

1 Jan. 2006--And now it is ought six, an oddly bemusable number for a year. It was a phrase of reliability in my growing up, my dad's 30.06 hunting rifle our provider of venison and elk, enforcer against coyotes. May this year be similarly true in aim, without the lethality.

The storm cycle goes on, and is forecast to. Right now at settling dark, 4:25, strong gusts and occasional rain. We've marked the day in our habitual ways. I finished reading the Heart Earth page proofs, while C went to Fred Meyer and bought us a backup calculator (in case the beloved old Texas Instrument one ever gives up) and nice little travel alarm (after an earlier try with an atomic clock that refused our attempts at setting it), and then we watched the Seahawks-Packers game. (A meaningless one, thank goodness, as the Seahawks lost and it was fairly sloppy football all around.) Ah, though, tonight it is salmon salad supper, all the greens from our winter garden.

And as to Heart Earth, this re-read spoke to me as a very skilled and top-of-the-powers book, deeper than I had remembered--the portraits of us and our predicaments seem to me, more than ever, right on.

5 Jan.--At last, a day that feels like full-slam progress on 11th Man. C read over the first 30-some pages and made a few suggestions, I meanwhile went over it myself and came up with some deeper touches I saw to make, and after three or four more trips through the computer the rest of the day, ch. 1 is officially tinkered with enough. It's only 6800 words--about a trillion to go--but we both think it lines out a lot of the plot, for the story ahead. Now--tomorrow--to begin making 400 words a day, building pages.

Daylong rain, in this very wet siege, so C is likely to end up doing salmon in the oven tonight. I coal up the barbecue if the weather is at all tolerable, but this ain't, yet.

Heart Earth went off to NY in a FedEx packet y'day. A funny and nicely propitious round of exchange that benefited ~~it~~ just before that. Becky called, saying she had an e-mail from Russ Lawrence at Chapter One bookstore in Hamilton saying he'd liked the advance reading copy of another book-in-the-making

5 Jan. cont.--Whistling Season but caught an anachronism: I had the planet Pluto remarked on in 1910 although it was not discovered until 1930. I hooted, then apologized to Becky for the slipup. That's okay, she said perfectly cheerfully, "it proves you're human." Took me only a minute to get Pluto out of there without upsetting the pagination, and Becky then had a deft e-exchange with Ch. One which I'm enshrining in the back of this diary.

Y'day afternoon was actually rainless, and C and I got a great amount of yardwork done--pole-cut the upright suckers off the zealous tree in the middle of the front yard, took three big (wrist-thick) sprawling sets of branches off the old crabapple on the north patio, and C cut back the hydrangea while I assassinated the aggressive blackberry vines arching into the top of the lilac at the downslope brink. We agreed it felt terrific to get out and at that work for a change.

6 Jan.--Turned the corner into ch. 2 of 11th Man today. Not a big day of progress, but Ben's hunt for Toussaint is starting to interest me.

The phone has been ringing with people getting underway in the new year. Terry Beck of Sno-Isle Library called, firming up the \$2,000 speaking gig in Oak Harbor in late April.

Rain really laid in y'day, an all-day one of nearly  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ". It relented the first part of today, and I got in an hour of cutting dead canes out of the westmost raspberry row, although a shower came along and kept me from getting the row fully trimmed and tied.

Most vital of today's happenings, C got the report from Dr. Eggert that she's "ahead of the curve," and he's cutting her prednisone some more.

10 Jan.--Damn, but these are long hard days, what with the 11th Man ms, finances, general detritus. Not helped by the weather--23rd consecutive day of some kind of rain, longest wet spell since we've lived in Seattle. But what the hell, we're having salmon for supper.

12 Jan.--A signal day y'day, with \$50,147.85 coming to us (by way of wire deposit to Piper) from Liz D. Probably it is the only time I made \$50,000--on the 11th Man advance--by changing my mind. And there was a nice little nugget of good news in the total sum, first royalties ever from Ride With Me, Mariah Montana--earned out at last! Rain settled in again this afternoon, the wet streak of consecutive days still going. TV weathermen are atwitter.

I took y'day to get the damned office paper piles under control, and to wrestle finances a little. Otherwise, I have whacked away at 11th Man this week--good day on Monday, so-so the other two. Am still not happy with my pp. output. And this is showing every sign of being a deliriously busy year, the writing schedule aside. Y'day Liz faxed along a proposal that would take me to an event at the Nat'l Homestead Monument in Nebraska in early May.

17 Jan.--A dry day with some sun to it this afternoon, now that the rain streak broke on the 15th. C and I romped out to do yard work: she trimmed down the sprawly fuschia, I weeded the onion patch and transplanted to fill out the rows, then thinned and tied up the raspberry canes at the retaining wall.

Bookwise, I have turned the corner ~~into~~ to Ben at East Base; I'd still like the story to snap along faster, but this one maybe just won't.

The Atwoods came over from Poulsbo ~~on~~ for supper on Friday night, the 13th. I noticed Peter's face was thinner and something more. While he watched me pour drinks, I casually asked: "So how are you?" The answer was, "I have prostate cancer, my friend." It flashed on me why I had asked that: something deep in the subconscious had registered, this man looks like he has cancer. Actually Peter's is diagnosed as the thoroughly treatable kind, with radium pellets inserted, and I suppose he was showing the strain of having that ahead of him. One more episode, though, of what is going to be many as age and ailment catches up with our friends.

In this house, we're faring pretty well except for spotty sleep. We go to Tucson at the end of this week and both are ready for it.

20 Jan.--The brink of vacation. Our flight to Tucson is tomorrow, a week there where we can hope for some sun, the sighting of cardinals, a day in the good company of the Bengstons, a movie or two, wondrous food, and the generally pleasurable routines there we have worked out through the years.

9629 words: that's where The Eleventh Man stands, at least the polished portion. There's probably another 7500 words roughed, and I'm not far from turning the corner to where fewer flashbacks are needed and chronology can carry the story more easily. I'm hoping to get 3 ch.-- to the double news of deaths of Friessen and Prokosch-- before the Whistling Season booktour engulfs me.

I do dread how busy and scattered my life is going to be when the Whistling Season tour gets underway; I figure this year is going to be hectic until Labor Day.

On the brighter side, it is notable how much better I feel about this stint of book creation since deciding to do the Eleventh Man instead of a nonfiction book. I've had to make a lot of veers and try out too many leads and scenes, to get this one underway, but it seems to be going now. C remarked when I really began to plunge into it, working long writing days, how good it is to have that rhythm back in the house. So, I shall slam away at it, every time life will let me.

21 Jan.--A gray day, slight drizzle falling; good sendoff to Tucson for us.

29 Jan.--We went to Tucson for sun, and got a solid week of it. It began raining about 10:30 this morning, in the final few minutes of my grilling of salmon on the barbecue. So, our timing leaves nothing to be desired, at the moment.

The same can't be said for Alaska Airlines: late going, late coming. The plane slog is the one glitch in a trip that C and I by now know how to do wonderfully well, and on this morning's walk we talked over the possibility of traveling in and out of Phoenix to see if we can get away from wasted hours in airline gate areas or on the goddamn tarmac, as was the case in y'day's delayed departure--45 min. for Alaska maintenance to change a landing-light bulb.

29 Jan. cont.--Thank goodness we were creative with the start of the day y'day, heading out to Catalina State Park at 6:45 and getting in an hour on the Sutherland Trail before everything sludged into airport wait time. It helped a lot too that Ralph and Kathleen Waldt came in from their San Pedro River site, north of Benson, to have lunch with us at the airport. (El Charro, reliably mediocre.) We were surprised to learn his AZ Conservancy job's funds run out at the end of this fiscal year; he's trying to talk them into a nature education slot such as he had in Montana. A year has made quite a difference in their situation: last year Ralph said how glad he was to be out of the limelight of nature-teaching, and this year he badly wants to get back to it. It looks worrisome to me, a hefty guy just short of 50, with no settled job path. He still says he'd like to write some more--and I think he's quite a fine writer--but I'm not sure he has the grind-it-out mentality for it, particularly if he's always trying to piece together a livelihood. It was heartening

to hear that Crown of the Continent has sold 5,000 copies. In the absence of an Alaska Airlines travel package as in years past--one more mark of sordid decline as far as we're concerned--C put together a very nifty trip, which got us to Saguaro East and Catalina State Park twice each, the Desert Museum again, the Botanic Gardens butterfly show again, meals at the good standards such as Terra Cotta and El Minuto and most of all Poca Cosa, as well as a terrific new hole-in-the-wall find on 4th just south of the U. of Arizona, Maya Quetzl. The other eating surprise was in Wilcox, amid the interchange gas stations and franchises, a spotless family-run place called Salsa Fiesta. Pete Bengston had come across it in his peak-climbing treks, and it was as good as any of the Tucson food. The day with Pete and Betty was into knockout country, the Chiricahua Mountains. The wind was blowing like a son of a bitch at the topmost viewpoint of the National Monument area, but the geology and outlooks still astounded us.

And as is our Tucson habit, we caught up on movies a bit (actually that seriously understates it; I think it's the only place we're been to movies in the past year) by seeing Brokeback Mountain (very fine, although the sheep stuff was pathetically unreal) and Capote (surprisingly good; it didn't pull punches on creepy Truman).

30 Jan.--The rain was a big one, 2+ inches from 10:30 a.m. y'day until after lunch today. Then it began clearing, and C and I managed a couple of hours of yard work--she dug out old lavenders and frisked them of weeds, I got halfway along in digging out the upper row of raspberries in the retaining wall area, the better to convert that to a potato patch.

C had a first-rate report from Dr. Eggers this morn, her prednisone intake to be ramped down some more and, if this morn's good blood pressure reading becomes the norm, she can cut back on the beta blocker that slows her up so.

While C was at Group Health, I collected our week's mail--probably a good ten pounds' worth--and sorted it. Nothing of any harm, mostly year-end financial stuff. Did some other mild house chores of that sort to ease back into being home. Will see if I can get back into the 11th Man ms tomorrow.

6 Feb.--A weekend that was: the big wind on Saturday, then the Seahawks blew the Super Bowl on Sunday. The wind-storm was much the strongest of the winter, indeed of the past  $\frac{1}{2}$  doz. years, and while we watched all of the Kitsap Peninsula and Bainbridge go dark while we were having breakfast, we never did lose electricity. As for the Seahawks, alas; at C's suggestion during this period of medication slowdown for her, we'd been watching football for the last half of the season and found them an attractive team, smart, mature. They ended up possibly too fine-tuned, however, not scoring touchdowns on their first couple of drives while Pittsburgh wasn't yet in gear, and eventually the Steelers won pretty much on individual athleticism.

Ah, and we've both had colds, C catching my goddamn Tucson one after we got home. Both getting over it now, but with the one I caught just before Xmas there's been 6 weeks of vicious nose-blowing.

Went back to work on 11th Man this morn, a tough stint but made some gains.

12 Feb.--A bit of catch-up diary, on a splendid day we spent bird-watching with Tony Angell last Friday, the 10th. Before C and I went to Tucson, I was on the phone with Tony and told him we'd been up to the Skagit flats with the Damborgs but saw no snowy owls, and he instantly volunteered to go up with us sometime and take us to where he'd seen the wonderful birds. I called him at the start of last week, choosing Friday, and damned if the weather didn't turn perfect. Tony took us first of all to the Nature Conservancy holding at Port Susan, and there was the biggest flock of snow geese we'd ever seen, a mile or so of geese in the first field along the bayline. We walked out on the dike a few hundred yards--the circle walk around the entire dike is maybe a mile and a half--where he'd seen owls working on voles in the past, but the only sighting was distant, almost to the Camano bridge. We headed on to the Skagit--eagles were perched in treetops just about anywhere we looked all day, and we saw quite a few harriers and a few redtail hawks--through remarkable clarity of scene, details popping out in the fresh sunlight and Mt. Baker a white massif over it all. On into LaConner for lunch at the Brew Pub, then we toodled back to the viewing area near the Cowtown dairy, and there Tony hit paydirt. We walked only out to the brow of the slough just beyond the parking lot--there was a front-loader roaring on the dike farther out--to look around, and Tony spotted a white dot to the west, perched on something on the dike there. His ~~technique~~ spotting technique we can't really emulate: once he sees a dot of promising color in the distance, if in its a likely habitat he uses heavy stabilizer binocs to zero in on it, and then sets up his spotting scope if the sighting is worth it--our nimble little pocket binocs can verify color and likelihood but can't catch detail at the distance he's working at. But after spotting this snowy, he hustled back to his car for the spotting scope and while he was setting it up, the owl began flying in our direction. Tony got his big binoculars on it, C and I followed it with ours, and we all got the unforgettable splendid sight of those other-worldly long wings silently carrying the flat-masked

12 Feb. cont.--hunting creature. The <sup>owl</sup> ~~owl~~ landed on the roof of an old trailer house below the dike, maybe 150 yards from us, and through the spotting scope we could see it open its beak and pant from the exertion and warmth of the flight; Tony said they are incredibly insulated with thickness of feathers. We watched the snowy keep turning its head, pace the roof, look around, for a nice long while, then we headed home in triumph. Only to end up, at Tony's invitation, back at their place for flank-steak supper. A day as good as they come.

Elsewise on the outdoor front, C and I have managed several afternoons of yardwork since the weather blew itself dry last weekend--assassinated 3 or 4 of the most doddering rose bushes and moved in the trio of blueberry bushes from the south side of the house, making room there for my next try at tomatoes, for instance. First forsythia began showing yellow a day or so ago, and the downslope white plums are about to pop into full blossom. This run of fetching weather has carried into the nights, when there's been a maximum moon, silver-buttoning the sky when we come awake anytime from 3 on and then turning copper as it sets north of Kingston. The play of light we are given here is magnificent; y'day morning a van ship was going out just before dawn, the white letters of its ~~name~~ line standing out incredibly on its side while the angled plane from amidship to the bow was dramatically dark-shadowed.

20 Feb.--The white nights are over. Much of the past week we've had frosty nights, although the threatened cold snap that was going to be the worst in 20 years didn't quite materialize. The veg garden suffered some--Brunia primarily--but the coldframe lettuce with troublelights warming it seems to have treated this like a Caribbean vacation.

A bit of a landmark week, last one, on 11th Man. I at last mastered the first pair of chapters (I think) and with snatches of polishing here and there, including some over the weekend, brought the pp. up a lot. Today, Prez's Day as the rest of the country sees it, I've started on ch. 3's opening poker game etc. and some decent ideas and bits of dialogue have shown up.

Social niceties too last week. The 16th, the Damborgs

20 Feb. cont.--fed us supper and then we went to the Rep for August Wilson's last play, Radio Golf. Pretty good, also pretty talky. Two meaty character-actor parts, the old reprobate and the 'hood handyman, done very well; oddly, the leading part, the would-be mayor, was not as compelling and likely not written as well. Then Sat. the 18th, we picked up the Laskins here in our own 'hood and went to dinner at David Williams' and Marjorie's. The three writers and their sources of support, in numerous ways. Williams is working on a book about the geology of building stones; Laskin, the rascal, tiptoed through ~~xxx~~ another time of not telling us what he's working on. Anyway, much good conversation, literary enough to make Bloomsbury blush.

24 Feb.--Well, not the best day for the home team. In the annual look-over of my blood test results by Dr. Ginsberg, one reading has changed a lot: lymphocytes. An elevated reading can be an indicator ~~xxxxx~~ for either multiple myeloma or lymphoma--or could be caused by something like the colds I've had and the body's antibodies trying to fight back at them. He's having me repeat the blood tests in 4 weeks, consult him by phone in 6. More, sigh, to come.

27 Feb.--Back to basics, until the aforesaid tests change things or don't. Spent some time outdoors over the weekend usefully planting 5 heathers in the tomato patch I'm abandoning. And Saturday night the Mayfields came for dinner, a good time of catching up with friends we don't see enough of. I asked Betty if Vulcan had recovered from the Seahawks' loss in the Super Bowl, and said "We were robbed!" (C & I agree with that, actually) and then told of Paul Allen working off nerves through the playoffs. Before one of the games, he and his cousin Tom Grubb sneaked off from Santa Fe in some kind of vehicle--the security guys hate this kind of thing--and drove all the way to Sedona. Then in the days before the Super Bowl, Betty would go to his Mercer I. place and there would be guitar music blasting in every room.

27 Feb. cont.--The other entertainment around here lately was the Winter Olympics in Turin. As we did 4 years ago, we watched the CBC version--less familiar commercials, if nothing else--and found some stuff to enjoy, such as the way the Swedes play hockey.

6 March--A Monday without manuscript, devoted instead to speechwriting for my PNBA gig about ten days from now. And tomorrow it's the Nat'l Homestead Monument talk to be written. I feel I have to get these done and in the bank, well ahead of anything untoward and upsetting that may come of my next blood tests. I actually am feeling fine, and while I will be apprehensive when the time comes, am going along in a pretty decent mood just now.

We had a bit of a close call of another sort on Saturday, when we were in the Skagit country with the Damborgs looking at birds. Coming through Stanwood, Mark was starting up out of a stop-sign street and mistook the oncoming traffic's sign for a 4-way stop; he pulled out in front of a pickup and had to floor the Volvo to veer it out of the way, Lou's door meanwhile flying open, from centrifugal force, in the back seat. We all came through okay, but it was close enough.

Beyond that, we had a fine day together, spotting three short-eared owls at Port Susan and then being treated to a great swirling cloud of snow geese near the Hayton lookout. Then we furnished supper, from the Copper River sockeye we'd grilled up the night before; damn tasty. Also out of that evening came a surprise--it's something of an honor, given all the people the Damborgs know, although if I ever have to do it it'll be something else--when they asked me to be their executor. The four of us are in an interesting situation together, familyless.

And y'day C and I made a first move toward getting the bamboo plague out of our yard, when Susan Gainer came and gave us an estimate for removal. It's a thousand bucks, but given all the digging required it still sounded like a decent enough bargain to me.

14 ~~day~~ <sup>March</sup>--Good grief, life seems chockablock. I'm about to head for Gp Health for a late-afternoon appointment to see if anything non-drastring can be done about this damn itchy skin. Otherwise, most of last week went to speech-handling--I have fashioned the PNBA talk and the Nebraska event into finished script, by damn--and the like. ~~Simon~~ Oh, and in there was dealing with change of server settings on the website, three layers of confusion to work through there on Friday and a bit on into the weekend. Fortunately I did have a reasonable morning of work on 11th Man this morn, as I'd told C on the n'hood walk ~~just~~ I was starting to feel beleaguered with all this stuff, and antsy about the medical rounds possibly ahead as well. Anyway, now I go to Gp H and see what the first of those shapes up as.

15 ~~day~~ <sup>March</sup>--A day when I may or may not get any ms writing done, but it seems essential to pause and catch up with some things, ahead of the next couple of days' onset of The Whistling Season--the PNBA spring show.

On the medical front, I had a reassuring consultation about my itchy red spots with Dr. Shors, a lanky young dermatologist who turned out to be from Cut Bank. I can now be more aggressive with the steroid salve in good conscience, and after the booktour is out of the way I can resort to an ultraviolet treatment if I want to.

C has just written a Santa Fe encouragement letter to Linda Miller, whose health ordeal makes any of my frets look pale indeed. Among other things she's on prednisone for life because of the multiple sclerosis.

Friday night we had another chapter in gallantry from the Walkinshaws, who came for dinner. They are pressing on with an active life, with a trip to Copper Canyon, the pottery mecca in Mexico, although Walt is wobbly enough that he uses a cane, and he is in fact 89 years old.

Sunday morn, we walked Green Lake with David Williams and Marjorie, a good ritual. The friendship with the Davids, Williams and Laskin--which fortunately extends back and forth with them as well as through us--is becoming quite a bonus to me in the writing life, as the

15 ~~Mar~~<sup>March</sup> cont.--six miles of water across Puget Sound is an incredibly wide moat between our place and the writing whizzes I would love to see more regularly, Linda Bierds, Guterson, Eric Nalder. An interesting turn with Laskin lately, who took a look at Heart Earth after the night the three couples of us were at David and Marj's, and pronounces himself blown away. He's pressing it on Kate ("Are you sure that's such a good idea?" I muttered) so they can talk about it. And he's coming to the Nebraska event.

17 March--PNBA DAY, and C and I feel it went very well even though I was not absolutely on the mark in my b'fast presentation--my reading script a little too busy with inserts and markings, maybe, leading to a few word fumbles. It seemed to go over like a house afire, though, a round of applause when I made the point my millionth book will be sold sometime this book season and another at my catch-line about turning the Pentagon budget over to education. I went down to y'day morning's doings, too, taking the 100 signed ARCs as they're now known (advance reading copies, which used to be galleys) and spending some time visiting with booksellers and nosing into a couple of sessions, then attending the luncheon where Pete Fromm spoke. (Pete did a nice if anecdotal job; he was pretty badly stove up with a back ailment and spoke sitting down.) I was in comradely company today, the other authors Bill Gaston from Victoria, B.C., with what sounded like a rumbustious Canadian novel, and Terri Jentz with "Strange Piece of Paradise," about tracking down the likely suspect who tried to murder her with an ax many years ago. Bill was unscripted, and C and I wondered for a while if he was going to talk all morning, but he buzzed to an ending, and Terri, like me, was a bit overscripted, visibly doing some editing as she went; so, congeniality rather than stunning performance out of any of us, and evidently good enough. I came home to a phone message from Michelle in Harcourt publicity, and when I got back to her, she had two pieces of probable good news. Publishers Weekly says it's giving The Whistling Season a "big" review--a signature, they call it, evidently farming it out to someone with a

17 March--recognizable byline. Heaven forfend that they would go to all that trouble to trash a book, but we'll see. And Michelle was not supposed to tell me about the other but cutely hinted around that she's pretty sure it's going to happen--a review in Oprah magazine, lodestar of Miz Winfrey.

There also seemed to be plentiful encouraging signs for the book at the PNBA:

--the reps, George Carroll up here and John Huber in San Francisco, seem to have pushed the book well. Book-store owners spontaneously told me George did a "passionate" job of presenting it as a "pic" there ~~xxx~~ at the trade show.

--Harcourt's free-handed use of ARCs, possibly the most I've ever had, got the book a lot of early reads.

--Thom Chambliss, the PNBA exec director, thought the breakfast attendance might have been their best ever--C counted ~~180~~ seating for 180, and the tables seemed full--and told me my being there had a lot to do with that.

So, a day of good words for my book--with 2½ months to go yet until publication date.

21 March--The writing life, she is a strange one. Most of my achievement on 11th Man today was thinking up a raucous song about the Lend-Lease pipeline of planes to Alaska--"Oh, the Russians are drinking in Fairbanks"--but I feel pretty good about gaining that.

Y'day was an indisputable gain, although not in 11th Man wordage: Rick Bass's terrific review of Whistling showed up in Publishers Weekly, setting off cartwheels at Harcourt. And for that matter, here.

C and I have hit the yardwork pretty energetically the last some days--she's across from me typing up her notes on it right now--and there's discernable progress. I took a 3-hour class on grafting fruit trees the morn of the 18th and have ordered up a horrifyingly sharp grafting knife to tackle our ~~old~~ old apple tree situation. The grafting-cut technique as shown us by Bill Davis runs against my lifelong habits with a knife, i.e. you cut toward yourself. That, I may amend.

22 March--Two paths in a strange woods called O'Hare

Field diverged. Charles Newman and I were odd literary ducks together--Charlie much odder than I, then--in the Air Force Reserve at O'H during some considerable portion of 1964-66. Our word workplaces could not have been more different, Rotarian and TriQuarterly. Maybe the wordsmith guild forgives a lot in one another--looking back, it seems we got along together amazingly well. In Mtn Time I used a modified version of weekend warrior lunches with Charlie, parked at the end of the runway beneath the landing path of the jetliners, the swath of roar coming down on us as Charlie would flop back in the seat and let out an "ahhh" in what I called there the soul-emptying flush of noise. (Did Charlie ever see that?--nah, I doubt that he did or ever would have granted that I'd be the one to come up with that phrase and scene.) Those penitentiary-like weekends to us young strivers, he always was a jab in the imagination, sitting there in a hangar "classroom" where we ostensibly were studying military pap and pulling out his folders of literary submissions to TriQ, reading a manuscript just far enough to say "This is shit" and fling it beneath his chair, picking up the next one. A couple of main memories:

--Ann Sexton was on the ascent--I'd have to check the dates of her poems but I think pretty much from nowhere then--and Charlie sometimes would come to a weekend hollow-eyed, saying she had called him up in the middle of the night to talk about her poetry and her impulse to kill herself.

--One of the guys in our unit, who I think worked for Proctor & Gamble, something to do with advertising or marketing, once asked Charlie what the book he was writing was about (it would have been his first novel, I can't spot it in the obit; if I remember, it involved a character who compulsively made baseball bats on his basement lathe) and Charlie blurted, "You bastards."

Somewhere there, in what he saw as the bastardization of society, he stayed stuck. I suppose he was the smartest person in any room I was ever in with him, but postmodern have had the fatal problem of going beyond clever. His  
smarts

22 March cont.--books never even made a disruptive bubble in the mainstream, nor surfaced past the Gasses. ~~Franklin~~

His criticism was possibly hard to follow; never one to let any postmodernist notion get on me, I merrily quoted a passage from Charlie to the Western History Association in '87 when I was urging full-bodied writing on them:

"One cannot help seeing much contemporary fiction as a literary slide show, holding in common a purposive lack of scale and depth, an altogether predictable coloration and a transparency of surface, encoded by a narration that advertises in advance that it will not sustain itself, a voice-over esthetically and ethically neutral." Cutting through the purposive and encoded, it sounded to me like we were both kicking the plastic playthings in the literary toyshop of Coover, Barthelme, etc.--yet Charlie never produced a Tom Wolfe-like manifesto for "barbaric yawp" that I know of. His teaching, I wonder about; he may have been good in a classroom, especially if he ever found anyone smart enough to interest him, but again, the obit cites no writers he spawned; John Barth, whose stuff to me is output of a typical postmodernist skunkworks, could point to Louise Erdrich coming out of his classroom.

Couple of further memories of Charlie, dead at 67 according to today's NY Times obituary. Bill Kittredge telling of going to an Associated Writing Program meeting, seeing a guy who looked like a morose grad student sitting in the corner of the room, and going over to cheer him up with a handshake and trade of names. "Charlie Newman," came the response, and Bill thought, Had again. And in our Air Force days, Charlie would report that his wife, an Eastern European ballerina as I recall it, would be absolutely furious with the world because he had to put in a weekend of military service. By the Times count, she would have been the first of five wives, and five divorces. Charlie must have had trouble with the noise of the world beyond that flush of pure jet roar.

28 March--Am just back from Gp Health & the repeat blood test for lymphocytes level, a possibly consequential test.

Despite it and facing 24 hours of peeing in a jug for a urine protein test tomorrow, I am fairly sanguine. It may be that I simply feel quite good physically, geared up with all that's going on in life, the booktour plans, the 11th Man ms pp. etc. It'll be at least 9 days from now before I get the assessment from Dr. Ginsberg, and I'll either be what I was or someone identifiably carrying a form of cancer. Until then, live things as close to the hilt as I can.

Y'day's tale of the towhee: my row of peas was being devastated by the towhees, 6 or 8 plants an hour pulled up (for the seed-pea part) at times, so I frantically netted everything over and, because mice had also been bedeviling the peas, put out ten mousetraps as well. I looked out, day before y'day at around dusk, and a couple of traps were sprung and by one was a towhee. I went down for a look and indeed the bird was glazed somehow from its encounter with the trap while swiping the cheese. From the way it just sat there I could have killed it with a hoe, but decided against it. Next morning, I looked out, no towhee, so I figured it had reconstituted itself. But in the afternoon I was in that vicinity planting spinach and looked down, to a little pile of towhee feathers. An owl in the night, an early hawk? One way or another, nature ran the eat-and-be-eaten cycle on that towhee. I also noticed, y'day, a conspicuous absence of towhees, who had been about to take the property over before that.

Sunday's news: the Seattle Times magazine ran its spring books issue, and Mary Ann Gwinn's intro graf has this sentence: "Philip Roth, John Updike, Anne Tyler and Ivan Doig are publishing new novels." The Big Four of American literature, from the sound of it.

30 March--This afternoon was mild (though overcast) and C and I did yardwork. Amid it, I told her I'm in a remarkably good mood despite a medical diagnosis from an oncologist coming in a week. Y'day was the day of peeing in the orange jug, the 24-hr urine sample to be tested for protein level (high would not be good). Now we turn ourselves toward the Port Townsend weekend.

Not much writing achieved this week, with booktour details and medical errands, but what I did get done y'day was promising enough that I feel okay about the schedule. At the start of the week I faxed Becky that I'm going to bluesheet some scenes and concentrate on the big set scene (the plane crash in the Canadian wilds) that will show a major pivot of the plot. So, I'm tinkering away at that flight to the north. Arranged with Betty Mayfield to go to the Arlington airfield in a couple of weeks to see Paul Allen's collection of WWII planes, which doesn't have the P-39 I'd most like to see but includes a B-17 air-frame.

1 April--We are going to blessed Dungeness Spit this morning, probably in the damn rain. I aimed tomorrow's Pt Townsend speaking gig at today's minus tide, and so away we will go, despite the clamp of gray weather I see outside now, just at dawn.

Y'day ~~was~~ seemed to be mainly chores, although I did some useful rough drafting on the big plane crash scene for 11th Man. I can possibly can devote next week fully to the ms, which would be a welcome change.

3 April--4:30, end of a long day, coming home from Pt. Townsend and catching up on book biz stuff this afternoon. Will try for a better diary entry tomorrow, on what was quite a fine weekend, but for now, I'll note that the Dungeness trip went well, virtually dry. Virtually, because we could hear specks of rain hit our jackets though they were so inconsequential we couldn't see them. Good bird sightings in our 5-mile hike, guillemots, loons, several mergansers, a few scoters. The spit was good and sandy, great for walking, so once again it was a magical place.

6 April--If the typeface looks a little jittery, it is because I'm awaiting a phone conference with Dr. Ginsberg about my redone blood tests, after ~~the~~ last month's showed a rise in my lymphocyte count. This time, that count is down considerably--to 37 from 44--so I may be halfway home to no change in my monoclonal gammopathy diagnosis. The other half, however, sloshes threateningly until I hear the reading from Dr. G and his analysis of it: it's the 24-hour urine test for protein. When I did one 5 years ago, the level was 150 milligrams, and he told me then a gram is the threshold of concern. The half dozen or so test readings that are crucial indicators--calcium, creatinine, hematocrit, platelets, lymphocytes, protein in urine--are all tightrope walkers toward the lower end of satisfactory range, except for that earlier showing by the big orange urine jug; so we'll see if my luck holds.

Last weekend was idolization time--of me!--in Port Townsend, but we have been in such a spate of property projects, besides my determination to grind away at 11th Man in mornings, that I haven't managed a diary entry about it until now. When the Jefferson County Historical Society director, Bill Tennent, called me for the second year in a row asking me to come talk about James G. Swan and Winter Bros--it was probably the 8th or 10th time over the years they've asked me--I sighed and asked when it would have to be. The Society's charter specifies the annual meeting has to be on the final Sunday in April, said he. I looked up the tide table, found a nice morning low tide on Dungeness Spit the first Sunday, called him back and specified that date; fine, he said. Saturday So, we got a fine evocative hike of the Spit on April 1, went on into Pt. Angeles to load up on stray items at Swain's amazing general store as we do biennially, then headed onward to Port Townsend. We were put up in what is advertised as the carriage house, but is more or less the semi-attached back room, of the Bartlett House, a mansard-roof chunk of 19th century architecture, nicely restored, at the edge of the bluff above downtown. (Bluff dwellers call their neighborhood, quite sensibly, uptown.) The Historical Society pres, Linda Maguire, owns the place and bent every direction to make us comfortable,

6 April cont.--all the way to a Sunday NY Times on our doorstep. Based there a couple of nights, we socialized tooth and nail:

--Saturday night dinner at Linda Sullivan and Jeff Saeger's modern-design but unfinished cabin/house in the North Beach neighborhood, one house in from the bluff brink, just west of Ft. Worden state park. Incredibly, the one-house differential has been borderline hellish for them, as they lost the lawsuit over access to what ~~XXXXXX~~ looks for all the world like an alleyway at the edge of their property, their nearest and most natural path to the beach; and, if I savvy it correctly, it's another set of neighbors who have recently put up a five-foot board fence between their place and Jeff and Linda's, even though

7 April--The urine protein reading was dire. 1.4 grams, ~~XX~~ and a total protein reading was also elevated. Dr. G gently suggested it's time to take a bone marrow sample through a needle into my hip. I swallowed hard and chose the earliest possible time, next Tuesday, the 11th. My other test readings are okay--i.e., about the same as they have been or down a bit--but this one has me seriously spooked, as a high level of protein in the urine or blood is an indicator of monoclonal immunoglobulin, produced by cancer cells. My hunch is that Ginsberg suspects "smoldering" or "benign" myeloma, given that I don't seem to have overt signs of the malignant form, but maybe I'm underestimating that situation. What I can't scant is the possibility, even probability, that my diagnosis may soon change from MGUS to some level of myeloma. Talked with Carol after supper, and between us what we come up with is to take this one step at a time, and for me to not sit around in my head but go over things with her whenever I want to. Much of that will have to come out of me choked up, as just the typing of these words brings on, but I'd better get used to it.

9 April--A quiet Sunday. A literal turn of the page from the medical bulletin of the 6th. I am, what, reconciled? semi-adjusted? to the bone marrow test coming on the 11th. In the meantime, C and I have taken a few steps toward getting better nights of sleep, and that has helped a lot. I've taken one of her sleeping tablets every other night, and she slept in the guest room the night between, and sleeping through after midnight ~~to~~ until 4:30 or 5 instead of beginning to wake up around 2:30 has given me some calm and general sense of well-being. That is not to say there isn't a part of my brain that is scared to death of the bone marrow results--that simply seems to me a rational fear. But there is an odd warp of reality, given how good I feel and the possible news within this forthcoming test.

On the non-medical front: I treated Friday the 7th like a Saturday, doing yardwork and pitching in with C on her painting of the now exposed fence where Susan Gainer and her crew took out the black bamboo patch. On the 5th, the second day of her digging-out work, damned if tree trimmer Dave Weiss didn't arrive on time, on the promised day, with his two guys and whacked the upright branches off our pair of prodigiously growing white plums down-slope.

This is a Sunday morn of slow rain, which began y'day afternoon, adding up to a good soaker. This blessed property is wildly in bloom--I see the venerable magnolia along the fence is even beginning to open, and the ever so aptly named little Cheer rhododendron has been in full bloom for ten days or so. When we bought this exalted place, my hope was that we could get five good years here before health problems began to weigh on us; we managed more than seven, to late last summer when C's arteritis etc. hit.

11 April--I was just getting around to type in y'day's good news--Becky's bulletin that Pennie Clark Iannicello, the Costco buyer, is making House of Sky her July 'pick' in the Costco magazine--when today's came, from Liz. Harcourt sold condensation rights to Readers Digest for \$10,000. (We get a split if and when Whistling Season earns

11 April cont.--out) It's to be in the Xmas '06 issue, so that shouldn't stunt sales of the book. Liz's good news, part two: the Costco sales order is 12,000-20,000. I think even the low end of that is at least twice any of my previous books had there.

On the medical front, another mild(?) perturbation: my bone marrow test has been delayed two days because the Gp H staff found that Ginsberg was double-booked at 4 today.

Good news part three: no sooner was I away from the typewriter before the phone rang again. "Now old people like you and me can read the book," came Liz's voice, no hello or anything. Large-print rights, Thorndyke, \$8500 (up from their original \$4000 offer to Harcourt, if I savvied it right).

13 April--A day of fundamental dread. This afternoon I take the hipbone marrow test for the presence of myeloma or not. And this morn C has a biennial bone density scan, in the wake of this prednisone episode known to be hard on bones.

Yet when we returned just now from our morning walk around the neighborhood I sat down first to the manuscript, working on a pair of sentences about Ben's homecoming to Gros Ventre, within the first few grafts of 11th Man. Proving what? Life endures until it simply doesn't, I suppose.

Y'day's book news, sort of, was ~~Kinz's question~~ Liz asking whether Sky had ever been published in Britain. Barely, I said, in the miniscule effort by Sidgwick & Jackson in '80. She said her Brit counterpart, Rachel Calder, likes my work a lot and will see what she can do.

C and I had a fine day y'day, Betty Mayfield arriving for lunch from our garden and then driving us up to the Arlington airport to tour Paul Allen's collection of vintage planes; I got to peer in the cockpit of a Mustang and a Tomahawk, for verisimilitude's sake.

April 14--About 4:40 yesterday afternoon Dr. Ginsberg drove the needle into the back of my right hipbone and took the marrow and bone specule samples which will tell the tale. He's to see me on the 20th, when he'll have the results.

In the meantime, as I've told C, I intend to go about life as equably as I can. We still intend the anniversary trip to the Oregon coast, even though the weather is ranging from poor to rotten. And today I wrote as usual, pretty good results on 11th Man wordage.

On the medical front with C, her bone scan results showed some density loss, but she thinks not nearly as bad as it could have been from this prednisone regimen. She is wonderfully strong in the attitude she can take on this medical news, and I'm going to have to borrow as much of that as possible.

Here's one in the "go figure" category: Dr. G was running late, yesterday, and despite nearly an extra hour of stewing in the oncology waiting room, my blood pressure reading was a nearly ideal 121/70. (Wt: 158.)

April 15--Afternoon, rain letting up after sharp couple of hours. We are pretty well packed to head for Arch Cape tomorrow, probably also in the rain. I'm having phases of apprehension, when my certifiably vivid imagination tries to prepare for the worst from the marrow test, but keeping busy helps, the ms helps, C's step-at-a-time approach helps.

Have done some desk tidying, ahead of the Oregon trip, and maybe it's that that reminded me of something C and I remarked on after our trip with Betty Mayfield-- how immaculate (and well-heated!) those airplane hangars were. We can't even begin to guess what that little hobby of Paul Allen's costs--buying up the relic planes, hiring restoration outfits (the B-17 gun turrets we saw were impeccably restored), staffing etc. A good outing for us, and we're going to try to have a good Oregon trip.

19 April--Back from Oregon a day early, and we remarked to each other during this morning's walk what a relief it is to be home today without having to face the traffic of the trip. Except for a really tough patch at Olympia, traffic flowed rapidly y'day and even so it was a grind.

Despite stints when it rained buckets, we had a good few days' outing. Three walks of the Nehalem beach, the one y'day morn in fine mild weather. The best meal at the Bistro in a while--beef for both us! Oysters so fresh they were perfection, the night C bravely cooked in the borrowed kitchen. We had let magazines stack up for the occasion, and both read at great leisure, not a book cracked nor a TV clicked on the whole while. The oddest happening was hand-to-hand combat with the smoke alarm in the downstairs hallway, which began test-like peeping and would not quit even when we took out the battery and then replaced the battery; after my fourth or fifth effort at dealing with it, I finally by main force managed to unplug the entire alarm from the house's electrical system, and even then the thing peeped periodically until C took it to the garage and buried it in rolls of paper towels or some such. That aside, we marked anniversary #41 well enough there in the Nelsons' generously offered abode at Arch Cape, and we've decided we don't have to hew to the actual anniversary spot on the calendar, with its chronically damp weather (as it was on the day we were married in Evanston), in the future.

C noted in her diary entry the phone call from Liz on the 17th: the news that Whistling is a BookSense pick for June. Another good sign, from my old stronghold, the independent bookstores.

20 April--An unlucky number in the results of the bone marrow test: 30% plasma cells, and the level where that begins to become a concern is 10%. Dr. Ginsberg ordered up 2 more blood tests and sent me downstairs for a total body set of X-rays. Next, in this harrowing series of test results, will be a phone conversation with him on the 25th. The upshot of all this appears to be, and it's not a surprise to me, that he considers my condition has

20 April--crossed into "smoldering" myeloma. That can remain stable for years, he keeps telling me, and the point I must keep reminding myself of is that I am otherwise healthy and feeling fine, and therefore must get on with life. Told C when we were both typing up our notes--I had her sit in on this verdict from Dr. G--that I don't have any "why me?" at all, because I've always figured life asks back, "why the hell not you?" Did tell her, in choked-up fashion, that what daunts me about the possibility ahead is going through the end of life from one cancer treatment to the next. So we know that's daunting, and now to work through it in the meantime.

21 April--This first day after, I settled to work on The Eleventh Man, then got in some garden work in the afternoon, and it has been a remarkably sanguine day. C and I are agreed that this household needs no overpowering goals, in whatever time is left, but only our customary lives. Day by day, we'll do our damndest at that.

25 April--4 p.m., awaiting the phone call from Dr. Ginsberg about the result of my total bone scan.

And I had no sooner typed those words than the phone rang, with the blessed word from Dr. G that the result was normal. No Swiss cheese? I asked, referring to the lesions that are the marker of devastation within the bones. All Gouda, he said.

So, as I will now put down in the notes I keep in the fairly fat MGUS file, he tells me I am at "the best end of the spectrum" of this affliction. It is irrefutable that my condition has edged from "unknown significance" to "smoldering myeloma", which is plenty goddamn significant, but the progression so far is textbook slow. After Dr. G's call, I went out on the lower deck, called to C who was gardening nearby "It's over" (meaning the phone call) and "It's good" (meaning the bone scan news). We hugged each other, both quivering near tears. On with life.

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29 ~~Aug.~~ --Christamighty, what a rollercoaster of prospects this week was. The entries back there at the start, <sup>good,</sup> awaiting the bone scan verdict, and then when it was <sup>a</sup> quite terrific trip to Whidbey Island, and before that, our dinner with Alice (Quinn, poetry editor of The New Yorker). Details:

--The Whidbey trip was at the instigation of the go-getting Sno-Isle library system; they made House of Sky the "community read" and got 140 people to turn out for my Sky speech, in the comely Oak Harbor yacht club. I was on the beam, and the evening went very well, and we sold a lot of books afterward. (Including, by way of one of my bookplates we use as chits when the wanted book isn't yet on hand, the very first copy of The Whistling Season, due out of the bindery the next day, to a well-preserved Northwestern U. classmate of mine, Carolyn Elmer, who showed up with her NU annual with me amid the Latham House pic). Beforehand, we were fed dinner at the home of the prez of the Friends of the Library or some such, Dani Fowler and husband Vern, plus another library couple, Pat and John somebody. And we were put up in a beach cottage, damn near down ~~into~~ the surfline, owned by Linda and John McNamara. Next day, intrinsic to my planning in all this, we hiked the bluff at Ebey's Landing and caught it in spectacular weather--today, 24 hours later, was foggy and now it's raining, so we truly lucked out. Then visited Doug Smith at his stunning Penn Cove place about 4 mi. out of Coupeville.

--The dinner with Alice, April 26. This came about because Linda Bierds, with plenty of poems in The New Yorker under the hand of both Alice Quinn and her sainted predecessor Howard Moss, was in charge of a UW session where Alice discussed her book of Elizabeth Bishop's unpublished poems. People would kill to have dinner with Alice Quinn, but Linda--this is very Seattle, and very Linda--played no poet-politics with it at all and simply invited Carol and me, comfortable old friends. When ~~the~~ ~~phone~~ Linda asked us--this is very Ivan and Carol--there was a heavy moment of silence while we simultaneously pondered, do we want to spend an evening with a possibly high-maintenance literary New Yorker type? Then good

29 <sup>April</sup> cont.--sense kicked in and we said sure, and Alice turned out to be a delight. She drew about 65 people in the UW session, with Linda and fellow faculty member Brian Reed providing some discussion leads, and then audience q-and-a. Then Linda and Sydney, Alice, Brian and us, plus Frances McCue who was honchaing Alice's event at Hugo House the next night, fetched up at a Brazilian restaurant (Frances' not-so-great brainstorm, in tribute to Eliz. Bishop's Brazil years) on the Ave. Bit of a rocky start in the barely populated place, when we had a hell of a time getting a drink, and then none of us knew anything about the menu items. (C guessed and got vegetarian, which was pallid; I guessed and got a steak, which was terrific.) So, in the course of the evening, C put the question she and I had agreed damn well ought to be put to Alice, what better chance: how'd she get the job as poetry editor of The New Yorker? This version is a bit condensed, and has some sidebars, but this is essentially is what emerged as Alice, warmed with good food and wine (and prompted by me, whenever I had to steer things back from some loudmouth detour Frances threw out) got going--as she said with a chuckle amid it, "I've never told this story before."

if It begins with Laurie Colwin, the late lamented writer who was a friend of Alice's and, I don't know, possibly published by her when A. was a fiction editor at Knopf then, in 1986. It sounded as if Alice, Laurie, and other NY literary types were somewhat aware of a not particularly adept waitress, somewhere where they all ate, and Laurie took the step of getting this barely-kitchen-broken but interesting waitress involved with her in a program for serving meals to homeless women. It soon devolved, says Alice, that of course she was not a true waitress but a writer in waiting, and Laurie asked to see her work. She had four or so short stories, and Laurie soon was telling Alice, you've got to read these. Alice did, and soon was saying the same to Bob Gottlieb, her boss at Knopf, and they agreed these were the best short stories they'd seen in "the past six months," high praise around Knopf, I guess. They called the young woman in--lo, she was Deborah Eisenberg--and asked if she had tried ~~these~~ these

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29 ~~mag~~ cont.--on any magazine. Yes, Eisenberg said--and here Alice ~~indignant~~ mimicked her chin-up but slightly quivering response, The New Yorker had been very encouraging but hadn't taken any. Why was that, I gather the Knopf editors wondered, and the answer of course was spelled S-H-A-W-N. Even then, Eisenberg was living with Wallace Shawn in a manner so oblique and hush-hush they might as well have been Eskimos in an igloo in a whiteout--when Eisenberg's latest book came out this spring and was being raved about as Chekhovian, the NY Times tried to ask Shawn about their life together and ~~some~~ all he would say is that he and she are "somewhat mysterious" to each other--and with William Shawn running The New Yorker (and maintaining his own whiteout lovenest with Lillian Ross), nobody at the magazine knew what the hell to do with what they, and probably most of all Bill Shawn, saw as this nepotistic conundrum. The upshot was that Alice and Gottlieb signed up Eisenberg, assuring her all she had to do was write more such stories so they would ~~publish~~ have enough for a book, and meanwhile, on the basis of the Knopf book contract, they would just send those first four or so stories to The New Yorker again and see what happened. With that Knopf gangplank laid down, the New Yorker nervous nellies clambered aboard the Eisenberg ship of talent and, Alice says, published four stories in a year's time, virtually unprecedented for an unknown writer.

Comes now, sometime amid this but evidently in 1986, a phone call to Alice at Knopf. He was famous/notorious, she said, for murmuring into the phone, "This is William Shawn: S-H-A-W-N" but in this case he skipped the spelling, because he knew she knew son Wally, by way of her writer Deborah. He was equally notorious/famous for not finishing sentences and getting to the point, so she was treated to something along the lines of "I'm calling just on the chance...I don't know what your situation there may be, you're probably...but if you were to ever...why then we'd be..." and she finally divined this was the Shawn version of a job offer and she said she'd love to meet him.

As C and I count it, Alice was then 38, and of course quite a personage in the publishing world as a Knopf

29 <sup>April</sup> cont.--fiction editor, but she said she had never dressed so carefully and nervously for anything in her life, except her first date with her partner Laurie Kerr, as that meeting with Shawn: "I even wore a hat!" She said she was so strung-out that she stopped on the way at Janet Malcolm's, just hoping Janet would tell her she looked good. ("Did Janet come through?" I asked. "She did!" Alice laughed.) The session in Shawn's office indeed led to her coming to The New Yorker, as one of their fiction "readers" or whatever the hell they call people who are assistant editors in realer places of the world, with New Yorkerish consequences such as these:

--She was assigned to write assessments of fiction the magazine was considering, and noticed as she went along (a) her reports tended to run a page or so long and the other assessors' were more like a paragraph and (b) stories she had not given nice grades to showed up in the pages of the magazine fairly frequently.

--Nobody thought to provide her an office. (I may be off in the chronology here, and this happened after she became poetry editor, but I think it took place here when she first signed on.) Ultimately, Janet Malcolm came through again and told her to use hers, as (again, how New Yorkerish is this?) she herself never did. So Alice ended up in the corridor of offices known as Sleepy Hollow--populated by the old non-producing cadre Shawn gave shelter to, Brendan Gill, Philip Hamberger, Emily Hahn, and somebody else Alice cited.

Alice figured out, then or later, that she had been brought aboard because Chip McGrath of the fiction dept. was also the #2 poetry editor and the actual editor, Howard Moss, was in his final illness--i.e., McGrath had his hands full outside of fiction and Alice was to bolster that situation. Thus she was within the walls when Shawn at last was kicked out for the magazine's musty ways and, aha, ~~the~~ his successor was Alice's old Knopf boss, Gottlieb. (Sidebar: Telling this part, Alice said, "Why, there had never been any...oh, what do you call it?" She had turned to me and in puzzlement I was offering up standard magazine functioning fare such as double-truck

29 April cont.--ads, supplements, and so on as the phrase Alice was searching for. Across the table, Frances piped up: "Market research?" "That's it!" said Alice.) There was a period of turmoil and protest when Gottlieb came to the job, but Alice said he simply posted a short simple statement amid the bulletin board calumny of him for daring to replace the immortal Shawn, to the effect that he intended to run the magazine and looked forward to working with everybody. As I savvied it, there was some overlap, or maybe it was before Gottlieb entered the building, but Alice had a great description of the fall of the titan, I think her phrasing was "Shawn reeling around in his Belgian boiled-wool suit." The long and short of it was, when Gottlieb put some structure in the staff, there Alice was, a known and trusted quantity to him, and he made her poetry editor, the preeminent spot of its kind in this country.

5 May--Ho for Nebraska. I am in blue jeans and a new tan sunproof shirt, with my Akubra packed in the suitcase, C and I both wearing hiking boots, to leave in 25 min. for the airport and the Nat'l Homestead Monument gig.

It has been one helluva busy week; Costco magazine interview Monday, KWBE radio (Beatrice, NEB) Wed., an hour on phone with Tom Nolan for his on-line Bookselling This Week piece y'day. Plus sizable q'airres answered for harcourtbooks.com and Powell's newsletter. By god, though, I still got a few pp. written.

7 May, Beatrice NEB - An hr. and a quarter from now, the traveling road show the National Homestead Monument. Brought to town - Percival Everett, David Lashin, Carol & me - with the trail for the Lincoln airport in David's rental car. Everything was top-notch at yesterday's event except the attendance, which was dismal. We're just the talent, we can't do anything about the audience, so I'm happily enough going home with my \$2000. Yet, remarkably, I stay here, too, in - on - the Homestead Legacy banner they unveiled, with my Akubra-hatted mug on it big as a washtub, blowing in the wind there outside the Heritage Center along with Willa Cather, Laura Ingalls Wilder, George Washington Carver and, uh, Lawrence Welk and Jewel and others. An odd honor, but a welcome one.

The literary company here has been just great. Percival turns out to be quick, funny, warm. & at the end of the afternoon, ahead of the evening reception for poet laureate Ted Kooser, Carol & I & Lashin were boiling out for some real food in town ahead of reception-line grazing, just going out the door when Kooser arrived. The ball-of-fire interpretive park ranger behind this

7 May cont. - event introduced us all to Kooner, we chatted in the doorway for a minute, then I said we're going to a Mexican place for some supper, want to come along? Sounds better than chicken breasts, said Ted - he's done 200+ events in his about-to-be-up 2 years as poet laureate - & away ~~to~~ the 4 of us went. (Lacking only Percival, who is both vegetarian & allergic to garlic - i.e., not Mexican-grub prone, alas.) So, in Playa Azul, David & C & I stood up on surprisingly good fajitas while Ted had, in his dry-wit way, shopped his way down a long list of combinations & as he said, rather than something & Tacos, come up with tacos & something. David, who became turned on to Kooner's writing (& so thoughtfully gave C & me a copy of Local Wonders for our anniversary), was in obvious heaven, elbow-to-elbow with the poet laureate of the U.S., talking about literature.

We had a good quick spirited debate about Alice Quinn's book of Eliz. Bishop's unpublished ~~po~~ work, ~~at~~ their side of the table against the whole idea of the book, C & I arguing it's a terrific teaching tool, it's inspirational, scholarly, etc.

7 May. cont. - Literary talk ~~and~~ and his bright dry facility with spoken words as well as the written, Ted looked somewhat worn. ("Hard-used" was C's word; and I was gratified later, after it turned out Ted & I are the same age, that David & Carol remarked nobody would guess it; I'd have said Ted was likely 75.) Besides the terrific grind of post-laureate appearances - he told us over supper he'd felt he had to do it "better than anyone else" since he was the first post laureate "from out here" - he's terribly concerned for his wife, who has just been diagnosed with breast cancer.

They talk with her surgeon tomorrow. All in all, he seemed glad of the company and the writing talk, as the quartet of us guzzled Mexican food & beer (Ted had water), & he said some memorable things:

- David remarked how accessible his poems are, & Ted said yeah, he thinks poetry ought to be that way - the 20th century was the 1st time in history poetry had to be taught. Said he sometimes uses as a speech phrase the comparison of modernism to "a leaf at the end of an alley." So do we blame it all on Eliot? I asked. Yeah, he said, then

7 May cont. - in a flash corrected:  
no, Pound. He speculated that Pound's  
fascistic flirtation was part of his  
infatuation with the notion of an elite.

11 A.M. - Now aboard a train & minibus  
44-passenger NW Canadian, headed from  
Lincoln to Mpls. Larkin drove us & Percival  
to the airport & headed onward in his  
Children's Blizzard & back tour. Oddly, the Lincoln  
airport was the first security glitch in quite  
a while, the tweezers in our toiletry kit  
evidently baffling the X-ray machine.

Neither of us looks forward to the cattle-  
car conditions of the full plane, from Mpls to  
Seattle, but as C says, we're never going to  
like air travel. That aside, we both feel we've  
had a fortunate trip, the other writers terrific  
company.

Before Percival & I read y'day afternoon,  
David Kipen, former SF Chronicle book editor  
who has radically swapped hats to be head of  
literature at the NEA, had an hour's slot &  
showed how to fill it charmingly, off the  
cuff. When he said he hoped to get to  
Red Cloud - heart of Cather country - the  
audience laughed, & he grinned, leaned  
forward & asked, Have I made my first  
faux pas. How ~~far~~ far is Red Cloud?

7 May cont. - 100 miles, somewhat  
called out. He grinned again & said, "That's  
okay - I hadn't meant to make it sound  
like it was just down the road." I hoped  
he'd be around to go to supper with us,  
but because of the thing in Omaha at  
Warren Buffett's stockholder meeting -  
24,000 - he had to sprint for the only available  
plane seat.

Maureen: Tad is used like a public  
utility in Nebraska (he told us he hopes to cut  
down, after lawsuit ends, to 2 events a  
month), & so he's very practical & apt,  
reading his poems & fielding questions. Last  
night he chose poems with women in them, in  
honor of Mother's Day, he said, & indeed his  
most - poem to his mother within a month  
after her death & which I believe ends "or  
I would have to be really grouchy," is a classic  
teen-junker. He's masterful at associations &  
comparisons in his poems, although I did not  
hear informal rhyme or significant meter in  
them - we brought a book of poems (which  
he marvelously incidented with a tiny sketch  
of a house & sky); he did a moving 18th/19th  
century's & I took forward to finding it all  
the way from Tad's home south, here, to our  
own in coast country.

May 16--This, I believe, is a first: a little after 4 this morning, it was 66 degrees. I woke up exceedingly early as I do every morning when I haven't taken sleeping tablets and when I went out to ~~check~~ see if the newspapers had come yet, it was eerily balmy. We'll see if y'day's forecasted hot weather--85, which the day didn't come within 10 degrees of--is showing up today.

Life is busy, busy. I am determinedly polishing the 11th Manus chunk I want to get to Becky even as the Whistling Season takes on more and more life of its own. I need to be careful, stay braced for nasty reviews and other hiccups, but signs have stayed consistently good the past week and more. There was ecstasy at Harcourt last Friday when Oprah Winfrey's more or less eponymous magazine, O, came out with a review that said, among other wonderful things, "You feel as if you're in the hands of an absolute expert at story-making, a hard-hewn frontier version of Walter Scott or early Dickens." That's the second Dickensian reference so far, in the reviews process. Meanwhile, I'm hearing from booksellers who have a crush on the book; Rebecca Willow of Park-Place Books in Kirkland choked up when she was telling me on the phone about not wanting the book to ever end. It's a long road ahead, the booktour trail, but if the book does well that will ease the way considerably.

Did some socializing last weekend, Tony Angell & Lee here for a crab feed Friday night, then on Saturday we caught the 4:30 ferry to Kingston, were met at the dock by Eric Nalder, and merrily went off to Suquamish for dinner at his and Jan's cute-as-a-button place that looks across the water toward ours. Ah, and then there was Sunday when life here, on this blossomed property, in this blessed house, took on a persona of its own in the perfect weather. C and I dabbled a bit at yardwork, had a lunch-time beer on the deck, and leaned back in life.

19 May--C is upstairs reading the 93-pp. chunks of 11th Man ms I intend to send in to Becky on June 1, pub day of Whistling Season. Can't generate any more literary traffic than that.

Weather has shifted, cooler and grayer, after a spate of days in 70s or even 80.

22 May--A day of running ~~home~~ hard to stay in place, medically speaking. Over the weekend, not only did the ribcage sore spot wax and wane, but a shadowy line showed up in the corner of my left eye. Of course neither of our beloved doctors for such ailments, Kato nor Faulstich, is in on Mondays, so I sighed hard and had things checked out @ Group Health anyway:

--Dr. Bill Baluch, in the same pod of doctors as Pat Kato, is a good-looking crewcut guy of middle age; said he was glad to meet me, he'd shared This House of Sky with his father in Rhode Island etc. His diagnosis of my rib situation did not encompass the quick-cure cortisone shot I'd hoped for--he said a cortisone injection in that chest area risks a lung deflation--and so I ended up with advice on mildly exercising that side of the body (to keep the muscles loose), use a hot pad, and a couple of levels of pain reliever if the going gets tough on the booktour trail.

--Dr. Brian Rhee, the ophthalmologist in Liz Faulstich's stead, was younger but thorough (I'm just now getting over the eye dilation, 5+ hrs ago) and assured me it's a floater in the eye, not a dreaded detached retina or the like. It's a big one, unlike any others in my long history with these squiggles, ~~which~~ and what alarmed me were times when it appeared to be a straight dark line at the very outer edge of my vision; he said it may be a couple of months before it dissolves significantly.

Other than that, and the beating that the sleep routine has been taking around here (I've spent the past 3-4 nights in the guest room), I suppose I'm okay. We are entertaining tooth and nail; Linda Sullivan and Jeff Saeger coming tonight, we're going to lavish messy beef

23 May--ribs on them. David Williams and Majorie came for a Sunday morning walk y'day, and along w/ coffee we fed them the rest of the applesauce cake David Laskin brought when he and Kate were here the night before. So, our little writing colony has been flourishing; our bunch of Whistling Seasons came and so I'm giving freebies to friends like these, joyously. Kate and David make a great, wide-ranging, funny evening; they are deadly hilarious on their twin daughters, who are not alike and don't much get along--Kate cracked us up with her imitation of Alice having perfected the talk-to-the-hand gesture, i.e. the dramatic don't-tell-me flourish of the young and put-upon. David had a good line to report from Eric Larson, who ever since his book Isaac's Storm (and now Devil in the White City) has been a fixture on the national best-seller list. Eric's wife is a neo-natologist, and at parties her oblivious fellow medicoes still come up to him and ask condescendingly, "Still writing?" He tells them, "Yes--still doing neo-natology?"

24 May--We're in a showery stint, two or three days' worth by now and that many more in the forecast. Among the vegs, beans and tomatoes are stalled, peas and lettuce adore this weather.

Am going to try to do one small dab of brushup on the 100 pp-Eleventh Man chunk tomorrow, but other than that, all is preparation for the book tour. Spent today getting filecards into my traveling notebook for interviews and q-&a.

Aches and pains report: my side is troublesome at night, when I have to sleep entirely on the opposite side. Using a heating pad, especially at naptime, does help to keep the muscles and other glop loose under there.

27 May--Y'day I was called "beloved" (in print; John Marshall's "Best Bet" slot of week's literary events) and received (into the Piper brokerage account) \$22,500, the finale of The Whistling Season's series of advances. Today, we'll see; C is out right now buying the Seattle Times for its review of Whstling. And in a couple of

27 May cont.--hours I'll sign up 50 books being brought here to the house by Jane Laclergue of the Fireside book store in Olympia. This coming week is the real onset of the booktour, 3 events and then on Sunday I pack for San Francisco.

So it's busy, made more so by my tendency to overwork the tasks. Y'day I mailed off meet-the-author posters to Montana bookstores. Necessary? Dunno. I do it on "can't hurt, could help basis."

While Whistling is acrobating into the center ring, I've been busy lining up the next act, shipping the 1st 100 pp. of The 11th Man to Liz (who actually is in Turkey or somewhere; agents seem to have the right financial angle on the book biz) and readying Becky's copy to FedEx it in for arrival on June 1, publication day for Whistling.

The weather is in its customary Memorial Day weekend snit--chilly, gray, soggy--although it's supposed to improve on Monday. C and I went to Swanson's nursery y'day morn, where I bought the biggest tomato plants I could find to replace the weather-whipped miserable specimens I started from seeds.

9:05 a.m.--C just arrived with the S. Times review, and it's again by Tim McNulty (he hinted to me as much when we crossed paths at my Port Townsend gig, but I thought it might be too good to happen) and it's again good. So the local media has been nice to me, always a relief in that our friends don't have to get upset on my behalf.

30 May--The long holiday weekend passed quietly and pleasantly, particularly after the weather let up. Had dinner at the Walkinshaws on the 27th. Walt's balance problem doesn't improve--at his age, it almost certainly never will--and so he gets around with a big-handled cane and spends a lot of time in a favorite chair reading; but he's lost nothing mentally. Another good evening with those irreplaceable friends--Walt goes back to New Deal days in his lawyering career.

So, I have greatly enjoyed the past 2-3 days of puttering and gardening, and tomorrow, I expect, the book biz roars back to life.

31 May--The Whistling Season is a bestseller. Debuted at #15 on the fiction list of BookSense, the independent stores' compilation. Hot damn.

Also, to the surprise of this household, the booktour veer into Canada is still on, albeit to only--only!--Calgary, with Winnipeg having been cast aside.

So, on this eve of publication day, this book about a one-room school and a dream-ridden boy is doing quite well. As for me, I spent the last half of this morning practicing my reading selection, for Elliott Bay tomorrow night and beyond.

Earlier this morn, put the bold new tomato plants from Swanson's into the ground, on S side of the house. Seems a good day for it, warm but mostly overcast.

1 June--Publication day in the best possible fashion: Harcourt has gone back to press on The Whistling Season, 5,000 more copies on top of the original 28,000. Becky just called with that news, along w/ gratitude for receiving the 1st 100 pp. of The Eleventh Man. Her other news is that the Harcourt operative who works w/ Amazon has bought a link to McMurtry's new book, so that anyone who hits on Telegraph Days is also propositioned with Whistling (which I find hilarious), and there'll be a New Yorker ad in one of the next 2 issues.

While things are swimming along here, it's chastening to think of Craig and Kathy Lesley. I called them to see if we could get together for dinner before my Powell's reading in Portland, and the answer is no way in hell--Kathy is back east with her dying father, Craig is going back there this weekend, and meanwhile their younger daughter Kyra is terribly precarious--recently diagnosed with bi-polar condition, evidently akin to what we used to call manic depressive. Seven times she's been hospitalized, and at least once Craig has had to call the police on her. He said again, as he did the last time we saw him, she's drinking to self-medicate herself. I hope this turns out to be not as grim as it is trending, but it is hard to see how this can end short of a grave or an institution.

4 June--Big rain, underway when I got up to go to the bathroom at half past midnight and just lately has let up, around 9.

This is Sunday, with the airport part of the booktour looming tomorrow when I go to San Francisco. The book's first 3 days here could hardly have gone better: 200 people and a strong signing at Elliott Bay on publication night, June 1; 100 of Seattle Public Library's biggest donors at luncheon the next day, and 48-50 books sold, with the rest of the Friends of the Library's agreed-upon order of 75 either designated for someone or headed for the gift shop, i.e. no returns; and y'day, 68 Whistlings sold at the venerable little Edmonds bookshop, total of 80 sold from Mary Kay's initial buy of 120. And so, huzzah.

Last night was our annual baseball game, courtesy of Marshall Nelson's law firm, and so there C and I and Ann and Marsh were, ensconced in suite seats while the woeful Mariners beat up on the even more woeful KC Royals. We left at the end of six innings with the M's ahead 11-1.

Once again it was newspaper exec night--Rowland Thompson of Inland Press Ass'n, Dick Clever of the Skagit Valley Herald, David Schneiderman (buddy of Liz Darhansoff in his NY days) of the Village Voice's digital end of things, and so on.

And, in what I have to admit is an interestingly varied life these days, after the booksigning y'day and ahead of the ballgame I went to Bill Davis's place in Edmonds and traded him a signed book for some more scionwood for apple and pear tree grafting.

San Francisco, 6 June (the fabled 06/06/06 of mortal fear; nice day so far) - In Stanford Court, indeed in the floor east-facing room (743) that C & I, or at least I, likely have had before. Cable cars rattle along beneath the windows, yet here the racket somehow seems worthwhile. The view is splendid - fog-rimmed bay this morn - & the hotel functions well (mostly; the restaurant is an expensive ghetto; damn near \$30 for granola & berries, bagel, coffee & glass of milk) once I'm past the front desk; the clerk sweetly offered me a nice interior room & I firmly said no, 3 days in SF without a view was not why I am here.

Y'day was an eternity of downtime - left the house @ 7:30, plane was 45 min. late arriving here, 3 p.m. by the time this room was ready - but today is passing in better style: slept in until 6 (courtesy of sleeping tablets, which maybe are going to be my nightly companions in these big-city hotels of the tour), had b'fast & muddled through n'papers (~~Chronicle~~ Chronicle, feebler than it used to be, USA Today & WSJ), then went to the hilltop park between Grace Cathedral & Union Club, found a nice bench in the shade & watched the tai chi exercisers for 1/2 hr or so. Only 2 women & two men this morning, but one of the men remarkably resembled Jim Welch, and the other, a wiry dancer-built goateed guy of about 50, was superb in his movements. As in other times - 1/2 doz. ? - I've gone there of a morning & felt

6 June/2 - a kind of serenity, something like a better hope for the poor raddled human species. The green little park itself is an urban mesa within an urban canyon - spires & building-top spikes of antennas & such are all around, & the gray loom of the cathedral, & to the south the sky-topping faded red sign atop the Huntington Hotel looks surprisingly like Russian, read from the back & at an oblique angle. The park's central fountain meanwhile riots in eternal slow-motion eroticism, four nubile dolphin-riding lads with their peckers out for the world to see, atop scallops as big as hot tubs, & always strange to me but maybe I'm missing some symbolism here, above each male naiad is a turtle balanced on uppermost rim of the fountain, butt out and apparently sipping the fountain water. Besides the tai chi group with its calm Asian music, a dozen or two people percolate thru the park, some with stroller tots, some walking dogs. The dogs all make the rounds, sniffing the bushes and occasionally the rest of us.

While waiting for my room y'day I walked downhill to Union Square & tried Macy's, Brooks Bros & a few other places for a soft cord jacket like my trusty but aged one, but alas, "Not in spring," as the Brooks Bros. clerk told me. For dinner, I followed C's suggestion & took a cab to the Ferry Terminal. One more time, the touted place, the Starved Door, was jammed to overflowing - this was @ 10 min. to 6, even the bar was stacked full - so I walked

6 June/3 - thru the fine old building, shops  
shuttering for the day, 200-300 yds west to The  
Waterfront Restaurant, a AAA book listing. It  
was monumentally quiet, offers some view to  
Treasure 4. and the Bay Bridge (best view  
would be from balcony tables), & the food was  
pretty good, although again staggeringly priced -  
nearly \$50 for 2 Anchor Steams & bouill-  
laine. Coming back to this hotel - couldn't spot  
in the Chronicle a damn thing to go to on a  
shutted Mon. night - & worried a bit about  
finding a cab in time to spare my touchy knees,  
but got one with no trouble at the hotel  
(Vital? C has her eye on it for us to try  
some time) eater corner from the Ferry Bldg.  
Then holed up in the room & read - ~~long~~  
brought The Day of the Jackal (our Corgi  
paperback ~~for~~ from our sabbatical in Britain  
30+ years ago!) as pass-the-time airplane &  
hotel reading & it works.

10:30 now; escort Frank Lancia & I are off  
to Corte Madere to the Book Passage in 45  
min. I don't have much hope for these Bay-  
area signings - no media beforehand, no Chron  
review - & so we shall soldier through -  
fortified beforehand, Frank promises, with a  
good Italian lunch at ~~St Fornio~~ in Corte M.  
Fornio

6 June, 4:50 p.m. - Damned if this book doesn't continue to lead a happy life. The events coordinator @ Book Passage, Tim Pearson, met me with "This book is creating a buzz." Yeah, sure, maybe, I said. No, he said, look - & he brought out a tall stack of pre-orders to be signed. Then we had a full house - 65, Tim said - for my reading, which went quite smoothly. Now to see whether the book & I crash to earth tonight in the Haight, @ Booksmith's.

After a few min. I head up the street to Big 4 for an early dinner, likely in the bar, before escort Frank Lauria picks me up @ 6:30. He knew of a fine Italian restaurant for lunch in Corte Madera - Al Tornio - so I've already had veal scallopini, in the march of eating that goes on with a book tour.

7 June - And sure enough, Booksmith was a dud, was it ever. About a dozen in the audience (?), worst since - come to think of it - another counter-culture bookstore somewhere west of downtown SF some years ago. Oddly, the total of books sold seemed to outnumber the audience - advance orders were a decent stack of 8 or 10, plus the 1/2 doz. the audience brought. & there's a review in the SF Chronicle this morn -

7 June cont. - there I was @ breakfast in the hotel restaurant & turned to that page & thought, "Well, well" - which laddles on the nostalgia angle that I don't think is particularly there, but is overall favorable enough.

Culinary note: the Big 4 came thru in fine fashion for early dinner last night, a 1st-rate lamb stew from the bar menu.

6 June - 9:35 AM, for 11:20 flight to Portland. Down time, down time, is the theme of book touring. Bermuda Car Service, w/ a stately old German driver, was nearly 1/2 hr early to the hotel, & then the accident-caused backup he was being of on the free way began, literally, about 50 yards ahead of our airport exit, so we zipped right in. I've called Michelle this morn - she had no news - & C, who did: 2nd week in a row, Whistling is #1 on the PWBA list. Last night's reading at Black Oak in Berkeley drew 70 people - a crowd the store staff was very happy with, although I'll always have in my mind the old days of reading to 150+ in the back room there - & people bought 25-30 books afterward. So, much effort, & a big wad of Harcourt \$, went into the 3 5# days. Onward now to Portland, where the review in the Oregonian did not sound

June 8 cont. - promising, but with any luck it won't matter much @ Powell's.

Speaking of luck, I chanced into a good escort in Frank Lauria, late South Brooklyn-born Italian guy who has written a bunch of books - w/ occult themes, as best I could gather. He was talkative but a good talker, & knew the good eating places (although I'm now SF veteran enough to know some he didn't, such as the bar menu in Big 4 in the Huntington Hotel) & with my expressed wish to go to Berkeley early and eat dinner there, we muddled through the dreaded Bay Bridge traffic in not bad shape. (It still took 40 min., Nob Hill to Black Oak.) Half Frank's doing & half my own (mostly C's) smarts, my SF main meals, all first-rate, were:

- dinner @ Waterfront Restaurant (Louisiana) N.
- lunch @ El Fajita in Corte Madona (veal scallopini & Moretti beer)
- early quick dinner @ Big 4 (lamb stew, very nice & meaty, & an Anchor Steam)
- lunch @ Green's, delicious as ever (Mediterranean sampler, hummus & cous-cous & such, & yes, Anchor Steam)
- dinner a block or so south of the other Coody's (i.e., not the apparently doomed Telegraph Ave store), Japanese place

June 8 con't. - Frank knew of, called  
O S (something, i.e. 2nd letter began w/ S).  
I had a terrific skirt steak on toothpick  
& robe, Frank had grilled tuna & rice  
cakes, grand grub.

& now, at 10 AM, I need to begin thinking  
about an airport lunch, given the starvation  
policy that now rules airplane travel.

June 9 - Victory in Portland. Last night @  
Pavell's, 105 in audience, & w/ the 14  
pre-orders on-line, sold books were around  
50. The audience was not as ~~loose~~ loose  
and laugh-ready as the Berkeley one, but  
they perked up in the question period.  
All in all, good-oh, & the luck of a  
superb escort, warm & funny, Barbara  
Diles. She picked me up @ Jake's Grill where  
I had dinner w/ Bill Lang & Marianne.  
A good visit, although M's job at the Oregon  
Historical Society sounds shaky. The director  
is leaving, & she figures the OHS board-  
moneyed dot-com types - will use the interim  
to chop the publishing program.

'Twas a busy y'day in Portland, Barbara  
zipping me around to sign up stock @  
Broadway Bks, the Lloyd Center Barnes &  
Noble, & Looking Glass, where the owner &  
staff practically dissolved in gratitude.

June 9 cont. - After the stock signing (the good news/bad news was that the downtown Borders was sold out of Whistling except for ~~2~~ 1 copy, & Annie Bloom's had only 2 left - we ignored 'em both) we made a trip for my hotel room, & of course not a chance until 3 p.m. Thus, travel-disheveled, off I went w/ Barbara to the bar @ Higgins where we had a quick coffee while I crammed from my notecards for 3 o'clock interview w/ Jeff Baker, book editor of the Oregonian, who is making Skay the Aug. pick of its ~~read~~ reading club. He's kind of a hopity-shippety interviewer, his questions occasionally more like statements, but he knew the books & my career, so it likely went okay. Then at last to the hotel, a quick shower & change of clothes, & off to a hugely welcome double-cut pork chop w/ the hams @ Jake's.

14 June - About to leave Philadelphia again, the escort ferrying me to the airport in 45 min. at the Free library last night, 50 people - the minimum I hoped for, but good attentive bunch - and 20 books sold, a high ratio. & y'day morn I trooped through the two attractions here that I much wanted to see:

- The Independence Hall tour, 1st of the day @ 9 a.m., consisted of high schoolers from Grand Rapids, Michigan, & me. The park ranger guide, something like a pony-tailed drill sgt, boomed out from the very bottom of his diaphragm. On the way out, I asked him if he'd had dramatic training & he admitted to majoring in interpretation.

- After that I grabbed an immediate cab & went to Museum of Art to try for the Andrew Wyeth retrospective. My info was that the place opened @ 10, I walked in about 2 min. after, & the museum was full of people already - & I doubt they'd over-nighted there. I hustled into the Wyeth ticket line, the next tour posted for 10:30. The line had barely bridged when a museum staffer hopped onto a chair & changed that time to 11. Well, still OK, I thought. About one ticket sale later, here came another staffer, another hop, & shazam, the time was

14 June cont. - now 11:30. That made me seriously think over whether I could do it & still make the 2 o'clock apptmt w/ the escort back @ the Omni Hotel at Independence Square.

Decided (with a little blunt advice from a NY guy in line in front of me) I could stick it out if I substituted a quickie lunch @ museum instead of intended one at The Omni's reputable restaurant. Spent time in the museum's American Art section, & profitably saw thought-provoking pieces such as Kate Javens' 6' long crow (possibly raven) painting titled "Named for Andrew Furuseth" (social activist, founder of Sailors' Union of the Pacific). Then grabbed a chicken pita sandwich in the cafeteria. Then got on line to get in line - 2 serpentine of 50 or so people each, for the 11:30 Wyeth let-in - & abt 11:45 at last was in the series of rooms - 8 or 10? - themed to Wyeth's work. Best of it was amazing; 12 studies leading up to "Groundhog Day," a mean dog asleep in several of early ones, then in the 10th or 11th the dog finally appears, & in the finished pic the vague menaces - or maybe too obvious ones, in that sleeping canine - have come down into the wood's jagged edge.

July 15, Logan Airport - Boston was tough.  
Audience of 15 @ Newton, the Boston Post  
night, after nearly an hour of grinding thru  
rush-hour traffic of than a half (paid for  
chicken sausage) supper @ a so-so upscale  
restaurant. On the other hand, the location has  
a lot of action clubs, & there were a few phone  
orders & generous buying by the audience,  
so a healthy number of hotels were accounted  
for. What a formidable amount of shlepping  
it takes, however. The descent, Baffly Catedral,  
personally attractive in, yes, a Jewish-mother  
way, is phenomenally out of it - caught off-  
guard by the parking garage construction turned  
five under 15-20 min. to reach her car, then  
by the ticket-pay machines, then consistently  
underestimating the traffic. She figured  
it'd take 1/2 hr to reach Newton, it took  
an hour, & a rush-hour at that - she drove  
the whole way nervously twisting her thumbs  
on the steering wheel. Also, the Dwyer  
Hotel was not convenient to anywhere we  
were going, particularly Newton, whereas  
the Charles Hotel in Cambridge, by  
Harvard Sq., would have been. The Boston  
traffic situation was summed up by the  
fact we spent on a back street waiting for  
the garbage truck to pick up 8 on 10  
driv.


June 16, Wyndham Hotel - Wash'n D.C.  
was magical. Standing room only @  
Politics & Prose last night, 58 books sold  
@ the signing, 97 overall, & the store is down  
to its last 10 copies. More vitally, the Diane  
Rehm show on NPR clicked terrifically; &  
felt on top of things throughout it, Diane's  
producer Nancy & Diane her royal self -  
one of the callers in dubbed her a 'goddess'.  
seemed thoroughly happy with it. & Michelle  
Blankenship came down from Harcourt & we  
got to lay eyes on each other; knowing each  
other a bit from personal reconnaissance is  
bound to be a help. To top it all off, the  
escort here, Craig Montgomery, is a good  
smart-mouth, quick & inventively funny -  
much relief after the semi-distracted  
earth-motherliness of Betty in Boston.

And at home, when I called the love of  
my life, C had the news that Whistling  
is back on the BookSense bestseller list,  
up 3 notches, #12. Hallelujah.

8:25 AM, over probably one of the  
D. A. A. What a fine spot in time  
this is, flying home to C in comfort - 1st  
class is another planet from the salt-mine  
crowdedness of coach - with The Whistling  
Season flying high in its own world. Ahead  
may be rough treatment from newspaper  
reviewers - Boston Globe this Sunday, NYT

June 16 cont.:—on July 2, the LA Times & Denver Post supposedly somewhere along the line—but also ahead are the big Montana signings & what have been reliable standbys in Denver, Boulder, Salt Lake, Bellingham... O Paul, O Rose, O Marie, O Mure, O lady luck—what have ye all conspired to bestow on this shopworn scribbler?

Below, now, is probably the Medicine, broad & winding & braided w/ silt islands. How nifty it would be to fly over Ft. Pack & salute Bucking the Sun, but clouds are schooling, here & there, ahead.

Ah, and here's an illusion to remember. Off to the southwest is a fat half of the moon, the upper left half——which given the speed of the plane ~~looks~~ seems eerily, on first glance, to be drifting up and away, like a parachute caught in the jetstream.

Patches of snow on cirqued mtns below, but farmland blue south of them, & the next mtns are almost to the southern horizon—dim rusty, & there are lots of clouds in the way, so I haven't

June 16 cont. - pinpointed the geography yet. When'er we are, the land is fetchingly green down there.

Just asked the flight attendant our probable location, she said we're likely over Idaho, & that makes geographic sense, finally.

June 19--It is almost breathlessly busy around here, but here's a sample of the day's news:

--Harcourt is back to press for a 3rd printing, 5 or 6000, which will be 38 or 39,000 in print.

--Steve Charlston, our longtime broker, has a new brokerage--Dain--and we'll follow him there with a million and a half dollars or so.

--Patty Limerick, when I called to arrange dinner w/ her the night of my Boulder reading, has a new life, i.e., a boyfriend, a loss of 40 pounds, and the ~~new~~ emergence of what sounds like her inner clothes horse.

--And it turns out C and I are not going to Calgary to pierce the Canadian frontier w/ Whistling, but to Kelowna, B.C.

Amid it all, Michelle told me ~~the~~ y'day's reviews in the Boston Globe and Denver Post were good, which should mean they're at least OK.

20 June--Again today, booktour so hot and heavy it's hard to keep track of it. Main news was Becky's, from Costco, that they've been doing "very nicely" with the book and are re-ordering, re-stocking, whatever--in essence, we're over the hump where they decide whether to keep something on the shelves or not. And, pure stroke of luck, Pennie Clark called this afternoon when I'd accidentally left the phone machine off, C came in from the yard as it rang and rang and answered it, and out of that was Pennie taking me up on lunch invitation for July 5 and more vitally, restoring the signing that day that she did not know had been canceled. Also today, sundry phone interviews were set up--it looks like 3, back to back to back, Friday afternoon.

28 June - Sea Tac, @ table in Burger King area of North terminal, waiting to board the jet to Denver. Styrofoam coffee, a place to actually put a notebook on a table - what more can a 21st Century traveler ask?

So, on the first day past my 67<sup>th</sup> birthday, I am back on the book tour. Canada was a triumph, on Monday, an audience of 65 prime western Canada bookbuyers for stores, for me, Rob ~~Wiersema~~ Wiersema, Steve Zio and Jack Whyte. The Raincoast publishing folks who brought us to Kelowna all were nice as pie, especially Jamie Broadhurst, the director of marketing, a sweet man. So, we were hailed for having made the journey north, and my crafted Canada-centered 12-min. talk - Canada's cultural influence on me, instead of the perpetual heavy lean of U.S. influence they feel - seemed to touch a deep chord. Raincoast was impressive and plainly well-heeled in some manner C & I could not quite identify - except their basic smarts in being in book distribution as well as publishing - until Betty Mayfield explained it last night: they have been Canada's

28 June cont. - Harry Potter distributor  
from the start.

The Mayjelds came for crab dinner  
last night, helping mark my birthday.  
C valiantly put together as much of a  
pleasant day for me as she could, though  
most of the afternoon went to preparation  
for this trip, & other book tour biz. Given  
a heads-up by Becky that the NYTBR  
handling of Whistling was not entirely to  
her liking, I decided to grant myself a  
birthday gift and not read the damn  
thing until this morn. When I did look  
it over, I pretty much agreed with C  
that Sven Birkerts did some thumb-  
sucking in it - he would pounce on this  
hyphenated portion as "spring rhythm,  
typically," for instance - but he comes out  
mostly on my un-ironic side. My book  
wasn't savaged nor mocked, so much  
the better.

8:10 AM now, time to slope off to a  
restroom, then get into place for  
the next cattle-herding that air travel  
has become. The return flt from Kelowna  
got off to an awful start - 40 min. of  
the plane full of us roasting on a runway in  
90+ heat.

30 June - Denver airport, @ gate B42 1 hr before 8:55 AM flt time (theoretical). This airport is a mess to handle. I had the gods - Memory, my blessed begetter of Paul Millon's messia will do - I thought to ask last night's escort, Keighly Appel, whether this gargantuan has any United electronic kiosks tucked away toward the baggage area as Sea Tac does. The main United area, with the central kiosks, had block-long lines, so, heart in mouth, down I went to the deserted baggage area, 20 or so carousels, & began trying to follow Keighly & his memory of where the ~~star~~ stacks of little-used ones were. They were off a bit in their directions, but I found a United employee & she pointed me to carousel 14 - 4 blessed electronic ticket machines, 3 of us using them compared to 100s alone us.

Thus I am on the last lap of the next-to-last plane travel of this mighty tour. Had a capacity crowd last night in Boulder, although that store's reading area only seats 75. A good book signing after, enjoyed by Bill & Clarice Tidyman buying books in memory of Frances for their grandchildren etc. - they accounted for 7-8 of the 3 doz. or so sold.

30 June cont. - So, with the 100+ audience  
at Tattered Cover Lo Do the night before,  
+ the signing there magnified by the 200  
I signed for their 1st Edition club that  
afternoon, this trip has been a winner -  
so much so that I'm just now getting to  
the big news: lead review, warm & good, in  
USA Today y'day. Also, Ch. 1 bookstore &  
C both had the news, during my afternoon  
spate of phoning, that Whistling remains on  
the Book Sense national bestseller list, at  
#14. C also had fielded a phone call from  
Jamie Broadhurst of Raincoast, conveying  
an invitation to do an event at Bolen's  
in Victoria, biggest bookstore in the  
Canadian West.

2 July--Phone calls, phone calls, this Sunday of Whistling in the NY Times Book Review. David Laskin, David Williams, Kathy Ashton in Salt Lake, all seemed to think it was a fine review; as C says, I must pass that along to Becky, who found Sven Birkerts' ponderings a bit perplexing.

What an immense week it was, that ultimate one of June:

--It began with Canada, the key audience of western Canadian booksellers in Kelowna, the boyish grace of Jamie Broadhurst, the savvy of the sales manager Paddy Laidley, and the generous reception of my talk about the influence of Canada and the borderlands on my work. Betty and Roy Mayfield came for dinner the night of my birthday, and Betty, Calgarian, put her finger on what what I inadvertantly provided that audience: Canadians are forever aware of the cultural influence leaning so heavily on them from this side of the border that it's ~~x~~ news (possibly welcome news) that their culture is respected and reflected on by somebody down here.

--Then Denver and Boulder, capacity audiences both places, and the frosting on top of the Tattered Cover event, the 200 books I signed up for their 1st edition club.

--Thursday morn, in the Breuger's Bagels shop a block away from the Hotel Monaco, over my hot bagel-sausage-cheese breakfast sandwich, I opened USA Today and there was Bob Mintzeheimer's glowing review. Coupled with the NYTBR today, there's a couple million+ mentions of my surprising book.

--That night, 8 pm NY time, Becky called C (knowing I was incommunicado in Boulder before that signing) and told her they're going back to press for a 4th printing, total 43,600 in print.

--And by phone and mail, these divergent messages trickled in: Rascal Fair has been chosen the community read in Billings, and censored--i.e., parental permission required because of sex!--in Coeur d'Alene schools.

9 July--It has been a daylong battle to get to the diary, but here at last. Tomorrow we go east to the West--Spokane tomorrow night, then the Montana booktour--and may it all flourish as splendidly as this past week, the week of the Fourth of July:

--On the 5th, Eagle Harbor Books, standing room only crowd of 175, strong signing afterward, and sensational meal of sea scallops beforehand at the Four Swallows with Linda and Sydney. With Linda there and Eric Nalder also in the audience, a MacArthur Grant (and now a Bellagio!) and two Pulitzers in attendance--we are blessed in our friends.

--Next afternoon, 2 o'clock stopby as arranged at Snow Goose, the little bookstore in little Stanwood, and damned if we didn't sell somewhere between 20 and 30 Whistlings in a pleasant 45 min. or so of signing and gabbing. The store all in all has sold an amazing 50 copies.

--Onward to LaConner and the snazzy room at the Channel Lodge, briefly, before scooting for Bellingham and a real meal--prime rib at Dirty Dan's--before Chuck and Dee Robinson's reception for Whatcom Conservancy in their condo above the bookstore. Then a capacity crowd of 170 for my reading, and a sellout of books. Giving me the chance to rib Chuck and Dee, nationally known creative booksellers, for their latest innovation, no stock to sign.

--C and I had expected Snow Goose and Scott's store in Mount Vernon to be the tamest events of the Skagit tour, and while Snow Goose pleasantly surprised us, the turnout of a couple of dozen for my noonhour reading gave us about what we'd foreseen at Scott's. The signing was pretty good however, buoyed by a woman from Darrington who bought 7 Whistlings.

--The finale, in the Anacortes public library, hosted by Watermark, was great; a chuckling audience, nearly as good as the loose and ready-to-laugh one in Bellingham, and in both those cases I hit my stride in the reading.

How to sum up? Carol tells me the respect I am receiving, in these capacity crowds and big booksignings, is well-earned, and if diligence is the measure, that's so. It still startles me out of my "too good to last" view,

9 July cont.--however; as I type this, C is across the desk rattling away at her own typewriter, putting into her diary the unprecedented fact that I am an "Editor's Choice" in today's NY Times Book Review.

Hamilton, 17 July--We have nearly done it. The Costco signing in Missoula over the noon hour, sign up some stock at Auntie's when we hit Spokane in late afternoon, and we're through with the Montana booktour. Not before time, for the health of my right hand and the downward trend of accommodations--the grandly named Bitterroot River Inn here is awkwardly laid out, the biscuits and gravy at breakfast were lukewarm, and here under one of the handsomest of mountain ranges they managed to give us, on a reservation made an eon ago, an eastfacing view of the highway instead. The desk clerks also were determined not to honor Harcourt's payment-in-advance arrangement until the manager caught on, ran up to me in the lobby as I was schlepping our luggage in, and apologized.

Be that as it may, the bookstore success has been tremendous. 140 people for my Chapter One reading last night, in the upstairs meeting room of the Banque restaurant (indeed a whopping old bank building). Ch 1 has sold 89 of its 100 Whistlings; biggest signing of all was Montana Book Co. in Helena, 147 sold at the signing or by phone orders with another 20 or so phone orders inscribed but not paid for and therefore not in their cash register total. 203 total books sold at Waldenbooks in Gt. Falls, 135 (all they had) of Whistling plus 21 of my bookplates. Mary Jane at Country Bookshelf in Bozeman had 300 in stock, I signed every bloody one she had left--she didn't know the total for the signing by the time we left town, but it was large. Have not had a chance to total/guess-timate the entire result for this trip, but it's surely toward a thousand handsold signed Whistlings. And now to begin trying to call NY and check in with Michelle and Becky.

20 July - What is it w/ Costco this time? Lack of ads, most likely. This Aurora store was bang-up last time, and glacial this time - 10 sold in 1st 20 min., but it seems slower than that. Anyway, better for the immense book tour to do some winding - down here than in Salt Lake tomorrow or Billings on Sat.

24 July--It's over. I marked the end of the Whistling Season booktour by throwing away the return half of my plane ticket from the Billings High Plains Book Festival, which would have taken me back through the teeming Salt Lake airport on detestable Sky West, and buying myself a direct flight home on Horizon, getting myself home a little after 8 y'day morning, saving a day.

The finale, at the unsinkable King's English in Salt Lake (150 people on the patio in hundred-degree heat to hear my reading) and at Costco (steady line of buyers, mostly multiple copies, for 40 min.) and the Bair Theater (audience of 250-300?, large signing afterward), went as strongly as the rest of the tour. Terrific word-of-mouth for this book, both from booksellers and customers--more than with any of my other books, people on line told me they'd already read and loved it, and were back to buy it as gifts. Along with that, the reviews were consistently good, sometimes superb--the LA Times, Washington Post, Rocky Mtn News, PW, Booklist, Oprah's blessed O. In my sayonara phone call this morn to Michelle Blankenship in Harcourt publicity--it'll be a lingering sayonara but in essence she's done with major scheduling of me and on to next books--she said she'd been watching the Amazon.com numbers and it hangs in there at around #200. Coupled

24 July cont.--with 6 weeks (so far) on the independent stores' national BookSense list, a marvelous amount of copies are being sold.

So, road-weary as I was when I arrived home, I have to be satisfied and gratified, by it all. A sense of peace came over me y'day morn in the airport concourse as I swung along with my briefcase slung on one shoulder and my suitcase on the other, the last flight behind me. I was--am--keenly aware of leaving that chapter of life and tiptoeing into the next. But that and the memory mosaic of ~~of~~ this booktour are a story for tomorrow and beyond, as I dig through everything that has accumulated around this workspace; today is C's birthday, and we are doing our damndest to take life easy.

27 July--And now I am edited by the new publisher of the venerable house of Harcourt. Liz just called with the news that Andre Bernard has left for the Guggenheim Foundation and Becky Saletan moves up to his job. Methinks

I am attached to a literary rocket in this miraculous Becky. Liz's other news was that the pub'ing house has gone back to press on Whistling Season yet again, fifth printing, 48,600 total by Carol's and my count, grandly rounded off to "fifty thousand" by Liz.

So, on the grand level, things seem to be prospering. Down at bodily existence, I am bothered by the sporadic pull in the right groin, and am having to exercise my way out of it. There's also the continuing mess of my office, which I've had a hell of a time finding time to tackle, since alighting from the booktour. It'll all straighten out, more or less, but getting the grip into life that I want is not easy.

28 July--Back to Montana, a little more than 2 weeks from now. Marcella has asked me to speak at the memorial service for Dave Walter, and of course I must. This morn I pulled out my correspondence file with the two of them and found it goes back to 1982. (Interestingly, it evolves about two-thirds of the way through to letters primarily from Marcella rather than Dave, and I can only speculate

28 July cont.--what that reflects. Carol's and my deepening friendship with her? Dave's shift to an e-mail life, where we are not at the other end? His change of role at the Montana Historical Society, after he shifted from the library job? I can't sense any diminution in the friendship, just the wordage from his end.) It was an unexpected friendship, ~~with him~~ Dave's beyond the librarian desk, and it indubitably shows both of us as more flexible and amenable than our public visages indicated. Marcella has said C and I were among the very few--did she in fact say the only?--he liked to have stay with them; Amanda's basement bedroom, where we would sleep, he referred to as "Carol and Ivan's room," she's told us. We saw only littlest glimpses of the devils of addiction Dave wrestled with--the smoking that was bad for his heart, which he did quit; the alcohol, which as far as we know he fought to a standstill; the affairs of the heart, the three bad marriages before the long and successful one to Marcella; and for that matter, the attachment to the admittedly lovely family land far up the North Fork of the Flathead River, a hard six hours' drive from Helena and constant strenuous work when he was there--in his constant intake of soft drinks during dinner, say, or his nearly ironclad refusal to set foot into the wider world outside Montana. His sorcery with Montana history, which included the basement library at home and his own set of reference works and files that existed at oblique and sometimes deeper angles than the Historical Society's formal holdings, was a terrific aid to me; book after book of mine is stitched with lore shorn from Dave's fleeces of history and spun by my imagination. The goodbye to Dave that looms in Helena on Aug. 13 is not unexpected, as he had heart trouble and alarming episodes perhaps our entire span of knowing him, but it's a tough one.

Better news, from that tireless provider of it, The Whistling Season: it's still on the national BookSense list, #13.

1 Aug.--"Well, hell, Andre. Congratulations, I guess."

So I began my phone call of farewell to Andre Bernard, best publisher this writer has ever had.

Y'day afternoon I put in a phone message to Becky, congratulating her on her new title, and within minutes she called back and filled me in on Andre's departure. He has reasons: his wife diagnosed with multiple sclerosis last fall, kids to put through college, long acquaintance-ship with Edward Hirsch who will be his boss at the Guggenheim Foundation, doubtless more money and a job he can leave at the office more easily than anyone in publishing ever does. Becky said she was "devastated" at first, as Andre was the best boss she's ever had, they worked very well together etc. She just wanted to pull the covers over her head, the first few days after the news, but then went to Santa Fe, and a few nights into that supposed vacation, she and Marshall had dinner and tequila and watched lightning play over the mountains, and she said, "I'm beginning to get interested in the job."

Back to Andre, this morn. He met my mixed greeting with a quote, Harold Ross ~~knows John McNulty~~ when John McNulty left the New Yorker for another job: "God bless you, McNulty, goddamn you."

10 August--Odious airport times ahead, as the British have broken up a plot to set off explosions in U.S.-bound flights. On the 12th I endure through SeaTac to fly to Helena for Dave Walter's memorial service.

This morning I am actually, at last, on the 11th Man ms. The writing sputtery, but I'm getting some dabs done.

Aug. 12--With lots of kinds of trepidation, I'm about to embark for the airport and Montana, for Dave Walter's memorial service. Am allowing more than 2 hours to get through the security line, and then there's the layover in Great Falls--supposedly brief but who the hell knows--and tomorrow there's the emotion to be regulated somehow as I deliver my remembrance of him. Not one bit of it do I want to do, but this is a case of keeping the faith of friendship, and so to SeaTac and beyond I go.

Aug. 12 - San Tac, gate C27, in this strange world of travel. Less than 72 hrs after the British busted the plot to blow up trans-Atlantic airliners, & zoomed through the security check here in about 10 minutes - shortest entry line I've seen all year, then so many X-ray machines available that I went thru screening with no one else in line with me. The absurdity of the ban on liquids etc. is that I couldn't bring the usual tidy lunch of yogurt & apple juice, & so ~~that~~ I spent about 45 min. (at \$15) in the Anthony's restaurant lounge to have a smoked salmon scramble - much food, but I may need it before the day is done.

& I just entered the modern all-talk all-the-time world by calling C on our newly acquired cell phone & reporting my progress. Looking around, I seem to be the only airport ~~habitué~~ habitué who combines that technology & this one, pen onto diary page.

Aug 13 - Helena, in the Great Northern hotel on quite a lovely Montana high country morn - the air crisp, but 80° promised.

The Horizon flight from SeaTac lived up to its name - it was somewhere out there on the horizon instead of at the jetway by takeoff time - & all in all we were  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr late arriving in Helena, with a hell of a bumpy approach & bouncy landing in Gt Falls as well. Even so, I figured I had time to swing by & see Marcella, cell-phoned her, & indeed spent nearly an hour at the house, Dave's daughters on their way but not yet there. Marcella seems more composed than I think I would be; a couple of spates of tears as some facet of life with Dave came up (the 5 p.m. ritual of arriving home & catching up on each other's day, for instance) but she unblinkingly weeps a lot & moves on. She went in to her new job one day this week, is moving step by step on the legal matters (Dave did not leave a will, alas) and so on.

I then drove my rental Ford Taurus here to this newish hotel in the so-called Great Northern Town Center, a developer's

Aug. 13 cont. - Avenue that has absolutely  
rotten commerce from downtown; Bill  
Liang and Harrison are staying up there  
in East Clance Eubel at the Henry Park  
Plaza (for the Langian reason indicative  
to me) of they came to supper last night  
saying the Eubel is dead. & reconsidered  
up there this morning, saying not a street  
to parking for this afternoon's events, and  
Bill & Harrison aren't overreacting. Dad  
attempts to frequent, no anchor business.  
When I did my book signing at AT  
Book Co. & didn't have a chance to look  
around, so it was sobering, this morning,  
to realize how much it ~~is~~ like  
that Apache and the and atrophies.

Dinner conversation with the Lang also  
took an unexpected direction: Bill has  
been urged by the recent committee  
again to apply for an endowed chair -  
\$110,000 a year & academic appointments -  
at Washington State. The chairman - what  
& think ought to be the deal - makes &  
told him so - is Pullman itself. USC, says  
Bill, is the most remote from any metropolitan  
area of any major US university. How do  
you appeal "no urban"? & he says he doesn't  
do it, but who knows.

Aug. 13 cont. - 5:30, back at the hotel after the reception in the Montana Club, done & done. I got thru my part of Dave Walter's memorial service with some quavers but without actually breaking down. Several other speakers did go into tears, but not Marcella! Brave beyond belief, she finished the ceremony with a beautifully written point-by-point remembrance from her and the daughters, including some of his asides to her as they would be driving somewhere and then his capstone comment, "You're going to want to write that down."

After, at the dark-paneled and rather magnificently timeworn & gloomy Montana Club, I asked Bill Lang his impression of the service - too ambitious, he judged, but we learned a lot of sides of Dave we didn't know. He caught what had also impressed me, that none of us - & there were 8, counting Marcella - repeated any stories or anecdotes.

Aug. 14 - Valena airport, waiting for the day plane to arrive from GT Falls so it can whisk me home. Met Marcelle for lunch - burgers & fries at the Brew House near the GT Northern Hotel - & we then caravanned to the airport for me<sup>to</sup> turn in the rental car, then we had an hour or so at her place, before she ran me back out here for this, alas, inevitably late SOBing flight. We'd no sooner got into the ~~house~~ house & gone to her computer to check on the progress of the plane than the electricity went off. - Aha! The sound of plane engines, only 15 min. late. -

She is doing remarkably well, it seems to me, from her courageous finale in speaking at the memorial service to her sizing up of Dave's daughters & their situations.

This morning, I got in 3 1/2 hours of research at the Historical Society library, grabbing off 91 photocopied pp. of WWII memoirs & letters, photos, etc. Some good stuff, including the New Guinea combat diary of that odd-card historian I had so unlikely a friendship with, Stan Davison of Dillon & the right-wing edge of the political universe.

Aug. 15--And so I am home, duty done, another friend consigned to earth. Y'day I put in a highly useful morn in the Montana Historical Society library, scooping in WWII memoirs & letters home & pics, then met Marcella for lunch at the Brew Pub and spent the rest of the time with her, until my 4 pm+ Horizon flight home. It was 20 min. or so late in arriving at SeaTac, but traffic flowed remarkably well and I was here in the house soon after 6. C meanwhile had put in her first day on jury summons, peremptorily dismissed on the 1st case she was called for.

16 Aug.--The mortality beat. I am about 48 hours home from the memorial service for Dave Walter, and this afternoon was my regular visit to Dr. Ginsberg to measure the status of my smoldering myeloma. Still smoldering (rather than flaring), so that's probably as good as the news can be, there. The prospect now is that he'll put me on a bone-strengthening biphosphate called Pomidronate after our next session, in Nov. Thus I have a 3-month reprieve.

Looking back on Helena: 8 speaking segments at Dave's memorial were a lot, but it was notable that no one repeated stories, Dave had enough sides to him to justify all the angles of remembrance. Dorothy Bradley, who might well have won her gubernatorial bid in another state, presided in the sanctuary. In tan slacks, matching sandal-strap shoes, wearing a top of variegated Southwest colors, slim as a blade and with sharp cheekbones, she still is quite a figure. And a real pro at the podium, so things moved along, speaker to speaker, quite nicely. I didn't get any count of the crowd, but it must have been 150-200. The ceremony repeatedly got emotional--Bob Swartout and Margaret King/land both choking up during their presentations, and at the very end, bless her, Lory Morrow from the Historical Society, who had bravely held herself together during her time at the microphone, absolutely broke down, full tears, running nose, the whole lot; I hugged her against me to walk her up the aisle and out. For me, the hardest to get through was the musical interlude, Joan Baez singing "Forever Young"--what a heart-wrencher that voice and those words were.

16 Aug.--A TV reporter got hold of me, and then Dorothy Bradley, outside the church, though I forgot to tune in at 10 that night to see the result. After the service, in the Montana Club, it was a tribal gathering, historians thick on the rug--Bill Lang, Bill Farr, Harry Fritz, Duane ~~Kay~~ Hampton, Bob Swartout, Mary Murphy--along with dozens of other people who'd known Dave or Marcella (many of her Heritage Project high school teachers came) or the family. Norma Ashby was there, visibly suffering at not being in the spotlight, accustomed as she was in her "Today in Montana" TV years. I promptly got myself a beer and tried to buy Norma a drink, but she specified water, so I ordered "a glass of Helena's tapwater for the lady." Did manage to buy Dorothy and the man in her life, Dan Hurwitz, a drink--Dan asked if they had Moose Drool beer, and I was proud of the Montana Club that they did not. So it went, until I left at about 5. Met Judy and Fred Flanders at the Silver Star for dinner, and we talked about everything from how the Great Northern development project has drained the economy out of Last Chance Gulch to mountain-climbing Fred has done--Denali!

17 Aug.--Now that I can compartmentalize my health situation to "later," it's time to report y'day's incredible piece of generosity from Tom Jones--Thomas William Jones, he of painting fame, White House Christmas cards, Carmel gallery, the whole extent of watercolor eminence. Tom painted and sent the Whistling Season schoolhouse--a stunning evocation at about sunset beneath a moody western sky, the three windows of the schoolhouse lit, a patient saddlehorse at the hitching rail outside, the flagpole and pump in the places I wrote of them; all of it titled "Latin Lesson." Man oh man, Tom: from Paul and Morrie, not to mention Ivan and Carol, eternal gratitude. When I called to tell him how flabbergasted we were, he said he's had a headful of images from the book, and wanted to do the scene of Paul and Rose in the field with the lantern as Halley's Comet arrives, except that the bullsye lantern I gave Paul wasn't the kind he wanted to paint! Must reiterate to him in person, artistic license, Tom, paint all you want of my stuff!

Aug. 18--The Whistling Season rose back to #1 on the Pacific Northwest Booksellers bestseller list, for the week of Aug. 13, good-bh.

21 Aug.--Got back to writing, not much but some, this morn, with work on the scene of the Senator about to discover the "Men Who Gave All" list. The weekend went heavily to gardening, and C finished painting the deck posts that worst needed it. Damborgs came for supper Saturday night, and while they can always outcook us, they can't match our ingredients--homegrown Chioggia beets I roasted on the BBQ then let sweeten in the refrigerator overnight, Jade beans in C's fine recipe, a ~~simple~~ salad of our leaf lettuce and tomatoes, and cold sockeye salmon. Also, it was a pleasant evening on the deck, the three cruise ships passing, a couple of rounds of drinks, the Olympics in full series of cutout profiles marching south. Bless them, Mark and Lou obviously got a kick out of it all, and brought a splendid peach cobbler for dessert as well.

I socialized some more this noon, picking up David Laskin and then we met Lee Soper at the Flying Fish in Belltown. A good time was had, Lee and David having bonded when David looked him up as a source on NW artists for his NY Times piece of Tobey, Graves et al. After, I drove Lee up to Horizon House to meet Joie--'Plan B,' says Lee, at 82, contemplating how long they can stay in their Queen Anne condo.

28 Aug.--Lo and behold, thumbed through the New Yorker last week and there waited a pleasant short review of Whistling, first one, I do believe, since Winter Brothers.

Weather in the ~~80s~~ high 70s, more likely low 80s, this afternoon, with a cook break supposedly coming tomorrow. C and I whaled into yardwork each morning of last weekend, trimming the front hedge, veg gardening etc. This is a nice time of harvest--potatoes, all kinds of berries, pears, plums just about ready, as are the Melrose apples.

Accordingly we fed the Walkinshaws out of our garden (with the conspicuous exception of the rib roast) last Saturday--baked potatoes, green beans, salad with our tomatoes. That may have been our farewell to Walter Walkinshaw beneath this roof--thank goodness it was an

28 Aug. cont.--exquisite evening for sitting on the deck--as he has become more and more unsteady on his feet. He made it into the house with Jean's help, and I made sure to get hold of him to aid him back to the car when they left. Age is being savage on Walt; we last saw them a couple of months ago, and he looks as if two years have been added on to him--he's much more bent. All the while, he is mentally sharp as ever. Alas, our friends.

On the literary front, I am feeling somewhat more freed of chores--C and I finished the goddamn caulking and painting of the deck's posts and windows last week--and spent this morning arranging research material into specific files and planning the research days of the Montana trip we'll make at the time of the Missoula book festival. It ain't words on the page, something like today, but it's at least something.

Ah, and a royalty surprise today: \$492 from A River Runs through It, due to Highbridge's issuance of the CD. The previous royalty check was for something around \$4.

30 Aug.--#1 again, on the Pacific NW Booksellers bestseller list that C pulled off the Internet y'day. Incredibly, The Whistling Season has owned the summer, from Bellingham to Boise. The big guns of autumn will be rolling into bookstores after Labor Day, with all manner of national hype behind them, but what a blessed run this has been across the sunny months. Not even the new national best-sellers, such as Special Topics in Calamity Physics or James Lee Burke's newest, have dislodged my schoolkids.

Sept. 4--How many times has something like this been written in these pages: Labor Day and we labored. C did laundry, I worked on ms this morn and then on finances (C's IRA distribution request for Dain, cost-ave. checks for mutual funds, notes to myself for stock buys). So, we have spent the ~~w~~ holiday weekend without budging from home, getting considerable work done on the property, eating royally, generally feeling mellow.

On the work front, I continue to scramble. Hunkering in for this weekend and dealing with a lot of finances should help; will see, tomorrow, as I get back to the 11th Man.

10 Sept.--8 a.m., and in an hour and a half we head out for Leavenworth, Kitsch-Bavaria in the Cascades, for today's pair of booksignings at what we trust is the estimable bookstore there, A Book for All Seasons. Good news came Friday, Becky Saletan is coming to town, and so we're to meet for lunch on Thursday after she meets with the godzillian legion at Amazon.com. As of now, I also intend to show the flag at Elliott Bay that night, when the Harcourt publicity director, Jennifer Gilmore, reads from her novel.

The week's writing finally shaped up, 5 decent pp. of the bed scene that opens ch. 4 and a couple of rough pp. beyond that, although it's not quite the output I feel I need. On what I hope is the stronger side of the outlook for achieving this book before something medically nasty catches up with me, I feel more settled into the resolve that booktours, most speeches, similar chores that are not direct book work, must be put aside from here on. It has been 28 years, from right about now, since I put my shoulder to This House of Sky, and thus my wages of bookselling are sufficiently earned, I think. For some time now--hell, a lot of time of telling people "no" on talks, articles, forewords, conferences--I have been aware of Wallace Stegner staying too long at the dance, out there on speaking tour when he was 80 or damn near and his hip was killing him. Coincident to this, phone call the other day from Philip Fradkin as he finishes up his biography of Stegner, checking to see if I had any letters from Wally for him. After some telephone tag I got Philip actually on the line and we divined that he'd seen all my Stegner correspondence in the little batch I provided to Page Stegner some time back. While he had me, Philip read me the couple of grafs he has about me in the book--it sounds good to me, I told him--and we got to talking about Wally a bit. Fradkin says he'll show Stegner as less lovable but more human than the usual perception. Couple of detail that sent my eyebrows up: Wally was so ashamed of his father--that stands out powerfully, I've always figured; the old man ultimately was a murderer--that when he went back to East End, Saskatchewan, in 1953 (I assume for Wolf Willow research) he did it "under a different

10 Sept. cont.--persona." Holy H. Jesus, I thought to myself, an assumed name to go back to a town of your boyhood? For that matter, I've always wondered what that business of changing the town's name to Whitemud ~~which~~ is all about, when the man at least ostensibly was writing about it nonfictionally. The other nugget from Fradkin is a greatly intensified view of something I'd glimpsed and guessed at, in something Page said or wrote or maybe just as I thought about how much traveling etc.--the opposite of no-saying--the Stegners did while Page was a kid; in short I knew Wally and Page had their problems, but Fradkin says the "violent streak" came down from Wally's father to Wally, toward Page, and in Page's relationship with his own son. Fradkin checked around in, what, psycho-medico literature and could find no such thing as an "anger gene" being passed along that way, but he says there it was. Mary "interceded," he said, and "helped Wally a lot", but it's going to be eye-popping to see what Fradkin has come up with on the Stegner family situation. On a more elevated note, I said to Philip on the phone, okay, you and I are old pro's at turning out wordage, yet Wally with no journalistic training could blaze out pages while we're still trying to think about it: how'd he do that? By working all the time, was his answer; he said he'd found that Wally wrote seven mornings a week, back there at Wisconsin and Harvard when he was teaching 4 classes, and maintained a big correspondence, and did it all with two-finger typing, having lost the tip of a finger in some accident, I guess.

But ah, diary, we get to ask: did he have you?

17 Sept.--A crammed week but a gainful one in one respect: got a pardon from the warden--my beloved editor/publisher Becky--and need not go on a Midwestern ~~round~~ tour when the paperback comes out next May. Also, while it still seems to me slow going, I did manage to extend and spiff up the opener of ch. 4, Ben and Cass very much in bed.

And so we are at a weekend, of some kind of equipoise: when I called in to Group Health for my next session with Dr. Ginsberg (and the beginning of Pamidrenate), the schedule was not yet available for Nov. and so that is in abeyance, and the Montana trip is ahead, and what I hope

17 Sept. cont.--is the shift to autumn and settled-in writing. On that topic of autumn, we finally had some rain, night of the 13th or 14th, and maybe will be delivered some more today.

Becky Salatan's visit: she spent the morn at Amazon.com w/ Laurie Brown, Harcourt's sales and marketing director, and Paul Von Drasek, who deals with Amazon for H'court, then met me for lunch at 1 at the Dahlia Lounge. The Dahlia was not at the top of its game, the service slow etc., but it was grand to see Becky. Facially, she looks great, maybe a trifle thinner under the new job of publisher--though she says exercise and regular eating have suffered--and seems on top of it. Such business as we had to talk about:

--Told her I'm doing my best to provoke another printing (it would be the sixth) of Whistling Season for the holidays, by calling Montana bookstores and a few others to sign up more stock for them if they'll order more in. She said she expects there will indeed be such a printing.

--I put it to her that she should decide whether she wants me to concentrate on work on the next book or put my body on the line in the Midwest booktour Michelle sketched to me, Minneapolis-Milwaukee--St. Louis-Kansas City and, groan, Iowa for that dreaded trek through monster airports (O'Hare or Minneapolis/St. Paul) and a shrimpy airline to get to perfectly wonderful Prairie Lights bookstore. She said she'd talk to her sales cohorts and see what they thought, and that night at Elliott Bay it devolved that Laurie Brown figures it is not essential that I make that tour, given how much groundwork we did for Whistling with the big hardback tour.

--The kicker on getting out of that tour (I winced damn hard when Michelle recited both these to me) is that I said I'd go to the '07 South Dakota Book Festival--ai yi yi, in farthest Deadwood--should they choose Whistling as the year's state read. I'd had Michelle get the figure on how many paperback copies the Humanities Commission there would actually buy, and it's plenty significant enough--a minimum of 600, and they bought 1400 when a previous Harcourt book, The Work of Wolves was Chosen, and 1700 for Gilead this year--that I said yes, it's worth doing.

Sept. 17 cont.--Becky's visit also produced an absolute first in all my years as a quivering writer, a copy of Harcourt's sales charts on sales of the book so far. It's not only a heartening document--Whistling looks safely past earning-out, and while I'd have to check the contract line, triggering the \$25,000 bonus for doing so within its first year--but a revelation. I find that I was accidentally right in skewing the booktour to the independent stores, as those are the ones that made it a national bestseller~~x~~ on their BookSense list, while unbeknownst to me and indeed against any expectations Barnes & Noble was selling the hell out of the book--5,269 copies so far.

And Becky is good and frank about talking about how things are going for her at the publishing house. She says the one thing ~~xxxx~~ still outstanding that she never had a peek at over Andre's shoulder is dealing with the literary estates--Woolf and Orwell and the like--and there's a lot at stake there, any mistake can cost big bucks. She also told a story akin to the experience C and

I had more than once, going off on a hiking trip and coming back to find the world had turned on its ear while we were in the woods (Nixon's "Saturday Night Massacre," Eagleton's meltdown from the McGovern ticket). It has happened to her and Marshall a similarly spooking number of times, and this time when they came out of the Adirondacks and saw no big headlines, they figured all was well. Becky then began going through her e-mail in the car as they drove to their Berkshires place, and she said, "Here it is, Marshall. Gunter Grass is a Nazi." She told me she thinks ultimately the commotion ~~xxxx~~ will be good for Harcourt's sales of the memoir, ~~xx~~ but who knows.

I did a literary doubleheader that day, going back downtown again to Elliott Bay for the reading by Jennifer Gilmore, Harcourt's publicity director and a 1st-time novelist. Becky, Laurie et al sprung a surprise on Jennifer by showing up in Seattle at this time, and she seemed gratified I ~~came back~~ turned out, too. Likewise Rick Simonson was on hand to do Jennifer's introduction his very self, and the sales rep George Carroll showed up, so besides the young Amazonians and chums from Jennifer's Seattle years of waitressing and the New Yorkers, she had about a century of ~~xx~~ us Pacific Northwest old hands there for her.

Sept. 17 cont.--Before any of that, Beck's visit etc., C and I drove the  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs to Leavenworth last Sunday, the 10th, for the booksigning at A Book for All Seasons. It was a trip with quirks--the bookstore put us up in its Shakespeare Room above the store, rather dark and somehow gawky and fussy at the same time, and L'worth itself was a hive of tourists, day-trippers, whoever the hell--but a resounding sales success, 55 Whistlings sold and 90 paperbacks (an across-the-board rarity as well: sold some of every one of my books). The next morning, having tidily packed along our own breakfast, we pulled out at 6 and were home here in lovely weather by 8:30.

Lastly, and I'm going to leave details of this to C's diary entry, on Friday the 15th she showed her San Diego cousin, Pat, and Pat's travelling chum Dore, around the city, then we provided them scotch and crab for supper; a good time was had.

Oct. 8--The year's second big Montana road trip, perhaps the last for a while, is behind us. C captured the essence of the journey in her diary entries of the past couple of days while I've been fending with accumulated mail etc., and the detailed schedule is in the back of this diary. The impromptu stock signings, with book-sellers either fetching up with us or our drop-bys at the stores, produced 506 signed Whistlings, 236 signed Skys, and 114 signed Heart Earths, besides the healthy signings at the Wilma theater and the next day after my fine session with Margaret Kingsland. The weather cooperated, did it ever, golden autumn at its height along the streams as we drove from Missoula to Helena on Sunday Oct. 1, and still a lot of leafy color when we headed west from Great Falls to Ritzville on the 5th.

We began in Missoula in traditional style, dinner at Lois Welch's. (I gulped when, seating us, Lois put me in Jim's old chair at the end of the table.) Usual suspects on hand, Kittredge and Annick, Bevis and Juliette; the weather was so mellow we had a couple of rounds of drinks in the backyard first. The one clinker of the evening, I think more so for C than for me, was the presence of Frances McCue, she of the blabby performance at last spring's dinner with Alice Quinn and still afflicted with

Oct. 8 cont.--blab. She's doing some kind of book about Richard Hugo (and of course did the Hugo House conference on Jim Welch) and so the Missoula gang seems-- seems--to accept her, and she does/rattle off high-toned writing--Murakami, Cormac McCarthy--with them. (When the talk turns that way, I sit and look abstractly interested keeping it to myself that whenever I read McCarthy I have the damndest sensation of hearing Faulkner guffawing in the background.) Kittredge, bless him, is happy to have his novel out into the world. Annick said she is finishing up a book about traveling back to the Midwest with her dog Bruno. Bevis and Juliette were about to leave on an irresistible bargain Caribbean cruise.

And the next night, Lois introduced me with grace and elegance at the packed Wilma Theater. (Kittredge, alas, didn't fare as well; David James Duncan's introduction of him was so self-absorbed it's a wonder Duncan didn't disappear up his own butthole in front of the wondering eyes of the audience--he concluded by taking credit for Bill doing the novel, direct result of Duncanian urging. I didn't get a chance to ask Bill afterward how it feels to be clay in the hands of the almighty Dunc.) Particularly nifty was her segue from saying that as a former teacher she could go on about me at length, "but I won't even go on as long as David James Duncan." She concluded with the graf she'd shown C and C had okayed, the great and noble news that Jim that day had been enshrined at the French book festival with Hemingway and Faulkner. As to my reading--the wrong-end-to horse race--it went well, although not the best I've ever done. The logistics of the evening, delay upon miscommunication upon bloviation (Duncan), wore on me and the audience. To get started we had to wait for the mayor of Missoula, John Engen, to arrive, prompting me to joke and not, in the direction of the Festival folks, a la Treasure of the Sierra Madre, "Bill, we didn't sign on for any stinkin' mayor, did we?" Engen was actually quite funny when he finally showed up and took the stage, and the deadlier delay was an intermission after Kittredge read that stretched on to at least 20

Oct. 8 cont.--minutes; C was sitting in the middle of the audience with Margaret Kingsland, and I knew she wanted to wring Mark Sherouse's neck over all the dead space in the evening. In any case, we now have gone and done the Montana Festival of the Book. Later, I talked over with C what we ought to do should Whistling Season win the Montana Book Award next year--I think they usually give it to a writer actually living in Montana, and it seems to me they should--and concluded that a quick trip, perhaps flying in (Barry Lopez did so, in and out the same day, ~~himself~~ for his Festival session), would be in order.

The House of Sky session the next day was classy, with Margaret Kingsland providing me some questions--in fact, how do I approach the issue of class in my books; and where do the strong women in my books come from--I could riff on. We had standing-room only, couple of hundred people, and they were a wonderful crowd, getting everything. When we took questions from the audience, one guy put up his hand and said he didn't have a question but testimony to my factual accuracy: he'd been born in '39, like me, grew up in northern Montana (Inverness), like me, and said I had it exactly right where the location of that (whore)house in Shelby was. The place exploded in laughter, and I set off a second round by peering at him as if trying to place him, asking "Were you there the same...?" Similarly, a woman commented on Sky's miraculous recovery of memory/detail, even unto making her understand the terms about lambing etc., and I joked that yeah, it took literary guts or something to explain a gutwagon to a national audience, I didn't see Garrison Keillor tackling that. (Prairie Home Companion was being broadcast from Missoula that afternoon. I came within a couple of minutes of meeting him at the Festival book table when I went down at 9:45 to sign up stock; Keillor was sloping out as I arrived, and the book guys said he'd been buying books. Otherwise, PHC not only ignored the Book Festival but ran competition with it.)

Oct. 8 cont.--That night, the 30th, we went to dinner with Mary Blew, after having sat in on the session she and Judy Blunt and another women did on writing about domestic violence in the West. (Similar good fortune in dinner company the night before, when we pailed out of the hot and crowded silent auction in the basement of the Wilma; we gathered in Jack Nisbet and then Lois Welch and had a dandy meal and visit at El Cazador. Jack claimed to be in his late fifties, for crying out loud, although it all adds up when I think how long we've known him; as carved and lean as he is, he looks, oh, maybe 45.) We chose The Shack as a place known to be leisurely and it was damn near glacial; even so, when we'd finally eaten, Mary said she'd like to have a cup of coffee and dawdle some more because she was having such a good time. Indeed, it was an evening of good talk as it almost always is with Mary, my exact contemporary in age and with her own Montana ranch childhood, along lines that included these:

--She's finishing up a novel for U. of Nebraska Press, a contemporary one based on the mock train robberies that are now staged on a dinner train in the Judith Basin. Her brother-in-law is one of the faux bandidoes, merrily firing off a shotgun blast in the dusk that she says looks like a flamethrower. She says the question that interests her is, who's entertaining whom in these dress-up games?

--She surprised me with an insight I'd never seen, that being female had freed her from the family ranch. Bill Kittredge, she contrasted, had to go through hell to get away from the family spread in Oregon.

--That brought us to Bill's work, and we turned out to be in delighted total accord on our favorites, "Breaker of Horses" and "The Phantom Silver." She broached that she thought Ray Carver had been a bad influence on Bill, turning his stories toward that flat toughness--she pointed out that even the title We Are Not In This Together is Carveresque--and I wholeheartedly agreed, telling her how outraged I was when Bill told me Carver edited "Phantom Silver" out of Bill's story collection because it didn't "fit." It didn't fit

Oct. 8 cont.--Carverland, was the problem. Mary also riffed on how much in thrall Carver had been to Gordon Lish, as shown by the Lish-edited piece and Carver's ms of the story about the birthday cake and the dead boy--Lish's pencil was full of cold blood.

Along with all the Festival stuff, we worked in stock signings of Whistling Season for JoAnn Jensen of the Kalispell store and Judy Klein of the Hamilton one. Most amazing was Susan Dennison of the Waldenbooks at Southgate in Missoula: she had nearly 500 books waiting for me--nearly 200 Whistling, 200 Sky, and 100 Heart Earth. (We split 'em into 2 days.)

We went onward to Helena, spending the next 3 nights with Marcella. C has nicely encapsuled Marcella's situation, gallantly dealing with Dave's complicated profusion of kids, library, files, land. At the Montana Historical Society, we got in 2 days of strong research on WWII tales and details. One particular South Pacific invasion detail that leapt out and has stuck in my head: an Aussie soldier with a lantern to guide in the landing craft, standing in the surf buck-naked except for his Digger hat. All in all, we came away with 300+ photo-copied pp.

And then Great Falls, where I naively figured we could duck through town without social niceties at the Arnsts!--I simply was running out of energy for any more socializing--and of course was front-paged on the Tribune when I talked to middle-school writing students at the Cascade County Historical Society. That aside, the Society did wonderfully well by us, spreading out their entire WWII collection of artifacts--uniforms, goggles, medical kits--for us in 2 rooms. Next morning, we buzzed around town, taking notes and pics at Hill 57 and other sites that will figure in the book, and then drove to Ritzville for the night. Helluva large day, but it set us up ~~xxxx~~ beautifully to get home in good time the next morning.

And I came home to another request from another biographer--Jackson Benson, this time--to turn down.

12 Oct.--The week's elegances. Monday I retrieved our typewriters, cleaned and new-ribboned, from the fix-it guy at the anachronistic Richards place. And Tuesday, Bob Spangler delivered our splendid new chair and side table, miraculous arches of wood where the clumpy old leather chair sat in the thrust of the living room.

Workwise, not bad; at start of the week I decided to use the Seeley Lake smokejumper base as the conscientious objector site in 11th Man and it's providing some nice possibilities.

18 Oct.--Only Wednesday, but a kind of an end of the week, as tomorrow goes to out-of-the-house chores (signing up bookstore stock, lunch with Tony, signing up more bookstore stock) and Friday and perhaps the weekend has to be allotted to the Salt Lake Book Festival speech. That speech is the finale, of this year and who knows how long after that.

I did a couple of strong pp. on 11th Man today, after limping along a page at a time the first two days of this week. It remains a tough book, probably always will be, and I may be wacko for taking it on at this point of my life. I only know to write what lures me at the time, and maybe it'll work again. I have felt somewhat rocky at times lately, maybe the onset of dank weather, maybe the nagging case of bad back--bad right leg mostly, the old tightness all the way down to the back of the knee--that I'm finally getting to ease up with exercises; maybe what's awaiting me. (Blood tests again a couple of weeks from now, Dr. Ginsberg appointment in about three weeks.) Best to blame it on the weather until I know otherwise.

It's Provinces night, the monthly date with the blessed Nelsons. Tomorrow C entertains the ladies of GLASS, mostly so 92-year-old Margaret Svec can get out of the house, and I clear out of here to simplify matters. We socialized in fine fashion last weekend: Friday the 13th at ~~David and Marjorie~~ Marjorie and David Williams', along with David Laskin and Kate O'Neill, celebrating David W's book contract for his Stories in Stone. As C said later, the 6 of us are a good mix, ongoing conversation from the instant we step in the door. The next night, to the Damborgs' for supper, along

Oct. 27--7a.m. of a travel day, the book festival trip to Salt Lake. On the one hand, I wrung a 1st-class plane ticket out of them, and on the other, I don't have any enthusiasm for going. What should have been a fairly straightforward 40-45 min. speech inexplicably kept looping long, to the point where I had to go back into it after C and I listened to my taped rehearsal and cut some more. Tonight's gig is also lumpy, a talk for an audience that is half Utah Nature Conservancy and half Alta Club regulars there to be entertained by a reading from Whistling Season. I've cobbled together some conservation material, and will do that portion a hell of a lot more impromptu than I usually do. But it still comes out to doing a doubleheader on this trip, as I also did at the Missoula book festival, and I am going to have to be more obdurate against such doubling up. At least I am making the trip as short as I possibly can.

2 Nov.--The rains have come, and November. Damp days as far as the forecasts extend. Until this weather moved in, we had clear chilly days, and C and I made use of the afternoons, clearing away leaves, barbering the raspberries.

It's coming onto 4:30, and I haven't managed to come near the diary since the Salt Lake trip; long days on 11th Man are finally paying off, I think, in the hard-to-keep-unpreachy conscientious objector scene between Ben and Dex--it feels as if I'm within reach of finishing it tomorrow.

Salt Lake: broom on the conning tower, as C would say, clean sweep. The evening speaking gig that I contributed to the Utah Nature Conservancy went well enough, given that I hashed it together without a usual script--the 90 or so in the audience at the museumy Alta Club got, among other things, a short dose of Roy Silen's scolding of humanity over extinctions--and there was an interesting meal ~~hooked~~ afterward footed by Dave Livermore of the Conservancy. Sixteen or so of us in a fireplaced side room of the stately Club, wine flowing (and when I ordered a scotch, they had no Cutty Sark but brought me a double of single-malt Oban)

2 Nov. cont.--which makes me think the Mormon donors (I'm assured there are such) were segregated out of that part of the evening. I sat next to a very lively couple, Tom and Judy Billings; he's a lawyer, and I puzzled over people sometimes saying "Tom" and sometimes "Judge Billings," until it emerged that she's the judge, of the state court of appeals. Dave Livermore added a fillip to the let's-go-around-the-table-and-introduce-ourselves routine, asking us each ~~name~~ to name someone we'd ideally like to go camping with (I readily chose Aldo Leopold, woodcraft and wordcraft both). Tom Billings said Teddy Roosevelt, because he'd like to see what a true Republican looked like. Nobody flinched.

Next day, my fee speech at the Book Festival, live on the radio, I felt like I hit my stride; await the promised tape with interest.

And ~~on Monday~~ at the start of this week I once more had the 3-month blood tests. Next Wednesday, I see Dr. Ginsberg for his evaluation, and at very least probably begin the regimen of Pomidronate intravenously.

3 Nov.--There. The printer is disgorging twenty-some pp. of 11th Man, wherein Ben seeks out Dex at the conscientious objector camp. It has been a tricky scene to write, much to impart but trying to keep some subtlety to it, and I am damn glad to have it in the bank finally.

Phone call from Ann Nelson minutes ago--"Is this check for real?"--reminds me I haven't yet inscribed for the ages the main news of the weekend I was in Salt Lake. When I called C from there, she said "Let me go get the royalty statement and read it to you"--This House of Sky sold 9,996 copies in the 1st half of this year, the most ever. \$11,447 in royalties, four or five times what I'd been expecting.

And so. With the dogged past week of writing out of the way, and some spirited socializing ahead--Tom & Carrie Jones, lunch this Sunday so they can see the framed version of Tom's marvelous schoolhouse-pic gift to us; blessed Linda and Syd, promising tales of Venice next Tuesday; Linda and Jeff, with a new job apiece, at their place next Thursday--I now can turn a corner toward the holidays. Dr. G and the test results permitting.

6 Nov.--Big rain, some wind, 1st Pineapple Express storm of the season. We haven't walked the n'hood yet, will wait until after nap if necessary to see if we can catch a letup.

Ahead of the storm, we hosted Tom and Carrie Jones for lunch. We see them damn seldom--time or so a year--any more, since they live out there beyond Snohomish, so it was exceedingly welcome to catch up with them. They had not seen Tom's wondrous one-room school painting framed and hung, so it was an occasion. It also turns out Tom is quite familiar with the WWII aircraft I'm writing about in this book, P-39s etc.

This morn, in that promised turn-the-corner attempt, I've been reading through the New Guinea combat material we gathered at the Montana Historical Society, starting to conjure a bloody incident for Ben to have experienced. There's no shortage. I did look back at Mtn Time and the New Guinea material there still looks damn good, so much so I wish I had it for this book.

Nov. 9--A rough 24 hours. Yesterday at about this time, Dr. Ginsberg gave me the news that my blood protein level continues to spike sharply, indicating "the myeloma is progressing." I walked in there ready to start the bone-strengthening year-long regimen of Pamidronate infusions he'd been talking about, and walked out needing to seek a second opinion (at his suggestion) before deciding on a much more dire course of treatment. My test results are puzzling, he says, because the other blood-test measurements continue to be in their ~~xx~~ acceptable range but this protein elevation "scares" him. So, the inflection point that began in the blood tests in February is pointing us toward cancer-patient life, at a point I can't divine before that second opinion (from one of two myeloma specialists he recommended at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, which I think amounts to the Hutchinson) and my next session with Ginsberg on Dec. 5, when he'll also have the protein results from a 24-hr urine test I'm to do.

I spent the morning:

--re-organizing the thick file accumulated since Dr. G began tracking what was then my case of MGUS nearly six years ago, into more readily handleable individual files of test results, clipping abt cancer drug research, etc.

Nov. 9 cont.--

--doing what Ginsberg called my "homework," paperwork for a double-blind placebo regimen in which I'd have a 50-50 chance of getting Revlimid, Celgene's expensive new cancer drug. I concluded I do not want a placebo as a factor in whatever I do, I want health care professionals working with their best definite knowledge.

--talked with C after she had read over my 6-yr run of summaries of meetings with Dr. G, the Revlimid proposal, and the clippings. I am putting our combined thinking into computerized notes that will go in the Ginsberg file, but on the personal level I told her--through a lot of emotional choking-up, one of the countless things I despise about all of this but which we are going to have to get used to--that I don't feel I have great unachieved things I have to get to or places I must see, I simply want to have as much more time with her as we can manage. We're having at least a momentary bit of luck in that she's feeling better and more energetic; in a couple of weeks she has another checkup with Dr. Eggert.

Out in the world away from the haunting pale medical walls, the congressional elections were more than we could have hoped for, both Houses of Congress going to the Democrats.

Nov. 12--A stormy Sunday, ahead of the floatplane flight we are supposed to take to Victoria tomorrow afternoon, for the Raincoast-sponsored reading at Bolen's bookstore.

After the personal tumult of last Wednesday's medical diagnosis--my god, what a massive week that has seemed--I've stuck to some common-sense things such as going to the multiple myeloma research group's website and printing off their summaries of treatments etc. I'm deliberately not grinding through those until at least the middle of next week, when I have to be confined to the house for a 24-hr urine test anyway. Medical decisions and treatment consequences may dominate our life soon enough, without sacrificing this weekend and the Victoria trip to it.

I am meanwhile attending to some year-end sorts of chores --made our '07 desk calendars of the kind we find easiest to write on, will do some shopping at Northgate when I take the urine sample to Group Health next week, and so on--to stay occupied. I can't quite tell yet whether I can muster

Nov. 12 cont.--myself enough this afternoon to do a bit of work on 11th Man, but maybe. Meanwhile, we've been unusually social: dinner at Linda Sullivan & Jeff Sager's on the 9th, stew last night at the Damborgs', and tonight we're due at the Walkinshaws. Life goes on.

Later (4 p.m.): I did go to the ms this afternoon, and by damn made fixes in the first 3 ch., good necessary work.

Nov. 14--A nice jaunt to Victoria, courtesy of Raincoast Books, y'day and back today. Our floatplane flights from Lake Union just fitt@d in between a big storm on the 12th and another one probably coming tonight--a squall is moving north along the Sound, approaching us, as I write. I read last night at Bolen's bookstore, said to be the biggest in western Canada; C had a chance to wander around in it a bit and said she's never seen one quite like it, big sections for mysteries, childrens', etc., with a lot of other merchandise chocked in. To my surprise, there was an audience of 90 or so, twice what I'd have rated as a sizable turnout (and greatly more than I expected). I was paired with David Adams Richards, a New Brunswick novelist there with his new book *The Friends of Meager Fortune*, so between us, we drew 'em. Mel Bolen herself, the grande dame of the store, was on hand, and Rob Wiersema gave Richards and me spirited eloquent intros. We were squited through all this by the nicest of the nice Canadians, Jamie Broadhurst of Raincoast, who met us at the Kenmore floatplane dock and we went by cab to the Laurel Point Inn, which has a stunning location on a neck of land into Victoria's Inner Harbor. The Raincoast rep, Lorna, met us for dinner at the hotel; C and I concluded that our meals were perfectly okay but short of great, but it's a terrific spot for drinks and looking across the water to downtown Victoria.

At the reading, Betty Mayfield's <sup>family</sup> loyally showed up, her brother Jim Hemstock and wife Nancy, sister Cathy and niece Naomi Lee. Betty had said, "If a bunch of short people show up..." We managed to go out for a drink with them afterward, by way of logistics that boggles C and me. The nearest spot, all the Canadians agreed, was the 5th Street Grill, quite a ways from the bookstore, and half of

Nov. 14 cont.--the place a deafening sports bar. The Hemstock clan had staked a waiting claim to a table in the restaurant side by the time we and the Raincoasters got there, and after an exceedingly drunk tableload of young men wobbled out, we indeed got the table. Comes then the fact that we're not there to eat, we just want a drink; can't do that, says the waiter, so Cathy's husband Steven who had joined us there (and is of an old Victoria Chinese family) solved it with a slew of appetizers, chips with chipotle sauce etc., until we had a tableful of snacks and our drinks. Not entirely by accident, we worked out the seating so Naomi would be next to Jamie and Lorna; Betty had alerted me that she's interested in the publishing biz--she currently works at Bolen's bookstore--and by the end of the evening, damned if Jamie wasn't handing her his business card and saying to let him know if he could do anything to help her.

So, we have been to another country, quite charmingly, and I have done my last event for the hardback of *The Whistling Season*. (A decent venue to do it in, too; Jamie told C they've sold about a thousand of the book.) The booktour began the 1st of June with a KUOW interview, and I count 40 main-event bookstore signings, which doesn't include 15 or 20 stock signings (from dabs in Boston and Philadelphia stores to Susan Dennison's 500 books at the Missoula Waldenbooks), nor count the interviews and speeches.

16 Nov.--Y'day was definitely adventurous enough. Sizable storm (90 mph gusts at Tatoosh; probably 30-40 here) with driving rain, and amid it the workman showed up to replace our staggering garage door opener. About 1:30, minutes before he could finish up, the power went off. He went out into the maelstrom to his next job, and we began trying to cope with the possibility of a powerless night. Supper situation was just fine, salmon salad dinner from our garden, but the old camping lantern of course had dead batteries. C went out into it all to Fred Meyer for new batteries while I tried to fidget things into place for nightfall. Amid all this, naturally, was the 24-hr urine test ordered up by Ginsberg, which had to be kept refrigerated. I was just despairing over what the hell to do about that when, about 3, damned if the lights

16 Nov. cont.--didn't burst back on, welcoming C as she pulled back into the sopping driveway.

Earlier in the day, I did get back to the 11th Manus and wrote a decent page before all this cut loose.

23 Nov.--Thanksgiving morn, our 11 guests on their way in about an hour and a half for traditional noon gathering and hoisting of champagne. C has worked and worked, at the house, at the kitchen, at everything it takes, and last night when I poured us a drink before supper, she clinked my glass and said, "To our friends and Thanksgiving."

It vows to be a stormy one, the forecast for rain growing heavier through the afternoon.

On the ms front: by putting in some shifts on 11th Manus during last week's storminess (this now is the rainiest month on record in Seattle, about  $13\frac{1}{2}$ " of precip), I've come out at the end of ch. 4, Ben having dealt with both the visit to the conscientious objector Dex and the New Guinea combat memory. The New Guinea patch, a little more than 3 ms pp.--probably around 800 words total--is born of the 300+ photocopied pp. of research at the Montana Historical Society, the Great Falls East Base holdings and so on. I read and considered every damn incident, every word, of those 300+ pp. to distill, distill, distill--and I hope the result reads pure.

25 Nov.--The Saturday after Thanksgiving, in the cornucopia of leftovers. Ham tonight, from our ace in the hole in case the power had gone off ~~was~~ and we were left with uncooked turkey. This was one of our best gatherings ever, C and I are agreed, with not nearly the best food--by whatever coincidence, the vegetable dishes brought by various folks were much of a muchness. Our turkey was exemplary, however, cooked to the point it fell apart as I heaved it to the cutting board for Mark's traditional carving. And damned if the weather didn't give us a big break, staying dry and reasonably bright; for once we walked plenty early, 3 or so, comfortably ahead of 4:20ish sunset. The gathering this year was comprised of: Ann and Norm, who again stayed overnight with us rather than drive back to Bellingham (their stay was against my inclination this year, given my ragged sleep patterns, but I slept fine while they were here and then had a terrible night's worth last night; go figure);

25 Nov. cont.---John and Katharina Maloof, regulars for several years, and Mark and Lou Damborg, for longer than that; Bill Calvin and Katherine Graubard, whom we're always glad to have if they're in the country; ~~and~~ Peter Rockas, our wild card Greek bachelor retired social worker jokester, whom I could sometimes stand fewer groan-making jokes from and more substantial conversation, but he's been coming to Thanksgiving for 28 years now and so I guess we get along quite okay; and newcomers this year, Betty and Roy Mayfield, terrific additions to the general conversation. We no longer have our strata of MacArthur and Pulitzer winners but it's still a helluva brainy bunch. At one point, C was stirring stuff and generally fending at the stove while clustered around the kitchen island there were three and nine-tenths Ph.D.s--Mark, Bill, Norm, and Roy (closing in on his degree)--talking about climate change, soil liquefaction, and the like. Katherine told us Bill has a ms titled Earth Fever at the U. of Chicago Press awaiting peer review, meanwhile the climate change research changes constantly.

I missed out on a lot of the high-powered conversation because of general hosting and having to baby my back away from standing around talking for very long, but I felt the vibes and had a good time. C seemed highly pleased with the way our holiday went, this time around.

And today she has read ms for me and proclaimed it fine. I meanwhile have beavered into file cards and notes, and set up categories for the 9 or so chapters yet to be done. I am pleased with 11th Man so far, although heaven knows it's going to be a shocker--all those dead men--to a lot of readers who loved Whistling Season. So be it.

The weather has chilled. Possible snow showers the next few days. We're to walk with, or at least connect with, David Williams and Marjorie tomorrow morn. I took y'day morn to write my recommendation for him for a G'heim; see if I can bring home the bacon two years in a row (Judy Blunt last year).

Thanksgiving line of the day, from Katherine Graubard:

"Before Bill retired, Bill sat home and wrote books. Now he sits home and writes books."

26 Nov.--Rough weather. Slushy enough this morn that I chickened us out of meeting up with David Williams and Marjorie, postponing for a week. Alternate rain and snow and something in between, and we waited until this afternoon to walk the n'hood. Started out in rain at 40 degrees, and by the time we reached our old house, what was falling was mostly sleet and becoming near-ice as it hit water or wet leaves. We turned right around and got home okay, but it was slicker underfoot than either of us should be around with the state of our bones. Earlier today, I formed up ch. icons for the rest of 11th Man on the computer and just now (4, and going dark fast) banged some file cards and other possible material onto the one for the next ch. to be worked on, Ben & Cass watching the homecoming game from Hill 57. One way or another, my life in all likelihood is going to get medical, this coming week or the next or the one after that, and I know little to do but try to line out possible work while I endure whatever is needed.

Neglected to enter in y'day's spate about Thanksgiving, the second-best line of the day, Betty Mayfield's. Someone asked about how we met on the Paul Allen Alaska trip, and Betty recalled that at the Boeing Field terminal we were all gathering, and perhaps Betty Bengston had already intro'd us to the Mayfields. But Paul A. had not come in yet, and as Betty watched the names gather--Quincy Jones, Clyde the Glide Drexler--she wondered who he would greet first. When he did come in, he aimed straight for her and directed: "Betty, I want you to take care of Ivan Doig." The story absolutely floors C and me, as we'd have bet Paul A. never did know us from the wallpaper, but we figure Faye Allen must have said something to him, and bingo.

29 Nov.--Weather beyond rough to treacherous. Much ice on roads, freezing temperatures pretty much all day long and down into the teens last night (probably giving the coup de grace to my covered-up salad garden), so we've simply stayed hunkered in to the house. I've kept at the 11th Man ms, breaking loose a bit today with a couple of pp. instead of one or so eked out, and C turned her hand to

29 Nov. cont.--our Christmas letter, very nicely tooting our horn (with angelic illustration to match) about the year of Whistling Season.

4 Dec.--Another day in the life, and not an easy one. With two medical sessions in the next two days--Dr. Ginsberg tomorrow and Dr. Becker at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance for a second opinion the next day--I spent the morning reviewing the six-year history since my diagnosis and going through material on the multiple myeloma website. Also went into the Group Health website to my medical record for the last 24-hr urine test result, and it's still spiking just as the serum protein results have been. I will be very surprised if I come out of this week without treatment ahead, probably the Thalidomide/dexamethasone combination. As C said on our walk this morn, much will clarify in the next few days.

In an odd conjunction, our social life meanwhile is busying up madly. David Williams and Marjorie were here Sunday morning, and Wed.-Thurs.-Fri. nights we are seeing the Nelsons, the Atwoods, and the Laskins. As yet I have not said anything to anyone about this medical situation, seeing no benefit to anyone by laying it on them before necessary, but it will become serially necessary if and when I enter chemotherapy, and I dread the notifications ahead, which are numerous.

Meanwhile, as I will tell Dr. Ginsberg tomorrow, I feel fine except when I'm doing homework on cancer. And now I go off to the dentist to have my teeth cleaned.

8 Dec.--3 p.m., awaiting the phone call from Dr. Ginsberg which may (or may not, given the coming of the holidays and what that must do to medical staffing) determine the chemical life ahead of me, probably from now on. I have distilled the Dec. 5 session with Dr. G and the Dec. 6 session with Dr. Becker at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance into the record I'm keeping in the medical files, but the central fact is that her "second opinion" backed up his analysis that I need to begin chemotherapy and then have a stem cell transplant. If anything, her opinion for it was stronger than his.

Dec. 8 cont.--Dr. G called about 3:30. When I told him Dr. Becker wanted a chromosome analysis called a FISH study done from my bone marrow test, he said he'd order that up. He's waiting to hear from her by e-mail and to receive the fax of her report. If I don't hear from him by next Friday, I'm to call. I told him I'd just as soon get started with this, holidays or no. And so we shall see, on what day I put into these pages the notation of my first doses of Thalidomide, the stronger prednisone called dexamethasone, and Coumadin to thin the blood against clotting from the other two.

This medical process inevitably has taken up this week, except for a quite good session of fixing up the plane crash scene in 11th Man this morn. We did go to the Provinces on the 6th--after our 2-hour "second opinion" session with Dr. Becker--and had a good evening, even with the tinge of mortality there in Ann's news that Ken Peterson had died. Hosting the Atwoods fell through when Peter called y'day morn saying he had some kind of winter crud, and sounding like it; boy, do I ever appreciate his thoughtfulness in not bringing that into the house. Tonight we're to go to the Provinces again, the Laskins' treat. We've decided we're going to forge ahead socially, telling people what's up with me medically when and if we have to. C and I both found the pair of doctor sessions very heavy duty, but our general mood is better than I would have forecast. After all the info we've garnered this week, C tells me I have "a lot of innings" left. I can't say I'm that sanguine, as the life expectancy rates from the time myeloma is diagnosed aren't that hot, and it'll take drugs, drugs, drugs to extend that. Yet I felt remarkably composed yesterday as I spent all morning distilling Dr. Becker's encyclopedic session on myeloma treatment, and I've been pretty ~~gx~~ steady today. The will to live, I guess, although I'm likely to have that challenged a lot in whatever time is ahead.

Dec. 10--A quiet restorative weekend, with the damp weather giving us half-day breaks to work outside. Y'day afternoon

I harvested lettuce and other greens, and barbecued salmon, for a terrific dinner tonight. This morn, C and I pruned the downslope fruit trees, and with the rare circumstance of no breeze, I sprayed the peach tree with lime sulphur.

During y'day morn's rain we went to Fred Meyer and Radio Shack and bought some gear I anticipate needing during stem cell hospitalization etc.--an MP3 CD player ~~witthxm~~ (which I'm going to try to get noiseproof Bose earphones for) and a small tape recorder for possible use in sessions with doctors.

An extreme oddity of this medical situation is that I still feel terrific. This is an advantage in doing the preliminaries, but it's also poignant to me, that I have to voluntarily go from what feels like a peak of health to periods when I very likely will feel sick as a dog, to reach some kind of rugged plateau of remission vs. recurrence.

On the 8th, a couple of hours after the phone session with Dr. Ginsberg when I opted for chemotherapy as soon as possible, out we went for dinner with the Laskins at the Provinces. A fine and lively evening, with Kate giving us the lowdown on the story of the errant law school dean (doing work for State Farm on his office computer) that broke in the P-I that day. David listened as patiently as possible, then at some point he brought up the Ian McEwen plagiarism incident and off we went on that. C and I are hardliners; on the 4 "inadvertent" chunks McEwen copied I think he arrogantly did not mix the historical points of research into his wordcraft, just slapped 'em on the page with a few words changed. So, much good conversation, and again, poignant; it will not be long before the fact of my cancer sits somewhere in the room when we are with friends.

Dec. 11--When I wasn't looking, the world seems to have voted me very old. The issue of Montana Quarterly that C and I were interviewed and photographed for came today, and while Megan Ault's article is a nice piece of work, there is a definite autumnal tinge to it. As, way back at the start of The Whistling Season caravan of reviews, Rick Bass's PW review carried a similar tint. Was I deluding myself that 67 is less than ancient, these days? (I may have to change my mind about that now, but it's from medical necessity, not the arithmetic of years.) In any case, it keeps catching me by surprise to be regarded as venerable, but maybe a white beard has to expect such reaction.

C just passed through on her way back upstairs from her yoga exercise and asked where a copy of Columns magazine is, as she'd forgotten to put that encomium in her diary. Christ, I have too, amid all the medical report. Columns listed me in its roundup of the 100 best books by UW folks, and made me one of four that they did sidebars and mug shots on.

(The others were Marilynne Robinson, James Wright, and Dave Horsey.) I have the good company of friends on the list--Linda Bierds, Eric Nalder, Bill Calvin.

This is Monday--a stormy one, with wind whooping and quite a hell of a lot of rain this morning--and without much likelihood of hearing from Dr. Ginsberg until later in the week, I applied myself to the 11th Man ms today. Warmed up this morning with a few dabs of editing, then C and I walked the n'hood, and as soon as we got back I tackled, so to speak, the football scene. There's no telling how much interruption or sapping of energy awaits me, but at least this is one more writing day in the bank.

Ah, and the milestone of the day: C grinning this morn at breakfast as she put one single tiny white pill beside her water glass, the last smallest dosage of prednisone which, with any luck, she will be done with in late Jan.

Dec. 12--All quiet on the medical front, and a decent day of writing, couple of pp. Call from Liz this morn, asking if I knew how many places had named Whistling Season in their list of best books of the year. Why don't you dazzle me with the news, said I, and she reeled off Wash'n Post, Minneapolis Star-Tribune, Salt Lake Tribune, Rocky Mountain News...

Dec. 14--2:30 and the trees and blueberry bushes are starting to stir, first hints of the windstorm that is supposed to hit after dark. Even as I typed that, gusts of the sort we haven't had all day made the rhodies shrug up against Kastners' fence and the big downslope bare-limbed maples waved against the water. This is forecast as possibly the biggest windstorm since the '93 one on Inauguration Day, and I'll be surprised if the power doesn't go off on this one as it did that one. The difference is that we do not have our tidy emergency power system with this house, alas, and a generator has been a tricky proposition--the fueling problem, the noise problem, the limited wattage problem--every time I've contemplated one. We shall see if we have to rethink after this much weather (this is the ~~third~~ windstorm of the week and the fifth or sixth of the season) and it's still eight days until winter.

C is at the GLASS shindig at Margaret Svec's, not her favorite thing by any measure but it provides an event for Margaret in her deep years of age. I am putting in a writing day, although quite a lot of the morning went to readying for the storm--plucking my beloved coldframes to shelter under the downstairs deck, hosing out the driveway gutter to try to keep the garage from flooding, and the like.

Dec. 18--What a time this is. Since the last time I struggled to this diary:

--I have made a Group Health appointment with Dr. Ginsberg's nurse Lynn for the 20th, to do the paperwork for Thalidomide and to begin chemotherapy Jan. 1

--We went through the biggest windstorm of our 40 years on Puget Sound, bailing out of the powerless and chilling-down house the night of the 15th.

--While we were grinding through stoplightless traffic toward the U District Hotel Deca, the call phone rang, Michelle at Harcourt telling me The Whistling Season has won a PNBA award, my sixth of the kind and, niftiest of all, now a majority of my eleven books.

--Becky called from Harcourt today with congrats and the news that they've gone back to press, 6th printing, another 2,000 copies.

Somehow amid it all, I've eyed financial chores (discovering we'll have to reinvest \$450,000 this coming year) and managed a dab on 11th Man.

22 Dec.--A dry if cloudy day as the world draws into the long weekend of Christmas. We celebrated ahead of time last night when Linda and Syd came for dinner, make that turkey dinner. A good time was had, as ever with those two, and there's an extra dimension for me these days as we've been seeing various friends for the holidays, the poignancy with each that it's the last time with them before I become an acknowledged cancer patient.

On that score, two days ago I had my session with Dr. Ginsberg's nurse Lynn Flaherty, and came home with the sackful of pills and instructions for starting the drug therapy on Jan. 1. My account of that, as all these medical sessions are, is in my Ginsberg file folder, but it's worth noting here that Lynn remarked myeloma is "practically curable" with the stem cell transplant. I'll of course take any brightening of prognosis I can get, but that's more optimism than I can summon. We'll see, will we ever.

On the non-medical front, Whistling Season made the Seattle Times best-books-of-the-year list, fifth such accolade that we know of.

And my erstwhile next bookx, The 11th Man? Between the windstorm and the medical consultation, it's been a tough patch of wordmaking. Oddly enough, the football scene I'm working on has been harder to write than the New Guinea combat scene or damn near anything else in the book.

26 Dec.--4 p.m., rainy and inky. Decent day of writing/rewriting; needed, now that I am in the countdown to therapy.

We Christmased at the Rodens, a fine and pleasant gathering with Lisa and Jerry Clemens on hand from Minneapolis and John's nephew Sherwin and lady Carlene up from Texas. We gave John a copy of The Quote Verifier, fodder for his penchant of citing (and just as often mis-citing) so-and-so having said such-and-such. Here amongst the two of us, we managed a few nifty presents apiece, with C's valiant effort at solving our radio reception problem with a high-def model not quite working. Ah well, we decided, so what if it takes three different radios to bring in the three stations we want to hear.

28 Dec.--Ought six is drawing to a close (a year-name that will teach me to muse about aim and lethality, back there on day one; there must have been some intimation there, though) and in very few days I begin taking a dozen pills ~~and~~ day and seeing what they do to me as well as to the indolent cancer. This afternoon will start another phase of what is ahead, when we intend to phone Marcella Walter in Helena, the first person to be told about my disease.

Meanwhile we work on. I traded some stock this morn, spiffed up a few bits of the 11th Man ms, and this afternoon we intend to go over to Sleep-Aire and buy a new mattress for nights I may have to spend in the guest room. It's a beautiful cold day, a plump blue Hyundai van ship just now passing along under the high white crests of the Olympics and the lower band of ~~fox~~ shore fog, with the heaviest frost of the season. Last night we socialized again, at the Damborgs, along with Bill and Judy Talley. Bill has been the UW's landscape architect, and as C said, who knew a landscaper would be that voluble? He'd be even more entertaining if he toned down the volubility by about 25%, but it was a nice evening, rapid-fire talk, and Bill would answer anything I asked him about the history and status of the UW grounds, the Arboretum, the fancy new overpraised Seattle sculpture park... One unforeseen consequence of Mark and Lou's wonderfully done lamb-shanks dinner was the steamed (and alcohol-soaked) pudding dessert, which seems to have made both C and me start the day at about half-speed.

An odd thing about this year's diary as I enter its last few pages: all of '06 I've had the impression I'm not getting to the diary very often, yet here it sits, absolutely thick. Some of that is material tipped in to the back, but the entry pages themselves ~~are~~ stand an inch high. More diligence than I knew.

31 Dec.--Sunset, a muted one, last of the year. In the morning I begin my next phase of life, as an out-and-out cancer patient. I find I'm entering this unsought experience in a spirit of hope; wrenching as the drug doses may be, they are proven medications and I have otherwise good health and a supremely flexible schedule and C's positive spirit on my side. I have been determined not to let the medical gauntlet take us over until there's no choice, so I confined my preparations to this afternoon: reviewing the warning sheets that list possible side effects, familiarizing with the Group Health e-mail setup, and so on. Beside me, my desk calendar has red streaks four days long--the "pulses" of taking dexamethasone--and blue notations of blood draws and lab tests and the Jan 29 appointment with Dr. Ginsberg to see how this is going; three calendar months of this will tell the tale.

Year-end matters: today I went with C to visit Margaret Svec, getting by at 93. Still sharp as a tack, she wondered out loud if she will live through the year to come, saying 93 seems to be the age people are dying at--her neighbor and ex-Prez Gerald Ford, she named off. I told her she had just cited two people out of 300 million, and she laughed.

And, what, two nights ago we called Marcella Walter. From something C had said, I somehow had the notion that she felt we needed to tell Marcella about my medical situation, and in going over that just before picking up the phone, learned she hadn't meant that at all. Good thing I checked, because Marcella obviously was having a tougher time with this last half of the holidays--Dave's birthday was Jan. 1, most eminently--than she'd had with Christmas, and she sure as hell did not need my news dropped on her.

So, with the pills waiting for me upstairs, this time we go from one year to the next through a truly defined passage. I am somewhat scared (as seems to me only rational) guardedly hopeful (the kind of "treatable" cancer this is and the health that permits this level of treatment), and resolved to quiet diligence, pill by damned pill.

And today I ordered my vegetable seeds for spring.

# CdA schools adopt permission policy

Parents can prohibit student participation

BY MEGHANN M. CUNIFF  
Staff writer

The board also added parental permission requirements for two books - "Fallen Angels" by Walter Dean Myers and "Dancing at the Rascal Fair" by Ivan Doig.

Parents in the Coeur d'Alene School District will be able to keep their children from participating in school-sponsored activities by denying them written permission under a policy unanimously approved Monday night by the Coeur d'Alene School Board.

The policy does not mean parents must grant permission before a student can participate in an activity - it simply means parents can prohibit their children from participating in specific activities if they so desire.

The forms will be available at the request of a parent or student, and information about the policy and about the form will be written into student handbooks, said Judy Drake, the district's director of staff relations and community resources.

The policy comes two months after Rep. Bob Nonini, R-Coeur d'Alene, urged the board to adopt a policy governing parental permission for school clubs.

Nonini tried to pass a bill during the final days of this year's legislative session that would have required parental permission for students to participate in extracurricular activities, but it stalled in the Senate Education Committee.

See PARTICIPATION, B6

23 June '06

Dear Ivan:  
I send this along (in case you haven't seen it) not to get your blood up, but in hopes that you now know why you've had a sudden increase in sales in Eastern Washington + Northern Idaho!

Bought your new book in Missoula (Fact + Fiction) two weeks ago + enjoyed it immensely!

Hope all's well w/ you +

Carol

Sincerely,  
Rick Ardinger

## NORTHWEST

### PARTICIPATION Continued from B1

Nonini said at the time that he was pushing the bill in response to the Gay-Straight Alliance Club at Lake City High School.

The board also added parental permission requirements for two books - "Fallen Angels" by Walter Dean Myers and "Dancing at the Rascal Fair" by Ivan Doig.

Complaints from parents about both books prompted the district to examine each using separate committees of one administrator, one librarian and two parents, said Rosie Astorquia.

The committee could not reach a consensus on "Fallen Angels," a novel about a young man fighting in the Vietnam War that contains profanity and other graphic language, but the board voted to place it on

the restricted list for middle school students, meaning parental permission is required for middle school students to borrow it from a library.

Astorquia said although two committee members were offended by the book's language, the other four said they recognized the powerful story and felt no restrictions were needed. But trustee Vernon Newby said he read "Fallen Angels" "cover-to-cover" and concluded

that "it's definitely full of obscenity."

"The parents should know," he said.

Trustee Sid Fredrickson agreed.

"I would err on the side of caution," he said.

Though the committee charged with examining "Dancing at the Rascal Fair," a novel about life in Montana at the turn of the century that contains graphic sexual pass-

ages, did not recommend restricting access through a parental permission requirement, Newby said he found some parts of the books "actually difficult to read to my wife" and the board decided to add the requirement.

"What is the harm of letting parents know?" trustee Christie Wood said.

The book is on the optional reading list for high school juniors and seniors.

Coeur d'Alene resident Jim Hollingsworth questioned why it was in the school in the first place.

"It shouldn't even have been written, let alone fall into the hands of an adult or child," he said.

The board postponed approval of the 2006-07 budget until Monday at noon.

A complete budget is available at the school district office.

day-by-day schedule, Sept. 28-Oct. 7

**28 Thursday**

6 a.m. lv for Missoula

11:30 arr Spokane; sign stock @ Auntie's, then lunch *Lois Hughes; 402 W. Main*

4:30 p.m. arr Missoula: Holiday Inn Parkside, 200 S. Pattee  
check with Judy Klein about Ch. One stock signing

6 p.m? dinner @ Lois's

**29 Friday**

8:30 a.m. Ivan to UM archives: *(Donna Marnae will let me in)*  
Del Stark WWII papers  
Stan Davison papers if time  
*Mundell's?*

11 a.m. lv archives; lunch @ Doubletree? - *JoAnn Jensen, sign book*  
call Susan Dennison 549-1375

12 Waldenbooks stock signing

1 to 2:30 p.m. nap

2:30 to 3:30 rehearse reading

4 to 5 go to Annick and Mary Blew's session?

5 onward silent auction & reception

6 to 7 dinner near the Wilma? *the Shack*

7:30 reading with Kittredge  
booksigning afterward

8:30 walk

<b>30 Saturday</b>			
9 a.m.	review notes etc. for session with Margaret		
11 to 12	Sky session with Margaret, Parkside ballroom AB booksigning afterward; Fact & Fiction stock signing?		
lunch	somewhere, somehow <i>El Cazador</i>		
1 to 2:30	go to Annick and Ripley's session on Hugo? <i>sign rest of Walden Lhs.</i>		
2:30 onward	nap		
5	a drink in the room?		
6	dinner out with Lois and...? <i>Mary Blue / The Shack</i>		
<b>1 Oct., Sunday</b>			
9 a.m.	lv for Helena		
10:30 onward	with Marcella laundry?		
6:30	take Marcella to dinner @ Silver Star <i>6:30</i>		
<b>2 Oct., Monday</b>			
9 a.m.	Historical Society library research (take layers) Carol: John Harrison WWII letters from England MT Nat'l Guard Guard books? Ivan: WWII diaries etc.		
12 - lunch	<i>lunch @ Marcella's</i>		
11:30	lunch; then sign stock @ MT Book Co.		
1 p.m. onward	Ivan resume research, Carol free afternoon?		
supper	at Marcella's		

<b><u>3 Oct., Tuesday</u></b>	
<b>9 a.m.</b>	Historical Society library research (take layers)
<b>noon</b>	lunch at Windbag with Mary Jane sign up stock @ <del>public library?</del> <i>car</i> buy insulated coffee mug; other shopping?
<b>afternoon</b>	finish up research or hang out at Marcella's
<b><u>4 Oct., Wednesday</u></b>	
<b>8 a.m.</b>	lv for Great Falls
<b>10 a.m.</b>	Gt. Falls public library research <i>pegy clinehamer</i> East Base newsletters etc. Hill 57
<b>noon</b>	call Joan Seiler <b>453-2202</b> abt stock signing lunch somewhere on 10th Ave. S? sign up stock @ Waldenbooks
<b>3 p.m.</b>	Cascade His'l Society to see WWII artifacts <i>writing class?</i>
<b>supper</b>	McKenzie River pizza or Applebee's
<b><u>5 Oct, Thursday</u></b>	
<b>after breakfast</b>	general Gt. Falls research; river, hills, Black Eagle, etc.
<b>10 a.m. onward</b>	finish up public library research (if need be)
<b>noon</b>	lunch @ Three D Club, Mongolian Grill?
<b>afternoon</b>	head toward home and one of these overnight options: 2 hrs to Missoula via Highway 200 3 hours to Coeur d'Alene (with gain of hour) 3.5 hours to Spokane: Hampton Inn? 5 hours to Ritzville
<b><u>6 Oct., Friday</u></b>	
<b>homeward bound</b>	

Lois Welch <lowelch@bresnan.net>

**Lo's Doig Intro**

October 17, 2006 11:04:02 AM PDT

caroldean Doig <cddean@earthlink.net>

## DOIG INTRO

Ivan Doig Introduction

9/29/06 for Gala Reading at the Wilma  
Montana Festival of the Book  
by Lois Welch

Last week the tallest woman in the Montana legislature asked me if I was going to introduce anyone at this year's book festival. "Yes," I said, "Ivan Doig--and I'm a bit nervous." "You shouldn't be," she replied with some enthusiasm, "he's a wonderful person. I love his books! My husband has given me every new book he writes, and he is always so nice when I get them signed." "Indeed," I agreed, "I'm just nervous, not afraid. He's been a good friend for years; my problem is to do an introduction that isn't a lecture. I could go on and on." [...] **I won't, I promise.** If I were Ivan doing this intro, I'd haul a couple of 4X6 filecards out of my jacket pocket & launch in. It's such a characteristic gesture.

Actually, Ivan Doig needs no introduction. At least 85% of you probably know his work already. Half of you probably have bought, or will buy within the next 24 hours, his wonderful new book The Whistling Season. He will sign with a smile. The purpose of an introduction is to re-contextualize the speaker--and to heighten your anticipation. A sort of delayed gratification. Introductions are the original No Listener Left Behind Acts. I regret to announce that we are now--these post 9/11 days-- obliged to make you fill out a brief comprehension test before you leave the theatre. (...Just kidding.)

The facts about Ivan Doig are well known: he was born and raised in the country around White Sulphur Springs, beyond the Big Belt mountains, east of Helena. An avid reader, like the narrator in Whistling Season, Ivan worked summers as a ranch hand, but yearned--to put it mildly-- to go off to college, and did, majoring in broadcast journalism. Then he wrote for newspapers and edited a magazine. He met and married a fellow journalism student from New Jersey; Carol now accompanies his note taking with her camera. They moved west and Ivan got a PhD in history from the University of Washington. He had decided to be a writer when he was in highschool. PhD in hand, he opted for the typewriter full time. He has worn out more than one. Recognition has grown and grown. Recently he was honored with the lifetime Distinguished Achievement award from the Western Literature Association. Among his other awards he counts a Montana Governor's Award from 1996. There are many more.

Our first encounter--Jim's and mine-- with the Doigs was in Bill Kittredge's jampacked livingroom in the spring of 1979, if memory serves me right. At the reception for the first and fateful "Who Owns the West" conference--where we also met Bud Guthrie (and his Carol) and Norman MacLean. Our lives were arranged in a parallel fashion, it turned out: Carol taught college; I taught college; she had a 5 minute commute; mine was 7. Our husbands stayed home and wrote. Both Jim and Ivan offered the same advice to aspiring writers wondering how to make a living at writing: marry someone with a steady job. There the parallels diverge: Jim was claustrophobic, hated libraries; Ivan is claustrophilic & can't get enough of them. Trail Ivan out of town & you'll find him in the MT historical society archives in Helena as soon as they open. If you say anything remotely interesting, he will whip out the tiny notebook in his left shirt pocket & write it down.

Ivan's remarkable combination of historical insight, even intuition, and his love of language have combined with an indefatigable capacity for work to make him one of the "reigning masters of western lit." (As book jackets put it.) How lucky we are tonight to have the two live ones on stage together! We recall how Ivan burst upon our scene with This House of Sky in 1979. One gasps still at its opening line: "Soon before daybreak on my sixth birthday, my mother's breathing wheezed more raggedly than ever, then quieted. And then stopped. The remembering begins out of that new silence."

Out of that silence, every couple of years, he has offered us a new exploration of early twentieth century life in that "big and hard and glorious country" he knows so well: English Creek in '84, Dancing at the Rascal Fair in '87, Ride with Me Mariah Montana in 1990, Heart Earth, Bucking the Sun, Mountain Time, Prairie Nocturne in 2003 and now The Whistling Season. The narrator of this new novel is probably closest to the author--loving school, Latin especially, hoping to break away from a future of ranch work. As Ivan says in an interview "he eavesdrops with his eyes and admits to a bit of a pedantic streak."

Somewhere Ivan wrote of a landscape remembered in a "Rembrandt light." On this exquisite September day, his precision seems apt once again. Proust said that one can only imagine that which is absent. History of course, consists of absence, and Ivan has managed over and over the feat of imagining compelling characters and lives from the tantalizing traces of a past at the margins of our memory, in the corner of our eyes, as it were.

A final note, if you will excuse the indulgence: At 3:00 this afternoon I received an email from a friend in France telling me that my Jim's picture is hanging on a wall of American Masters between Hemingway and Melville at the Festival America, a book festival opening today outside Paris. And here I am, on stage between these two living Masters of American Lit.

So it is with a light heart and a good bit of admiration that I ask you to welcome my friend, the author, Ivan Doig.

caroldean <cddean@earthlink.net>

**Re: Lo's Doig Intro**

October 28, 2006 7:44:51 AM PDT

Lois Welch <lowelch@bresnan.net>

Dear Lois

Many thanks for a copy of your intro. Ivan thanks you, too, although in absentia because at the moment he's in Salt Lake City, doing gigs for their book festival and for the Utah chapter of the Nature Conservancy. (I wasn't offered a first-class airline ticket, so I stayed home--and oversaw the cleaning of carpets.)

We have just one more stop, an overnight via float plane to Victoria early in November. After that we're home for the long haul on the next novel, which is well under way and for which we gleaned several hundred pages of research during our Montana trip. How right you are about Ivan's love of libraries! By the last day of that wonderful trip we were rather worn and had three stops to make in Great Falls, so we decided to skip through town without contacting Ivan's high school buddy, with whom we often stay. On this day all we wanted was a room at LaQuinta and dinner next door. This would have been more socially acceptable if a reporter and photographer had not shown up, unknown to Ivan (lots of folks were standing in back with cameras), as he met with a class of middle school students, at the behest of our host at Cascade Historical Society. We didn't know, until a friend sent us a copy some days later, that he'd been featured, pix and all, on page one. A note featuring the verbal equivalent of throat clearing went to our friends.

As to you, our friend, we're grateful for your hosting the Usual Suspects, once again. It was a treat to see them in fine fettle, and to enjoy Kittredge's enjoyment of his first published novel. (By the way, I did notice one loud absence in your printed intro, and you did the line so very well. But not to worry. Ivan has Duncan securely skewered in the Doig diary. I don't know the man at all, but he looks old enough to have had time to grow up.)

All's well here. The garden is producing tomatoes, and some lettuce, and a start on kale. If we're lucky we'll get more green beans. Your yard, by the way, looked splendid and provided us the best of drinking hours.

Take care. With much love, Carol

On Oct 17, 2006, at 11:04 AM, Lois Welch wrote:



**Montana Festival of the Book  
Gala Readings**

**September 29<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 PM**

**Wilma Theatre  
Missoula, Montana**



**Montana Committee for the Humanities**

# Montana Festival of the Book

## Gala Readings

Friday Evening, September 29th, 7:30 PM  
Wilma Theatre

### Greetings

Mark Sherouse, Executive Director, Montana Committee for the Humanities, Montana Festival of the Book

### Welcome

The Honorable John Engen, Mayor of Missoula

### Announcements and acknowledgements

Mark Sherouse

### Introduction of William Kittredge

David James Duncan, essayist and novelist

**William Kittredge** is a native of southeastern Oregon, where he ranched until he was 35. He studied at the Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa and taught creative writing at The University of Montana until his retirement as Regents Professor of English and Creative Writing. Among his honors are a Stegner Fellowship at Stanford, two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, two Pacific Northwest Booksellers awards, the Montana Governor's Award for the Arts, the Montana Humanities Award, a PEN West award, a Neil Simon award, and the National Endowment for the Humanities' Charles Frankel Prize, the national humanities medal. The William Kittredge Distinguished Writing Professorship at The University of Montana is named in his honor. Among his chief writings are *Owning It All*, *The Nature of Generosity*, *Taking Care: Thoughts on Storytelling and Belief*, *We Are Not in This Together*, *Who Owns the West?*, *Hole in the Sky*, *The Collected Short Stories of William Kittredge*, and, as co-editor with Annick Smith, Montana's centennial literary anthology, *The Last Best Place*. Although his writing career spans several decades, *The Willow Field* is his first novel. He resides in Missoula.

### Intermission

## Introduction of Ivan Doig

Lois Welch, University of Montana Professor of English *Emerita*

**Ivan Doig** was born into a ranching family and community, in White Sulphur Springs, Montana. He attended Northwestern University, where he earned both undergraduate and graduate degrees in journalism. He later earned a Ph.D. in history at the University of Washington, but turned from teaching to writing full-time. His first book, the memoir *This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind*, was a National Book Award finalist, and remains one of Montana's favorite books. His other books include *Winter Brothers*, *The Sea Runners*, *English Creek*, *Dancing at the Rascal Fair*, *Ride with Me Mariah Montana*, *Heart Earth*, *Bucking the Sun*, *Mountain Time*, *Prairie Nocturne*, and, most recently, *The Whistling Season*. Doig's works have received many awards, including two Pacific Northwest Booksellers awards, a lifetime distinguished achievement award from the Western Literature Association, and the Montana Governor's Humanities Award. In the century's-end *San Francisco Chronicle* poll to name the best Western novels and works of non-fiction, he is the only living writer with books in the top dozen of both lists: *English Creek* in fiction and *This House of Sky* in non-fiction. He lives with his wife Carol, a college professor of English, in Seattle.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Montana Festival of the Book is an annual presentation of the **Montana Committee for the Humanities**, Montana's independent non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. MCH grants, Speakers Bureau, OpenBook reading and discussion groups, One Book Montana, Letters About Literature, and other programs have served Montanans since 1972. The Montana Center for the Book, a program of MCH, is Montana's affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. For further information, contact the MCH offices at: 311 Brantly Hall, The University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812-7848; telephone 406-243-6022; toll-free in Montana 800-624-6001; fax 406-243-4836; or email at [humanities.mt@umontana.edu](mailto:humanities.mt@umontana.edu). The MCH website is [www.humanities-mt.org](http://www.humanities-mt.org). The Montana Center for the Book website is [www.montanabook.org](http://www.montanabook.org). Contributions to the Festival and to MCH are tax-deductible—and will bring the joys and insights of the humanities to ever more Montanans, now and in the future.*

## **Montana Festival of the Book Sincerely Thanks...**

The many writers, scholars, and panelists, who are appearing at this year's Festival, for their generous response and support.

### **Festival Sponsors, Partners, and Volunteers**

Montana Festival of the Book major sponsors: The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Montana Arts Council, The Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, and the *Missoulian*. Sponsors: Attorney's Liability Protection Society, The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library at The University of Montana, First Interstate Bank, U.S. Bank, ABC Fox Television, Clear Channel Radio, *New West Magazine*, the Cultural Service of the French Embassy, and the Alliances Françaises of New York and Missoula. And partners: Fact & Fiction Bookstore, Shakespeare & Co., the Book Store at The University of Montana, Barnes & Noble, KUFM-Montana Public Radio, Missoula Public Library, The Wilma Theatre, the Holiday Inn Parkside, the Missoula Art Museum, Kinkos, and the many individuals, organizations, and merchants who have supported our silent auction. And, not least, we thank the many volunteers who have helped make the Festival a success. And *special* thanks to photographer Anthony Cesare and to Montana Librarian of the Year Gloria Curdy for this year's Festival poster.

### **Festival Planning Committee**

C. E. Abramson (Missoula Public Library Foundation), Kim Anderson (Montana Committee for the Humanities), Tom Benson (Missoula Cultural Council), Sherry Devlin (*Missoulian*), Michael Marsolek (KUFM/Montana Public Radio), Ginnie Merriam (City of Missoula), John Rimel (Mountain Press), Mark Sherouse (Montana Committee for the Humanities), Barbara Theroux (Fact & Fiction Bookstore), and Racquel Williams (Holiday Inn Parkside).

### **Montana Committee for the Humanities/Festival Staff**

Mark Sherouse, Executive Director; Kim Anderson, Festival Coordinator and Administrative Officer; Yvonne Gritzner, Program Officer; Ken Stolz, Fiscal Officer; and Festival Assistants Judy Klein, Susan Carlson, and Pamala Burke.

ISBN: **0151012377** Title: **WHISTLING SEASON C** Stock Available: **326**  
 Author: **DOIG** List Price: **\$25.00** Release Date: **5/8/2006** Suspense Orders: **139**

Channel or Customer Name	Cust/Chnl Numbers	Gross Units	Return Units	Net Units	Gross Sales	Return Sales	Net Sales	Ret %
International	32	1,480	0	1,480	\$14,071	\$0	\$14,071	0.0%
Non-Return Retail	15	4,659	-4	4,655	\$47,962	(\$40)	\$47,922	0.1%
Non-Return Wholesale	16	9,257	-41	9,216	\$106,493	(\$513)	\$105,981	0.5%
Other	13	56	0	56	\$754	\$0	\$754	0.0%
Retail Bookstores	01	17,257	-3,461	13,796	\$228,010	(\$46,531)	\$181,479	20.4%
Wholesale	02	19,944	-1,316	18,628	\$248,963	(\$16,408)	\$232,554	6.6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>52,653</b>	<b>-4,822</b>	<b>47,831</b>	<b>\$646,252</b>	<b>(\$63,492)</b>	<b>\$582,761</b>	<b>9.8%</b>

Barnes & Noble	284935	01	7,987	-2,174	5,813	\$104,815	(\$29,420)	\$75,394	28.1%
Baker & Taylor	219794	02	8,123	-461	7,662	\$101,374	(\$5,763)	\$95,611	5.7%
Ingram	246194	16	8,162	-41	8,121	\$95,445	(\$513)	\$94,933	0.5%
Borders Inc.	315187	01	4,233	-689	3,544	\$55,270	(\$8,945)	\$46,325	16.2%
Benjamin News - Missoula	414844	02	4,402	-475	3,927	\$55,025	(\$5,938)	\$49,088	10.8%
Amazon.com	1903325	15	4,165	-4	4,161	\$42,021	(\$40)	\$41,981	0.1%
Partners West	1337604	02	3,318	-28	3,290	\$41,475	(\$350)	\$41,125	0.8%
The News Group	4263770	02	1,200	-72	1,128	\$15,000	(\$912)	\$14,089	6.1%
Raincoast	5166297	32	1,459	0	1,459	\$13,861	\$0	\$13,861	0.0%
Brodart	246578	02	893	-3	890	\$11,163	(\$38)	\$11,125	0.3%
AWBC	5165804	02	561	-12	549	\$6,944	(\$151)	\$6,793	2.2%
Follett Library Resources	1369887	16	674	0	674	\$6,737	\$0	\$6,737	0.0%
COUNTRY BOOKSHELF	239808	01	412	0	412	\$5,665	\$0	\$5,665	0.0%
Tattered Cover Bookstore	233300	01	392	-24	368	\$5,342	(\$330)	\$5,012	6.2%
Bookazine	146389	02	350	-49	301	\$4,375	(\$623)	\$3,753	14.2%
BOOKS WEST	291051	01	250	-75	175	\$3,438	(\$938)	\$2,500	27.3%
KING'S ENGLISH	326161	01	225	0	225	\$3,086	\$0	\$3,086	0.0%
Powells	161722	01	225	0	225	\$2,946	\$0	\$2,946	0.0%
Levy	1336543	02	233	-78	155	\$2,913	(\$908)	\$2,004	31.2%
University Bookstore	238108	01	217	-3	214	\$2,896	(\$42)	\$2,854	1.4%
MONTANA BOOK COMPANY	354087	15	252	0	252	\$2,835	\$0	\$2,835	0.0%
THOMAS BOOKS	1344995	01	198	-70	128	\$2,723	(\$977)	\$1,746	35.9%
Partners East	1337601	02	210	-2	208	\$2,625	(\$25)	\$2,600	1.0%
AUNTIE'S BOOKSTORE & CAFE	101845	01	168	0	168	\$2,310	\$0	\$2,310	0.0%
Book Warehouse Inc.	3110298	02	168	0	168	\$2,100	\$0	\$2,100	0.0%
FACT & FICTION	757915	01	157	0	157	\$2,054	\$0	\$2,054	0.0%
Hertzberg	280125	16	200	0	200	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000	0.0%
Third Place Books	4073999	01	131	0	131	\$1,783	\$0	\$1,783	0.0%
Book Passage	407819	01	130	-20	110	\$1,778	(\$279)	\$1,500	15.7%
CHAPTER ONE BOOKSHOP	308414	15	109	0	109	\$1,405	\$0	\$1,405	0.0%
Book Wholesalers Inc.	317148	16	135	0	135	\$1,388	\$0	\$1,388	0.0%
Politics & Prose	420047	01	99	0	99	\$1,346	\$0	\$1,346	0.0%
EAGLE HARBOR BOOK CO	302837	01	90	-75	15	\$1,226	(\$1,031)	\$195	84.1%
Boulder Book Store	339168	01	84	-3	81	\$1,099	(\$41)	\$1,057	3.8%
VILLAGE BOOKS	369192	01	78	0	78	\$1,049	\$0	\$1,049	0.0%
PMG Books Inc.	1876815	02	80	-4	76	\$900	(\$47)	\$853	5.2%
Newtonville Books	4199252	01	65	-7	58	\$890	(\$96)	\$794	10.8%
PASSTIMES BOOKS	1352455	15	70	0	70	\$875	\$0	\$875	0.0%
NACS	238454	02	70	-55	15	\$875	(\$694)	\$181	79.3%
Books Inc.	145418	01	58	-12	46	\$765	(\$162)	\$603	21.2%
Harry W Schwartz	191120	01	54	0	54	\$715	\$0	\$715	0.0%
Joseph Fox Bookshop	146103	01	53	-26	27	\$691	(\$364)	\$327	52.7%
Eastern National	318081	01	50	-50	0	\$688	(\$688)	\$0	100.0%
Elliot Bay	257681	01	52	0	52	\$684	\$0	\$684	0.0%
MICROMARKETING LLC	4096628	16	51	0	51	\$574	\$0	\$574	0.0%
WATERMARK BOOK CO	278167	01	42	0	42	\$567	\$0	\$567	0.0%
Vromans Bookstore	264553	01	42	0	42	\$551	\$0	\$551	0.0%
Follett Bookstores	238188	01	39	-15	24	\$548	(\$210)	\$338	38.3%
Blackwells	268475	02	43	-6	37	\$538	(\$75)	\$463	14.0%
Anderson News	749735	02	40	-35	5	\$500	(\$438)	\$63	87.5%
Emery Pratt	145799	02	39	-2	37	\$488	(\$25)	\$463	5.1%
Tower Records & Books	281319	01	36	-1	35	\$486	(\$15)	\$471	3.0%
Bookstream Inc.	6337882	02	36	0	36	\$450	\$0	\$450	0.0%
Distributors Inc.	254607	02	34	0	34	\$425	\$0	\$425	0.0%
Barbara's Bkstre	113237	01	31	-20	11	\$422	(\$275)	\$147	65.2%
Iconoclast Books Inc.	5580173	15	30	0	30	\$401	\$0	\$401	0.0%
Scott's Bookstore	321145	01	30	0	30	\$390	\$0	\$390	0.0%
THE BOOKSMITH	319706	01	28	-6	22	\$384	(\$81)	\$303	21.1%
Hudson News Company	1337839	02	30	-22	8	\$375	(\$275)	\$100	73.3%
THE BOOKSTORE NACS*	123719	01	28	0	28	\$364	\$0	\$364	0.0%

ISBN: **0151012377**

Title: **WHISTLING SEASON C**

Author: **DOIG**

List Price

**\$25.00**

Release Date

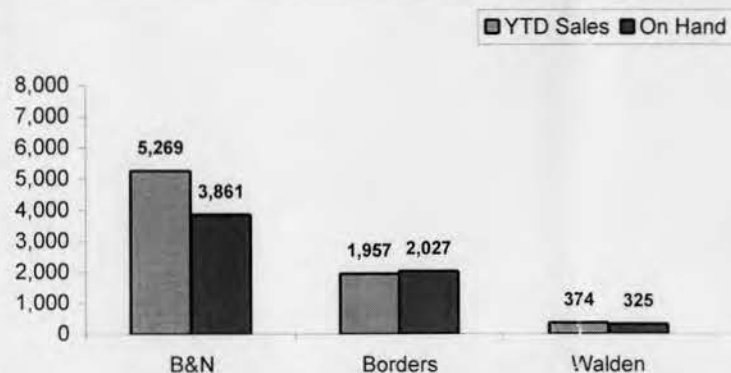
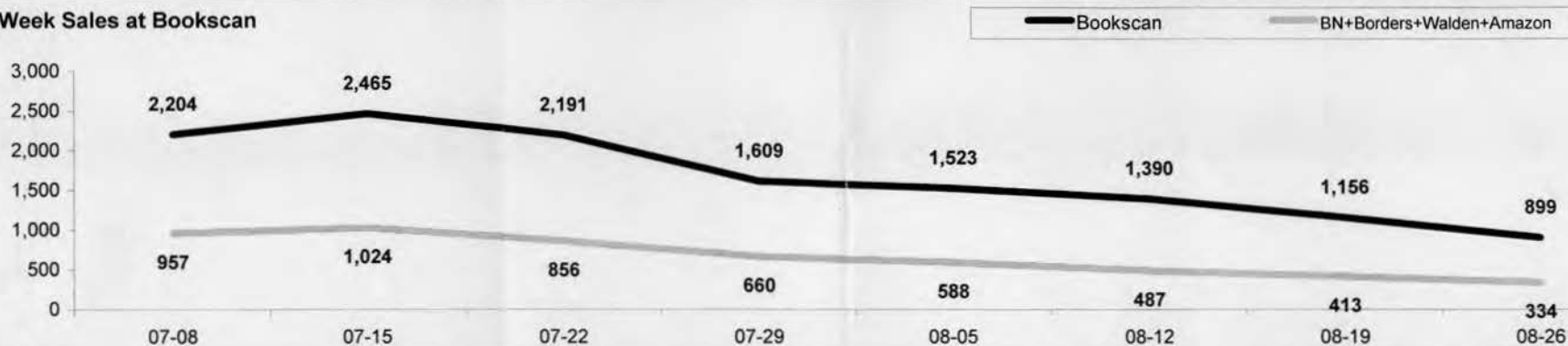
**5/8/2006**

Channel or Customer Name	Cust/Chnl Numbers	Gross Units	Return Units	Net Units	Gross Sales	Return Sales	Net Sales	%
International	32	1,439	0	1,439	\$13,671	\$0	\$13,671	0.0%
Non-Return Retail	15	3,378	0	3,378	\$36,961	\$0	\$36,961	0.0%
Non-Return Wholesale	16	114	0	114	\$1,203	\$0	\$1,203	0.0%
Other	13	32	0	32	\$469	\$0	\$469	0.0%
Retail Bookstores	01	16,405	-385	16,020	\$216,628	(\$5,198)	\$211,430	2.4%
Wholesale	02	23,273	-42	23,231	\$288,433	(\$525)	\$287,908	0.2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>44,641</b>	<b>-427</b>	<b>44,214</b>	<b>\$557,363</b>	<b>(\$5,723)</b>	<b>\$551,640</b>	<b>1.0%</b>

Barnes & Noble	284935	01	7,805	-34	7,771	\$102,540	(\$447)	\$102,093	0.4%
Baker & Taylor	219794	02	7,297	-21	7,276	\$91,213	(\$263)	\$90,950	0.3%
Ingram	246194	02	6,482	-9	6,473	\$78,645	(\$113)	\$78,533	0.1%
Borders Inc	315187	01	4,203	-5	4,198	\$54,867	(\$64)	\$54,803	0.1%
Benjamin News - Missoula	414844	02	3,562	0	3,562	\$44,525	\$0	\$44,525	0.0%
Amazon.com	1903325	15	2,908	0	2,908	\$31,320	\$0	\$31,320	0.0%
Partners West	1337604	02	2,478	-4	2,474	\$30,975	(\$50)	\$30,925	0.2%
Raincoast	5166297	32	1,439	0	1,439	\$13,671	\$0	\$13,671	0.0%
The News Group	4263770	02	900	0	900	\$11,250	\$0	\$11,250	0.0%
Brodart	246578	02	853	0	853	\$10,663	\$0	\$10,663	0.0%
AWBC	5165804	02	447	0	447	\$5,588	\$0	\$5,588	0.0%
Tattered Cover Bookstore	233300	01	380	-24	356	\$5,180	(\$330)	\$4,850	6.4%
COUNTRY BOOKSHELF	239808	01	300	0	300	\$4,125	\$0	\$4,125	0.0%
Bookazine	146389	02	294	0	294	\$3,675	\$0	\$3,675	0.0%
BOOKS WEST	291051	01	250	-75	175	\$3,438	(\$938)	\$2,500	27.3%
Levy	1336543	02	233	0	233	\$2,913	\$0	\$2,913	0.0%
MONTANA BOOK COMPANY	354087	15	252	0	252	\$2,835	\$0	\$2,835	0.0%
THOMAS BOOKS	1344995	01	198	-70	128	\$2,723	(\$977)	\$1,746	35.9%
Powells	161722	01	199	0	199	\$2,589	\$0	\$2,589	0.0%
University Bookstore	238108	01	172	0	172	\$2,281	\$0	\$2,281	0.0%
FACT & FICTION	757915	01	155	0	155	\$2,026	\$0	\$2,026	0.0%
Partners East	1337601	02	154	0	154	\$1,925	\$0	\$1,925	0.0%
Book Passage	407819	01	130	-14	116	\$1,778	(\$196)	\$1,582	11.0%
BOOK WAREHOUSE INC	3110298	02	140	0	140	\$1,750	\$0	\$1,750	0.0%
AUNTIE'S BOOKSTORE & CAFE	101845	01	126	0	126	\$1,733	\$0	\$1,733	0.0%
Third Place Books	4073999	01	122	0	122	\$1,663	\$0	\$1,663	0.0%
Politics & Prose	420047	01	95	0	95	\$1,291	\$0	\$1,291	0.0%
EAGLE HARBOR BOOK CO	302837	01	90	-75	15	\$1,226	(\$1,031)	\$195	84.1%
CHAPTER ONE BOOKSHOP	308414	15	89	0	89	\$1,155	\$0	\$1,155	0.0%
Boulder Book Store	339168	01	80	0	80	\$1,044	\$0	\$1,044	0.0%
VILLAGE BOOKS	369192	01	68	0	68	\$914	\$0	\$914	0.0%
PMG Books Inc	1876815	02	80	0	80	\$900	\$0	\$900	0.0%
Newtonville Books	4199252	01	65	0	65	\$890	\$0	\$890	0.0%
NACS	238454	02	70	0	70	\$875	\$0	\$875	0.0%
PASSTIMES BOOKS	1352455	15	70	0	70	\$875	\$0	\$875	0.0%
Books Inc	145418	01	58	0	58	\$765	\$0	\$765	0.0%
Joseph Fox Bookshop	146103	01	53	-20	33	\$691	(\$280)	\$411	40.5%
Eastern National	318081	01	50	-50	0	\$688	(\$688)	\$0	100.0%
Elliot Bay	257681	01	52	0	52	\$684	\$0	\$684	0.0%
Anderson News	749735	02	54	0	54	\$675	\$0	\$675	0.0%
MICROMARKETING LLC	4096628	16	50	0	50	\$563	\$0	\$563	0.0%
Follett Bookstores	238188	01	39	0	39	\$548	\$0	\$548	0.0%
Blackwells	268475	02	43	-6	37	\$538	(\$75)	\$463	14.0%
Harry W. Schwartz	191120	01	37	0	37	\$500	\$0	\$500	0.0%
WATERMARK BOOK CO	278167	01	36	0	36	\$489	\$0	\$489	0.0%
Tower Records & Books	281319	01	36	-1	35	\$486	(\$15)	\$471	3.0%
Vromans Bookstore	264553	01	35	0	35	\$458	\$0	\$458	0.0%
Emery Pratt	145799	02	36	0	36	\$450	\$0	\$450	0.0%
Book Wholesalers Inc.	317148	16	43	0	43	\$430	\$0	\$430	0.0%
Distributors Inc	254607	02	34	0	34	\$425	\$0	\$425	0.0%
Barbara's Bkstre	113237	01	31	0	31	\$422	\$0	\$422	0.0%
Iconoclast Books Inc	5580173	15	30	0	30	\$401	\$0	\$401	0.0%
Scott's Bookstore	321145	01	30	0	30	\$390	\$0	\$390	0.0%
THE BOOKSMITH	319706	01	28	0	28	\$384	\$0	\$384	0.0%
Hudson News Company	1337839	02	30	-2	28	\$375	(\$25)	\$350	6.7%
THE BOOKSTORE NACS*	123719	01	28	0	28	\$364	\$0	\$364	0.0%
Chaucer's Bookstore	383614	01	28	0	28	\$364	\$0	\$364	0.0%
IVAN DOIG	4684016	13	24	0	24	\$360	\$0	\$360	0.0%
Kepfers	245383	01	26	0	26	\$346	\$0	\$346	0.0%
Bookstream Inc	6337882	02	23	0	23	\$288	\$0	\$288	0.0%

ISBN	Title						Format	Author		Editor	Publicist	Release	Pub Date
0151012377	Whistling Season						HC	Doig		RS	MRB	5/8/06	6/1/06
	07-08	07-15	07-22	07-29	08-05	08-12	08-19	08-26	YTD	2005	2004	4wk Bksn	4wk Retail
Bookscan Retail	1,754	2,031	1,527	1,267	1,122	1,061	898	655	20,200	0	0	1,242	456
Bookscan Disc / Other	450	434	664	342	401	329	258	244	5,844	0	0		
Total Bookscan	2,204	2,465	2,191	1,609	1,523	1,390	1,156	899	26,044	0	0	OH	On Order
B&N	505	477	448	376	326	252	236	142	5,269	0	0	3,861	255
Borders	179	168	141	121	85	98	72	79	1,957	0	0	2,027	0
Walden	11	166	63	23	28	14	14	12	374	0	0	325	19
Amazon	262	213	204	140	149	123	91	101	2,669	0	0	1,021	0
Total Major Retail	957	1,024	856	660	588	487	413	334	10,269	0	0	7,234	274
B&T	132	610	325	152	194	67	128	75	6,668	0	0	715	0
Harcourt	Mth Gross	Mth Return	Mth Net		Tot Gross	Tot Return	Tot Net	Ret %	YTD	2005	2004	OH	Backorder
	276	76	200		44,641	427	44,214	1.0%	44,641	0	0	2,565	0

8-Week Sales at Bookscan



Notes:

TOTAL SHIPPED = 45,414  
IN PRINT = 48,747  
5 PRINTINGS



# *The Heartland Experience*



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE ARTS

a national literary event

May 6, 2006  
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

featuring



**Ivan Doig**



**Percival Everett**

and



**U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser**

## ***Schedule of events In the courtyard tent***

- 10:00 Discussion of Willa Cather's works with Cather scholars Steve Shively and Dr. Charles Peek.
- 11:00 The legacies of John Neihardt and Willa Cather as discussed by Executive Director of the *John Neihardt Center*, Nancy Gillis, and Executive Director of the *Willa Cather Foundation*, Betty Kort.
- 12:00 Musical interlude with Chris Sayre
- 1:00 NEA director of literature, David Kipen
- 2:00 Percival Everett  
with Ladette Randolph as moderator
- 3:00 Ivan Doig  
with Ladette Randolph as moderator
- 4:00 Unveil Ivan Doig's Legacy Banner,  
book signings by all applicable authors.
- 6:00 Evening reception with music by Chris Sayre (~~Tickets required~~)
- 7:00 Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate keynote address.

## ***Schedule of Events for Children's Tent***



Steve Otto



Jim "Two Crows" Wallen



Regina Leininger



Dr. Bill Clemente

10:00 Regina Leininger - *The Storyteller*

11:00 Steve Otto & Jim Two Crows Wallen  
(Suitable for grades K-4)

- break -

1:00 Bill Clemente - Creative writing

2:00 Steve Otto & Jim Two Crows Wallen  
(Suitable for grades 5-8)

## **A Great Nation Deserves Great Art**

The National Endowment for the Arts is the largest annual funder of the arts in the United States. An independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Arts is the official arts organization of the United States government.

**Mission:** The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education.

**Vision:** A nation in which artistic excellence is celebrated, supported, and available to all Americans.

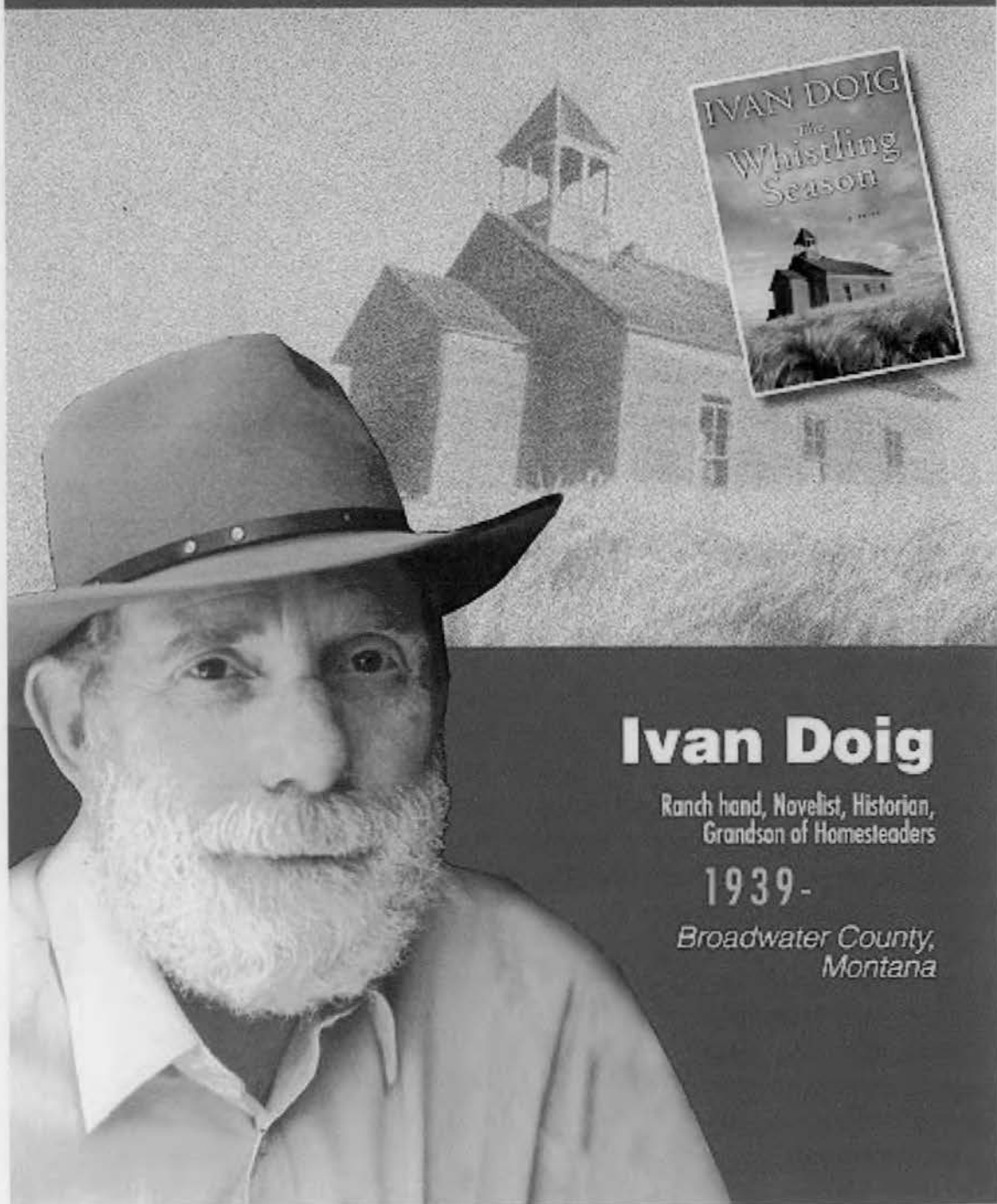
## **Special thanks to our partners:**

National Endowment for the Arts  
Arts Midwest  
Nebraska Humanities Council  
Nebraska Arts Council  
Southeast Community College  
University of Nebraska at Lincoln  
Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial  
John Neihardt State Historic Site  
Nebraska Center for the Book  
Bess Streeter Aldrich House & Museum  
Peru State College  
Lincoln City Libraries  
Beatrice Public Library

Homestead National Monument of America

# Homestead Legacies

[www.nps.gov/home](http://www.nps.gov/home)



## Ivan Doig

Ranch hand, Novelist, Historian,  
Grandson of Homesteaders

1939-

Broadwater County,  
Montana

## Dave Walter memorial service, Aug. 13, '06<sup>1</sup>

(this is a "safe-keeping" copy rather than my edited final version, which I gave to Marcella after the memorial service.)

Dave's indelible presence in my pages begins in my diary. In June of 1982, my wife Carol and I alit into the Historical Society to do research on 1930s Montana for my novel, English Crick. Behind the library desk sat a man with chest like a boulder and pleasant eyes and an uncanny intuition for what a researcher was actually after, however ill-defined and in my case downright novelistic that researcher's quest might be. After two days of what I record as Dave's "swift, shrewd help," we walked out with 305 pages of photocopied material.

Characteristically, then and ever after, as a professional acquaintanceship rapidly rocketed off into such a friendship that Dave and Marcella always merrily provided Carol and me a bed and roof over our heads whenever we were in Helena, fed us and regaled us, laughed into the night with us on summer evenings in their backyard, Dave's deepest magic that he repeatedly lent me in my almost infinite number of research questions lay in his sense of what was tucked away in a library or archival source. What an obscure book or stray collection of personal papers might have in its hip pocket, so to speak. That very first time I ever heard him speak his own distinctive form of *abracadabra*-- "You might try

over here"--he steered me to the <sup>3</sup>index of the papers of a 1930s forest ranger named Neil Fullerton, and one glance told me I was in the hands of a research sorcerer. As my diary records, Fullerton "looked like a pack rat after my own heart," and the treasure within the treasure was an array of Forest Service details and minutiae so gloriously unclassifiable that Fullerton himself called them his "crud files." Dave could not have known that wonderful "crud" even existed in those obscure files, but his miraculous sixth sense--his genius for intuiting where the real stuff of the past was buried--told him it might.

I think of Dave as a kind of fjord<sup>4</sup>--a person of deep privacies, where tides both serious and playful flowed, and of course shaped intrinsically by his man-made glacier of research. He loved Montana and its stories, its follies and its glories, and he knew this state and its history in a way probably none of the rest of us ever can. Nor will his exact keen glint of eye toward Montana and Montanans ever be duplicated. You didn't have to be around Dave many minutes to realize that he not only had his wits about him, he had the blessed singular of that, wit. He began his response to one of my usual cockeyed research requests this way:

“Your letter moved to the top of one of the piles quickly, when I realized that all those (others) asked questions about (1) grandmother, (2) Custer, (3) Lewis and Clark, and (4) Charlie Russell.”

Naturally I wrote him back:

“Dear Mr. Walter--

The late great Charles M. Russell personally told my dear departed grandmother, Lewisia Clark, that he painted the picture of the tragic martyred General Custer and his doomed heroic soldiers at the Battle of the Little Big Horn that hangs in saloons

and is sponsored by a beer company.<sup>6</sup> Will you verify this for me, in the next five minutes, please?”

Dave always gave as good as he got. The time he sent me some nugget of research practically by return mail, he warned me severely:

“Don’t let word get around that you received a response from us this quickly, as it will give us a lousy reputation. It is our policy to answer this quickly--it just isn’t our practice.”

Ultimately Dave figured so large in the contents of my pages that I simply put him there. I think he was the only living person I ever enlisted in my fiction, and inevitably in the scene in **Ride**

**With Me, Mariah Montana** <sup>7</sup> he is at work in the library of the Historical Society, where he helps Jick McCaskill with a vital piece of family research. The roulette grace of fate is in that scene, because before I ever knew of the Marcella in Dave's life I gave that name to Jick's wife whom he had met when she was a librarian. All of which provided me the luck to be able to write this line of description of Dave:

“Over behind the librarian's desk was a distinguished guy wearing a tie and a mustache both, and though he was no Marcella he looked more or less civil.”

8  
And one more time beyond that, I was able to take delight in bringing Dave Walter openly onto the page, this time way up at the front of the book. It felt only right to try to repay, a bit, Dave's dedication to the historical milieu of my books by putting him on the dedication page, of **Prairie Nocturne**. That page carries these words:

“To Dave and Marcella--for doing half the laughing and damn near all the history.”

## ORDER OF SERVICE

1:00 – **MUSIC** – Ian Tyson, Derek begins background music ASAP

1:30 – service begins

- Dorothy Bradley – welcome & officiate
- Father Brehe – invocation
- Dorothy makes remarks, will introduce individual speakers
- TBA reading Hampton's reminiscence (Dave as student)
- Bob Swartout (Dave as mentor & educator)
- **MUSIC** –Forever Young (track #7, 2-minute snippet fade to Dorothy)
- Dorothy reading Dick H's words (Dave and social justice)
- Margaret Kingsland (Dave as speaker)
- Ron Brey (Dave as friend)
- Lory Morrow (Dave at MHS)
- Ivan Doig (Dave as research historian)
- Marcella and/or girls (Dave at home)
- Dorothy – conclusion
- Fr. Brehe – moment of silence and benediction **MUSIC** – Handel's Largo (#7)  
**during moment of silence as background**

Approx. 2:30 – **MUSIC** put Ian Tyson CD back on as people exit

# Dave Walter



1943–2006

## Remembering the Mosaic of Dave's Life

A husband and father, student and mentor, friend and colleague,  
and advocate and historian.

August 13, 2006

St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
Montana Club

---

Thank you all for the opportunity to pursue what I love in so many different jobs, and for accepting me into the Montana community—with your caring, and interest, and support. Thank you for teaching me not to take either history or my own work too seriously. Thank you for showing me, instead, how to take people and place very seriously.

*Dave Walter on receiving his honorary doctorate  
from the University of Montana in 1994.*

Through my early years of personal confusion in the UM History Department, I was reminded repeatedly of my father's teaching: that almost any pursuit, embraced with diligence and passion, would yield merit, satisfaction, and the stuff of joy. He taught this lesson in several ways, but none better than with a little-known verse by Dr. Seuss.

*Dave Walter*

### **The Great Henry McBride**

by Dr. Seuss

It's hard to decide, said young Henry McBride.  
It's terribly, terribly hard to decide.  
When a fellow grows up and turns into a man.  
A fellow should pick the best job that he can.  
But there's so many jobs that would be so much fun.  
It's terribly hard to decide on just one.

I could be a farmer!  
That sounds pretty good.  
That could be my job, and now maybe it should.  
I'll buy a big farm somewhere out in the West  
And raise giant rabbits—the world's very best.  
Yeah, that's what I'll do. That's how I'll decide.  
I'll be the big rabbit-man, Henry McBride.

Oh. . . . but now, I don't know. . . .  
I'm too smart and too clever  
To tie myself down to jus one job forever.  
If I could have two jobs. . . . Boy, that'd be swell.  
Besides taking care of the rabbits I'd sell,  
Well, I could be also a doctor as well.  
Then people will say when they feel sick inside,  
"I'll go to the rabbit-man, Dr. McBride.  
The guy that does two things." . . . . Boy, that'll be me,  
Doctor and Rabbit-man, Henry McBee.

Oh, but why only two things, I could do three.  
I'll build a big radio broadcasting tower  
And broadcast the news and the sports every hour.  
And then I'll be famous and known far and wide  
As broadcaster, rabbit-man, Dr. McBride.

Aw, three jobs are nothing. I still could do more.  
I've got lots of brains. It's a cinch, I'll do four.

David A. Walter, 63, Helena research historian, writer, and teacher, died Wednesday, July 19, 2006.

Dave is survived by his wife, Marcella; daughter and son-in-law, Heather and Coby Ellison, Tucson, AZ; daughter and son-in-law Emily Walter and Sergio Romero, Missoula; daughter Amanda Walter and Cory Guthmiller, Great Falls; by grandchildren Rhain Walter, Guillermo Romero Walter, and Rocko Guthmiller; and by brother Peter and family. He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Dorothy Walter.

Dave was born January 1, 1943—the first New Year's baby in Racine, Wisconsin. He graduated from high school in Appleton, Wisconsin, and received his BA from Wesleyan University, Connecticut, in 1965. From 1965 to 1977, Dave conducted graduate research under Montana historian K. Ross Toole at the University of Montana.

Dave's love for Montana began in the late 1940s when his family began camping at Bowman Lake in Glacier National Park. He moved to Montana permanently in 1965, spending the remainder of his life helping Montanans discover all the stories that comprise the mosaic of the state's past.

From 1979 until his death, Dave worked for the Montana Historical Society as a reference and research historian. He authored and edited hundreds of articles and a dozen books. For 20 years, Dave contributed a regular history column to *Montana Magazine*. For over a decade, Dave traveled Montana as a Montana Committee for the Humanities Speakers' Bureau presenter. Although he always preferred research to administrative responsibilities he contributed time to boards and committees.

The breadth and importance of Dave's work in Montana history research and education are reflected in the awards he received: an honorary doctorate of humane letters from the University of Montana in 1994; the Governor's Humanities Award in 1998; the H. G. Merriam Award for contributions to Montana literature in 2001; and the Montana Historical Society Educators' Award in 2003.

Dave took greatest pride in his work on Montana's World War II conscientious objector camps; the state's World War I Councils of Defense; the 1920s KKK movement; and Jeannette Rankin. Well known as a mentor, Dave reveled in helping Montana history students of all ages. He believed that we learn from our heroes and our villains; he celebrated the irony, humanity, and humor he found in historical events.

Dave loved his family's North Fork of the Flathead property passionately and was its skilled steward. He never missed a Green Bay Packers or Atlanta Braves game on TV. He arrived at the Society each day in a button-down collar shirt and tie. He treasured helping his daughters with 4-H rabbit projects and their own research papers, cheering them on at sporting events, and encouraging them in their vocations and avocations. He measured himself and others by work accomplished not titles. He was a steady quiet champion of social justice, civil rights, and nonviolence.



I'll get myself one of those seal-training suits  
And train seals to balance big balls on their snouts.  
Then people will say, "Young McBride sure is slick.  
He raises live rabbits, while healing the sick,  
While broadcasting news, and besides he's so quick  
That he's all the time teaching some seal a new trick."

And cow-punching's great, so I'll do that, of course.  
I'll do all five jobs from the back of my horse!  
And when people see me go galloping by,  
They'll cheer and they'll shout, "What a wonderful guy!"  
The guy that does everything, Wow, he's a whiz.  
He's got the very best job that there is.  
The seal-training doctor, just look at him ride.  
The broadcasting rabbit-man, two-gun McBride!

Yea, I'll pick the very best job that I can,  
When I finally grow up and turn into a man.  
But now....well, right now....when I'm still sort of small,  
The best job is dreaming.....with no work at all.

---

Biography is the wrong field for the mystical, and for the wishful, the tender-minded, the hopeful, and the passionate. It enforces an unrelenting skepticism—toward its materials, toward the subject, most of all toward the biographer.... His job is not dramatic; it is only to discover evidence and analyze it. And all the evidence he can find is the least satisfactory kind, documentary evidence, which is among the most treacherous phenomena in a malevolent world. With Luck he will be certain of the dates of his subject's birth and marriage and death, the names of his wife and children, a limited number of things he did and offices he held and trades he practised and places he visited and manuscript pages he wrote, people he praised or attacked, and some remarks made about him. Beyond that, not even luck can make certainty possible. The rest is merely printed matter, and a harassed man who sweats out his life in libraries, courthouses, record offices, vaults, newspaper morgues, and family attics. A harassed man who knows that he cannot find everything and is willing to believe that, forever concealed from him, exists something which, if found, would prove that what he takes to be facts are only appearances.

*"The Skeptical Biographer" by Bernard DeVoto*

## Forgiving Our Fathers

by Dick Lourie

maybe in a dream: he's in your power  
you twist his arm but you're not sure it was  
he that stole your money you feel calmer  
and you decide to let him go free

or he's the one (as in a dream of mine)  
I must pull from the water but I never  
knew it or wouldn't have done it until  
I saw the street-theater play so close up  
I was moved to actions I'd never before taken

maybe for leaving us too often or  
forever when we were little maybe  
for scaring us with unexpected rage  
or making us nervous because there seemed  
never to be any rage there at all

for marrying or not marrying our mothers  
for divorcing or not divorcing our mothers  
and shall we forgive them for their excesses  
of warmth or coldness shall we forgive them

for pushing or leaning for shutting doors  
for speaking only through layers of cloth  
or never speaking or never being silent

in our age or in theirs or in their deaths  
saying it to them or not saying it -  
if we forgive our fathers what is left

### Special thanks to:

Dorothy Bradley  
Father Steve Brehe  
Ron Brey  
Ivan Doig

H. Duane Hampton  
Richard Harghesheimer  
Margaret Kingsland  
Becca Kohl

Kirby Lambert  
Katherine Mitchell  
Delores Morrow  
Robert Swartout

Photo courtesy of the Montana Historical Society

DeVoto, Bernard. "The Skeptical Biographer." *Harper's*, January 1933.

Geisel, Theodor Seuss. "The Great Henry McBride." *Redbook*, November 1951.

Lourie, Dick. "Forgiving Our Fathers." <http://everything2.com> (accessed August 9, 2006).

Music:

Baez, Joan and Bob Dylan. "Forever Young." Perf. Joan Baez. Ram's Horn Music, 1974.

Handel, George Frideric. "Largo." Perf. The Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conductor.

Tyson, Ian. *All the Good 'uns*. Vanguard Recording Society, 1996.

# Farewell to a wet, wild January

## Seattle counts cost of its 3rd-soggiest month on record

BY JAKE ELLISON  
P-I reporter

Weirdly warm and record wet, a strange January has become history for Seattle.

The past month was the third-wettest month on record, with 11.65 inches of rain, according to the National Weather Service. The wettest month on record: January 1953, with 12.92 inches. The second-rainiest was December 1979, with 11.85 inches.

All that rain, accompanied by high winds recently, has come at a price for Seattle and the region.

Homes have been flooded, Amtrak service cut and roads closed because of landslides and avalanches. A cluster of power outages early Wednesday morning also cast 10,000 homes into darkness.

In January's run for the record books, the past month featured above-normal temperatures, averaging 46.6 degrees.

The normal average is 40.9 degrees; in 1981, however, the average rose to 64 degrees.

Wednesday's power outages were caused by a combination of high winds and soggy soil. The downed lines and toppled trees left residents primarily in West Seattle, Lake City, Shoreline and Tukwila without lights.

Traffic lights also were out for the area from Meridian Avenue to Lake Washington Boulevard, the Seattle Police Department reported.

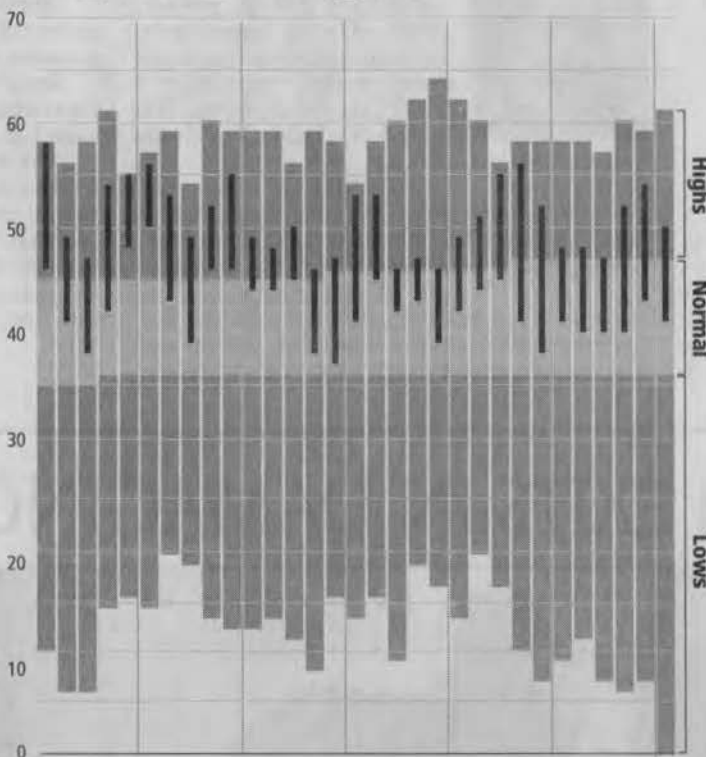
Residents began calling around 3 a.m. Wednesday to report the loss of electricity, said Dan Williams, a spokesman for City Light. The peak outages occurred around 5 a.m.

Winds gusted to 45 mph around that time, according to the National Weather Service.

## JANUARY WEATHER

**Daily temperatures** In degrees Fahrenheit, recorded at Sea-Tac Airport

KEY ■ Record ■ Normal ■ Actual



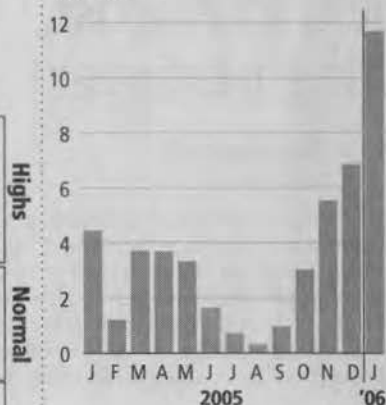
**Daily precipitation** In inches T = Trace



Source: National Weather Service

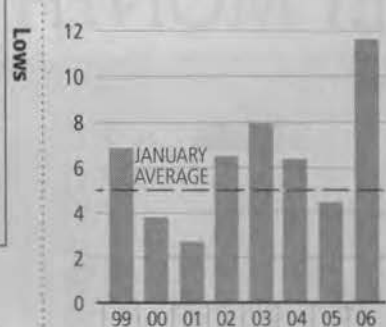
**Monthly precipitation**

In inches



**January precipitation**

By year, in inches



**Rainy**

25 24 22 23 19 22 20 28

**Cloudy**

30 23 27 31 24 31 27 28

**Sunny**

1 8 4 0 7 0 4 0

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

The majority of the outages were resolved by 9:30 a.m., with crews fixing a few smaller outages scattered around the city throughout the morning.

The winds also caused one ferry run, from Port Townsend to Keystone, and the Wednesday morning's passenger-only runs between Vashon Island and Seat-

tle to be canceled.

The trouble may not be over, Williams said.

"We could get more (outages), because the ground is so wet it doesn't take a real big wind to topple trees," he said.

Rain is expected to continue through today, with winds in the 10- to 20-mph range, said John-

ny Burg, a meteorologist with the service.

"Things can get a little hairy again on Friday night and Saturday," he said, when another storm is expected to blow in.

P-I reporter Jake Ellison can be reached at 206-448-8346 or [jakeellison@seattlepi.com](mailto:jakeellison@seattlepi.com).



"Chapter One Book  
Store"

<books@chapter1book  
store.com>

To: <rsaletan@harcourt.com>

cc:

Subject: RE: Ivan Doig

01/03/2006 03:15 PM

Glad there was time to catch it. We look forward to seeing his book and watching our sales go into orbit!

Russ Lawrence  
Chapter One Book Store, Inc.  
252 Main Street  
Hamilton MT 59840  
406-363-5220 / 406-363-5003 fax  
[books@chapter1bookstore.com](mailto:books@chapter1bookstore.com)  
[www.chapter1bookstore.com](http://www.chapter1bookstore.com)

**From:** rsaletan@harcourt.com [mailto:rsaletan@harcourt.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 03, 2006 10:45 AM

**To:** books@chapter1bookstore.com

**Cc:** pvondrasek@harcourt.com

**Subject:** Ivan Doig

sends thanks to you, Russ, for catching his Pluto blooper. He will substitute a non-anachronistic planet and says you just proved what he's long known about Chapter 1 folk--that you're all smart as whips.