

Hartford Public Library
500 Main St.
Hartford, CT 06103-3075



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2009

CONTACT: Kat Lyons
Coordinator, Connecticut Center for the Book
(860) 695-6320
klyons@hplct.org

Winners Announced for 2009 Connecticut Book Awards

Bessy Reyna Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Winners of the eighth annual Connecticut Book Awards were announced at a ceremony in the atrium of Hartford Public Library on Sunday, September 20.

An enthusiastic audience paid tribute to the state's authors, illustrators, and book designers in an award ceremony presented by the Connecticut Center for the Book, a program of the Hartford Public Library and an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

The Awards, an annual event for the Connecticut Center for the Book, were made after 35 judges, distinguished in the fields of writing, librarianship, book arts, academe, journalism and publishing, considered nominations for work published in 2008. The winners, current or former state residents or authors whose work had a Connecticut setting, were chosen in seven categories as well as for a Lifetime Achievement award.

The 2009 Connecticut Book Award winners are:

Biography & Memoir

Joseph Hopkins Twichell: The Life and Times of Mark Twain's Closest Friend
Written by Steve Courtney (The University of Georgia Press)

- more -

Children's Author

Waiting for Normal

Written by Leslie Connor (Katherine Tegen Books: HarperCollins Publishers)

Children's Illustrator

Baseball Hour

Illustrated by Bill Thomson (Marshall Cavendish Children)

Design

Scrapbooks: An American History

Designed by Jessica Helfand (Yale University Press)

Fiction

Songs for the Missing

Written by Stewart O'Nan (Viking)

Nonfiction

Thinking Beyond the Unthinkable: Harnessing Doom from the Cold War to the Age of Terror

Written by Jonathan Stevenson (Viking)

Poetry

Present Vanishing

Written by Dick Allen (Sarabande Books)

Guests were welcomed by interim co-directors of Hartford Public Library, Jenny Benedict and Matt Poland, and by Fran Keilty, Connecticut Center for the Book Advisory Council chairperson. Leslie Connor, winner of the 2005 Connecticut Book Award for Children's Author, was the keynote speaker. Later in the program, she received the 2009 Children's Author award; in accepting her prize—a pewter lamp—she told Marilyn Nelson and Nancy Elizabeth Wallace, the finalists in that category, that while she was taking the lamp, she would be sharing the light with them.

The 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Bessy Reyna in recognition of her contributions in the fields of journalism, poetry, and arts education, and for her mentoring of aspiring poets and memoirists.

The Connecticut Book Awards are presented with support from the Connecticut

Commission on Culture and Tourism. The 2006 - 2009 Connecticut Book Awards ceremonies can be viewed at www.hplct.org/media/bookawards.shtml.

The mission of the Connecticut Center for the Book is to celebrate books, writers, and readers who engender and sustain the life of the imagination and to highlight authors, illustrators, printers, and the literary heritage of the State of Connecticut. The Connecticut Center for the Book is an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. For more information about this or other Connecticut Center for the Book programs call (860) 695-6320 or email klyons@hplct.org.



Hartford Public Library celebrated its eighth annual Connecticut Book Awards, September 20, in the atrium of the Library. (From left: Hartford Public Library Interim Co-Director, Jenny Benedict; Children's Illustrator winner, Bill Thomson; Keynote speaker and Children's Author winner, Leslie Connor; Coordinator, Connecticut Center for the Book, Kat Lyons; Design winner, Jessica Helfand; Lifetime Achievement in Service to the Literary Community Award winner, Bessy Reyna; Nonfiction winner, Jonathan Stevenson; Poetry winner, Dick Allen; Fiction winner, Stewart O'Nan and Hartford Public Library Interim Co-Director, Matthew Poland. Missing: Steve Courtney, Biography winner.)