

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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THIRD ANNUAL WILLIAM STAFFORD BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT
WELCHES, OREGON - SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2-4 pm – FREE AND OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC

WY'EAST BOOKSHOPPE & ART GALLERY, 67195 East US Highway 26, in the
Arrah Wanna Rendezvous Center, hosts the third annual William Stafford
Commemorative Reading and Birthday Celebration in which the public is invited to
participate.

The Welches reading is one of 50 readings in the United States during January, the birth
month of the former Oregon poet laureate. Each “party” is dedicated to raising awareness
of poetry and literature in the spirit of Stafford’s legacy, life, and works.

The afternoon’s program features poets Josh Baker, Lindy Delf, Paula Friedman, Nan
Hunt, Paul Keller, Rita Ott Ramstad, Elizabeth Simson, Tony Wolk, and Friends of
William Stafford Board member Sharon Wood Wortman.

Members of the audience are especially invited to read one of their favorite Stafford
poems. The afternoon also includes a taped recording of William Stafford reciting his
poetry, as well as refreshments.

William Stafford was born in Kansas January 17, 1914. In 1948 he moved to Oregon to
teach at Lewis and Clark College. His first major collection of poems, *Traveling Through
the Dark*, was published when Stafford was 48, and it won the National Book Award in
1963. From 1970 to 1971, William Stafford was Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to
the Library of Congress. Stafford published numerous volumes of poetry and prose
during his lifetime and won numerous additional awards.

Readers:

Joshua Baker is an English teacher, volunteer Mount Hood firefighter, and former editor
and publisher of the poetry journal *Freudian Shrimp*.

Lindy Delf has taught in elementary, Title One and English as a Second language
classrooms for 30 years. She uses William Stafford as a model in her teaching.

Paula Friedman received a 2006 award from the Columbia River Peace Fellowship and a
2005 award from the Oregon State Poetry Association. Her poetry chapbook came out

this summer and she just completed a new novel on the Sixties Movement. She is on the Hood River County transit board and agitates for public buses to Portland.

Nan Hunt is a widely published poet, essayist, fiction writer, and creative writing teacher. She is a Hambidge Art Center Fellow and travels widely, but writes several months during the year at her cabin in Zig Zag.

Paul Keller, managing editor of *Fire Management Today*, has lived on Mount Hood thirty years. His poems and essays have appeared in many journals. *Beneath Wy'east*, a chapbook that celebrates and explores his intimate relationship with Mount Hood, is forthcoming.

Rita Ott-Ramstad, of Brightwood, won the William Stafford/Hazel Hall Award (2003 Oregon Book Awards) for her first book of poetry, *The Play of Dark and Light*. Her poems have also been published in TriMet's Poetry in Motion series.

Elizabeth Simson, author of *Sea Change* (Finishing Line Press, 2005), works from her home in Welches. She serves on the board for Gertrude Press (based in Portland), and edits the Oregon State Poetry Association's quarterly newsletter.

Tony Wolk, author of *Abraham Lincoln, A Novel Life* (Ooligan Press, 2004), has taught English at Portland State University since 1965.

Sharon Wood Wortman is author of *The Portland Bridge Book* (3rd ed., Urban Adventure Press, 2006), with Ed Wortman, a structural engineer. Both use their Forest Service cabin off Road 20 in Rhododendron as a retreat for writing and reading.