

Texas Institute of Letters Announces Winners for Works Published in 2007

Prizes totaling \$21,700 were awarded for works published in 2007 at the Texas Institute of Letters' annual meeting Saturday in Dallas. Eight new members were inducted, and SMU historian David J. Weber was honored with the Lon Tinkle Award for excellence sustained throughout a career.

The Texas Institute of Letters was founded in 1936 to recognize literary achievement and to promote interest in Texas literature.

Top prizewinner was novelist John J. McLaughlin of Seattle, Washington, whose *Run in the Fam'ly*, captured the \$6,000 Jesse H. Jones Award for best novel and also the \$1,000 Steven Turner Award for best first novel.

The novel, published by the University of Tennessee Press, is an intimate portrait of the desperate lives of lower class people in an inner city. McLaughlin is a native of San Antonio with an MFA in fiction from the University of Iowa's Writers' Workshop,

In the non-fiction category, Robert Krueger and Kathleen Tobin Krueger won the \$5,000 Carr P. Collins Award for *From Bloodshed to Hope in Burundi: Our Embassy Years During Genocide*, published by the University of Texas Press. In the book Krueger, who was ambassador to Burundi, and his wife Kathleen provide an eyewitness report to the genocide occurring there and in neighboring Rwanda and of their efforts to stop it. The Kruegers now live in New Braunfels.

Winner of the \$2,500 TIL award for best scholarly book was Jerry Thompson for *Cortina: Defending the Mexican Name in Texas* published by Texas A&M University Press, 2007. Thompson is Regents Professor at Texas A&M International University in Laredo and former president of the Texas State Historical Association.

Rick Bass, who now lives in Troy, Montana, claimed two first-place awards. His short story, "The Elephant," appearing in the summer 2007 edition of *Tin House*, won the \$750 Kay Cattarulla Prize for Best Short Story, and his article, "The Lives of the Browns," published in *Southern Review*, Autumn 2007, won the \$1,000 O. Henry Award for Magazine Journalism.

Cate Marvin won the \$1,200 Helen C. Smith Memorial Award for Best Book of Poetry for *Fragment of the Head of a Queen* (Sarabande Books).

Todd Bensman of the *San Antonio Express-News* won the \$1,000 Stanley Walker Award for Best Work of Newspaper Journalism Appearing in Newspaper or Sunday Supplement for his series, "Breaching America."

The \$750 Fred Whitehead Award for Best Design of a Trade Book went to DJ Stout and Julie Savasky, co-designers of *Reflections of a Man: The Photographs of Stanley Marcus*, published by Cairn Press and edited by Jerrie Smith and Allison Smith.

Arturo O. Martinez won the \$500 Friends of the Austin Public Library Award for Best Children's Book for *Pedrito's World*, published by Texas Tech University Press.

Naomi Shihab Nye's *I'll Ask You Three Times, Are You OK?, Tales of Driving and Being Driven*, won the \$500 Friends of the Austin Public Library Award for Best Young Adult Book. The book was published by Greenwillow Books, an imprint of Harper/Collins Publishers.

The Lon Tinkle Award, won by Weber, carries a prize of \$1,500. Weber, a specialist in the American Southwest and Mexico, is a prolific scholar who is director of SMU's William P. Clements Center for Southwestern Studies.

New members inducted into the organization at the Saturday night banquet at the Park Cities Hilton Hotel were T. Lindsay Baker of Rio Vista, Scott Blackwood of Austin, Robert Bonazzi of San Antonio, Emily Fox Gordon of Houston, James Hornfischer of Austin, Noel Parsons of Lubbock, and Steve Wilson of San Marcos.

As part of its efforts to promote the appreciation of literature in Texas, the TIL helps fund the Dobie-Paisano Fellows, awarded annually to promising writers and artists, by giving \$12,000 a year to the Jesse Jones Fellowship and \$2,000 to the Ralph Johnston Fellowship. This year's fellows, who reside at J. Frank Dobie's Paisano ranch, are Alison Moore and Mary Helen Specht.