

50-state Women Honorees for June 2012

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MARYLAND

Dr. Lois Green Carr, called by colleagues “an historian’s historian” exemplifies the talent of an AWWNM honoree. Colleagues describe Carr, a member of the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame, as a “magnificent mind,” “a giant among historians” who specialize in early American history—specifically 17th century Chesapeake. Carr, born in 1922, has collaborated on 15 books and still offices at the State Archives. She holds a B.A. degree from Swarthmore College, M.A. from Radcliffe, and a Harvard PhD in history, one of the first woman graduates of that program.



American women poets are another literary category AWWNM showcases.

The work of **Mary Carter Smith** (1919-2007), local TV and radio personality, is included in early books of poetry such as the 1970 edition of a book entitled “*Poetry of the Negro*,” as well as books titled “*Opinionated*” and “*Vibes*.” Smith, who taught in Baltimore public schools for 30 years, is known for “reviving and promoting storytelling,” singing, writing and reciting poetry “from the African heritage.” She is also honored by the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame.



Women sportswriters, are among the journalist category of AWWNM honorees.



Sadie Kneller Miller (1867-1920) a “journalist’s journalist”—a extraordinary groundbreaker who circa 1887 was known as “the only woman baseball reporter in the country.” As a sportswriter, she covered the Baltimore Orioles for the Baltimore-Telegram. In the early 1900s, Miller, as a photojournalist, “scooped all national publications” with such historic photos as “Baltimore fire of 1904, Teddy Roosevelt and Susan B. Anthony, and President Taft inauguration.” Just before World War I, Miller became “the only woman war correspondent in the world” reporting from Morocco, Cuba, Russia, and even interviewing Pancho Villa in 1916 at his guerrilla base in the Mexican mountains.” Miller is a WOW!

**AWWNM thanks and credits the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame for much of this material.*

MASSACHUSETTS



The Bay State boasts a large cache of America’s premier women writers, beginning with superlative **Abigail Adams** (1744-1818) wife of America’s second President, John Adams, as well as the mother of John Quincy Adams, America’s sixth president. Abigail’s detailed, perceptive, intellectual letter correspondence with her husband during the Continental Congresses are a riveting eyewitness account of America’s birth. She is featured on AWWNM’s website Home Page.

Curator Paul Lewis of Boston Public Library notes writers **Judith Sargent Murray** of the 1790 period, and **Susanna Haswell Rowson**, **Hannah Webster**, and 19th century **Lydia Maria Child**—women who “asked probing questions about women’s place”—all of whom he is researching.

A duo of world renowned literary genius:



Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888). Her 1862-63 dispatches to her family describing her service as a nurse in a Union Hospital during the Civil War made their way to magazines, bringing her her first literary recognition. Her quintessential American book “*Little Women*” remains a cultural staple.

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) a reclusive poet whose mega-talent was widely recognized only after her death. A revered American icon.

MICHIGAN

Screenwriters are a genre AWWNM honors. **Judith Guest** (1936-) has the distinction of having her 1976 book *Ordinary People*, about family life, made into a film that won the 1980 Academy Award for Best Picture. Guest, a University of Michigan graduate, wrote the screenplay for the 1987 film *Rachel River*. Guest is the great-niece of Michigan’s Poet Laureate Edgar Guest (1881-1959) whose poem-a-day graced the Detroit Free Press for 40 years.



Although **Elizabeth Chandler** (1807-1834) died at 26 years old, she made her mark as one of the first American women writers to make abolition of slavery, specifically the tragedy of slave women separated from their children, a central theme of her poetry.

Marguerite de Angeli (1889-1987) used her almost 100 years to both write and illustrate children’s books championing respect for marginalized groups. Her illustrating and writing awards included Newbery Medal, Caldecott, Lewis Carrol, Regina Medal. Her final book was published when she was 92.

MINNESOTA

Anne Tyler (1941-). *The Accidental Tourist*, (1985) Tyler’s 10th novel, won the National Book Critics Circle Award, was a 1986 Pulitzer Prize finalist, and was made into a 1988 movie. In 1983 Tyler was a Pulitzer and PEN/Faulkner Award finalist for her novel “*Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*.” She finally won the Pulitzer in 1989 for *Breathing Lessons*. Raised as a Quaker, she did not attend school until she was 11.



A Minnesota annual youth reading award is named for **Maud Hart Lovelace** (1892-1980) whose children’s books, including the famous Betsy-Tacy books, were set in her girlhood home of Mankato.

Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867-1957) lived in a dugout on the banks of Plum Creek while “Pa” built the family two-story house. Her pioneer life was fuel for her 11 family books, familiar to generations of American children. *Little House on the Prairie* (1935) became the basis of a popular 1974-82 television series.