



Literary License

February, 2006

SMA LITERARY AWARDS ENTRY DEADLINE FEB. 15 *See Entry Form Inside*

BY CAROL JEAN CARLSON

The Society of Midland Authors Literary Competition for books published in 2005 is now underway. Each year since its inception in 1915, the Society has presented awards for excellence to authors and poets.

Currently the Society presents awards of cash and recognition plaques to winners in the categories of adult fiction and nonfiction, biography, poetry, and children's fiction and nonfiction published in the previous year. The juried

competition is open to authors and poets who reside in, were born in, or have strong ties to the Midwestern Heartland.

Beginning in 2002, the James Friend Memorial Award for Literary Criticism is also presented under our aegis. In addition, at the discretion of the Society's officers and board of directors, lifetime achievement awards are presented to individuals who have donated their time and energies to assist the Society over a period of years and authors recognized for their contributions to Midwestern letters.

States covered include Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri,

Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

SEND ONE ENTRY TO EACH JUDGE

ADULT FICTION

Mark Eleveld, 305 Brooks Ave., Joliet, IL 60435
(815-723-3184)

Cheryl Reed, 1128 46th St., Chicago, IL 60653
(312-321-2031)

Donna Seaman, 4159 N. Lawndale, Chicago, IL 60618

ADULT NONFICTION

Carol Jean Carlson, 1420 West Farragut, Chicago, IL 60640 (773-506-7578)

Bill Cleveland, 1560 N.

Science for Public Consumption

Speaker: Carol Rausch Albright has lectured extensively on her specialty--examining the relationships among neuroscience, religious experience, theology and complexity studies--in North America and Europe. Varied venues include St. Paul University, University of Ottawa (Canada), the University of Central Arkansas and the European Society for the Study of Science and Theology in Barcelona.

She's executive editor of *Zygon: Journal of Religion & Science* and author or co-author of several books. *The Humanizing Brain: Where Religion and Neuroscience Meet*, has been required reading at a variety of colleges and universities, including Columbia University, the University of Vermont and St. Louis University.

Where: Chicago Athletic Assn., 12 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago

When: 6 p.m. social hour, 7 p.m. program, Tuesday, Feb. 14

Reservations NOT needed. Public invited. Reception and presentation \$5 for nonmembers. SMA members and teachers and students with ID free. Snacks and cash bar.

Other Coming Events

March 14--Dr. Martin E. Marty, "Six Years Among the Fundamentalists."

April 11--William T. McGrath, copyright/ fair use.

May 9--Annual awards dinner.

Board Meetings

Usually on the third Wednesday of each month:
Feb. 15, March 15, Apr. 19, May 17.

LITERARY LICENSE

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60657 (773-534-1196 or
773-327-1475)

POETRY

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(773-702-9768 or
773-645-9973)

Richard Jones, 913 Lois Lane,
Glenview, IL 60025
(847-657-9525)

PR TIP: BE MORE AGGRESSIVE AT YOUR BOOK SIGNINGS

BY TOM CIESIELKA
TC Public Relations

Many book signings are a
“bust.” Plenty of work goes into
setting up the event and the only
people who show up are the
author and the author-relations
person from the store. It’s a sad
story that repeats itself over and
over. However, the author can
take steps to improve book
signing success.

Keep in mind that, unless
you’re a celebrity author, the
store will not do much
promotion. Therefore, it’s the
author’s responsibility to be
more proactive. Here are some
ways to do that:

* After you’ve secured the
date, set up a meeting to discuss
what the store will do to promote
the signing. Then the author
should ask that person what are
some of the best ways the author

can to help out.

* Ask for a copy of the
store’s media list. Most stores
maintain a media list of places
where they send listings of
special events. If the store will
give you the list, call those
places and tell them that you’re
available for interviews. Of
course, before you call, think of
a good reason why they would
want to interview you.

* Depending on the location,
consider inviting your friends,
business associates and anyone
else that supports you. Also,
think about associations or
organizations that would be
interested in the topic of your
book. If you wrote a mystery
novel, see if there is a local
organization of mystery readers
and invite their members.

* As people are walking
through the store, find ways to
engage them in conversation. If
the person is near your table,
say hello and ask, “What types
of books interest you?” Find a
way to introduce yourself and
explain that you are in the store
promoting your latest book.

While many of these people
won’t be buyers, they might
know someone who would like
your book and would want to
give an autographed copy to that
person. Books signed by authors
are always special.

While you may not sell
hundreds of books at a
traditional bookstore signing,
you still could generate some
publicity and also learn first
hand what people are looking
for in the marketplace.

*Next month’s tip: What To Do
When Your Book is Getting Zero
Publicity.*

AWARDS ENTRY FORM
DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: February 15, 2006

Duplicate this page. Make three copies for each book entered. Send one book and one copy of this completed form to each of the three judges in the book's category. Please type or print clearly.

Name of book: _____

Publisher: _____

Publication date: _____

(If publication date differs from copyright date, please explain in "Comments" section below.)

Author: _____

Author's address: _____

Category of entry (circle one). Entries improperly categorized will be disqualified.

ADULT FICTION

POETRY

CHILDREN'S FICTION

ADULT NONFICTION

BIOGRAPHY

CHILDREN'S NONFICTION

I nominate the above work for a Society of Midland Authors Award. (An author may nominate his or her own work.)

Your name: _____

Signature: _____

Company and business title: _____

Telephone and/or email address: _____

Address: _____

Comments:

CAROL'S IN-BOX

BY CAROL JEAN CARLSON

Forbidden Pleasures

Frank González-Crussi's new book, *On Seeing: Things Seen, Unseen, and Obscene* (Overlook), is a compelling set of philosophical meditations on the relationship between the viewer and the viewed. González-Crussi contends that through seeing, the two are forever joined and effect one another in profound ways and that this has led to a strong desire on the part of humans to see what is forbidden.

In support of this theory, González-Crussi recounts historical and cultural examples of voyeurism. González-Crussi, who is a professor emeritus of pathology at Northwestern University Medical School, mixes in his personal reflections on this phenomenon drawn from medicine.

Classic American Storyteller

An early and active member of the Society of Midland Authors, **Zona Gale** (1874-1938) first published the novella, *Miss Lulu Bett*, in 1920 to both critical and popular acclaim. It was followed by Gale's Pulitzer Prize-winning play of the same name.

A new edition, *Miss Lulu Bett and Selected Stories* (paperback, Anchor), edited by Barbara Solomon and Eileen Panetta, has a new introduction and adds four of Gale's short stories.

Lulu Bett is 34 years old, unwed, and lives with her sister and mean-spirited brother-in-

law. She is "the family beast of burden," an uncompensated menial.

Things seem about to change with the arrival of Ninian, the high-spirited and sophisticated brother of her brother-in-law. What follows is a story of independence and marriage.

The other stories in the book are "Dream" (1919), "The Biography of Blade" (1927), "The Need" (1930) and "Bridal Pond" (1930). All of these speak of marriage, societal strictures and the imbalance of power.

And Still Counting

On the New Year's Eve edition of *Those Were the Days*, Chuck Schaden reached a milestone never attained by any of the radio classics showcased on his program. Schaden has been on the air for 35 years and eight months. The longest running classic radio show was *Don McNeill's Breakfast Club*, which broadcast from the Allerton Hotel and aired for 35 years and six months.

To celebrate the occasion, Schaden ran the final broadcast of the *Breakfast Club*, which signed off on Dec. 27, 1968.

Those Were the Days airs from 1 pm to 5 pm Saturdays on the College of DuPage's WDCB-FM (90.9) and streams online at www.wdcb.org.

RECENT NEW MEMBERS

BY THOMAS FRISBIE

Alex Kotlowitz, of Oak Park, Ill., is author of the 1998 book, *The Other Side of the River: A Story of Two Towns, a Death*

and *America's Dilemma*, and the 1987 best-selling *There Are No Children Here*, which received the Helen B. Bernstein Award for Excellence in Journalism, the Carl Sandburg Award and a Christopher Award.

It also was the subject of a 1993 television film for ABC starring Oprah Winfrey. The New York Public Library included it on a list of the 150 most important books of the 20th century. His most recent book is *Never a City So Real: A Walk in Chicago* (2004).

His first reporting job was in Lansing, Mich., for the *Lansing Star*. He then worked for the *Wall Street Journal* for nine years. He speaks on college campuses and has been writer-in-residence at Northwestern University and a Distinguished Visitor at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Taylor H.A. Bell, author of *Sweet Charlie, Dike, Cazzie, and Bobby Joe: High School Basketball in Illinois*, joined the sports staff of the *Champaign-Urbana Courier* after graduating from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He moved to the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, and then to the *Chicago Daily News*.

When that paper folded in 1978 he joined the *Chicago Sun-Times*. He has covered professional sports as well, but found his niche in traveling the state to write about high school sports.

Before retiring in 2001, he wrote a column on high school basketball and covered the sport extensively throughout the state.

Pamela Riney-Kehrberg is associate professor of history and director of the program in agricultural history and rural studies at Iowa State University. She is author of *Childhood on the Farm: Work, Play and Coming of Age in the Midwest* (University of Kansas Press, 2005) and *Rooted in the Dust: Surviving Drought and Depression in Southwestern Kansas* and editor of *Waiting on the Bounty: The Dust Bowl Diary of Mary Knackstedt Dyck* (University of Iowa Press).

Larry Lane is a young Chicago area writer and poet. He is author of *The Wonder Years: A College Story* (2004).

OTHER MEMBER NEWS

Athletes of Yesteryear

Taylor Bell writes, "I am about to send the manuscript of my second book, *Where Have You Gone?*, to the publisher, Sports Publishing, in Champaign, Ill.

"My book focuses on 50 former Illinois high school basketball players from the 1950s to the early 1990s, 1,000-word personality profiles documenting their careers from childhood, high school, college and professional sports and/or careers to retirement.

"Some of the players that even casual sports fans might remember: Cazzie Russell, Sweet Charlie Brown, Tommy Hawkins, Bobby Joe Mason, Quinn Buckner, Jack Sikma, Jay Shidler, Deon Thomas, Tom Kleinschmidt, Kiwane Garris, Rashard Griffith.

"It was so enjoyable to research these books, renewing relationships with old players and coaches whom I had covered as a journalist for 40 years.

"Now I'm hoping to find a publisher who might want to publish a book on a history of high school football in Illinois.

"Does anybody remember Red Grange, Dick Butkus and Ray Nitschke?"

One Sale Leads to Another...

Alan Neff writes, "I recently sold to F&W Publications a "Success Story" about how I marketed and sold my novel, *Blauser's Building*, without an agent. F&W publishes, among other things, *Novel and Short Story Writer's Market*, the annual novelist's marketing reference and directory.

"My success story will appear in the 2007 edition to be released in August, 2006.

"Here's a footnote that you might find amusing: I also wrote a humorous piece called 'Novelista'" about writing and selling this piece about selling my novel. I performed it at the Green Mill poetry slam one night, and I won the slam on the strength of it.

"The moral: Little fleas have smaller fleas upon their backs to bite 'em, and smaller fleas have smaller fleas, and on ad infinitum."

Writes Obit of Co-author

Steve Huntley had the sad duty of writing an obit in the *Chicago Sun-Times* for his co-author, Truman K. Gibson, Jr., who died Dec. 23 at 93. They collaborated on *Knocking Down*

Barriers (Northwestern University Press, 2005).

Gibson, a Chicago attorney, was the last surviving member of the World War II-era "Black Cabinet" of Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman.

"As an advocate for African-American soldiers in the War Department from 1940 through 1945, Mr. Gibson fought tirelessly to break down the segregation that ruled the U.S. Army, to persuade the military leadership to commit black servicemen to combat instead of relegating them to service and support duty, and to protect the rights" and even the lives of African-American soldiers trained at camps mostly in the Jim Crow South, where white violence was a constant threat.

As a young graduate of the University of Chicago Law School, Mr. Gibson was a member of the legal team that challenged a restrictive racial covenant prohibiting African-Americans from living in the Washington Park area of the South Side. This case involved black real-estate developer Carl Hansberry, whose daughter Lorraine would use the experience as inspiration for her 1959 Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *A Raisin in the Sun*.

Abner Mikva, the former Illinois congressman, federal appellate judge and White House counsel, praised Gibson's role in helping persuade President Truman to integrate the armed forces, and called Truman's order "the most important thing the government had done since the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the

Constitution."

Huntley wrote, "(Gibson's) was a life that touched on many of the critical issues of race in America in the 20th century."

Signs 65th Book Contract

Marlene Targ Brill has seen just-off-the-press copies of her latest book, *Barack Obama:*

Working to Make a Difference by Millbrook Press. As far as she knows, this is the only children's biography about Illinois's latest star politician--at least until Obama's own comes out in the future.

Brill, who is about to sign her 65th book contract, received news that her *Alzheimer's*

Disease from Marshall Cavendish made the list of Outstanding Science Trade Books for K-12 for 2006. Selections result from a cooperative project by the National Science Teacher's Association and Children Book Council.