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**Appalachian State University professor wins North Carolina Humanities Council's  
Linda Flowers Literary Prize**

Susan Weinberg Vogel, Associate Professor of English and Creative Writing at [Appalachian State University](#), has been awarded the 2007 [Linda Flowers Literary Prize](#) for her creative nonfiction essay "The Pick-Up Line." Vogel's entry was among more than fifty received from across the southeast and as far away as California for the annual North Carolina Humanities Council's writing competition.

Vogel, who hails from northern Virginia, earned the M.F.A. in fiction at [Cornell University](#) in 1985. After working four years for Friends of the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., she was honored with a Stegner Fellowship in Creative Writing at [Stanford](#), a program she credits with changing her life. Three years of subsequent teaching as a Jones Lecturer at Stanford convinced her that she wanted to be both a teacher and a writer and to do so in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Vogel found what she wanted at Appalachian State University in 1994 where she also serves as Co-Director of the Undergraduate Creative Writing Program and the [Hughlene Bostian Frank Visiting Writers Series](#).

Although Vogel began as a fiction writer, in the last few years she has turned to creative nonfiction and memoir which offer her the freedom to observe and comment on what she sees rather than sacrificing reflection to the plotline of a story. She explores the creative nonfiction form in both short and long pieces to discover complexities that always lie beneath a surface.

The strength of this technique resonates throughout "The Pick-Up Line," which recounts Vogel's experience as a foster parent savoring the relationship she has been able to maintain with her foster son and his brother, even after they have resumed life with their biological mother. Vogel comments, "I was so fortunate to wind up doing this in conjunction with a mother who was very generous in allowing us to continue sharing—a really remarkable thing that most people would have trouble with." Vogel's articulate meditation on waiting for these boys creates from what would usually be a mundane task that precise, remarkable quality that lies at the heart of her extended family.

"The Pick-Up Line" will be featured in the inaugural issue of *North Carolina Conversations*, a Humanities Council publication coming out in winter 2008. In addition, Vogel receives a \$500 cash prize and a writer's residency at the [Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities](#) in Southern Pines, N.C.

Vogel has published about two dozen stories and memoirs in *Gettysburg Review*, *Third Coast*, *Other Voices*, *Gargoyle*, Ohio State's *The Journal*, and *Voices from Home: The North Carolina Prose Anthology*. She has received a Blumenthal Writers and Readers Award, and one of her novel manuscripts was selected as a finalist in the [Novello Festival](#) Novel Competition in Charlotte. In July 2002 her revision and expansion of the sixth edition of Janet Burroway's widely used textbook *Writing Fiction* was published by Longman Publishing. She has also edited a local memoir by newspaper columnist Melanie Edmisten entitled *Send Forth Your Light: The Story of Greg Edmisten and the Foscoe Community* (Parkway Publishers). Vogel is currently working on creative nonfiction pieces and developing an advanced fiction handbook and contemporary story anthology on the subject of Magic Realism.

Vogel and her husband are licensed foster parents for the Watauga County Department of Social Services and are members of the High Country Foster and Adoptive Parents Association. She praises highly the foster care families and social workers in the Watauga County Department of Social Services.

The Linda Flowers Literary Prize is named in honor of the late Humanities Council member Linda Flowers (1944-2000). She taught English at North Carolina Wesleyan College in Rocky Mount, and wrote the admired book *Thrown Away: Failures of Progress in Eastern North Carolina*, which chronicled the impact on farm families of public work, like factory and textile mill jobs in eastern North Carolina. Through this annual writing competition, the Humanities Council celebrates Flowers' many contributions to the humanities. The annual Flowers Prize was established in 2001 for the best original written work that captures the richness of North Carolina, its people, and cultures.

The Humanities Council is a nonprofit foundation and state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities whose mission is to support through grants and public programs vital conversations that nurture the cultures and heritage of North Carolina.

Information about the Council's programs and the Linda Flowers Literary Prize can be found at [www.nchumanities.org](http://www.nchumanities.org).

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