

October 12, 2009

Dear friends,

Let me apologize, first, for the length of this email. Still, I hope you find the information useful. Next, let me invite you to join us in Belton for the annual UMHB Writers' Festival, January 6-9, 2010. We have an exciting and entertaining program already taking shape. We'd love for you to be a part of our festival. The basic structure of the festival will remain the same, but we are hosting dinners each evening (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday) to make our time together more enjoyable.

[Main Events](#)

This year we will again host a Coffee House and Open Mic event on Wednesday evening. Following dinner, **Nathan Brown** will perform in concert. Afterward, we will enjoy coffee, desserts, and the open mic. Nathan has published five books of poetry. *Two Tables Over*, his most recent, won the *2009 Oklahoma Book Award* in Poetry. He worked as a professional songwriter and musician for fifteen years in and around Oklahoma City, Nashville, and Austin. He has also performed internationally and has recorded five of his own albums. The two most recent are "Why in the Road" and "Driftin' Away." Nathan holds an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Creative and Professional Writing from the University of Oklahoma. He currently teaches for the Human Relations and Liberal Studies departments at the University of Oklahoma and has also served as the Artist-in-Residence at the University of Central Oklahoma.

Kelly Cherry will deliver the George Nixon Memorial Lecture on Thursday evening at 7:00. She will also lead the master poetry workshop for a group of twelve poets (see details below to apply for the master workshops). Cherry is Professor Emerita at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. At UW-Madison she was Eudora Welty Professor of English and Evjue-Bascom Professor in the Humanities. She retired in 1999, after twenty-two years (twenty-three in Madison), and in retirement continues to hold those titles while also holding named chairs and distinguished writer positions at the University of Alabama Huntsville, Colgate University, Mercer University, Atlantic Center for the Arts, and Hollins University. She has published seventeen books of fiction (novels, short stories), poetry, and nonfiction (memoir, essay, criticism), eight chapbooks, and translations of two classical plays. Her short fiction has been reprinted in *Best American Short Stories*, *Prize Stories: The O. Henry Awards*, *The Pushcart Prize*, and *New Stories from the South*, and has won three PEN/Syndicated Fiction Awards. In 2000 her collection *The Society of Friends: Stories*, received the Dictionary of Literary Biography Award for the best volume of short stories published in 1999. She was the first recipient of the Hanes Poetry Prize for a body of work from the Fellowship of Southern Writers and her collection *Hazard and Prospect: New and Selected Poems* was a finalist for The Poets' Prize. Her work in fiction, poetry, and nonfiction has been published in well over one hundred anthologies, and she has published more than one hundred reviews. Recently invited to serve as an Elector of The Poets' Corner at The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine for a term of five years, she also recently received a Rockefeller Foundation grant to work on a poetry manuscript in progress. New this year are *The Retreats of Thought: Poems* and *Girl in a Library: On Women Writers and the Writing Life*.

Myra McLarey will conduct the master prose workshop for a group of twelve writers (see details below to apply for the master workshops). Myra was raised in the bottomlands of southwest Arkansas. Her books include *Moncrief, My Journey to the NBA* (co-authored with Sidney Moncrief) and *When You Take a Pig to a Party*, (co-authored with her daughter, Kristina). Her novel, *The Road to Eden's Ridge* (co-authored with Linda Weeks under the pen name of M.L. Rose) was optioned by MGM, and her critically acclaimed novel, *Water from the Well*, was a finalist for the Lillian Smith Award. She won the James Conway teaching and other awards during her years at Harvard, where she taught writing from 1991-2000. She is an associate faculty member of Bard College's Institute for Writing and Thinking and is the chair of the English Department at Ensworth

High School, a new school in Nashville, TN. Her most recent work is a novel that returns to Sugars Spring, Arkansas.

Friday evening, **Andrew McKnight**, the award-winning folk and Americana artist, will perform a special concert. Andrew will also present a songwriting workshop Friday morning. Since permanently leaving his corporate environmental engineering career in 1996, Andrew's musical journey has traced nearly half a million miles of blue highways nationwide, and earned him a wealth of critical acclaim and enthusiastic fans for his captivating performances and five CDs on the independent Falling Mountain Music label. While Andrew has toured as a solo singer/ songwriter and guitarist for the past 15 years, he is a musician first and foremost, in the mold of John Mayer or Darrell Scott. He put himself through Connecticut College and graduate school at UMass/Amherst by moonlighting in rock and blues trios. This experience shaped his musical sensibilities. His 2008 CD *Something Worth Standing For* showcases the full maturation of his musical artisanship.

Helen Kwiatkowski will offer an art workshop Wednesday afternoon. In addition to serving as art editor for *Windhover* since 2002, Helen has taught art at Palomar College and UMHB, where Helen is a tenured professor of Art. She is an award-winning artist and has exhibited her paintings in many galleries and art centers across the United States. Most recently she coordinated a Peace Festival celebrating the International Day of Peace.

[Registration](#)

For the first time in eight years, we are raising registration fees. The higher fee covers the additional dinners on Wednesday and Thursday. To help us keep the cost as low as possible, we are asking people to register early, but you can help by recruiting some friends and colleagues to join us this year. As in the past, full registration will include all activities (readings, workshops, refreshments, and dinner). Full registration is \$175 (\$155 if you register before November 15th). Single day registration is \$50, and any individual event is \$25. A limited number of scholarships are available to assist individuals.

[Propose a Reading or a Workshop](#)

If you wish to present a reading of your work (poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, non-fiction) or conduct a workshop, please send a proposal to me via email as soon as possible, at least before October 30^h. We have a limited number of presenters due to limitations of time. Apply by the deadline to insure full consideration of your proposal. Proposals to read should include a sample of your work for consideration. Proposals to conduct workshops should include enough of a description that I can make a fair assessment of the activity. Readings at the Open Mic on Wednesday evening will be informal and open to all participants.

[Apply for a seat in the Master Workshops](#)

The Master Workshops and Classes have limited enrollment. If you are interested in attending one of them, you need to apply by the deadline to insure full consideration. Seats are likely to fill up before the conference.

To apply for Kelly Cherry's master poetry workshop, you should submit a brief biography and two fairly representative pieces of your poetry, plus the specific poem you would like to work on during the class. Members in the class will receive a copy of your work as part of the workshop.

To apply for Myra McLarey's prose workshop, submit a brief biography, a representative sample of your work, and a description of the material you are interested in working on during the class. If selected for the workshop, you will be asked to provide a full copy of the material you want to focus on during the workshop.

Application materials should be sent by email to Audell at ashelburne@umhb.edu as soon as possible.

Finally, let me put in a plug for my friend Angela O'Donnell, who asked me to share a call for submissions for a project she is working on. The attachment contains details if you are interested.

For more information about the Writers' Festival, call me at 254-295-4561 or email me at ashelburne@umhb.edu. We're looking forward to seeing you in January.

Sincerely,

Audell