



newsletter

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Upcoming Biblio Events

October 9-11

Writers & Readers Rendezvous

McCall, Idaho
Information, reservations call
208-426-3492 or (800) 632-6586
ext. 3492

December 1-18

Festival of Wreaths

Homemade wreath fund raiser for
the Cascade Library. For more
information call (208) 382-4757

October 22

In The Spirit of Robert "Two Gun" Limbert; The Man From The Sawtooths

A one-man show starring Clark Hegler; sponsored by the Idaho Humanities Council; 7:30 pm, Boise Public Library, 715 Capitol Boulevard, call 208-286-7940 for details.

Vol. 5/No. 2 October 1998 "...because people read t-shirts."



"Do Come" by Bret Fowler

Conclusion of the interview with Nampa author Marianne Lawrence

In this issue

"Booker's Dozen"

Photographs and itinerary of the ICB-sponsored Idaho artists' book traveling exhibition

Next Issue...Idaho Books of the Dead

Do Come by Bret Fowler (Continued from last issue)

BF: You mentioned your parents' home served as a half-way house for people with psychological problems when you were growing up. Do you remember other "guests"?

ML: Oh, yes, Ida Mae, Miss Kay . . . I was enthralled with Ida Mae's story of her Gold Rush history, and Miss Kay . . . an aspiring senator had his eye on her and had wanted to marry her. He kept proposing, and she kept saying, "No, not yet." He waited and waited for her to change her mind and say yes. But she never did. He finally gave up and married someone else. When Miss Kay's parents died—she'd said no because she didn't want to leave them alone—well, she fell apart and had a nervous breakdown. I can remember her telling me how important it was to make a mental scrapbook, to save special memories in my mind to think about in the future days when I might be sad or lonely. I think about Miss Kay, and I'm glad she was part of my life. She was a special elderly friend I had as I was growing up. . . . There were many others.

BF: So you're a part of all of those people that you met?

ML: No, not really (laughing). I still feel very much me. But I'm still glad for all of those people in my life. And, of course, who knows how much influence they really had in making me what I am. Maybe it's given me an edge on my life.

BF: What do you hope will come of your writing?

ML: I would like to see a really published piece that I've done, and I hope that my writing touches other people, that there's some common bond, that people read it and can identify with it. I'm not a real deep writer, so I just want to make their life maybe more of a delight, more pleasant, more enjoyable, maybe to bring some memories back. People will say to me, "Oh, yes, I did this, and we used to do that. . . . It makes me remember this." My writing is pretty simple. It talks about simple things, and since life is made up of these kinds of things, simple things happen to other people. I think that's what I'm hearing from the audience I write to.

BF: Was the idea behind your Little Country Farm series to bring delight to your readers?

ML: Actually, I don't know if that would be the case. When I was in my forties, I went back to take a writing class, and it just connected. I really enjoyed it, and at that time I thought I would like someday to write children stories. Since I enjoy reading them, and I enjoyed reading them to my children, I thought this is what I'd like to do. I was a little bit discouraged by one of my writing teachers that thought I would never be able to write down to children, but I don't think you write down to children anyway. I think my stories come from living on our little farm, raising sheep and chickens. These are things that children might enjoy. And I even think parents would enjoy reading them to their child.

BF: You've done the illustrations for your Little Country Farm books and your newsletters. How did you get started doing the illustrations?

ML: All of my life I've doodled and drawn pictures. When I wrote my first little book, I thought it would be nice to have some illustrations. At first, I didn't think I was qualified. Then I thought, "Well, shoot, I've been doing all of these other little pictures." Believe it or not, when I was in the eighth grade, I had a teacher who said that she never gave A+'s, but I made one in art class. She was a very good teacher, I think (laughing)—well, naturally, since I got an A+. In high school I took art, and the teacher was very . . . not encouraging. She told me that I would never be good, and I probably won't be tremendously good. But people can look at those pictures and tell what they are. I think the more I do it the better I get at it. In a way, it's writing in a different form.

BF: Do you have a favorite piece that you've written, something that stands out from the rest?

ML: Well, I probably do, but I would have to give that thought. The pieces that come across as more descriptive I probably like more than other pieces. My second story about Mrs. Bidly . . . I very much like it more than I like my first story. This past Sunday a little adopted girl read to her adopted brother the story about Molly Mae [a cat] and where Molly was born and about Cheekah [a cockatiel]. She came to me afterwards and said how much she enjoyed the story. Since I wrote the stories with children in mind, it was nice to have that happen. It was also neat to hear someone else's voice, a child's voice, reading my story.

BF: Are you aware of your voice as you write?



Author Marianne Lawrence holding a friend

ML: No, I don't think so. I know that I must have a style that remains the same. When I write about the animals . . . like Molly Mae has a certain personality, and I try to stick with her personality every time I write about her, a kitty that's not quite sure of herself and needs to be reassured. I may tend to live in my own little created world, not quite in step with this generation or my generation either, and living up to my peers' standards has never been a big must with me.

BF: Any advice you would offer to would-be writers?

ML: Do it. The more you write, the more you can write. The more you practice at a thing the better you become. Don't listen to people who tell you that you can't succeed. If you want to write, write. And don't ever wait for some event or time to start enjoying life, because life is what happens while you are waiting for your plans to happen.

. . . .

Molly ran toward the bird's cage and lifted a paw like she always did when she came in from the barn yard. The cat and the bird had made a game of paw and peck. Molly would put her paw onto the top of the bird cage, and Cheekah would give a friendly peck. Then the game continued on between the two friends as they exchanged household news for barnyard news. Only then would Molly settle down by the cage and begin her morning wash, starting with her ears and ending with her tail. Marianne Lawrence's children story, *Molly Mae Marché and Friends*, is the third volume of her four volume *Little Country Farm* series. It contains two stories which

(Continued on Back Page)

Westward Bound

November 20-December 20, 1998

Daily 9am-9pm, Weekends Noon-5pm

Liberal Arts Building

Free Admission

Westward Bound is a juried exhibition of artists books...books that are works of art and pieces of art that are also books. Westward Bound celebrates the remarkable growth of the book arts in the West and will include one-of-a-kind and limited-edition handcrafted artist books, finepress editions, and fine bindings by emerging and professional regional and nationally prominent book artists.

Made possible in part by grants from the Idaho Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts



Seizing Penumbra

Dianne Reeves
Austin, Texas

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Bret Fowler Bret Linhart David Schlater Elena Farmer



Matthew Haynes Robynn Brown Ruth Barnes Thomas Echanove



Heather Katula Joni Spigler Troy Passey Bret Linhart

Pictured above are books/authors selected for Booker's Dozen '98

Booker's Dozen '98

The Idaho Center for the Book is again pleased to present "Booker's Dozen," the third biennial travelling Idaho artists' book exhibition. Twelve institutions and organizations have been selected to host "Booker's '98":

- 1998
- July Idaho Center for the Book (Boise)
 - August Karcher Mall (Nampa)
 - September Ada County Community Library (Boise)
 - October East Bonner Country Public Library District (Sandpoint)
 - November Pineawaus Community Center (Lapwai, Nez Perce Reservation)
 - December Mountain Home Public Library
- 1999
- January Idaho Falls Art Council
 - February University of Idaho Library (Moscow)
 - March Herrett Center (Twin Falls)
 - April Marshall Public Library (Pocatello)
 - May Clearwater Public Library (Orofino)
 - June Salmon Arts Council

Judges for the '98 biennial included Jacqueline Crist, of J. Crist Gallery in Boise, Cort Conley, publisher of Bakeddy Books in Cambridge, Cheryl Shurtleff-Young and Brent Smith of the Boise State University Department of Art, and Director of the Idaho Center for the Book, Tom Trusky.

For a free copy of the "Booker's Dozen '98" exhibition catalogue (made possible, in part, by generous grants from the Idaho Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts), or a bibliography on making handmade books, please write, e-mail, or call the Idaho Center for the Book.

Do Come (Continued from front)

star a long-haired, black and white adopted cat by the name of Molly Mae. The first tale, "Molly and Dolly," tells the story of the cat's arrival as a kitten to the Lawrence household, or actually the garage. Hitching a ride under the hood of Marianne's car that had been parked at the Bon Marché, Molly Mae Marché (named in part from her point of departure) is quickly accepted into the farm family. Nevertheless, the cat's self-esteem suffers when she is questioned during the course of a normal conversation by a one-month-old lamb, Dolly Dumpling, about her place of birth. Mistress Marianne reassures the insecure feline that "The most important thing is that you live here now." It is a theme of belonging, acceptance, and purpose that is also common in Marianne's other stories. In fact, in the second tale of volume three, "Molly and Cheekah," Molly Mae herself plays the role of comforter to her latest friend, Cheekah (or Chica, Spanish for little girl—or Shrieka, nicknamed by Tom). Cheekah is a yellow cockatiel, who, as a non-traditional farm animal, questions her place on the farm. "I don't belong here," she tells Molly Mae. "I serve no purpose. I'm not a farm animal like you are. I don't fit in." Molly Mae replies, Cheekahh, if you weren't here, I would miss you lots. . . . Mistress Marianne likes to hear you sing, and she thinks you are so pretty. Master Tom enjoys watching your little tricks, and you make him laugh. They don't need you to lay eggs and eat bugs. The chickens can do that, but the hens can't sit in a cage and sing a pretty song. Mistress Marianne has sheep to give wool, but the sheep have no exotic feathers bright as the sunshine. If you caught mice, what would I do? I can't sing and sit on Mistress Marianne's fingers. Cheekahh, we need you just the way you are. You don't have to change. You don't have to be like everyone else. You need to be yourself. Be Cheekah."

By the end of the story, Cheekah is indeed Cheekah again, engaging in a friendly game of paw and peck and exchanging news for news with Molly Mae. It is a story that ends happily, and its message is simply, as Molly Mae reports, "You don't have to be a farm animal to fit in."

Marianne Lawrence's newsletters and children stories are authentic narratives that explore events which are tied to the rituals of her day. They are narratives that are as gracious in their invitation as the hostess is to her Sunday guests. For Marianne, it is important "to write thoughts and words

on paper," but it is equally important for her "to cook, to invite people into her home," and to do whatever must be done. Her writing is a mirror of the life she lives. Last week, I received Marianne's latest newsletter, the one that will be sent out in November. Again, she offers the invitation to celebrate life's seasons: Sunday breakfast after church is a ritual for us, a lovely one, that starts my week with a good taste in my mouth. One, two, or three families come to join us around our table filled with pancakes, scrambled eggs and bacon cooked on the wood stove. More often than not, some guest becomes a cook, whipping up the eggs, making the coffee.

"Pass the syrup."
 "Which is the vanilla?"
 "I think I'll try the strawberry."
 "I'll stick to maple."
 "The salsa's hot, the relish sweet."
 "Anyone for a piece of Zucchini chocolate cake?"
 We visit, get acquainted, talk, laugh and share. The afternoon slips by. The children run in and out.
 "Can we play hide-and-seek, pet the lambs, gather the eggs?"
 Older kids read to younger kids. . . . Too soon the time is gone, and our Sunday brunch is over. But it will come again, new faces among familiar. Do come.

The message is similar to the one that she passes onto Jenaya, the three-year-old that Marianne has "adopted" as her own granddaughter, as Marianne concludes the story of Mrs. Biddy: Now, Jenaya, you know this happened just as I have related this story to you. Remember. Remember, how I held you up in my arms, so you could tell Mrs. Biddy and her six Itty Bittys goodnight as they settled on the limb of what we call our Poultree. And you know that Gray Bird, Dumb Bird, Joseph, Young Blackie, Black Beauty, and Freddy Fricassee (that most handsome rooster of them all) were the Itty Bittys. And you know there are other stories about the hens, Molly Mae and the lambs, but I'll tell you those another day. The promise Marianne makes is for all those who would take time out from the race which runs from morning through evening, and her invitation is as sure as her handshake. All that the reader must do is read to reserve a seat at the table. It doesn't get much simpler than this. All that is asked of you is "Do come."

ICB Advisory Board News

Joining the Idaho Center for the Book is Dr. Mary Beth Crane, Chair of the Department of English, College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls, Idaho. Crane joins the statewide ICB Board which currently consists of:

- Terry Abraham University of Idaho Library, Moscow
- Clint Berry USWest, Boise
- Mary Blew Department of English, University of Idaho, Moscow
- Charles Bolles Idaho State Library, Boise*
- Richard Bray Ex Libris Bookstore, Sun Valley
- Cort Conley Idaho Commission on the Arts, Boise*
- Paul Holland Idaho Falls Public Library
- Daryl Jones Idaho Writer in Residence, Boise
- Max Leek Marshall Public Library, Pocatello
- Peggy McClendon Idaho State Library, Boise
- Tom Trusky Director, ICB
- Alan Virta Albertsons Library, Boise State University, Boise
- Laurel Wagers Writer, Sandpoint

*Ex officio

Navajo College Library Call for Help

There was a fire at the Shiprock, New Mexico, campus of the college on the Navajo reservation on August 12, 1998. Approximately 25% of the building went up in flames.

The college library received damage from water. Water seeped through the north wall and soaked the journals in the alphabetical section from E through J. If you have knowledge of persons who might be willing to donate college level journals please contact:

Ms. Eleanor Kuhl
 Library Director
 Shiprock Campus-DINE' COLLEGE
 (505) 368-3542



IDAHO CENTER FOR THE BOOK

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