:00 p.m. Booksigning from 5:30–6:00 on Gerlinger Lawn, 1468 University Street.

October

- 12 Barry Lopez and Debra Gwartney, editors of *Home Ground: Language for an American Landscape*. Knight Library Browsing Room, 7:00 p.m.

(October continued)

- 14 Science Fiction writer Nina Kiriki Hoffman, reading and booksigning, Tsunami Books, 5:00 p.m.
- 17 Robert Bly reads at The Shedd, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 and are for sale at Tsunami, J. Michaels, UO Bookstore, and both Smith Family stores beginning Sept. 5.
- 18 Robert Bly signs books and broadsides at Tsunami Books, 3:00–5:00 p.m.
- 19 Poets Brian Turner (*Here, Bullet*) and Kate Lyn Hibbard (*Sleeping Upside Down*) read at the UO.
- 24 Windfall Reading Series presents poet Judith Montgomery and prose writer Michael Strelow. Eugene Public Library, 7:00 p.m.

Diana Rodgers, editor of *Ghosts at the Coast: The Best of Ghost Story Weekend Vol. II*. UO Bookstore, 7:00 p.m.

- 26 Novelists Cheryl Strayed and Randy Sue Coburn read from their novels, *Torch* and *Owl Island*. UO Bookstore, 7:00 p.m.