

CALDWELL AWARD

North Carolina Humanities Council Celebrates Marsha White Warren

as the 2009 Caldwell Laureate

ON FRIDAY, October 16, at 7 p.m. at the William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education in Chapel Hill, Marsha White Warren accepted the North Carolina Humanities Council's highest honor, the **John Tyler Caldwell Award for the Humanities**. Warren received the award for her life of advocacy for the public humanities across North Carolina.

At the Caldwell celebration, North Carolina Humanities Council member Reginald F. Hildebrand, associate professor of African American Studies & History at UNC Chapel Hill, delivered the annual Caldwell Lecture in the Humanities, "W.E.B. Du Bois, the Humanities, and the Pursuit of Freedom."

Other participants in the evening's program, which featured song and dramatic readings, included 1992 Caldwell Laureate Doris W. Betts, a fiction writer and former chair of the creative writing program at UNC Chapel Hill; Dreamweaver, curator of the Plum Tree Gallery in Goldsboro and founder of the nonprofit Grandpa's Children; Jaki Shelton Green, 2009 Piedmont Poet Laureate and recipient of the North Carolina Award for Literature; NC Representative David Price of the fourth congressional district; Shelby Stephenson, poet, musician, and professor of English at UNC Pembroke; and 2007 Caldwell Laureate Emily Herring Wilson, an author and North Carolina Award for Literature recipient. Wilson presented writer Katey Schultz with the Humanities Council's 2009 Linda Flowers Literary Award. Townsend Ludington, Humanities Council

chair and Boshamer Distinguished Professor Emeritus of American Studies and English at UNC Chapel Hill, presided over the program, which culminated in a stirring first person interpretation of Harriet "Moses" Tubman by renowned storyteller Joyce Gear.

A charter member of the North Carolina Writers' Network in 1985, Warren was the executive director from 1987 to 1996. She served as executive director of The Paul Green Foundation from 1991 to 2005 and is currently its literary executor. Warren sits on the boards of the North Carolina Freedom Monument and the Weymouth Center for the Arts & Humanities. With Sam Ragan, Warren developed the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame and currently serves on its administrative team.

In 1999, Warren received a Doctor of Humane Letters from St. Andrews

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~ Laurence Avery

CALDWELL LAUREATES

Presbyterian College. With Emily Herring Wilson, Warren co-organized the North Carolina Women Writers' Conference in 1992. Warren's numerous awards include the Sam Ragan Award for Contributions to the Fine Arts in North Carolina and the R. Hunt Parker Memorial Award for Lifetime Contributions to Literature from the North Carolina Literary & Historical Association.

The Raleigh *News and Observer* named Warren "Tar Heel of the Week" in 1991. Under her leadership, the North Carolina Writers' Network received the 1992 Governor's Business Award in the Arts and Humanities from the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources and the 1995 Indies Arts Award from the *Independent Weekly*.

The North Carolina Poetry Society honored Warren for her many contributions to the literary community. In 2006, the Society dedicated its annual anthology, *Pinesong*, to Warren, saying that "no one else we know of has achieved so much for so many with such grace and genuine love of people."

Warren was associate editor of *North Carolina's 400 Years: Signs Along the Way*; consulting editor of *Weymouth: An Anthology of Poetry*; and editor of the *Collected Poems of Sam Ragan: Poet Laureate of North Carolina*. She was assistant editor of *Carolina Spring* and directed the project *Word & Witness: 100 Years of North Carolina Poetry*.

Laurence Avery, longtime president and current trustee of The Paul Green Foundation, states, "Just like John Caldwell, Marsha with boundless energy gets things done in the world in the service of humanistic ideals. It seems like the Caldwell Award was created just for her. It will be a happy day in North Carolina when she receives it."

THE JOHN TYLER CALDWELL AWARD FOR THE HUMANITIES, the Council's highest honor, has been presented annually since its inauguration in 1990. Named for its first recipient, the late John Tyler Caldwell, former chancellor of North Carolina State University from 1959–1975 and a founding member of the Council, the award pays tribute to individuals whose life and work illuminate one or more of the multiple dimensions of human life where the humanities come into play: civic, personal, intellectual, and moral.

1990 - John Tyler Caldwell†	2000 - Thomas J. Lassiter, Jr.†
1991 - John Hope Franklin†	2001 - Houston Gwynne (H.G.) Jones
1992 - Doris Waugh Betts	2002 - Reynolds Price
1993 - Samuel Talmadge Ragan†	2003 - Wilma Dykeman† & Hugh Morton†
1994 - Anne Firor Scott	2004 - Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans
1995 - John Marsden Ehle	2005 - Louis D. Rubin, Jr.
1996 - William W. Finlator†	2006 - Benjamin Eagles Fountain, Jr.
1997 - Charles Bishop Kuralt†	2007 - Emily Herring Wilson
1998 - Dorothy Spruill Redford	2008 - Walt Wolfram
1999 - William C. Friday	2009 - Marsha White Warren

†deceased



David and Marsha Warren at the Caldwell Award reception. Photo by Mario Gallucci.