



**REMEMBERING
TIL MEMBERS
WHOM WE HAVE
LOST THIS YEAR**

**JUDY ALTER
(1938-2024)
INDUCTED IN 1986**

Judy Alter was a cherished figure in Texas literature. Born in Chicago in 1938, she relocated to Fort Worth in 1965, where she earned a Ph.D. in English from Texas Christian University, focusing on the literature of the American West. Over her prolific career, Judy authored more than 100 books spanning historical fiction, young adult literature, cozy mysteries, and cookbooks, often highlighting the lives of women in the American West. As director of TCU Press from 1987 to 2009, she championed regional voices and stories. Her contributions earned her numerous accolades, including the Owen Wister Award for Lifetime Achievement and induction into both the Western Writers of America Hall of Fame and the Texas Literary Hall of Fame. Beyond her literary achievements, Judy was known for her warmth, mentorship, and the joy she found in hosting gatherings, cooking, and engaging with her community. Her legacy endures through her vast body of work and the countless lives she has touched, including her friends at the Texas Institute of Letters.



JAMES WARD LEE
(1931-2024)
INDUCTED IN 1974

James Ward “Jim” Lee was a distinguished author, folklorist, and educator. Born on February 12, 1931, Jim dedicated over four decades to the University of North Texas, where he served as Professor Emeritus of English and chaired the English Department. His literary contributions include works such as *Texas, My Texas*, *Adventures with a Texas Humanist*, and *A Texas Jubilee*, which celebrated the state's rich cultural tapestry. In 2017, Jim published his last novel, *The Girls of the Golden West*, a faux-memoir semi-Western that charmed readers with its wit and originality. As a past president of the Texas Folklore Society and co-editor of *Literary Fort Worth*, Jim played a pivotal role in preserving and promoting Texas's literary heritage. His legacy endures through his writings and the many students and readers he's inspired.



JEANNE WILLIAMS
(1930-2024)
INDUCTED BEFORE 1966

Jeanne Williams was a prolific and celebrated author of historical fiction. Born on April 10, 1930, in Elkhart, Kansas, Williams overcame early hardships to become a literary force whose works vividly captured the spirit of the American West and beyond. Over her career, she published 69 books and was only the second woman invited to join the Western Writers of America, where she later served as president. Her accolades include four Spur Awards and the Levi Strauss Saddleman Award for Lifetime Achievement in Western literature. Williams' novels, such as *The Cave Dreamers* and *The Longest Road*, were widely translated, with *The Cave Dreamers* becoming a New York Times bestseller in 1983. Beyond her writing, she was deeply engaged in her community—as a firefighter, EMT, and founder of local historical and cultural groups—and served on the national board of Defenders of Wildlife. Her personal papers are archived at Texas Tech University, ensuring that her legacy as both a storyteller and community advocate will continue to inspire future generations.



JAMES CARLOS BLAKE
(1943-2025)
INDUCTED IN 2000

James Carlos Blake was an acclaimed author known for his gritty, lyrical portrayals of outlaws and the American borderlands. Born in Tampico, Mexico, and raised in Brownsville, Texas, Blake's diverse heritage and experiences deeply influenced his storytelling. His debut novel, *The Pistoleer* (1995), introduced readers to his distinctive narrative style, which he continued to refine in works like *In the Rogue Blood*, winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Fiction. Blake's novels often delved into the lives of historical and fictional figures navigating the tumultuous landscapes of the American Southwest and Mexico, exploring themes of violence, honor, and identity. His contributions to literature earned him numerous accolades, including the Japan Adventure Fiction Association Prize and membership in the Texas Institute of Letters. Remembered as "one of the greatest chroniclers of the mythical American outlaw life," Blake's legacy endures through his compelling narratives that continue to captivate readers around the globe.

