

Support the  
James Jones Chair  
for WWII Studies!

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## Jones Society Board Holds Retreat in St. Louis



The JJLS Board and guests take a break during the St. Louis retreat. Standing, L-R: Warren Mason, Kim Cox, Tom Wood. Mike Lennon, Ray Elliott. Cullom Davis, Jim Johnson. Seated, L-R: Judy Everson, Kathy Stillwell, Kaylie Jones, Diane Reed, Anita Shelton.

### Board Discusses Strategies to Invigorate Society

The James Jones Literary Society Strategic Planning Retreat was held at the Embassy Suites in St. Louis during the weekend of October 10-12, 2008. Board members attending the retreat included: Jerry Bayne, Kim Cox, Cullom Davis, Ray Elliott, Judy Everson, Kaylie Jones, Mike Lennon, Warren Mason, Diane Reed, Kathy Stillwell and Tom Wood.

The board voted in the fall of 2007 to conduct a strategic planning session instead of a symposium in 2008. The mission of the retreat was

to review the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and to develop a plan for invigorating The Society.

Tom Wood, JJLS Archivist, began the proceedings by presenting an in depth review of the founding, history, activities and traditions of the organization. He reviewed the themes and the keynote speakers for the 17 annual symposia that have been sponsored by The Society. Also reviewed were many initiatives and writing contests to encourage unpublished writers. The endowed

The James Jones Journal is published periodically to keep members and interested parties apprised of activities, projects and upcoming events of the Society; to promote public interest and academic research in the works of James Jones; and to celebrate his memory and legacy.

Submissions of essays, features, anecdotes, photographs, etc., pertaining to the author James Jones may be sent to the editor for consideration. Every attempt will be made to return material, if requested, upon submission. Material may be edited for length, clarity and accuracy. Send submissions to:

Thomas J Wood  
Brookens Library, Room 144  
One University Plaza,  
MS BRK 140  
University of Illinois at Springfield  
Springfield IL 62703-5407

Email: [twood1@uis.edu](mailto:twood1@uis.edu)

Writers' guidelines are available upon request and online at the James Jones Literary Society web page at: <http://www.jamesjonesliterarysociety.org/>

Information on the James Jones First Novel Fellowship: <http://www.wilkes.edu/pages/1159.asp>

## Jones Board Holds Strategic Retreat in St. Louis

(continued from page 1)

JJLS First Novel Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania in Wilkes-Barre awards a \$10,000 grant annually. All but two of the contest winners have gone on to have their first novels published. The writing contests include the Valentine Short Story Essay Contest, the Lincoln Trail College Creative Writing Award and the Illinois Emerging Writer's Contest. Tom also reviewed the successful initiative to have the James Jones papers and archival items at the University of Texas at Austin catalogued.

Warren Mason, Treasurer and Chairperson of the Finance Committee, then reviewed the financial history of the organization. Warren presented a report on the fixed annual costs of The Society as well as the current funds in the organization's operational checking account (\$9,818.49) and in the organization's operating fund endowment (\$73,781.81). He reviewed the history of the Charles Robb Estate contributions (approximately \$135,000) equally divided between the First Novel Fellowship endowment and the JJLS operating fund endowment. Warren cited other major contributions such as those made by Don Sackrider.

Ray Elliott, past JJLS president and JJLS liaison to Eastern Illinois University, then introduced guests from EIU: Jim Johnson, Dean of Arts and Humanities and Anita Shelton, History Department Chairperson. The EIU project committee has targeted \$1.5 million as the amount needed to fully fund the James Jones Chair of WWII Studies. Since the project began last year, about \$50,000 has been raised including a contribution of \$10,000 from the JJLS and \$25,000 from businessman Jack Chamblin, Robinson. Jim and Anita re-

viewed the interdisciplinary activities that have been held at EIU as part of the James Jones Chair of WWII Studies. Discussion was held concerning combining efforts in 2009 for EIU to host the JJLS symposium in conjunction with their WWII Studies Festival.

After lunch the group discussed and listed, in no prioritized order, the strengths of the organization. There was a consensus that the JJLS strengths included: the two established endowments, the successful writing contests to encourage unpublished writers, the wise financial management of the organization's money by the past treasurers and finance committee members, the passion and continuity of the board members, the involvement of Kaylie Jones in the organization since its founding, the varied and diversified makeup of the board, the organization's presence on the world wide web, and the successful implementation of the 1995 strategic plan developed at a retreat in Chicago.

The group then spent the rest of the retreat time discussing and prioritizing five topical initiatives and specific strategies for each that could strengthen and reinvigorate the organization.

### I. Communications

Emphasis needs to be placed on updating and improving our web site and use of the www. We should attempt to secure the domain of [www.jjls.org](http://www.jjls.org) if it is available. Use of electronic mail to interested members should be established. It was recommended that a list serve or news group be established with a board member to serve as the gatekeeper. A new and improved James Jones Journal should be inaugurated and published

regularly. Tom Wood was asked to serve as the editor. Because of the inaccuracies in past biographies of James Jones, and the incredible amount of new information that is available since the previous biographies were written, a research scholar needs to publish a new biography. Mike Lennon and Kaylie Jones will be working on this initiative.

### 2. Symposia

The consensus of the group included the following plans. After 2009, the JJLS annual symposium should be held every other year. Every third symposia should be held at Lincoln Trail College in Robinson, Illinois. We should link our symposia projects with higher education institutions. To especially appeal to college students, we should change our format from Saturday programs to Thursday and Friday ones. We should work with Eastern Illinois University to hold the 2009 conference in conjunction with their James Jones Chair of WWII Studies project tentatively scheduled in Charleston, Illinois in November. There would be no symposium in 2010. The 2011 symposium will be a major one as it will mark the 90th year since the birth of James Jones, the 70th year since the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the 20th year since the founding of the JJLS. We should attempt to pool resources and hold the 2011 symposium in cooperation with the Norman Mailer Literary Society. There should be formal calls for academic papers for future symposia and travel grants should be awarded for presenters. An effort should be made to involve more grad students as presenters at the symposia. Symposia program chairs should be appointed and the JJLS presidents should not

## Margarite Landry, Winner of the 2008 James Jones First Novel Fellowship

be expected to serve as the chairs.

### 3. Support for Eastern Illinois University's James Jones Chair

Ray Elliott and Kaylie Jones will serve as JJLS Chairs to work with EIU in mounting the 2009 symposium. The JJLS Finance Committee members will be asked to make recommendations on helping raise money for the James Jones Chair of WWII Studies. The JJLS will draft the content of a brochure about James Jones, his life and literature, which is intended to help promote the EIU Chair project.

### 4. Membership Maintenance

Memberships should be on a calendar year basis. Because of the lapse in publishing mailings to the members in 2008, membership expirations will be pushed to December 31 in the year the memberships were previously scheduled to expire. Cover letters with invoices may be sent by the treasurer each January to encourage renewals. A Pay Pal account should be established for the JJLS so that memberships and contributions may be made electronically.

### 5. Board Development

Three EIU administrative or faculty members should be appointed to the JJLS Board. The JJLS treasurer should send an invoice to board members each January for their annual contributions. Judy Everson and Maxine Zwermann should be recognized as honorary board members. Upon the resignation or termination of a board member, the JJLS president should make an appointment to fill out the term.

Margarite Landry, of Southborough, MA, won first place for her novel "Blue Moon" in the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual James Jones First Novel Fellowship, co-sponsored by the Creative Writing Department of Wilkes University and the James Jones Literary Society.

Landry was awarded \$10,000. Her novel, which competed with about 520 other submissions, follows the story of a single mother and her son, who bring a lively, troubled foster child into their home.

Landry, who earned a Ph.D. in Victorian Literature from Columbia was inspired to craft the story after a boy on the street asked her where she was going. She told him she was going to teach at a college down the street, but the boy didn't even know what a college was.

"I fell in love with the boy," Landry said. "He was so vulnerable."

Throughout the years, Landry has had a variety of writing jobs, including editing math books and ghost writing self-help books. She currently is an associate professor of English/Professional Writing at Fitchburg State College in Massachusetts.

Now that her novel is award-winning, Landry plans to make some final revisions and try to get it published. She also has short stories slated to be released in *Pisgah Review* and *The Bellingham Review*.

One of the appeals of the contest for Landry is that it seeks novels that deal with problems ordinary people face, as well as American values.

"I think it tries to reach at what American life is like for most people. It very much tries to get at what the

strength of American life is,"

Landry said.

The runner-up winners were Matthew Dillon, of Port Townsend, WA, for his manuscript titled *Restoration*, and Nicholas Gerogiannis, of Birmingham, AL, for his manuscript titled "SERE." They were each awarded \$750.



**Margarite Landry, Winner of the 2008 James Jones First Novel Fellowship.**

The James Jones Fellowship was established in 1992 to "honor the spirit of unblinking honesty, determination, and insight into modern culture as exemplified by (the writings of) James Jones."

Requests for guidelines should be sent, along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope, to:

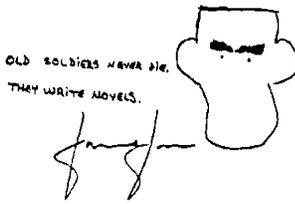
James Jones First Novel Fellowship  
c/o Creative Writing Department  
Wilkes University  
84 West South Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766,

Submissions may also be made via e-mail to [jamesjones-firstnovel@wilkes.edu](mailto:jamesjones-firstnovel@wilkes.edu).

The submission deadline for entries is March 1 of each year.

**"I think [my novel] tries to reach at what American life is like for most people. It very much tries to get at what the strength of American life is."**

## James Jones Literary Society Board Minutes and Revised By-Laws, October 11, 2008



The annual board meeting of the James Jones Literary Society was called to order by Vice President Jerry Bayne at the Embassy Suites Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri, Saturday, October 11, 2008. Board members present were: Jerry Bayne, Warren Mason, Tom Wood, Cullom Davis, Judy Everson, Kim Cox, Kaylie Jones, Mike Lennon, Diane Reed, Ray Elliott and Kathy Stillwell. Board members present by proxy were: Barbara Jones by Kathy Stillwell, Kevin Heisler by Kaylie Jones, Bev Terkle by Diane Reed and Cullom Davis, who left the meeting early, by Judy Everson.

Judy Everson moved that the minutes of the previous board meeting be approved as written, seconded by Mike Lennon, the motion passed unanimously.

Mike Lennon moved, seconded by Kaylie Jones, that the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented by Warren Mason, treasurer. Motion Carried. Warren reported a current balance of \$9,819.49 in the Operating Fund Account, at First Financial Bank, Robinson, IL. There will be a deposit of \$11,500 from Wilkes University to the operating fund for the First Novel Fellowship Awards. The monies will be dispersed to the three winners. The reserve account at First Financial Bank, Robinson, IL. has a current balance of \$3,781.81 and the two long-term Certificates of Deposit have a balance of \$30,000 and \$40,000 held at First Financial Bank, Robinson, IL.

### NEW BUSINESS

Mike Lennon moved, seconded by Warren Mason, that the James Jones Literary Society Newsletter title be

changed to the James Jones Literary Society Journal with Tom Wood appointed as editor with Richard King, Ray Elliott and Jerry Bayne to serve as the Editorial Committee. Motion carried.

Helen Howe recently questioned Ray Elliott if the funding will continue from the Society for the Valentine Essay Contest. Judy Everson volunteered to match funds with Jerry Bayne to underwrite the Essay's cash award. Helen Howe also stated that she would no longer maintain the showcase at Lincoln Trail College. Diane Reed volunteered to maintain the showcase. She requested a picture of the 2008 First Novel Fellowship Award for display in the case. Mike Lennon will send her a copy. Diane also suggested that the winner be invited to the '09 Symposium.

Jerry Bayne invited all to Madison, IN. to attend the city's bicentennial celebration in 2009 which will include a 50th anniversary of the making of the film *Some Came Running* on location in Madison. The Society plans to have representation at the festivities on the date as yet to be named.

Kim Cox moved, seconded by Mike Lennon, that the by-laws be changed to read as follows:

### JAMES JONES LITERARY SOCIETY BY-LAWS

*(Revised October 11, 2008)*

1. This Society shall be known as The James Jones Literary Society, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation chartered by the State of Illinois.  
2. The purpose of the Society is to encourage and facilitate interest in and study of the life and writings of James Jones, as well as to promote

the work of promising new and unpublished writers of fiction.

3. Membership in the Society is open to anyone interested in the life and writings of James Jones.

4. Dues for membership shall be \$15 for one year, individual; \$25 for one year, couple; \$50 for four years, individual; and \$250 for life.

5. The Society will meet at least every two years at a place to be determined by the Board of Directors, except that at least every third symposium will be held in Robinson, Illinois. Other meetings or programs that the Board deems useful or necessary will be held.

6. The Society shall publish the James Jones Journal periodically and distribute it to its members. Suggestions for other activities, such as special programs, may be made by any member and must be approved by the Board of Directors.

7. The Society shall sponsor fellowships to be presented to promising new writers of fiction. Recipients of First Novel Fellowships and the Creative Writing Award for students shall be nominated and approved by their respective Society awards committees.

8. The Board of Directors will consist of 27 members elected at large from the Society's membership. The term of office shall be three years with staggered terms. The Board will nominate and elect its officers as follows: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Archivist-Historian.

9. A quorum of regular directors (14) must be present at any formally assembled Board meeting in order to validate actions taken at such a meeting. If a quorum cannot

be assembled, a Director there present may cast a proxy vote for a Director not present, enabling the Board to reach its quorum total. Such proxies must be in writing; must designate the proxy voter; and must be signed, dated and issued by an absentee voter prior to the formal Board meeting. If a Board vote is taken by mail, e-mail or telephone, all Directors must be contacted and given a chance to participate and there must be at least a quorum response (a minimum of 14 votes) to validate such an action.

10. The Society shall have the following Standing Committees: Symposium Steering, Membership, Nominating, Finance, Technology, Journal, James Jones Lifetime Achievement Award, First Novel Fellowship, George Hendrick Research Award, and James Jones Creative Writing Award.

Motion carried.

Kim Cox, immediate Past President and Nominating

Committee Chair, nominated the following slate of officers for 2009: President, Barbara Jones; Vice President, Bonnie Culver; Treasurer, Warren Mason; Secretary, Kathy Stillwell; and Archivist-Historian, Tom Wood. Seconded by Diane Reed, motion carried.

Kaylie Jones moved that the following persons be nominated to the Board of Directors to serve 3 year terms: Jerry Bayne, Barbara Jones, Richard King, Warren Mason, Mike Mullen and Ed Seidel. Seconded by Ray Elliott, motion carried.

Three open slots remain to be appointed by the President. Mike Lennon moved, seconded by Kaylie Jones, that Judith Everson and Maxine Zwermann be elevated to Honorary Board Member status. Motion carried.

Warren Mason suggested that the follow up board meeting planned for Sunday was not necessary and the Board concurred.

Judy Everson thanked Jerry Bayne for his marvelous and efficient facilitation of the

strategic planning session as a last minute replacement due to the illness of Barbara Jones' mother. The Board heartily agreed and appreciated his willingness and superb ability to manage the session.



**JJLS Board members Tom Wood and Judy Everson at the St. Louis retreat.**

Judy Everson moved, seconded by Ray Elliott that the meeting be adjourned at 4:35 PM. Motion carried.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Stillwell,  
JJLS Secretary**

## Peggy Stortz Named Winner of the 2008 James Jones Short Story Award

In October, 2008 the Illinois Center for the Book announced the winners of the James Jones Short Story Award, as part of its Illinois Emerging Writers Competition:

- 1st place - **Peggy Stortz** of Galena for her story "Night Visitor"
- 2nd place - John Gabriel of Joliet for his story "Just Sort of Out of Sight"
- 3rd place - John J. Flaherty of Bloomingdale for his story "BUMS"

The purpose of the Illinois Emerging Writers Competition is to promote creative writing, encourage local writers and provide a unique opportunity and outlet for recognizing new literary talent. Winners receive cash prizes and have their works submitted for review and possible publication in the Illinois literary magazines -- *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Downstate Story*, *Ninth Letter* and *RHINO*.

When the Illinois Emerging Writers Competition was established in 2005, it was

solely dedicated to poetry. The following year, the Illinois Center for the Book partnered with the James Jones Literary Society to recognize outstanding short stories as well. Thanks to generous funding from the James Jones Literary Society, the Competition now offers two awards - the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award and the James Jones Short Story Award.

**See pages 6-8 for Stortz's award-winning story "The Night Visitor."**

## The Night Visitor

By Peggy Stortz

Winner of the 2008 James Jones Short Story Award  
in the Illinois Center for the Book's Emerging Writers' Competition.

I told Rosie I was concerned about her. Living out there by herself, so far from civilization. Not even a dog. No TV reception. No cell phone signal. No neighbors. Only the wood stove to keep her from freezing. Alone.

She hesitated, turned to regard me, tried to laugh. She said she loved it there. She didn't feel lonely. Not at all. She confided in me. She said there was a special person in her life. They had been together for six weeks. She was in love again and it was so thrilling.

Who, I asked. It was a rural community. Surely I would know him, or could find out more about him.

She wouldn't say. It was too soon. She wrapped herself up in her secret, wore it like a shawl.

Well, give me a hint, I said the next week. Is he widowed or divorced?

She regarded me and squinted her eyes. Why are you so interested?

Then she sighed and said he's widowed.

How old is he?

Well, that's just it. He's 81.

81? 81?

Yes, but he seems like 51. He looks 51. He is so handsome, so spry, so alive. He still runs his own business. He goes hunting with his sons. He is so active.

But he's 81.

Yes, 81.

I try to picture him. I see someone who is 81. Stooped back, small steps. Hair thinning. Weathered face. Hard of hearing. Drives real slow. 81.

The next week I said, just give me a few hints. I think I know.

She studied me and I thought she was going to change the subject. But she sighed and said he was a prominent man who had created his own business.

I know, I said. It's Jake Schmidt. He created Schmidt Mortuary.

No, she said. She shakes with laughter. Jake is dead.

Are you sure? I had been so certain he was her 81-year-old.

I'm sure, she said. Jake's dead.

The next week I said, what are you doing this weekend?

At first she didn't respond, her hands gripped the steering wheel, but after a time she said, it's his birthday. My special person. He will be 82.

82. He will be 82, I thought. I don't know what to do with this.

What are you going to give him? I ask.

Oh, she said, I ordered a cashmere sweater. It was \$148. I had it delivered to him at work. To surprise him. But when I called to see if he liked it, well, it was obvious it was the wrong thing. He said he didn't even know how to put it on. When I told him to unzip it at the neck and pull it over his head, he was confused. And he said there wasn't a zipper. That it was a silk tunic with no zipper, not even any buttons.

They sent the wrong thing, she said. I'll send it back and get the sweater.

I watched the road. She

swerved unexpectedly. I clutched my armrest.

So, will you take him out to eat? On Saturday night? For his birthday, are you going out?

No, she said. I'm going to make a home-cooked meal for him. He's coming to my house. I have it all planned. I'm making a salad with mesclun greens and baby spinach. It will have Craisins and slivered almonds. And I'm making a special dressing with extra virgin olive oil and balsamic vinegar and cherry juice to sweeten it.

I watched two wild turkeys in a field by the road. They were feasting on the remains of the corn crop.

And the main course? She frowned and flipped on the car radio, twisting up the volume.

Then she said I don't know why you care. I don't want to tell you the entrée. You would be offended. She shrugged and said, I will mix squash and yams as the side dish.

Wine, I suppose, I said.

Yes, he only drinks white zinfandel so I bought those little four ounce bottles. You can get four of them in a pack at the liquor store. I got little ones for him because I will be drinking a merlot, with the entrée, it needs a merlot.

And he can't drink that?

The merlot?

Oh no. He only drinks white zinfandel. So he will have the little bottles.

I tried to picture them. Like the ones they sell on the plane?

Oh no, they are larger than that, she said.

**No, she said. I'm going to make a home-cooked meal for him. He's coming to my house. I have it all planned. I'm making a salad with mesclun greens and baby spinach. It will have Craisins and slivered almonds.**

I tried to picture them. I couldn't remember ever seeing a wine container that was bigger than the ones on the plane, but smaller than a regular bottle.

Then the dessert. Will it be birthday cake?

No, he doesn't eat sweets. Won't touch them. I am going to have fresh raspberries with crème liquor. That will be the dessert.

The sun had set. It goes down so early this time of year.

On Saturday night I leaned over my kitchen counter and devoured a tuna sandwich.

Washed it down with a Diet Coke. I had a couple of little wrapped Snickers bars, remnants of my Halloween collection. Fun size, the bag said. They had been marked down. Half price.

I called my dogs out in the backyard and watched them do their business.

Back in my house, I slid each arm into the sleeve of a flannel shirt and then a sweatshirt over that. I put on a stocking cap, the kind you can pull down to mask your face with holes for your eyes, nose and mouth. I found two matching black gloves. I shoved my feet, covered in wool socks, into my boots and laced them up. I snatched the flashlight from the night-stand by my twin bed.

I motored to the bottom of Rosie's lane and got as far off the road as I could before shifting my car into park. I checked to see if the batteries were still working in the flashlight. It glimmered so I clicked it back off. I slid out and locked up.

I start the steep climb up her road. I have to stop a few times to catch my breath. I need to get to the gym. When I get to the crest of the hill, I hesitate. The moon is a great glowing orb on the horizon.

As I pause, I see a doe. She is quite close to me and I

am startled. She stares at me. Her liquid brown eyes reveal no fear. I wait. I know the buck will emerge from the woods any minute. It is rutting season, after all. But no other deer come out of the thicket. She regards me for a long time. I stay motionless, returning her gaze. Then she turns and leaps across the lane and bounds down the hill below. Her white furry tail bobs in the moonlight.

I approach the house with caution. Staying back in the trees. The only car on the rutted driveway is Rosie's. I'm early. He isn't here yet.

I crouch down and dart from tree to tree until I get to the old red Gremlin, propped up on blocks in the yard. Rosie's last lover liked to fiddle with engines. He had a fondness for American Motors. Said no other company was quite the same. Time has eroded the vehicle, its body is rusted and a side window is shattered. Glass shards are strewn on the ground. I peer inside. Despite the gloom, I can see mouse droppings on the seat cushion. I kneel behind the hood and turn to regard Rosie's house.

It is asymmetrical, haphazard. The master bedroom is built up on stilts and not quite on the level, at least from my perspective. A hole had been sundered in the wall of the ramshackle farmhouse to accommodate this recent addition. The windows of the bedroom are dark, forbidding.

In sharp contrast, the dining room is all ablaze. I peer through the gloom. I creep back and forth behind the dilapidated wreck trying to find the best vantage point. On the table, two long tapered candles flicker in pewter holders. A bouquet of colorful mums and asters at the centerpiece. Fine bone china. Silver forks and knives and spoons. A linen

napkin curves up like a swan from a place setting.

With no warning, Rosie's face is at the window and I recoil into the darkness. She has on mascara and red lipstick. Her cheeks carefully rouged, her hair pulled back in a burgundy ribbon. I have never seen her with makeup. I am fascinated and want to draw closer, but I remain in the dark seclusion.

After a while I catch the soft strains of opera music. Rosie is busting back and forth to the table and then into a windowless room and back out again. She has on a soft, cream-colored silk blouse with a large bow tied loosely at her neck. I can't see her shapely legs, but she is wearing a gray tailored skirt or maybe pants, with a tiny belt cinching in her slender waist.

Every so often she approaches the pane and gazes out. Each time she comes to the window, I sink down, almost crawl under the shell of the Gremlin, but I needn't have worried. Her eyes are on the lane, searching for two beams of light. She isn't looking for an intruder crouched down low, out in the cold and gloom, behind the rusty skeleton.

I'm not sure what alerts me, but suddenly my hair stands on end. I sense another presence in the darkness. I inhale sharply. Adrenaline courses through my veins. I turn slowly, very slowly, almost imperceptibly to see who is behind me, what is behind me. At first I can't decipher a thing. My pupils contract, adjusting to the blackness. I see the tall weeds behind me quiver and I choke back a scream. I jump away. A snake is coiled not two feet from me. A hefty one. Its head is raised and its forked tongue is flicking the air. My breath comes in quick gasps. I don't want to alarm it. I just want to get out. I don't

**I crouch down and dart from tree to tree until I get to the old red Gremlin, propped up on blocks in the yard. Rosie's last lover liked to fiddle with engines. He had a fondness for American Motors. Said no other company was quite the same.**

## Peggy Stortz: The Night Visitor (continued)

even worry about being exposed by the shafts of light from Rosie's glass panes. I back away from the serpent.

It lowers its head and slithers into the tall grass under the car, flicking its tail one last time as it zigzags out of sight.

I take a deep breath and whirl back to the window. Rosie is seated. She is at the table, smiling and hoisting her wine glass with the merlot. Her ruby lips are moving in a toast. He must be there. When did the geezer arrive?

Trying to stay in the shadows, but away from the Gremlin with its snake underneath, I slink under the trees. I try to maneuver so I can see him, the 81-year-old who is now 82. But I can't get a view of the other side of her table.

Rosie's laugh rings out, velvety and sensual, rising above Pavarotti.

I move back into the woods and look for his car. I don't see it. I dash from tree to tree, surveying the whole yard bathed in moonlight. I wipe my eyes, adjust my stocking cap. No, only Rosie's car.

I move back, closer to the window. I fixate on her tender lips, strain to catch her husky voice. Again I attempt to see the wizened old guy, but it is impossible. The window only allows me a view of Rosie, nibbling at the mesclun greens with the Craisins and slivered almonds, beaming at her visitor, sipping her merlot.

So I wait. I keep one eye out for the snake, there in the blackness. I watch for the buck who must surely be following that lithe doe. But mostly I am enthralled by the scene inside the house. The candle flames iridescent. The gold and maroon blooms. Rosie's captivating loveliness.

After the salad, she gets up and carries their plates to the other room. I hold my breath but he doesn't follow her. She comes out with a platter. I lean forward. Are they veal cutlets? I suspected as much. Alongside the slabs of meat are the squash and yams. She seats herself and I can see her full lips trembling, the mirth in her eyes.

I am starting to get stiff from the cold, but I can't bring myself to hike back down that hill. Not yet. I rub my gloved hands together and survey a

fallen log. I glance back at the house where Rosie is immersed in conversation. I turn on my flashlight and scrutinize the ground. No snakes. No mice or spiders. I lower myself and flip off the beam.

Then quick, back to the window. Rosie hasn't noticed the brief twinkle out here in the murky woods; she didn't glance out and spy my ray of light. She's tasting a raspberry, plump and succulent, a rarity in November. And she is still gazing at her visitor, seemingly enraptured. She has wrapped herself in a scarlet pashmina. I suck in air as I see how it flatters her complexion, reflects the blush of her delicate cheekbones, her crimson lips. I can't take my eyes off of her. She squeezes each berry and sucks its sweet nectar. I am enchanted by the warm glow. Intrigued by her splendor.

After the berries have been consumed, she rises to clear the dishes. Only then do I contemplate how much my back is aching. I stand and survey the encroaching woods. The snake, the possibility of a rutting buck, the scuttling of little feet. I consider returning home.

Slouching down on my decaying log, I gaze at the house one last time. But she is no longer there. I study each consecutive window in dismay. No one is at the table. The ceiling light is extinguished. Only one candle flickers. Where is the other? My eyes search.

And then I see the inviting circle of light in Rosie's bedroom. It is progressing from pane to pane towards the back. Someone is carrying the missing taper to the king-size bed. I stretch to see through the elevated windows. The shimmer of light. The candle is there, but darkness shrouds the chamber.

I linger until my toes and fingers are numb from the cold. The last strains of Pavarotti echo through the gloom. Then the night is still.

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Peggy Stortz

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## James Jones Literary Society Board Minutes, November 2-4, 2007

The following is a compilation of minutes from three meetings held November 2, 3 and 4, 2007 in Robinson, Illinois, as part of the fall JJLS symposium. Boards of Director meetings were held at the home of Maxine Zwermann on Friday afternoon and Sunday morning. A membership meeting was held on Saturday morning at Lincoln Trail College. Kim Cox, JJLS president for 2007, conducted the Friday and Saturday meetings. Barbara Jones, JJLS president for 2008, conducted the Sunday meeting.

Board members attending the Friday meeting included Kim Cox, Richard King, Judy Everson, Tom Wood, Jon Shirota, Warren Mason, Jerry Bayne, Barbara Jones, Cullom Davis, Michael Lennon, Helen Howe, Diane Reed, Ed Seidel, Wood Lewis, Doug Lawhead, Bonnie Culver, Maxine Zwermann, Nancy Claypool and Kathy Stillwell. Board members attending the Sunday meeting included Barbara Jones, Cullom Davis, Kim Cox, Mike Lennon, Ray Elliott, Diane Reed, Doug Lawhead, Tom Wood, Jon Shirota, Judy Everson, Jerry Bayne, Ed Seidel, Maxine Zwermann, Wood Lewis, Juanita Martin and Kathy Stillwell.

Jerry Bayne moved to approve the minutes as submitted of the 2006 meeting, second by Diane Reed. Motion carried.

Warren Mason, Treasurer, reported a balance in the operating fund checking account of \$19,740.17. Symposium expenses plus the First Novel Fellowship Awards (\$10,000 and \$250) would be deducted from the operating fund balance. Judy Everson moved to approve the treasurer's, second by Cullom Davis. Motion carried.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Finance Committee

Warren Mason, Chair, reported the operating fund endowment is invested in three certificates of deposit at First Financial Bank in Robinson. A \$30,000 CD is invested @ 3.9% and will mature in February 2010. A \$40,000 CD is invested @ 4.91% and will mature in May 2009.

There is an emergency fund CD in the amount of \$3,713.13 that matures and rolls over every six months. The total amount in the endowment bank accounts as of 10/2007 was \$73,713.13. Interest earnings from the certificates of direct are deposited into the operating fund checking account and helps pay for JLS fixed costs such as newsletter printings, postage, accounting fees for annual audits and IRS filings, insurance, short story writing contests, et cetera. Warren noted that following board approval, \$10,000 was drawn down from the operating fund endowment in May 2007 to contribute as seed money to the James Jones Chair of WWII project at Eastern Illinois University. Also, Warren said the finance may consider other investment strategies of the endowment funds in the future.

#### **Membership**

Jerry Bayne, Chair, reported 366 current members, with 52 of those memberships needing to be renewed by the end of 2007.

#### **First Novel Fellowship Endowment**

Mike Lennon, Chair, reported on the 2007 contest. The committee received 639 entries this year generating \$12,780 in fee revenue. Total expenses at time of Symposium were \$18,460, with minor additional fees to be incurred. The current market value of the James Jones First Novel endowment level managed by Wilkes University is \$182,254.34.

#### **Technology**

Richard King, Chair, reported that Vincennes University will continue its support of the website. The site is doing well with 68 thousand visits. He thanked all those who had contributed and encouraged all to continue their support.

#### **Newsletter**

Doug Lawhead, Chair, would prefer to maintain a printing schedule based on the dates of the major events of the Society: "The Valentine" contest, pre-symposium, post symposium. He plans to set predictable deadlines based on these Society events. Doug reported that working with the Wayne County

Press and publisher Preston Mathews continues to be a very good and professional association. Doug plans to renumber the newsletters so that the first one published in 2008 will be labeled as Vol. 17 No. 1

#### **George Hendrick Research Award**

Judy Everson, Chair, reported that there are no nominations for the award this year although some candidates were considered by the committee members. The fiscal and logistical properties of the award were discussed. A committee with Barbara Jones, Judy Everson, Mike Lennon, Tom Wood, Warren Mason, and Cullom Davis was named to address these issues. One possible genre discussed was investigation of a research in progress award.

#### **Nominating Committee**

Jerry Bayne presented nominees for the three-year term to expire in 2010: Nancy Claypool, Ray Elliott, Kaylie Jones, Doug Lawhead, Wood Lewis, Mike Lennon, Juanita Martin, Don Sackrider and Tom Wood. Judy Everson moved, second by Cullom Davis, that the nominees be accepted as presented. Motion carried. Diane Reed moved that Bev Turkal, President of Lincoln Trail College, be elected to the BOD to serve the one-year term left vacant by the resignation of Jack Morris, second by Kim Cox. Motion carried.

Officers elected for 2008 were Barbara Jones, president; Jerry Bayne, vice president; Kathy Stillwell, secretary; Warren Mason, treasurer; and Tom Wood, archivist.

#### **Old Business**

Jerry Bayne noted that archival and other materials are increasing in his storage area at Wabash Valley College. It was suggested that Society historical materials be sent to Tom Wood, Society Archivist, at the University of Illinois in Springfield. Jerry added that he has many boxes of Society properties stored that are not worthy of archival cataloguing but should be kept, he thought. No action was taken but there will be future consideration given for storing these boxes somewhere in Robinson. the increased award to the second place prizes without touching additional mon-

Ray Elliott and Doug Lawhead reported on the very successful World War II studies program held at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston in September. Besides a series of scholarly seminars, panel discussions and film showings, Winston Groom was a keynote speaker and Kaylie Jones conducted a writing workshop. The three-day program was very well attended. Nancy Claypool reported on activities in Marshall that coincided with the EIU programs. Ray gave a report on the establishment of the James Jones Chair of World War II Studies at EIU and the terrific progress that has been made in raising funds for the endowment. The goal is to raise one million dollars for the chair.

Helen Howe and Diane Reed reported on "The Valentine" high school essay contest. Robinson, Oblong, Palestine and Marshall High Schools participated in the program. Hutsonville High School may participate in the future. The Board wholeheartedly supported continuing the program. Several Board Members pledged to underwrite the cash awards and other expenses to continue the project. Nancy Claypool and Bev Turkal will assist Helen and Diane with the 2008 program.

#### **New Business**

Warren Mason moved that a student membership category be established at a reduced rate to be determined by the finance committee and treasurer (probably \$5.00 a year), second by Mike Lennon. Motion carried.

Following discussion, a committee was formed to investigate the possibility of publishing a collection of the papers presented at the JLS symposia since 1991. Previously the Society has self-published a collection of poems by Charles Robb, a former colony member and major contributor to the endowment funds. The committee members appointed to the project include Jerry Bayne, Judy Everson, Mike Lennon and Tom Wood.

Mike Lennon moved, second by Bonnie Culver, to increase the entry fee for the First Novel Fellowship to \$25, and to award \$750 to two runners up. The increase in the entry fee will pay for the increased award to the second place prizes without touching additional mon-

## JJLS Board Minutes, November 2-4, 2007 (continued)

ies from the endowment. Motion carried.

After considerable discussion, it was decided by the board to hold a Board Retreat in 2008 in lieu of a mounting a Symposium for the membership and general public. The strategic planning retreat will be in the form similar to the one the board held in Chicago in the spring of 1995. At the Chicago retreat, which was facilitated by Judy Everson, the Board developed a mid and long range strategic plan. All the major initiatives outlined at that retreat have been accomplished. The committee members assigned to organize the 2008 strategic planning board retreat include Barbara Jones, Kim Cox, Judy Everson, Diane Reed and Doug Lawhead. Indianapolis was agreed as a good meeting point within driving

distance or a one-stop flight for the majority of board members. The exact date is to be determined but a consensus was to meet in the fall, probably a weekend in October or November.

Consideration of future symposia sites was discussed. Barbara Jones mentioned New Haven and Middletown, Connecticut, home of Yale University and Wesleyan University respectively, as possible locations. Nancy Claypool suggested a focus on the Handy Writers Colony and meeting in Marshall, Illinois. Bonnie Culver suggested meeting at Wilkes University, Pennsylvania, which hosts the First Novel Fellowship Award creative writing competition. Mike Lennon suggested the JJLS consider a joint meeting with the Norman Mailer Literary Society some time in

the future. Also discussed was the possibility of holding a symposium every other year. All of these suggestions will be considered at the strategic planning retreat.

Jerry Bayne reported that there may be a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the filming of *Some Came Running* in Madison, Indiana, in either 2008 or 2009. The Society approved having some kind of formal representation there if the City of Madison does mount a celebration commemorating the filming as they did for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Jerry is to keep the Board informed of any information about the celebration.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Stillwell, JJLS Secretary**

## Fundraising Event for the James Jones Chair in World War II Studies: Springfield, Illinois, April 7, 2009

Plans are underway for an event in Springfield, Illinois, to support the James Jones Chair in World War II Studies at Eastern Illinois University for university alumni, James Jones Literary Society members and other interested parties. The event, scheduled for the evening of **Tuesday, April 7 in Springfield's Hoogland Center for the Arts**, will include an introduction of the chair and how the English and history departments at the EIU College of Arts & Humanities will offer students an opportunity to study the literature and history of World War II.

The chair was initiated in 2007 and prompted an annual James Jones Lecture Series while the \$1.5 million is being raised to support the endowment for the chair. Novelist and playwright Jon Shirota and his wife, Barbara, who was placed in one of the infamous internment camps for Japanese-Americans as a child during World War II, were the first to lecture.

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, University of California, Santa Barbara, Professor of History and Director of the Center for Cold War Studies and author of *Racing the Enemy - Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan* gave the second lecture in October, based on Japanese, Soviet, and U.S. records that traced "an intricate diplomatic and military end game" and sheds new light on the "standard accounts of the Japanese surrender."

EIU Foundation officer John Schmidt, who is based in Chicago, has been assigned to coordinate the endowment fundraising. While Schmidt will follow alumni leads for securing additional gifts, members of the James Jones Literary Society are asked to submit names of potential donors and to make their own contributions toward this opportunity with the flyer on the opposite page.

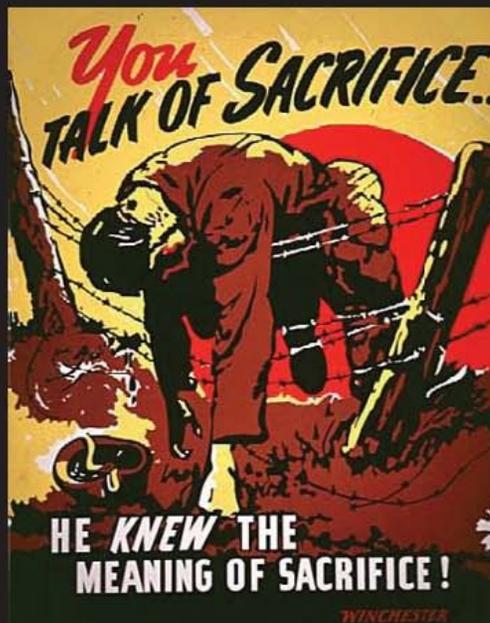
"It is fitting that the James Jones Chair should reside in two of the departments at Eastern most distinguished for the quality of their teach-

ing and for the national and international reach of their scholarship, the English Department and the History Department," Arts and Humanities College Dean Jim Johnson said. "They are truly the academic jewels in our crown at Eastern."

To continue these efforts, the 2009 James Jones Symposium will be held on the EIU campus in Charleston in the newly renovated Doudna Fine Arts Center (<http://www.eiu.edu/doudna/>) in November. The theme of the symposium is Memory of War. Kaylie Jones, whose memoir about her father, *Shakespeare's Children*, will be released in September, will head the program. JJLS board member Tom Jones, a Vietnam veteran and medic who was attached to the Third Marine Recon and the author of *Lost Survivor*, as well as EIU students and faculty members, will also highlight the program.

The James Jones Lecture Series will be held at the same time as the symposium.

Yes, I would like to support  
**the**  
**James Jones**  
**Chair**  
**in WWII**  
**Studies**  
 at Eastern Illinois University



Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Office) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

If your spouse is an Eastern alumna/us, please provide us with his or her full name (and maiden name if applicable) so we may update our records

Three-year pledge:

please accept my monthly gift of \$27.77 for the next three years (for a total of \$1,000)

To authorize a onetime or recurring donation from your bank account, please go to [www.eiu.edu/~develop/images/efform.pdf](http://www.eiu.edu/~develop/images/efform.pdf)

Onetime gift:

please accept my gift of  \$50  \$75  \$100  \$250  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check, made payable to: EIU Foundation  Credit Card:  Visa  MasterCard  Discover

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please send all correspondence and contributions to:  
 Karla Evans, Executive Director  
 EIU Office of Philanthropy  
 600 Lincoln Avenue  
 Charleston, IL 61920-3099



*Join or renew*

**The James Jones Literary Society**

*Membership / Contribution Form*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

- \$15 Annual Individual       \$25 Annual Couple  
 \$50 Four-Year Individual       \$250 Life Individual

- I / We wish to join or renew membership in the James Jones Literary Society and have enclosed the appropriate dues payment.
- I / We wish to support the activities of the James Jones Literary Society and would like to make a contribution. Enclosed is a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .

(Please indicate how you would like your contribution to be used.)

- To support The James Jones First Novelist Fellowship Award honoring promising new fiction authors.
- To support The James Jones Literary Society General Fund.

Make checks payable to The James Jones Literary Society and mail to P.O. Box 68, Robinson, IL 62454. Contributions are tax-deductible. This form may be duplicated for additional memberships and/or gifts.

James Jones Literary Society  
P.O. Box 68  
Robinson, Illinois  
62454

