



The Writer's Access

March–April 2007

News from the Lane Literary Guild

www.laneliteraryguild.org

A Look at Future Windfalls

May 15: Local favorite **William Sullivan** will be reading from and presenting a slideshow based on his new novel, *Hiking Europe in Search of Einstein's Violin*.

September 18: **Joe Millar** and **Dorianne Laux** share the stage for the first Windfall of next season.

October 16: **Kathleen Dean Moore**, author of *The Pine Island Paradox* and *Riverwalking*, and poet Duane Ackerson.

Windfall Readings are held 7:00–9:00 p.m. in the downtown library and are sponsored by the Lane Literary Guild, the Library, the Friends of the Library, the Library Foundation, and the Cultural Services Division of the Lane Arts Council.

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

Elizabeth Lawrence Eleanor Berry
Evelyn Hess

Renewing Members

Jim Higgins Diane Conrad
Eileen Peterson Ingrid Wendt
Steven Higgins Ralph Salisbury
Virginia Landgreen Alan Contreras
Rush Wayne John Groves

Angels

Keli Osborn Lex Runciman

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 or more 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 reminder for you.

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

March Windfall

From the Eastern Side of the State

Jodi Varon and David Axelrod of La Grande to read on March 20



Jodi Varon

The March 20 Windfall features Jodi Varon and David Axelrod, two versatile and dedicated writers from eastern Oregon. They will read at 7:00 p.m. in the Bascom–Tykeson Room of the downtown Eugene Library.

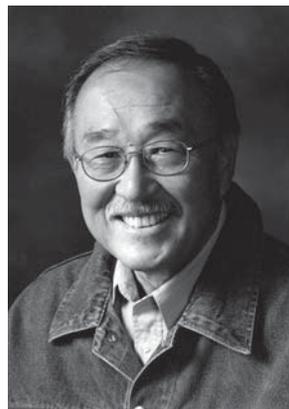
Jodi Varon's recent memoir, *Drawing to an Inside Straight: The Legacy of an Absent Father*, is a bittersweet story of growing up in the Jewish ghetto of west Denver in the 1960s. Her father was a cattleman and gambler whose lack of luck turned into a catastrophe when he wagered

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April Windfall

Celebrate National Poetry Month with Oregon's Poet Laureate

The Guild Welcomes Oregon Poet Laureate Lawson Inada and Portland Poet Paulann Peterson on April 17



Lawson Inada

On April 17, the Lane Literary Guild celebrates National Poetry Month by bringing Lawson Inada and Paulann Petersen to the library to read at 7:00 p.m. in the Bascom–Tykeson Room.

Oregon Poet Laureate **Lawson Fusao Inada** is a third-generation Japanese-American from Fresno, California. In May 1942 his family joined over 100,000 other Japanese-Americans in camps, where they were confined for the duration of World War II. Still a young child, Inada was first incarcerated at the Fresno County Fairgrounds, then moved to a concentration camp in Arkansas, and finally interred at a camp in Colorado at the end of the war.

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the family business in a poker game. He taught his three daughters proverbs in Ladino—a dialect of Castilian Spanish spoken by the Sephardi—but he was also a man “who had cut his teeth on highballs . . . who Lindy Hopped at the Savoy in Manhattan . . . [and] who likened people without a sense of history to husks who filled and emptied daily.”

Drawing to an Inside Straight drew praise from William Kittredge, who said it was a “clear-eyed story of an intellectual woman of Jewish background coming of age in the roughhouse American West.” The author portrays an era of disruptive, formative events: the Vietnam War, political assassinations, the month-long disappearance of her father before her fifteenth birthday, the drifting apart of the family, an assault on the author while she was in college, and the “first gesture of reconciliation” with her errant father, whom she could never bear to tell about the attack.

“Varon has crafted a richly evocative portrait of 1960s Denver with the delicate touch of a watercolorist,” wrote *The Rocky Mountain News*. “It will move readers, sometimes to laughter, other times to disgust or tears—but always we are moved.” In addition to her memoir, Varon is the author of *The Rock’s Cold Breath*, poems translated from the Chinese of Li He.



David Axelrod

David Axelrod grew up in the foothills of the Appalachians. His essays and poems have appeared in *Kenyon Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and *From Here We Speak: An Anthology of Oregon Poetry*. His most recent book is *Troubled Intimacies*, a collection of creative nonfiction.

The Cartographer’s Melancholy won the 2004 Spokane Poetry

Prize and was a 2006 Oregon Book Award finalist. His first two poetry books are *Jerusalem of Grass* and *The Kingdom at Hand*. He has received fellowships from Oregon Literary Arts and won the Carolyn Kizer and the Kay Deeter Poetry Prizes.

Fate, stillness, travel, and the deep bruise of individual history as it becomes political history all shape the poems in *The Cartographer’s Melancholy*. In lean, fresh language, Axelrod shows what it would be like to be truly alive to the nuance of events. He bears witness to human suffering and reaches an almost apocalyptic vision of “Holy site piled upon / wreckage of holy site.”

Yet Axelrod’s histories of war and despair are accompanied by glimpses of hope and even joy. When least expected, the reader is surprised with images of light—“bonfires like orange beacons.” As Richard Robbins says: “Fearless, guided by the angel Whitman, his poems enter the dark soul of American Empire and come back speaking the language of light.”

Varon and Axelrod are married and colleagues at English at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande. Together they edit the literary and fine arts journal *Basalt*.

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A graduate of the University of Oregon and Fresno State University, where he studied with Phil Levine, Inada is an emeritus professor at Southern Oregon University. Inada is known not only for his excellent writing, but for his approachability and humor.

His books of poetry are *Before the War*, *Legends from Camp*, and *Drawing the Line*. He is the editor of *Only What We Could Carry: The Japanese American Internment Experience*. Jazz is a major theme in his poems and an influence on his style. He has often read his poetry with jazz musicians accompanying him. Los Angeles poet Julia Stein writes in her blog *California Writer* that Inada “is a poet close to Whitman in his musicality and his seeing America as many different voices singing varied songs.”

Inada’s honors include an Oregon Book Award, an American Book Award, fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a Guggenheim Fellowship in Poetry. He was one of the co-editors of the landmark anthology, *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*. He is the Steinbeck Chair of the National Steinbeck Center, and was named the new poet laureate by Gov. Ted Kulongoski last year.



Paulann Petersen

Paulann Petersen is a poet who has encouraged and helped countless other writers. She has published three books: *The Wild Awake*, 2002; *Blood Silk*, 2004; and *A Bride of Narrow Escape*, which was a finalist for the 2006 Oregon Book Award. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *The New Republic*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Willow Springs*, *Poetry Daily*, and Portland’s bus project, *Poetry in Motion*.

Petersen dedicated *A Bride of Narrow Escape* to her first writing mentor, Lawson Inada.

Inada says the poems in *Bride* “brim with the brilliance of discovery. . . . Hers is a poetry of revelation and wonder.” In poems that are intimate, tender, and at times heart-wrenching, she writes about the illnesses and deaths of both parents, her childhood and teen years, married life, and mortality. The language—juxtaposing the everyday and the sublime—is wonderfully musical. Petersen turns to nature for her images, as if the world of branch and mountain, bird and star can clarify and console. In a poem about her dying mother, she writes: “Today the mountains grow / beyond familiarity, flaring their white sides / to the sun / looming up as the temples / they are.”

A former Stegner Fellow at Stanford, Petersen received the 2006 Literary Arts Steward Holbrook Award for Outstanding Contributions to Oregon’s Literary Life. She has won two Carolyn Kizer Poetry Awards and teaches workshops around the state. Petersen lives in Portland, where she serves on the board for the Friends of William Stafford and organizes the annual William Stafford Birthday Events.

Craft Workshop: Becoming the Other Person



Kim Stafford

On Saturday, May 5, the Lane Literary Guild will offer another day-long craft workshop. This time, Kim Stafford will help writers examine the poetry of affinity.

This workshop is for poets at all levels and costs \$50 for LLG members and \$65 for nonmembers. Please call 685-1087 or email tonipoet@gmail.com for more information.

Stafford writes this description of the workshop:

The writer gathers treasure, fiddles with fragments, becomes another person. The writer becomes a listener for beginnings with promise, a choreographer of lucky moments. By writing, we help to heal the world.

What if we set out to compose an archive of fragments for sustained use in the life of creation? An archive of fragments . . . a kitchen drawer filled with spices . . . a workbench furnished with fine tools . . . a life peppered with moments of learning . . . a notebook humming with stories and songs.

If a writer does not have a writing practice, what happens to the treasury of the unwritten? The materials for creation may be stories, sensations, persistent episodes of grief, nuggets of mystery, moments of joy that are inexplicable until you begin to form them as a gift for someone close to you.

In this workshop we will write a series of moments of affinity in the infinitely pliable form we call poetry: saying as much as you can in the shortest space by practicing the perennial miracle of words in your own voice. All practice, no performance.

Kim Stafford is the author of *The Muses Among Us: Eloquent Listening and Other Pleasures of the Writer's Craft*, and other books of poetry, essays, and memoir. He is the founding director of the Northwest Writing Institute.

Guild Members in the News

Laura LeHew has a poem in *Ellipsis* and had four poems accepted for the anthology *HeArts Desire*. **Eileen Dawson** Peterson had five accepted for the same anthology.

In April, the Eugene–Springfield OSPA Chapter will send poets to read at Crow High School. Poets include Poet Laureate **Lawson Inada** and Guild members **Quinton Hallett, Deborah Narin-Wells, Carter McKenzie, Sara Burant, Kelly Terwilliger, Jackie Melvin, Cecelia Hagen, Toni Van Deusen, and C.A. Gilbert**.

Kelly Terwilliger and **Deborah Narin-Wells** both had poems accepted by *Clackamas Literary Review*.

Howard W. Robertson has been selected for the 2007 Jack Straw Writers Program in Seattle (<http://www.jackstraw.org/>). The Writers Program includes a reading series, publication in an anthology, recorded studio interviews, radio broadcasts, and publication on the website. Robertson is also slated to be part of the Burning Word Poetry Festival (<http://www.burningword.org>) on April 28.

Deer Drink the Moon: Poems of Oregon is being released this April by Ooligan Press. The anthology includes many Guild poets, including **Ingrid Wendt, Ralph Salisbury, George Hitchcock, Robert Hill Long, and Erik Muller**. Anthology editor Liz Nakazawa has organized the book thematically into the seven ecoregions of Oregon. Statewide readings are taking place and local readings will be scheduled later in the spring.

Valerie Brooks of Leaburg has been awarded a month-long residency to Vermont Studio Center and a \$4,250 Elizabeth George Foundation grant to work on her novel, *Finding Vincible*. She previously has won residencies to Hedgebrook, Villa Montalvo, and Soapstone.

Ingrid Wendt has been awarded a 2006 Oregon Literary Fellowship, and has a poem in the latest issue of *Isotope: A Journal of Literary Nature and Science Writing*. In February, she and **Ralph Salisbury** will be Writers in Residence at the Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities, and they're reading at Augsburg College on February 20.

LLG Contacts

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

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Craft Workshops: Toni Van Deusen, tonipoet@gmail.com

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

Fiction 2: John Groves, 345-2732

Poetry 1: Deborah Narin-Wells, 683-2086

Red Sofa Poets: Michael Hanner, 895-2236

Poetry 4: Laure 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 March–April

Readings are free unless otherwise noted.

March

- 1 4J High School Poetry Competition. Tsunami Books, 7:00 p.m.
- 6 Poet Dorianne Laux, winner of the 2006 Oregon Book Award, reads from *Facts About the Moon* and poet Laton Carter, winner of the 2005 Oregon Book Award, reads from *Leaving*. UO Knight Library Browsing Room, 7:00 p.m.
- 8 Monica Drake reads from her new novel, *Clown Girl*. UO Bookstore, 7:00 p.m.
- 20 Windfall presents eastern Oregon writers Jodi Varon and David Axelrod. Eugene Public Library, Bascom–Tykeson Room, 7:00 p.m.

April

- 8 UO Creative Writing students at Tsunami Books, 8:00 p.m.
- 10 The Eugene–Springfield chapter of the OSPA brings poets Colette Jonopulos, Eleanor Berry, and Stephen Jones to read at the Library Meeting Room, Springfield City Hall, 7:00 p.m.
- 12 Poet Tess Gallagher, sponsored by UO Creative Writing, 8:00–9:00 p.m. Location TBA.
- 17 Windfall presents Oregon Poet Laureate Lawson Inada and Portland poet Paulann Petersen. Eugene Public Library, Bascom–Tykeson Room, 7:00 p.m.
- 21 Poets Tom Madden (*Lessons for Custer*) and George Estreich (*Textbook Illustrations of the Human Body*) read at Tsunami Books, 5:00 p.m.
- 28 Young Writers' Association's Glitterary Word Festival, a daylong event of fun including a noontime workshop with Lawson Inada for children and their favorite adults. Eugene Public Library, 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.