

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**The Western North Carolina Historical Association announces six finalists for the
2020 Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award.**

The Western North Carolina Historical Association announces the selection of six finalists for the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award. Originated by the Louis Lipinsky family and now also supported by Michael Sartisky, PhD, and the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Advisory Committee, the Award has been presented annually since 1955 for printed works that focus special attention on Western North Carolina. In order to more broadly support the writers of Western North Carolina, a December 16, 2020 award ceremony will celebrate all six finalists.

To be considered, an entry must be a published work of fiction, nonfiction, drama or poetry and meet the following criteria:

1. It must be a first edition work; revised editions of published works will not be considered.
2. The publication date must be in the calendar year 2019 or no later than July 15, 2020.
3. The author must be a native of western North Carolina or a resident of western NC for at least twelve months prior to the closing date for the Award.
4. An author may also qualify if the work submitted has a focus on or setting in western NC.

The WNC Historical Association presented the first Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award to Wilma Dykeman in 1955 for *The French Broad*. Last year winners were George Ellison and Janet McCue for their biography of Horace Kephart, *Back of Beyond*. Other authors who have received the award include Chales Frazier, Robert Morgan, John Parris, Gail Godwin, John Ehle, Robert Brunk, Michael McFee, Lee Smith, Ron Rash, Wiley Cash, Wayne Caldwell, Fiona Ritchie, and Doug Orr.

A prize of \$2,500.00 accompanies the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award and will be virtually presented to the author(s) on **Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 6:00pm during a live Zoom event** that will include readings by the finalists. Please reserve this date.

The Award Panel this year consists of: Catherine Frank, Chair, Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UNC Asheville; Brandon J. Johnson, Blue Ridge National Heritage Area; Leslee Johnson, English Department, UNC-Asheville; Tom Muir, Historic Site Manager, Thomas Wolfe Memorial; Gordon McKinney, PhD, former president, Appalachian Studies Association; Terry Roberts, PhD, Director, National Paideia Center; Jim Stokely, President, Wilma Dykeman Legacy.

This year's six finalists were chosen from an original group of 40 nominations. The finalists, listed below, encompass a broad range of genres and forms.

Leah Hampton

*F*ckface and Other Stories*

Sandra Muse Isaacs

Eastern Cherokee Stories: A Living Oral Tradition and Its Cultural Continuance

Susan E. Keefe, Junaluska Heritage Association

Junaluska: Oral Histories of a Black Appalachian Community

Courtney Lewis

Sovereign Entrepreneurs: Cherokee Small-Business Owners and the Making of Economic Sovereignty

Rose McLarney, Laura-Gray Street, and L.L. Gaddy, editors

A Literary Field Guide to Southern Appalachia

Dale Neal

Appalachian Book of the Dead

The Western North Carolina Historical Association is a nonprofit with a mission of promoting and preserving regional history. For more information, please call WNCHA at 828.253.9231 or visit www.wnchistory.org.