

At 2000 Awards Banquet

Oklahoma Authors Star

It was a stellar event for the Oklahoma Center for the Book; the evening's luminaries were the talented authors and designers with Oklahoma connections who had submitted entries to the 11th annual Oklahoma Book Awards Contest. From a short list in five categories, judges chose a favorite and each winner received a commemorative medal and a certificate.

Thirty-one of the thirty-six finalists joined 225 guests at the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Heritage Center on March 11, 2000, for the dinner and presentations. This was a new attendance record for the ceremony.

The evening began with a speech and slide presentation about **Jim Thompson**, the multi-talented, crime-genre writer originally from Anadarko. **Robert Polito**, author of *Savage Art: A Biography of Jim Thompson*, gave a personalized retrospective of Thompson's life and accomplishments. Thompson wrote no fewer than 29 novels. A number of his books were made (and remade) into movies, including *The Killer Inside Me*, *The Getaway*, *Coup de Torchon* (based on Thompson's *Pop. 1280*), *The Grifters*, and *After Dark, My Sweet*. Thompson's daughter, **Sharon Thompson Reed**, was present to accept the posthumous Ralph Ellison Award for her father's work.

Tulsa journalist **Ken Jackson** also received a posthumous award for Distinguished Service. Accepted by his wife Angie, the award recognized a lifetime dedicated to Oklahoma writers and to preserving the literary heritage of Oklahoma. Jackson was a long-time member of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Center for the Book. The award was presented by **John Wooley**, Entertainment Writer for the *Tulsa World*.

The 2000 award for fiction, presented by **Rilla Askew**, 1993 and 1998 recipient of this award, went to Tulsa author **Bill Bernhart**, for his thriller mystery *Dark Justice*. Winner of the 1995 fiction award, and a finalist seven times, Bernhart was thrilled to accept the award, and thanked his wife **Kirsten**, his family, and many fans and supporters.

Teresa Miller, Director of the Oklahoma Center for Poets and Writers, presented the award for poetry to **Scott Momaday** for *In the Bear's House*. Miller accepted the medal on his behalf.

Harold Keith, late author and Newberry Award winner, was honored in the Children/Young Adult category for *Brief Garland*. Originally published in 1971, Keith based *Brief Garland* on the true story of his nephew, basketball coach **Jim Keith**, who was present to accept the award. After presenter **Bettie Estes-Rickner** placed the award around the neck of Coach Keith, he replied, "This is the nicest thing Bettie has ever done for me. In 1965 she scored 49 points against my team in the state basketball finals."

The non-fiction award went to **Michael Wallis** for *The Real Wild West*:

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NEWSLETTER

Winning Cash Prizes

Six Oklahoma Kids **Talk Back** To Writers

The Oklahoma Center for the Book in the Department of Libraries and the *Weekly Reader* corporation have announced the 2000 Oklahoma state winners for the "Letters About Literature" essay contest. This contest encourages students to write letters to authors whose books have affected their lives in some important way.

Two competition levels were offered: Level I for students in grades 4 through 7, and Level II for students in grades 7 through 12.

This year, a tie for first place in Level I meant that two students received a first place certificate and a check for \$100. Winners of the first place award were **Shanon Kranich**, a seventh grade student at Sequoyah Middle School in Edmond, and **Zachary Garrett**, a seventh grade student at Oak Hill School in Broken Arrow. Kranich wrote to **J. R.R. Tolkien** for the book *The Hobbit*. Garrett's letter was to **Arthur Ransome** concerning his book *Coot Club*.

Second place winner **Matt Toffoli** received a check for \$50. Toffoli is also a seventh grade student at Sequoyah Middle School. His letter was to **Gary Paulson** for his books *Hatchet*, *The River*, and *Brian's Winter of the Hatchet* series.

In the Level II competition, **Adam Roll's** letter to **Stephen Crane** for *The Red Badge of Courage* earned him a first place certificate and \$100. Roll is a tenth grade student at Grace Fellowship Christian School in Tulsa.

The second place award and \$50 went to **Crystal Walton**, a 12th grade student at Washington High

School in Washington, Oklahoma. Her letter was to **Anne Frank** for *I've Lived a Thousand Years: The Diary of Anne Frank*.

The third place winner and recipient of \$25 was **Andrea Rolin**, an eighth grade student at Rush Springs Middle School in Rush Springs. Her letter to **Lurlene McDaniel** said, "there is no one particular book that changed my life, but your imaginative writing and heartwarming stories are truly amazing."

Oklahoma Center for the Book Thanks

the following for their
Special Assistance at the
annual Book Award Ceremony:

- **Best of Books** bookstore for handling book sales and donating the profits—a record total of nearly \$1500,
- **Full Circle Bookstore** for hosting the after-event party,
- **Independent Booksellers Association** for their support,
- **Oklahoma Department of Libraries** (in particular the Public Information Office),
- the Board members who "put it all together"—**Marsha Preston, Liz Coddling, M. J. Van Deventer, Bill Young, Ann Hamilton, Julia Fresonke, and Gerry Willingham**
- **FRIENDS of the Metropolitan Library System** for the Capital Hill book-signing program
- Volunteers **Susan McVey, Vickie Sullivan, Kitty Pittman, Donna Norvell, Thelma and Eddie Burchfiel**, and
- Executive Director **Glenda Carlile**.

Oklahoma Center for the Book Newsletter

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An outreach program of the Library of Congress, the Oklahoma Center for the Book's purpose is to promote the work of Oklahoma authors, to celebrate the literary heritage of the state, and to promote reading—especially for pleasure.

For more information, please contact Executive Director Glenda Carlile, or visit our webpage at—<http://www.odl.state.ok.us/ocb/>

Oklahoma Center for the Book
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OK 73105-3298 800-522-8116 toll-free statewide

Big Night: Bill Wallace Receives Gibson Award

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the 101 Ranch and the Creation of the American West. Wallis, the recipient of the 1999 Arrell Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award, was unable to attend, but expressed his appreciation by way of **Teresa Miller**.

The Glory Days of Summer: The History of Baseball in Oklahoma won honors in Design/Illustration. The designer **Carol Haralson**, a five time winner for her outstanding work, commented on how proud she is to be a part of the world of Oklahoma books.

For many, the highlight of the evening was the Arrell Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award acceptance by **Bill Wallace**. The audience was delighted with Wallace's tales of teaching children. Everyone in the audience could identify with his hilarious recreations of classroom hand-raising techniques such as "the sneaky snake," "the lazy arm," the "floppy," and even "the Hitler" with its stiffly upraised arm.

He told of calming classrooms filled with fidgeting kids by reading to them. Eventually, he began writing original stories to read to them—the genesis of his prolific career.

Comments by presenters **Gerry Willingham** and **Donna Bigby** clearly demonstrated the effect

of Wallace's dedication to teaching and influencing children to read. Wallace's love of children and writing were also evident in a video interview by 12-year old fan **Mark Moore** from Spiro Middle School. (The

video was produced by board member **Ann Hamilton**, Mark's aunt.) Appropriately, several children were in the audience to see their favorite author receive the award for his large body of writing for young people.

After the event, **Liz Coddling**, President of the Oklahoma Center for the Book, commented, "It is very gratifying to see the event grow both in numbers and in reputation. More and more authors are realizing the prestige of being a finalist in the Oklahoma Book Awards and more people are becoming aware of the Oklahoma Center for the Book and our efforts to promote Oklahoma authors."



Gerry Willingham, Bill Wallace, and Donna Bigby



Jim Keith, Carol Haralson, Bill Bernhart, and Sharon Thompson Reed

ALL OKLAHOMA READS JOYCE CAROL THOMAS



Joyce Carol Thomas will be the recipient of the Arrell Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award for 2001. Starting in September, the Center and its partners (the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, the Oklahoma Center for Poets and Writers, and the Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma) will be encouraging readers to discover (or rediscover) Thomas and her books. The campaign will be called “All Oklahoma Reads Joyce Carol Thomas.”

Joyce Carol Thomas was born and raised in Ponca City, Oklahoma. At ten years of age the family moved to California, but she never forgot her Oklahoma background and many of her works have issues involving Oklahoma. She is known for her poetry, play writing, and novels—especially for children or young adults. She received the National Book Award for her first novel, *Marked by Fire*. Her first illustrated book, *Brown Honey in Broomwheat Tea* won a Coretta Scott King Award. She was a finalist for the 1996 Oklahoma Book Awards for *Gingerbread Days*, and the 1999 Oklahoma Book Awards for *I Have Heard of a Land*. Thomas is the poet laureate for the Oklahoma Center for Poets and Writers, at Oklahoma State University–Tulsa.

Isn't That A New Membership Category?

The Board of Directors has added a new membership category to the bylaws of the Oklahoma Center for the Book. Article IV Section 1 Number d. reads: “**Partner:** Any organization associated with the community of the book—such as all types of libraries, Friends of Libraries, bookstores, and publishers—shall be eligible for a partner membership in the Center.”

The contribution level for the new category is \$250 per year.

Annual Meeting

Sept 15, 2000

10:30 AM

South Conference Room

Oklahoma Department of Libraries

200 NE 18, Oklahoma City

Board Changes:

Thank You + Welcome

Oklahoma Center for the Book thanks long-time board member **Lennie Draper** for her hard work and dedication. We wish her well upon her retirement from the University of Oklahoma Press and resignation from our board.

Welcome to **Glenda Madden** who will fill Lennie's unexpired term. Glenda is the assistant director over sales and marketing for the University of Oklahoma Press.

AWARDS PRESENTED

"KID'S CAUGHT READING"

With it's primary mission of promoting reading for pleasure by Oklahomans *of all ages*, the Oklahoma Center for the Book was pleased to participate again in the "Kids Caught Reading" event held on April 6, 2000, at the Lazy-E Arena in Guthrie. Part of the Oklahoma Celebration of Reading, this event begins when teachers and principals across the state call students at home and ask them what they are doing. When a student is caught reading, the teacher puts the student's name in a pool for a drawing. Therefore, of the 290 students across the state who were caught reading, these 10 students each received a \$25 check and a certificate from the Oklahoma Center for the Book.

Kids Caught Reading in 2000 were:

Angela Zanotti, 3rd grade, Mustang Valley Elementary, Mustang
Autumn Foley, 4th grade, Mustang Valley Elementary, Mustang
Nicole Hunter, 2nd grade, Westside Elementary, Okmulgee
Zach Blankenship, 5th grade, Piedmont elementary, Piedmont
Ryan Richardson, 3rd grade, Winding Creek Elementary, Moore
Rebecca Connett, 4th grade, Winding Creek Elementary, Moore
Jim Harris, 6th grade, Winding Creek Elementary, Moore
Adam Lewis, 4th grade, McCord Elementary, Ponca City
Nikki Robbins, 5th grade, McCord Elementary, Ponca City
Megan Reeves, 4th grade, McCord Elementary, Ponca City

Ten other students received certificates:

Chris Tyner, 3rd grade, Mustang Trails Elementary, Mustang
Brent Humphreys, 3rd grade, Talihina Elementary, Talihina
Jermia Norman, 6th grade, Talihina Elementary, Talihina
Latrisha De Weese, 4th grade, Coleman Elementary, Coleman
Savannah Stone, 6th grade, North Rock Creek School, Shawnee
Tanner Dockrey, 6th grade, North Rock Creek School, Shawnee
Jessica Stapleton, 3rd grade, Kendall-Whittier Elementary, Tulsa
T. J. Hodge, 6th grade, Lookeba-Sickles Elementary, Lookeba
Amber Barton, 3rd grade, Bryant Elementary, Tulsa
Nick Hutchison, 2nd grade, Tony Goetz Elementary, Muskogee



Springtime in Tulsa : Center for the Book Board of Directors met in May at the home of **Sue Stees**
(l to r) **John Woolery, Ann Hamilton, Diane Seebass, Glenda Madden, M.J. Van Deventer, Laurie Sundborg,** and **Bill Young**

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

ENTRIES NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR 2001 BOOK AWARDS



It's already time to think about entering the competition for the twelfth annual Oklahoma Book Awards. The deadline for entering is January 9 of 2001. All finalists will be notified in February, and winners will be announced at the awards Ceremony on March 10, 2001.

To qualify for the competition, books must have been published between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2000. Any individual, organization, or company may enter in any appropriate category. To be considered for this award, books must have an Oklahoma-based theme, or entrants (authors, illustrators, or designers) must live or have lived in Oklahoma.

The Center is seeking entries in five categories: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, children/young adult, and design/illustration. A book may be entered in more than one category. Entrants must provide six copies of their book in each category entered.

Entry forms can be downloaded at our website: www.odl.state.ok.us/ocb/entries.htm. There is no entry fee.

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Telephone _____

Type of Membership

Student—\$5__ Individual—\$25__ Contributing—\$50__
Partner—\$250__ Organizational—\$500__ Corporate—\$1000__

Please mail this card and membership fee to:

The Oklahoma Center for the Book

200 NE 18 Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3298
The Oklahoma Center for the Book is a nonprofit 501-c-3 organization.

The mission of the Oklahoma Center for the Book is to promote Oklahoma authors, celebrate the state's literary heritage, and encourage reading for pleasure by Oklahomans.



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Inside—

2000 Oklahoma Book Awards Recap

*All Oklahoma Reads—
Joyce Carol Thomas*

"Kids Caught Reading" at home

Kid's Talk Back To Writers—and win!