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2008 Hopkins Poetry Award Winners Announced

University Park, PA—Penn State's University Libraries and the Pennsylvania Center for the Book are pleased to announce the winner of the 2008 Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award. This year's winner is *Birmingham, 1963* by Carole Boston Weatherford (Wordsong, an imprint of Boyds Mills Press). The award and a \$1000 prize will be presented on May 2, 2008 at the Pennsylvania School Librarians' Association Conference in Hershey, PA.

One award judge described the winner as "a small readable book with sparse, elegant verse that will captivate and enlighten young readers to a heartbreaking event in our nation's history. Told from the viewpoint of a ten year-old narrator, *Birmingham, 1963* is an intimate look at the events that preceded the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church." Another judge commented, "This is a story quietly told, deeply felt, and beautifully presented. The poems carry intense emotion in the voice of a narrator who speaks as someone who lived through the events and has now become an adult—this creates a place of safety for children to come to understand what happened without reliving the terror."

Established in 1993, the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award is presented annually to an American poet or anthologist for the most outstanding new book of poetry for children published in the previous calendar year. Additionally, judges gave honor awards to John Grandits for *Blue Lipstick* (Clarion Books, a Houghton Mifflin Company imprint), and Joyce Sidman for *This is Just to Say* (Houghton Mifflin Company).

This prestigious award is named for Lee Bennett Hopkins, the internationally renowned educator, poet, anthologist, and passionate advocate of poetry for young people. Selected by a panel of teachers, librarians, and scholars, the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award was the first award of its kind in the United States. The Pennsylvania Center for the Book, the University Libraries, and Mr. Hopkins share joint administration of the annual award. The Pennsylvania School Librarians' Association was added as a co-sponsor in 2006.

The judges for this year's Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award are Chair-Carole D. Fiore, President, Training and Library Consulting, Tallahassee, FL; Randall Enos, Youth Services Consultant, Ramapo Catskill Library System, Middletown, NY; Helen Frost, Poet and one of last year's honor award winners (*The Braid*, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux), Fort Wayne, IN; Rebecca H. Frost, Retired Elementary School Library Media Specialist, Bloomsburg, PA; and Patricia M. Wong, County Librarian/Chief Archivist, Yolo County Library, Woodland, CA.

For more information about the Hopkins Award, contact Steven Herb at 814.863.2141 or visit the web site—www.pabook.libraries.psu.edu/activities/hopkins/index.html.