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North American Native writers to gather for "Returning the Gift" event at OU

NORMAN-Established and aspiring North American writers of Native American descent will gather for a four-day event titled "Returning the Gift: A Festival of North American Native Writers" July 7 through 10 on the University of Oklahoma's Norman Campus.

Some 200 writers, including Pulitzer-Prize winning author N. Scott Momaday and novelist Leslie Marmon Silko, will attend the festival at the Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education, 1700 Asp Ave. The festival is co-sponsored by the OU College of Arts and Sciences.

The festival will feature writers of North American Native descent from Canada, the United States, Mexico and Central America.

J. Rufus Fears, dean of the OU College of Arts and Sciences, has adopted the "Returning the Gift" project as part of an effort to promote American Indian research and awareness at OU, said Barbara Hobson, project coordinator at OU.

The first two days of the festival will be exclusively for the Native Writers themselves, said Hobson, a Comanche working on her doctoral degree at OU. The third and fourth days, open to the general public, will bring in non-Native supporters of Native writing, including critics, publishers and teachers of Native American literature.

The festival agenda includes writing workshops, panel discussion, seminars, working sessions, readings and performances. The event is part of an overall "Returning the Gift" project to highlight the contributions of North American Native peoples.

A central mission of the project is to strengthen the role played by Native writing and Native writers in educating and providing role models for Native youth.

The project also includes and outreach education program to bring traditions of Native literature to native American students at all levels and

their teachers; the publication of a "Directory of North American Native Writers"; and the formation of a North American Native Writers Association.

In addition, the outreach program will foster development of writing workshops; establish a clearing house to help Native writers publish; disseminate information about contemporary Native writing and writers to libraries and bookstores; and publish an anthology of Native writing from writers at the festival and other documentation of the project through a written history, audio, film and video.

Joseph Bruchac, an Abenaki storyteller who is serving as editor and chair of the steering committee for the "Returning the Gift" project, said social concerns and a sense of responsibility for coming generations are major elements of contemporary Native literature.

"There's no question that education is a great problem in this country today, and perhaps no group is more in need of better education and stronger, more positive role models than Native American youth," Bruchac said.

He said the United States and Canada "have a long history of government-imposed systems meant to destroy

Native cultural heritage and glorify Western civilization in a totally unbalanced way. Such education made people feel confused about their identity, even ashamed of being Indian or Eskimo."

"The idea of the artist being isolated from the people doesn't make sense to most Native American writers," Bruchac continued. "That is one of the reasons why our project is called

"Returning the Gift". The ability to write well, to tell stories or make poems is regarded by us as a special gift.

"This festival, with its strong emphasis on the place Native writers can hold as mentors and educators, is one way of our returning the gift and

keeping the balance. It is a means of giving back, as writers and as human beings, something useful to our communities, to our young people, and through our long-standing concerns for the health of our environment, to our Mother Earth," Bruchac said.

In addition to the OU College of Arts and Sciences, the event is sponsored by the Greenfield Review Literary Center, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, State Arts Council of Oklahoma, Bay Foundation and the New York Times Foundation.

Conference registration is \$85.00. To register, call (405) 325-5102. The toll free numbers are 1-800-522-0772, Ext. 5101, in Oklahoma and 1-800-523-7363, Ext. 5101, outside of Oklahoma.

The mind of man is capable of anything—because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future.

—Joseph Conrad

Fourth of July Celebration Planned in Lumberton

The North Carolina Indian Business Association will meet on Saturday, June 20, 1992 from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon in classroom 222 and 223 of the Education Center at Pembroke State University, Pembroke, North Carolina.

Agenda items will include: A presentation from Greg Richardson, Director of the North Carolina State Indian Housing Authority on an up coming construction bid (see attachment).

The Small Business Administration's Native American Initiative. Native American Marrow Donor Awareness Program List of North Carolina Indian Businesses

Membership is open to owners and operators of Indian businesses, organizations and those interested in assisting the association achieve its goals and objectives. Please plan to attend and bring a friend.

A \$5.00 registration fee will be collected at the door. For more information contact Wanda Burns-Ramsey, Economic Development Specialist for the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, at 919-733-5998.



Kim Hunt, a member of Golden Hearts 4-H Club

4-H activity day held

One of the major events in the Robeson County 4-H members present presentations on 4-H projects, says Vernon E. McHam, Extension Agent, 4-H. Presentations normally last from five to twelve minutes with the exception

of outdoor cookery projects. Presentations are a special kind of activity which help 4-Hers develop their public speaking and communication skills.

McHam states that the following is a list of 4-H members and their areas in which presentations were presented; Omekio Baldwin, Artistic Arrangement, Sr.; Marcus Leazer, Beef Charl-Grill, Sr.; Tiffany King, Breads, Sr.; Carol Richardson, Crafts, Sr.; Sonya McDuffie, Crafts, Sr.; Amy Tippetts, Electric, Sr.; Kim Hunt Environ-

mental Quality; Shawn Hershberger, Fish and Seafood Utilization, Sr.; Tony Locklear, Fruit and Vegetable Use, Sr.; Nkoma Young, Photography, Sr.; Laura Bethea, Safety, Sr.; Janet Jones, Sewing, Sr.; Shannon Hershberger, Wildlife, Jr.; and Shaun Southerland, Wildlife, Sr.

All first place contestants received \$20 scholarships and those placing second received \$10 scholarships. Many of these 4-H members will compete at district level. Our District Activity Day will be June 26 at Union Pines High School in Moore County beginning at 9 a.m. The public is cordially invited to attend.

For more information regarding our district activity day or other 4-H programs contact the Robeson County Center of NC Cooperative Extension service at 671-3276

Pembroke

Kiwanis Report

Program Chairman Ed Teets presented Cadet Art Thomas Locklear, a 1991 graduate of Purnell Sweett High School and on scholarship at the Air Force Preparatory School in New Mexico. Tribute was paid to parents Harold Baxley Locklear and mother, Laura. Plus many teachers of the Robeson County Schools. Dressed neatly in his Blue and White uniform he told of training in academics, sports and plans for the future. He plans to attend the Air Force Academy in Colorado following his Prep School training and is now busily engaged in taking chemistry at Pembroke State this summer. Tom grew up attending Berea Baptist Church, served as Study Body President at Purnell Sweett High School, commander in the school's cheerleading squad. Hobbies include air planes, horse back riding and did learn to swim in Dr. Johnson's pool as did Max Lowry, Brady and Maria Lowry, the Revels kids, the Ebert kids and Charley Mitchison and now Jessica Kisseih plus the Jacobs, the Hunts over 500 in all. So I personally am very proud of Tom Locklear's accomplishments, a real terrific kid.

Tickets are being sold for our fundraiser - a lawn mower donated by Pembroke Furniture Company, to be presented to the lucky winner at the Lumbee Homecoming on July 4th. Visiting was Susan Hunt, student at Chapel Hill law school, daughter of Annie and Chad Hunt.

Presiding - Clay Maynor; Invocation - Garth Locklear; Song leader and program for the evening - Ed Teets; reporter - Ken Johnson.

Distinguished Service Medal presented to Velasquez and Walker

Robert Walker, a 1982 Seward High graduate, recently received a Distinguished Service Medal from the Kansas City, Mo. Police Department. The department awarded Walker and his partner for their successful handling of a July shootout. During the altercation Walker's partner suffered a bullet wound to his hand. Walker is the son of Rev. and Mrs. David Walker of Seward and has Robeson County family connections.

The commendation follows:

At three o'clock in the afternoon of July 26th, officers David Velasquez and Robert Walker were sent to investigate a suspicious car parked in the lot at independence avenue and Prospect. When the officers arrived they found two men standing outside of a white limousine. Two others were in the back seat. Beginning their investigation, back seat occupants were told to get out of the car. As the one who was sitting in the rear passenger seat began moving out of the car, he pointed a .45 caliber handgun at officer Walker. Alert to this, Officer Walker slammed the car door onto the armed man and warned officer Velasquez of the danger. Coming out of the car again, the suspect fired his gun at Officer Velasquez, who almost simultaneously returned fire. Officer Velasquez was shot twice, once in his gun hand and once in his chest. The shot to the hand not only wounded him, but also disabled his revolver. The bullet fired at his

chest was stopped by his bullet resistance vest. Officer Walker also fired his weapon, hitting one of the suspects. Two of the men were taken into custody at the scene and two, including the one that was wounded, escaped. Even during this dangerous situation, both officers maintained their composure and were able to provide to the dispatcher a complete description of the two that escaped and their get-away car. The wounded suspect was soon arrested when he sought treatment at a hospital. The second man, during an operation

100 several months later, took his own life instead of surrendering to police. Officers Velasquez and Walker displayed courage, teamwork, and sense of responsibility when confronted with a very dangerous situation. For their actions, on behalf of the Board of Police Commissioners and myself, I am pleased to present the distinguished service medal to officers DAVID VELASQUEZ AND ROBERT WALKER.

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Smoking restricted further at Southeastern General Hospital

Guests of Southeastern General Hospital may breathe a little easier beginning July 1.

On that day the second phase of a smoke-free plan approved by the SGH Board of Trustees will take effect. Visitors will no longer be permitted to smoke inside the hospital building or inside any of SGH's affiliated facilities. Patients will be permitted to smoke only by written order of their physician based on criteria approved by the medical staff.

SGH employees, as of July 1, may smoke only in certain designated areas including specified lounge areas and in the Employee Smoking Facility, a free-standing smoking building located in a parking lot behind the hospital's west wing.

"We have undertaken a phased approach to going smoke-free," said J. Luckey Welsh, Jr., senior vice president and chief operating officer. "Back in 1989 we limited smoking to fewer areas within our buildings. By July 1, smoking will be restricted to even fewer locations in preparation for our November smoke-free status."

According to Welsh, demand for a smoke-free facility has come in large part from the community. "Some of our visitors have asked

why we have been so slow in banning smoking within the hospital," Welsh added. "Certainly we need to be more sensitive to the needs of those who do not smoke."

Hospital officials are also aware of the difficulty many employees have in quitting cigarettes. Because of this, smoking cessation classes are being offered to all employees at no charge.

"As the major health care provider in Robeson County, we at SGH believe that smoking is both a health and safety hazard," said Welsh. "Going smoke-free is the right thing to do in order to provide a healthier, safer environment for patients, visitors, and employees alike."

SGH affiliated facilities also covered under the no-smoking policy include: the SGH Healthcare Corporation building on Rowland Avenue; the SGH Lifestyle Fitness Center, 4895 Fayetteville RD.; WoodHaven Nursing and Alzheimer's Care Center, 1150 Pine Run Drive; Carolina Manor Treatment Center, 1100 Pine Run Drive; the MRI Center, West 28th ST.; Health Horizons Home Health/Personal Care/Uniforms and Medical Supplies, 2002 N. Cedar ST.; Hospice of Robeson, 2002 N. Cedar ST.; the Center for Audioc., 584 Farrington ST., and the Fairmont Medical Clinic, 208 Iona ST. in Fairmont.

Poems wanted for contest and anthology

Sparrowgrass Poetry Forum Inc. is offering a grand prize of \$500 in its new "AWARDS OF POETIC EXCELLENCE" poetry contest. Thirty-four other cash awards are also being offered. The contest is free to enter.

Poets may enter one poem only, 20 lines or less, on any subject, in any style. Contest closes July 31, 1992, but poets are encouraged to submit their work as soon as possible, since poems entered in the contest also will be considered for publication in POETIC VOICES OF AMERICA, a hardcover anthology. Prizes will be awarded by Sept. 30, 1992.

"We are looking for sincerity and originality in a wide variety of styles and themes," says Jerome P. Welch, Publisher. "You do not have to be an experienced poet to enter or win."

Poems should be sent to Sparrowgrass Poetry Forum Inc., Dept. GS, 203 Diamond st. Sistersville, West Virginia 26175-3030.

About the contest sponsor: Sparrowgrass Poetry Forum sponsors six free poetry contests and publishes six hardcover poetry anthologies each year. We are dedicated to encouraging and rewarding the many "undiscovered" poets across America.