

## Member news

Sue William Silverman's memoir, *Love Sick* (W. W. Norton), has gone into production for a Lifetime Television Original Movie, starring Sally Pressman and David James Elliott. Also, the paperback edition is due out soon. In addition,



Sue William Silverman

Sue has signed a contract with the University of Georgia Press to publish a book for women writing memoirs, and her essay, "The Pat Boone Fan Club," has been selected to appear in *The Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary*

*Nonfiction: Work From 1970 to the Present*, to be published this December by Simon and Schuster. More details at [www.suewilliamsilverman.com](http://www.suewilliamsilverman.com). ...

**Quraysh Ali Lansana** will be among the authors reading from their works at 6 p.m. Oct. 24, Fullerton Hall, Art Institute of Chicago. ... **Kevin Coval** is one of the poets who will be included in *I Speak of the City: Poems of New York*, called one of the most extensive anthologies of poems ever assembled about New York City. Coval, who has read his works at SMA programs, is the author of *Slingshots* (A Hip-Hop Poetica). ... **Evelyn Johnson** recently signed *Barns of Old Mission Peninsula and Their Stories* in Kentwood, Mich., and has more signings scheduled for Oct. 27 at the Grand Rapids (Mich.) Rivertown Crossing Barnes & Noble and Schulers Books in Grand Rapids from 11-1 on Nov. 17. ... **Achy Obejas** (see New Books) was a speaker as part of Illinois State University's Latino History Month events, which kicked off Sept. 15. ... **Arnie Bernstein** spoke at the Carter

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## As skilled-worker shortage looms, is U.S. tuned into wrong program?

### Future is 'Star Trek,' not 'L.A. Law,' author says

BY THOMAS FRISBIE

America faces a shortage of skilled workers, but isn't focusing on the big picture, Society of Midland Authors members were told Oct. 9.

SMA member Edward Gordon, author of *The 2010 Meltdown: Solving the Impending Jobs Crisis*, and Peggy Luce, vice president of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, said a large number of technical and crafts workers will be needed after 2010, and that the city and nation need to act quickly to train those workers.

Now, too many students are going into

such careers as law and finance and too few are going into engineering, Gordon said.

"We are acting as if the future is 'Dallas' and 'L.A. Law,' but the future is 'Star Trek' and 'Star Wars,'" Gordon said.

A third scheduled member of the panel, Swiss Business Hub Minister & Director Martin von Walterskirchen, was detained in Washington and was unable to take part in the program at the Cliff Dwellers Club, 200 S. Michigan, Chicago.

Luce said Ford Motor Co. has told the Chamber of Commerce that the shortage of skilled workers in the Chicago area is putting the future of its south suburban

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### November 13 program

David Mendell, author of *Obama: From Promise to Power* (August, 2007, Amistad), will be the speaker at the SMA's

November program. Mendell has covered Obama since the beginning of his campaign for the Senate and has far-reaching access to the senator — both his professional and personal life. He uses this to paint

a very intimate portrait of Obama and his life pre- and post-Senate.

Booklist calls the book "a nuanced,

compelling look at a man of idealism and ambition intent on making history."

Mendell, a native of Cincinnati,

began writing about urban issues and politics for the Chicago Tribune in 1998.

During his eight years at the Tribune, Mendell has also covered such breaking national news as the Columbine High School shootings and the

Seattle riots spurred by meetings of the World Trade Organization. He lives in Oak Park, Ill.

Nov. 13, 2007, program

Cliff Dwellers  
200 S. Michigan Avenue  
22nd floor

6 p.m. - Social Hour  
7:00 p.m. - Program

Free - members, teachers, students  
\$5.00 - general public

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## October program report

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auto assembly plants in doubt.

"If we don't do better with the work force supply, they are not going to be able to operate those plants," Luce said. "The problem they have is excellence in education. We have got people, but they missed out on that excellence in education."

A look at the numbers shows why there will be a worker shortage, Gordon said.

"In 2000, about 22 percent of the U.S. work force was working in the area of tech and skilled craft," he said. "By 2010, we hope to have 29 percent. By 2020, we are talking about 43 million people. Many of these individuals [in those jobs now] are Baby Boomers, and they will retire."

From a globalization standpoint, Europe will have even more retirements than the United States, and workers from



Ed Gordon

other nations who have streamed to the United States will start returning to their home countries as opportunities and wages in those countries increase, he said.

That's why it's important that the United States get job training into high gear so that hospitals, businesses and other employers of skill workers don't just shut down, Gordon said.

"The British threw away their industrial leadership by not having a proper pipeline [bringing in new trained workers]," he said.

The SMA program followed an earlier panel on the same topic with Gordon, Luce and others at the Federal Reserve Bank on La Salle Street that was sponsored by the government of Switzerland.

A similar program will be conducted next year, when the International Manufacturing Show will be in Chicago with 150,000 people in September, one of the largest shows that comes to the city,

Gordon said.

"The largest small manufacturing center in the United States is here in this city," Gordon said. "Many of them are small family businesses. What will happen to most of the businesses when they cannot replace skilled technical people — whether they are engineers, two-year degrees or different types of apprenticeships? They will disappear.

"If this were just the United States, probably this would not be a crisis," Gordon said. "But from a globalization standpoint, the problem is Europe will have even more retirements than the United States. And because many countries of Europe are not at a replacement birth rate, they will see their work force shrink. Japan right now is about 1.4 people per couple in terms of replacement. They, too, are set to have their population and work force shrink. What this means is that the United States will not be able to rely on those countries for technology workers as we did after the Second World War and since then."

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Woodson Library as part of the Chicago Book Fair on Oct. 13. On Oct. 14, he was one of the featured readers of the Alumni Reading as part of Columbia College's Creative NonFiction Week. ... **Frank Joseph** is coming to the Chicago area for two weeks of appearances and novel research in November. His novel, *To Love Mercy*, a coming-of-age tale set in Chicago in 1948, has won six awards and gone into a second printing since publication in April, 2006 by Mid-Atlantic Highlands ([www.tolovemeracy.com](http://www.tolovemeracy.com)). Frank has appearances scheduled at Barnes & Noble-Village Crossing in Skokie (Nov. 7, 7 p.m.), Schaumburg Central Library (Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m.), The Book Cellar-Lincoln Square (Nov. 9, 7 p.m.), Homewood Library (Nov. 10, 2 p.m.), Barnes & Noble-Hawthorne Mall Vernon Hills (Nov. 11, 2 p.m.), Skokie Public Library (Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m.) and Arlington Heights Memorial Library (Nov. 15, 7 p.m.). He is also speaking on the topic "Getting Boys to Read" at the Illinois School Library Media

Association's fall conference Nov. 3 at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Springfield, Ill. ... **Alex Kotlowitz** was among the writer friends who did David Halberstam's book tour for him for *The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War* six months after Halberstam's death in a car accident. The tour ended Oct. 15. ... **Janis F. Kearney** is leaving the Midland states to become a visiting scholar at Arkansas State University. ... **Jonathan Eig** discussed and signed his new book *Opening Day: the Story of Jackie Robinson's First Season* Oct. 6 at the Chicago Public Library Woodson Regional Library. ... On Oct. 3 at the Niles Public Library, **Richard Lindberg** discussed the 1955 murder of three Northwest Side boys that shocked the city. His 2006 book on the case is titled *Shattered Sense of Innocence*. Lindberg also will be at the Chicago Public Library's Budlong Woods Branch on Oct. 16, 5630 N. Lincoln Ave. ... Signings for *Further Persons Imperfect* will be held Nov. 4, 4:30 p.m. at Women & Children First Books, 5233 N. Clark St., Chicago and Nov. 16, 7 p.m., at The Writers

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## Former SMA president gets Hall of Fame vote

**Arthur Weinberg**, a past president of the Society of Midland Authors, a prominent author and a journalist covering consumer electronics for Fairchild Publications from 1946 until his death in 1989, has been named to the Consumer Electronics Industry Hall of Fame. His widow, **Lila Weinberg**, also a past president of the Society, will attend the Oct. 16 awards dinner in San Diego.

In 1987, Mr. Weinberg received the Midland Authors' award for a distinguished body of work.

He was a 1988-89 Lloyd Lewis Fellow in American History at the Newberry Library, where he spent years as a researcher and scholar.

He wrote seven books, and his biography of Clarence Darrow, *Attorney for the Damned*, was on the New York Times best-seller list for 19 weeks in 1957. (Darrow also was an SMA member.) Mr. Weinberg also wrote nonfiction books with Lila. They worked as a teaching team at DePaul University for 16 years.

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WorkSpace, 5443 N. Broadway, Chicago. The book has 17 first-person short stories by Evanston author/educator **Paul McComas** and 16 local writers who are current and past members of his Advanced Fiction Writing workshop. ... **Paula Kamen** will read from her new book *Finding Iris Chang* (see New Books) at 5:30 pm. Oct. 29 at the Conway Center, Columbia College Chicago, 1104 S. Wabash. Admission is \$5. Other upcoming readings: Nov. 6, 7:30 p.m., Barbara's Bookstore at UIC, 218 South Halsted St., Chicago; Nov. 7, 7 p.m., 57th Street Books, 1301 E. 57th St., Chicago; Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m., Women and Children First, 5233 N. Clark St., Chicago. ... **Ron Offen** read his poetry, including new and old works, at Molly Malone's Irish Pub, 7652 W. Madison St., Forest Park, Ill., on Sept. 10. ... **Amy Hassinger's** second novel, *The Priest's Madonna*, published by Putnam Adult in 2006, is being translated into Dutch, Spanish, Russian and Indonesian. ... **John Wasik**, author of *The Merchant of Power: Samuel Insull, Thomas Edison and the Creation of the Modern Metropolis* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2006), will appear Oct. 17, at the Niles Public Library in Niles, Ill. ... On Oct. 16, **Robert McClory** will give a talk titled, "Light At the End of the Tunnel: Democracy Becoming Reality in the Church." The 6 p.m. talk will be at

Loyola University's downtown campus, Beane Hall, 13th floor of Lewis Towers, 111 East Pearson. The occasion will mark the launch of McClory's new book *As It Was in the Beginning: The Coming Democratization of the Catholic Church* (see New Books). ... **Neal Samors** signed *Downtown Chicago in Transition* Oct. 9 (see New Books) at the Book Stall in Chestnut Court, Winnetka. ... **Ed Gordon** is working on a sequel to his book *The 2010 Meltdown*. It is tentatively titled *The Global Challenge Showdown*. ... **Stuart Dybek** and **Donna Seaman** on Oct. 10 discussed life, work and Chicago roots at the Chicago History Museum. ... **Christopher Wiman's** *Ambition and Survival: Becoming a Poet* was reviewed in the Oct. 7 New York Times Book Review by Ken Tucker, who said: "Wiman writes well the kind of verse he champions." ... **Ted McClelland** has moved back to Chicago from Michigan. ... **Craig Sautter** is going back to Miami Beach this winter to teach philosophy. Also, he was quoted in two recent Minneapolis Star Tribune stories about the 2008 Republican convention there. On one, he was credited as co-author with the paper's political writer, Randy Furst. Also, he posted the history of Denver's first Democratic presidential convention in 1908 on his Web site: [www.presidentialconventions.com](http://www.presidentialconventions.com). The Democrats are meeting in Denver in 2008. ... Last month, **Andrea Cheng** redesigned her Web site, [www.andreacheng.com](http://www.andreacheng.com). Browse!

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## SMA support

Dues cover mailings and other organizational expenses, but the Society always needs additional money for programs such as the awards given at the annual May banquet for books by Midwestern authors.

Thanks to these members who made contributions in addition to their renewals this year:

**Carol Madden Adorjan, James and Anne Barry, Charlene Ann Baumbich, Arnie Bernstein, Fern G. Brown, John D. Callaway, Phyllis Choyke, Alzina Stone Dale, Irma E. Davis, Michael H. Ebner, Jean B. Elshain, Rita Emmett,**

**Elizabeth A. Fama, Grace Bacon Ferrier, Robert J. R. Follett, Marianne Forrest, Thomas Frisbie, Jamie Gilson, Frank Gonzalez-Crussi, Elizabeth H. Gray, Sue Harrison, Jane R. Howard, Louise Hullinger, Cranston Sedrick Knight, Christopher Leland, George Levy, Richard Lindberg, Billy McCarthy, S. Charles Masters, George William McDaniel, Mary Jane Miller, S. Dow Mossman, Ron Offen, Daniel Texidor Parker, Mark Perlberg, Stella Pevsner, Mark E. Pulsifer, Robert Remer, Harriette Gillem Robinet, John Schultz, James C. Schwab, Elinor P. Swiger, Scott Turow, Martha Modena Vertreace-Doody and Lila Weinberg.**

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## New members

**R. LeRoy Bannerman**, professor emeritus of telecommunications, Indiana University, is author of *Norman Corwin and Radio: The Golden Years of Radio* (1986, University of Alabama Press), an authorized biography of the grand master of American radio dramas; *On a Note of Triumph: Norman Corwin and the Golden Years of Radio* (1989, Carol Publishing Corp.); and *Where Blood Runs Black and White* (2006, AuthorHouse).

**Wade Rouse** is author of *America's Boy: A Memoir* (2006, Dutton) and *Confessions of a Prep School Mommy Handler: A Memoir* (September, 2007, Random House).

Publishers Weekly said *America's Boy* "comes alive with tender portraits of kitsch and kin." Of *Confessions*, Publishers Weekly said, "Rouse's writing is fresh and funny, and the stories of Botox parties, catty mothers and manicured pet pups make this an amusing insider look into the opulent lifestyle of prep school families." The book is about Rouse's experiences as director of public relations for Tate Academy.

*America's Boy* recounts Rouse's childhood growing up gay in 1970s Granby, Missouri, a tiny Ozarks town where "trailers outnumber homes and teeth." It was named by Borders editors as one of the "Best Literary Memoirs of 2006" and a "A Best Book of 2006" by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Rouse is a contributing writer to a forthcoming humorous essay collection on working in retail, tentatively titled *The Customer Is Always Wrong: The Retail Chronicles*. The collection is scheduled to be published by Counterpoint/Soft Skull Press in fall, 2008. He is a regular essayist for Lake Magazine, and his articles have appeared in numerous national magazines and newspapers.

Rouse earned his B.A. in communications from Drury University and his master's in journalism from Northwestern University. He has worked as a journalist and writer, and his articles have appeared in, among others, The Chicago Reader, St. Louis Riverfront Times, Lake Magazine, Blue Magazine and Grand Rapids Magazine.



## New books

### Two new books

*Havana Noir* (October, 2007, Akashic Noir), which **Achy Obejas** edited and for which she translated 13 of the 18 stories, reached No. 5 on the Amazon mystery anthologies list this month. (Publishers Weekly: "Grim and gritty stories of despair and irony.") In November, she has a poetry chapbook coming out, *This is What Happened in Our Other Life*, (A Midsummer Night's Press). She's touring nationally for both.

Obejas also has recently been signed up to translate Junot Diaz's dark and exuberant first novel, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, into Spanish.

### "Sizable audience"

**Paula Kamen's** new book, *Finding Iris Chang: Friendship, Ambition and the Loss of an Extraordinary Mind* (Da Capo Press) was reviewed in the Sept. 10 issue of Publishers Weekly. It is about best-selling author Iris Chang, who committed suicide in 2004. The book "could find a sizable audience among those Chinese-Americans who lionized Chang," PW said. The Kirkus Fall & Winter Preview issue called the book "a rewarding, complex portrait."

In a blurb posted on Sept. 6, Helen Zia, author of *Asian American Dreams: the Emergence of an American People*, wrote, "Journalist Paula Kamen leaves no clue unturned in this riveting narrative that is part detective story, part psychological drama, part homage to a friend, as she peels back the complexities of Iris Chang's life and death."

The book is a November 2007 Booksense pick.

### Snapshot of history

In November, **Mark Jacob** and **Richard Cahan**, both SMA members, will publish *Chicago Under Glass: Early Photographs From the Chicago Daily News* (University of Chicago Press). The book displays about 250 photographs from the Chicago History Museum's collection of 57,000 glass-plate negatives taken by the Chicago Daily News from 1901 to 1930. The Daily News was one of the first newspapers in the country to feature black-and-white photography. In

1900, staffers from the paper's art department began lugging bulky cameras, heavy glass plates and explosive flash powder throughout the city. A labor strike, a boxing match, or a crime scene—it was all in a day's work for the Daily News photographer. Jacob and Cahan, have selected more than 250 images—many of which have never before been published—from the nearly 57,000 glass negatives housed at the Chicago History Museum. They include rare photographs of a young Buster Keaton with his wife and child, waiting to board a train and the notorious Al Capone outside a courtroom, smoking a cigar and consulting with his lawyer. In 1996, Cahan and Jacob co-authored *The Game That Was: The George Brace Baseball Photo Collection*.

### In the CTA archives

**Richard Cahan** also has another new book, this one co-authored with **Michael Williams** and **Bruce Moffat** with a foreword by **Stuart Dybek**: *Chicago: City on the Move* (\$39.95, CityFiles Press).

For close to 150 years, photographers have documented the construction of Chicago's public transportation system. They've photographed the building of the city's famous "L" lines. They've photographed the streetcars that glided through city streets. This book presents that history of the city through photographs from the archives of the Chicago Transportation Authority.

### What's up with Downtown

**Neal Samors** and **Eric Bronsky** have written *Downtown Chicago in Transition* (Chicago's Books Press), which explores the changes that have shaped the greater Loop district from the late nineteenth century to the present. The evolution of Chicago's downtown is vividly portrayed through more than 270 historical duotone and color photographs interlaced with a tapestry of memories, experiences and thoughts related by interviewees.

Unique and obscure subjects are featured together with some of downtown's more familiar and enduring icons. The most alluring images are enhanced to full-page and double page size, while photographs separated by decades invite spirited comparison. A descriptive narrative introduces each section of the book, tying

all the elements together. The foreword is by Joel Daly.

Among the interviewees are Josephine Baskin Minow, Gary Johnson, Jerome R. Butler, James McDonough, Ann Roth, James O'Connor, Kay Mayer, Michael Demetrio, Bernard Judge, Paul Meincke, Potter Palmer IV and Marshall Field V.

### Essays about the Cubs

*The Cubs: The Complete Story of Chicago Cubs Baseball* (October, 2007, Houghton Mifflin) includes essays by **Scott Turow** and **Rick Telander**.

### Detective back on the case

Hard-boiled detective Mike Duncaven is back in **Thomas J. Keevers' The Chainsaw Ballet (September, 2007, Five Star). It is Keevers' third Duncaven novel.**

### New novel and new translations

**Robert Hellenga** has published a new novel, his fifth, *The Italian Lover*, (Little Brown). The novel features two point-of-view characters who have appeared in previous novels (Margot Harrington from *The Sixteen Pleasures* and Woody Woodhull from *The Fall of a Sparrow*, and four additional point-of-view characters: a Hollywood producer who is determined to produce a film of Margot's memoir; the director of the film; the director's wife, and the actress who's going to play Margot herself.

Two earlier Hellenga novels have recently been translated: *Blues Lessons* into German and Croatian, and *Philosophy Made Simple* into Polish and Korean. A Spanish translation of *The Sixteen Pleasures* will be published in December. Hellenga was scheduled to discuss and read from *The Italian Lover*, at 7 p.m. Oct. 16 at the Warren County Public Library, 62 Public Square, Monmouth, Ill.

### The future of the Catholic Church

In *As It Was in the Beginning: The Coming Democratization of the Catholic Church* (September, 2007, Crossroad Publishing Co.) **Robert McClory** says there have been long periods where lay people were consulted in church affairs and had strong, leading voices. McClory also says a decentralized church is around the corner and is inevitable.

## Literary License

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Authors

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### Final chapters

Longtime SMA member **Marjorie M. Kriz**, 87, author of *Soaring above Setbacks: The Autobiography of Janet Harmon Bragg, African American Aviator* as told to Marjorie M. Kriz (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996) died Sept. 18.

A remembrance gathering for friends to celebrate her life was held Sept. 30 at the home of Marjorie's daughter, Helen Kriz Marshall in Wilmette.

Marjorie graduated from Northwestern (BA 1942, MA 1943), where she was a theater major in the former School of Speech. After college, she was a theater publicist and then a reporter for the City News Bureau of Chicago from 1944-1954, covering the police and county.



**Marjorie M. Kriz**

Marjorie returned to work for City News in 1966 when she was called in to cover the murder in Kenilworth of Valerie Percy, the daughter of former U.S. Sen. Charles H. Percy of Illinois. She was widowed in 1968 and continued to work full time to support her children, who then were 13 and 10. She remained a reporter for the City News Bureau, covering news at O'Hare Airport, until 1972. She left City News to work for the Federal Aviation Administration as a public affairs officer and retired in 1989. She also was a free-lance writer of local Chicago history and aviation-related subjects.

# Well-planned public relations effort can hook those busy journalists

BY THOMAS CIESIELKA

**D**rew Schadegg, a public relations specialist at Thomas Ciesielka Public Relations, is an avid fisherman. By avid, I don't mean a "drop a bobber in the water once or twice a year" kind of fisherman, I mean he REALLY likes to fish. He has thousands of dollars worth of fishing rods and reels, lures and equipment. Before a trip to the lake, he meticulously prepares his tackle, taking each reel apart and cleaning it, putting on new fishing line and marking out his strategy on a lake map. He even spends time practicing his casts in the backyard! But does all this preparation pay off? Absolutely! He consistently catches tons of fish (and he would be glad to show them to you on his camera phone).

Similarly, to "catch" the media's attention, you must prepare a plan and have a strategy. You need to put time and energy into the key elements that will make your company stand out to a journalist who gets hundreds of pitches a day.

Have you started working on a public relations plan for your company?

Breaking news is great. If there is a major disaster, it gets terrific coverage without much effort. If a musical group sets a record for CD sales that beats Elvis, the news media can't wait to report it. However, a long-term plan is required for authors who are dealing with image management and book announcements, or for a new author who wants to make a grand entrance.

While how to draft a public relations plan is better left to a good book on the topic, here are a few ideas that are important to keep in mind when you are preparing your next public relations campaign:

◆ Think months in advance: Monthly magazines often have a deadline of at least three months prior to publication date. Therefore, if you add at least another month to draft a public relations plan, you will need to begin the process at least four months prior to the date the company



**Thomas Ciesielka**

will open or the product will be available for sale.

◆ PR support materials: Major public relations plans require media-friendly product descriptions, biographies of key personnel, photos of people and products, development of a Web-based press kit, and so on. Collecting, producing, and writing all this information takes time. It's important that

you start creating your support materials shortly after the plan is created.

◆ Unified message: Many companies face the challenge of getting their marketing people in agreement with their salespeople. Often upper management needs to help the sales and marketing

*A long-term plan is required for authors who are dealing with image management and book announcements, or for a new author who wants to make a grand entrance.*

departments see the major objectives for the business to move forward. Now add in the public relations function. What is stated in the public relations information must match product specifications, delivery dates, and other information. Otherwise the public relations person may tell the reporter that a story can run on Oct. 1 to tie in with the product release. However, the public relations person may not know that the release date will be delayed for three months. You can imagine what the negative impact could be for the company.

Any good PR plan is going to take time, planning and strategy. If you keep these three tips in mind, your next PR campaign is sure to be your best.

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## Awards

The Ohioana Library Association on Sept. 21 presented the 2007 Ohioana Award for Juvenile Books to **Andrea Cheng** of Cincinnati for *The Lemon Sisters* and **Sharon Draper** also of Cincinnati for *Copper Sun*, which earlier won an SMA award. The Ohioana awards are given each year for outstanding books published the previous year about Ohio or Ohioans.

Booklist called *The Lemon Sisters* a "charming intergenerational story" and said, "Endearing, this will be a place for conversations to start between young and old."

Booklist said *Copper Sun* is "a searing work of historical fiction."

The online Web site *chicagopoetry.com* has named **Ron Offen** as a recipient of its "Top Dog in Poetry" award. It was given in connection with a review by C.J. Laity of Offen's latest book of poems, *Off-Target*.

Laity, a Chicago poet, is the originator and Webmaster of *chicagopoetry.com*.

## Another SMA member gets a 'genius grant'

Following a tradition of such SMA members as **Aleksandar Hemon** and **James A. McPherson**, **Stuart Dybek** last month won a MacArthur Foundation "genius grant."

Dybek, known for story collections such as *The Coast of Chicago* and *I Sailed With Magellan* (winner of the SMA Adult Fiction award in 2004), has written three short story collections and two books of poetry, and much of his writing is set in Chicago.

"Throughout his work, Dybek establishes an almost palpable sense of place, meticulously depicting each physical detail, from the flickering flow of a portable TV to the camphor reek of a grandmother's sickbed," the MacArthur Foundation said. The Chicago Sun-Times, in an editorial, said *The Coast of Chicago* "speaks to our melting pot identity in illuminating the lives of working-class Bohemians and Slovaks and Poles."

Dybek also last month won the \$30,000 Rea Award, established in 1986, for "originality and influence" on the short story.

"With three distinguished collections of short stories, Stuart Dybek has created his own country," said a statement from Rea judges. "The coast of Chicago is his landscape, one he has inhabited, pondered, remembered and made hauntingly real."

Dybek, 65, the son of Polish immigrants, grew up in Pilsen and Little Village and graduated from St. Rita High School and Loyola University Chicago. He said the grant, \$500,000 over the next five years, will give him time to finish three books.

In 2004, *The Coast of Chicago* was chosen for Chicago's "One Book, One Chicago" reading program. His previous honors include the PEN/Bernard Malamud Prize and four O'Henry awards.



**Stuart Dybek**

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