

The Bookish Frog

The Newsletter of Texas Christian University Press

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NEWS NOTES

The Rounce and Coffin Club of Occidental College Library has chosen *Texas Literary Outlaws*, by Steven L. Davis, for inclusion in its 2005 Western Books Exhibition. Designer is Barbara Mathews Whitehead.

Sympathy is extended to Jon McConal on the loss of his son, Patrick. Jon's newest title, *Bridges Over the Brazos*, comes out this fall from TCU Press.

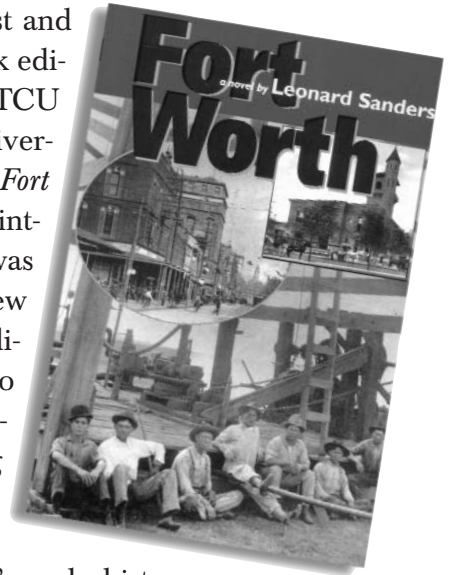
We're glad to report that Jim Lee is recovering well, after a heart attack and bypass surgery in May. We missed him mightily when he was out of the office.

Lionel Garcia, author of Mexican American literary fiction including *The Day They Took My Uncle* (TCU Press 2001), writes that his papers will be formally presented to the archives at Cushing Memorial Library at Texas A&M University in a ceremony scheduled for October 27th. Lionel, a veterinarian as well as a writer, is the author of four novels, three short-story collections, numerous short stories, and several plays. He has won awards from PEN Southwest, the Texas Institute of Letters, Southwest Booksellers, and PEN American center.



Leonard Sanders 1929 – 2005

In 2004 Fort Worth novelist and former *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* book editor Leonard Sanders called the TCU Press to point out the twentieth anniversary of the publication of his novel, *Fort Worth*. Were we interested in reprinting it? We definitely were. Sandy was too modest to say it, but we all knew the book is a classic. Acquisitions editor Jim Lee was delighted to add it to the Texas Tradition Series, and publication was scheduled for Spring 2005. Unfortunately, Sandy died while the book was in production.



Fort Worth captures the city's early history, from the days immediately after the Civil War into the twentieth century by tracing the fortunes of the Spurlock family. Young Travis Spurlock, orphaned by the Civil War, makes his way west to Fort Worth. Within a few years he is a famous and successful trial lawyer and a major force in transforming the sleepy, dusty town into a commercial center. He serves in the U.S. Senate and is an aide to President Roosevelt. But Travis Spurlock has a secret life, one of reckless love affairs, secret business dealings, and longing for something he can't identify. The Spurlock legacy contains both the bright and dark sides of this scion, as his descendants show both ruthless ambition in the oil boom and great patriotism and courage during World War II, their lives always marked by tragedy. While the Spurlocks are fictional, the events through which they lived are factual, true to the history of Fort Worth.

Former Speaker of the U. S. House Jim Wright, author of the foreword to the new edition, wrote that the "narrative contains both fascinating fact and believable fiction, so intricately intertwined that we get totally caught up in the story, its impelling sweep, and intriguing characters."

Leonard Sanders was the author of about two dozen books, some written under a pseudonym. His other novels include *The Hamlet Warning* and *The Hamlet Ultimatum*, *Sonoma*, *Light on the Mountain*, and *The Wooden Horseshoe*, which TCU reprinted earlier in the Texas Tradition Series. ■

Goodbye to Another Friend



Bob Seal, dean of the TCU Library, announced in August that he will leave TCU at the end of September to become dean of the library at Loyola University in Chicago. For Bob, the move represents a challenge. For the staff at TCU Press, it is a great blow. Bob has been at TCU eleven years and has served on the TCU Press editorial board the entire time, taking great interest in the press, its successes, and its problems. A year ago, when Larry Adams returned to the faculty, he arranged for the press to report to Bob. We found an advocate in him. Bob supported every aspect of our work, he understood the growing importance of the web in publishing, and he was generous with his time. Thanks to him, Susan Petty is once again a full-time employee, we have a slight budget increase, and we feel like we're on an upward swing. We will miss his guidance and his friendship, even as we wish him well in Chicago. Bob says he wouldn't even have been tempted by an offer in, say, Pittsburgh, but Chicago was hard to resist.

Personally, I tell myself that librarians are always wonderful people, just because they like books, and our next librarian will be as dedicated to the press as Bob has been. But he'll be a hard act to follow.

June Koelker will serve as interim director of the library, and we look forward to working with her.

Judy Alter

A personal note

In June I attended the annual meeting of Western Writers of America, an organization I was once most active in, including serving as its president. WWA honored me with the Owen Wister Lifetime Achievement Award, an honor that puts me in the company of Elmer Kelton, Wallace Stegner, Dee Brown, Tom Lea, A. B. Guthrie, Jr., Dale Walker, and other highly acclaimed western authors. Once I got past being overwhelmed, I was deeply appreciative and most flattered.

The meeting, held in Spokane, was refreshing. I served on panels, led a question-and-answer session (fortunately, they changed the title from "Meet an Old-Timer" to "Visit with a Legend"), and accepted the award at the banquet in as few words as possible. A friend said it was the best speech of the long evening, because it was the shortest.

But the trip also gave me a chance to prowl around Puget Sound, drive across Washington and the Cascade Range, take a cruise on Lake Coeur d'Alene, and drive the length of the Columbia River Gorge. It was a wonderful experience.

I want to thank TCU Press authors and others working with the press for letting me do the kind of work that I'm sure figured prominently in the decision to make me this year's Owen Wister recipient. I love running TCU Press.

But I am approaching retirement age, and I have made a momentous decision. With the blessing of Bob Seal, dean of TCU libraries to whom the press reports, I will begin to work half-time in January, still as director. For me it will be the best of both worlds—more time to write and a chance to continue doing the work I love. I am grateful to Bob Seal for making this possible. *Judy Alter*



Forthcoming



Ever notice the distinctive woodcuts on the cover of all our Elmer Kelton titles? They're done by Barbara Mathews Whitehead. She and her late husband, Fred, have designed countless books for TCU Press. Now we get to turn the tables on

Barbara. Our lead title next spring will be *From Wood to Linoleum: The Cuts and Prints of Barbara Mathews Whitehead*.

Spring will be a season of follow-up titles. In 1999 TCU Press published *Billy Rose Presents . . . Casa Mañana!* by Jan Jones. Now Jan has followed up with *Renegades, Showmen, and Angels: A Theatrical History of Fort Worth, 1873-2001*, covering everything from vaudeville to Bass Hall. Way back in 1987, Marian Martinello sent us *The Search for Emma's Story*, a recreation of the life of a German-Texan woman whose family home was on the grounds of what is now LBJ State Park. After several reprints and classroom adoptions, the book is still in print. We were delighted when Marian sent *The Search for Pedro's Story*, recreating the story of a leather jacket soldier in the Spanish Colonial army.

Other spring titles will be *When I Was a Horse*, a collection of stories by Spanish author Brianda Domecq, translated by Kayla Garcia, and *The Smiling Country* by Elmer Kelton, the sequel to his best-selling *The Good Old Boys*, which was made into a movie by Tommy Lee Jones.

Tentatively scheduled for fall are *Boys' Books, Boys' Dreams, and The Mystique of Flight*, by Fred Erisman, *Literary Austin*, edited by Don Graham, *True West—The Classic West in Popular Culture*, by Michael Barson, an as-yet untitled memoir about growing up in Fort Worth by TCU staff member David Murph, a young-adult novel, *Border Ransom*, by Pat Carr, and a reprint of Shelby Hearon's novel, *Hug Dancing*. ■



Owen Wister Lifetime Achievement Award

SOME FACTS ABOUT TCU PRESS

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Friday, December 2, 4:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
The Fort Worth Botanic Garden Auditorium
3220 Botanic Garden Boulevard (off University Drive)

The Friends of the TCU Library present



“A Visit with Santa Claus”

featuring

Jeff Guinn

author of

The Autobiography of Santa Claus

How Mrs. Claus Saved Christmas

Other authors present will be Johnny Carrabba and Damien Mandola,
Carole Nelson Douglas, Dan Jenkins, Elmer Kelton, Jon McConal, Joyce Roach,
Red Steagall, Carlton Stowers, Bryan Woolley, Jim Wright

Co-sponsored by TCU Press and the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*