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PART V FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

FULL HOUSE FOR
McCORKLE READING

IN MEMORIAM, IVAN D. JONES

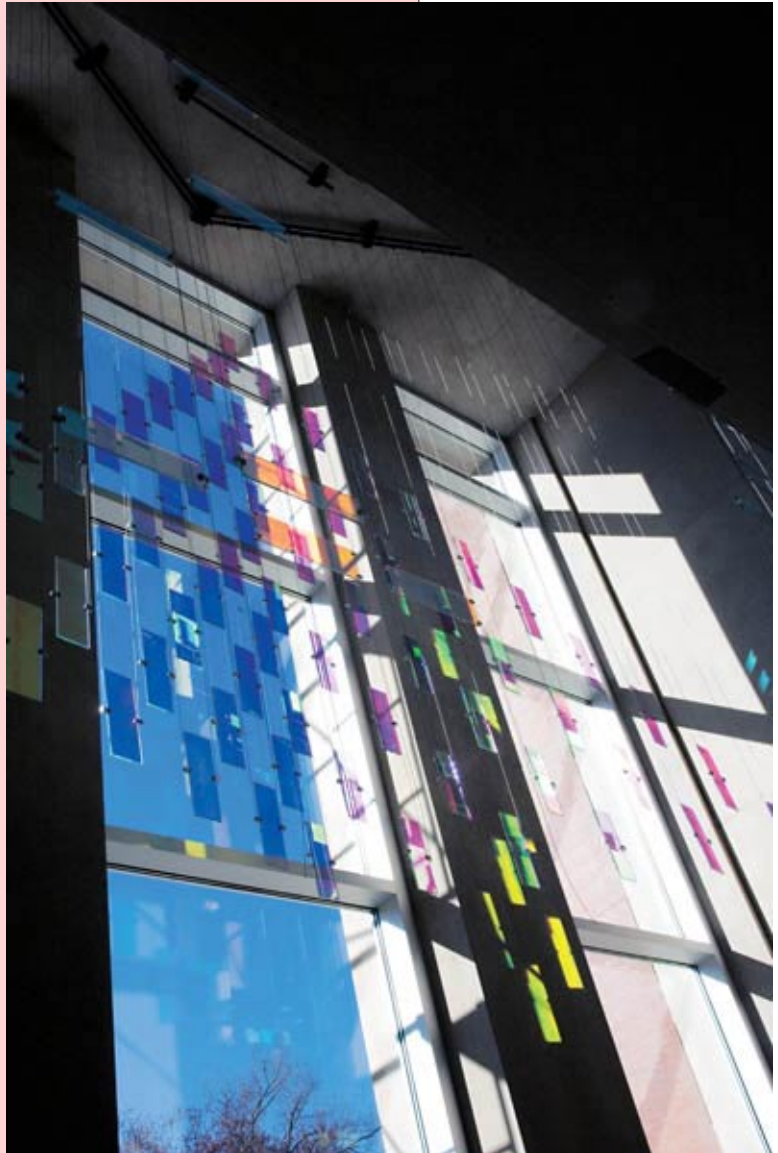
FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY
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*Conservatory with dichroic glass sculpture by artist Joy Wolke.
Gift of Susan K. Nutter in honor of Dr. Deborah Winslow Nutter.*

Friends of the Library News

By Chelcy Boyer

Full House for McCorkle Reading



“I don’t know what it is about a person all alone that drives other people crazy. I’m thinking we all heard too many Bible stories coming along—Adam and Eve (that match made in heaven). Or Noah’s Ark, desperate pairs scurrying onto the Love Boat; a lesson reinforced by that Irish song we sang to death in grade school about the poor unicorn left crying on a rock because he didn’t find somebody he wanted to live with for all eternity.”

—JILL McCORKLE,
“ME AND BIG FOOT,”

FROM HER FOURTH COLLECTION,
ALGONQUIN BOOKS OF CHAPEL HILL

Before the Jill McCorkle reading hosted by the Friends of the Library on January 17, 2007, NC State Associate Professor of English Barbara Bennett gave an introduction to the packed audience that summarized McCorkle’s effect on readers:

In all of her novels and collections of short stories, Jill McCorkle can make you laugh and cry in the same breath of exquisite recognition. She writes of the things that matter most—and the things that last: family, love, death, victories, failures, life, and loss.

Jill McCorkle signed books and answered questions at the reading sponsored by the Friends of the Library.



McCorkle, the critically acclaimed author and NC State professor of English, read two stories that deal with the disappointing and humorous sides of love. The stories are from a future collection, her fourth, from Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill. In one, a woman must come to terms with a husband whose attention seems to be elsewhere. He prominently displays a photograph of a former wife, making her wonder about his past life. In another, a single woman's well-meaning friends and family are intent on seeing her paired off. She is fine to be by herself and would rather they leave her alone. In an effort to quiet them, she creates a mythical boyfriend when a stranger parks his truck in her yard with a note asking her not to tow. Her fantasy boyfriend ends up being the perfect man. Most importantly, the myth allows her to have a break from her matchmaking friends and some much desired solitary time. McCorkle's characters are at once funny and honest, lonely and independent, and always smart.

McCorkle answered questions following the reading, saying that her stories are most often character driven. She noted she frequently does not know how her stories will evolve; like a cross-country road trip, she may know where she will end up but just doesn't know the route she will take to get there. Her life, she told the audience, has clearly informed her works and characters. In the middle of writing her best-selling novel *Ferris Beach*, she gave birth to her daughter. McCorkle was able to flesh out the character of the mother, having this new and first-hand account of motherhood.

As a teacher, McCorkle has to find a way to make the process of creative writing less intimidating for students.

I encourage my students to focus first on telling a good story. We spend a lot of time in the beginning talking about stories and memories and how you might lasso some bit of reality (a particular place or setting or an anecdote that describes a character) and then let the fiction grow out from it.

McCorkle tries to establish an atmosphere in the class that generates lots of talk and discussion so that students feel comfortable presenting their work.

I think that part of workshop—letting go of what you've written to be critiqued by others—is as hard a process as the writing of that first draft. There is so much to be learned in the process of revision, and so an open and honest classroom discussion that prepares the writer to go back in and rework is invaluable. I am thrilled to be back home and being at NCSU is just that.

The NCSU Friends of the Library has a great tradition of bringing prominent authors to NC State's campus, from Tom Wolfe and Bob Dole to many celebrated North Carolina authors such as Lee Smith and Kaye Gibbons. These events help foster NC State's intellectual climate and promote the university's own writers and scholars. The Friends is a group of community members, students, NC State alumni, corporate partners, and others that also promotes excellence in library collections and services. It acts as an advocacy organization by elevating public awareness of and raising funds for the Libraries. ❖

IN MEMORIAM

Ivan D. Jones

Ivan D. Jones, professor emeritus of food science and a life member of the Friends of the Library, passed away on December 5, 2006, just five days shy of his 103rd birthday. He is survived by two children, Ivan Jones Jr. and Lucia Fisher, eight grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren.

A native of Holdrege, Nebraska, Jones received a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Nebraska Wesleyan University and a doctorate in agricultural biochemistry from the University of Minnesota. He came to NC State in 1930 as an associate horticulturist. In 1933 he initiated the NC State program in fruit and vegetable processing. The program was expanded in 1935 through a cooperative arrangement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a partnership that continued for twenty-five years.

He also assisted in developing extension programs in home and commercial preservation of fruits and vegetables. He became a professor in the food science department in 1961, when the department was created. After a distinguished career, which included United Nations and other international consultations as well as memberships in numerous honorary and professional organizations, Jones retired as professor emeritus in 1970.

In 1995 he created the **Lillian Tyler Jones Endowment** in memory of his wife. This endowment supports the NCSU Libraries' human nutrition collections in all formats. Memorial donations may be made in his name to this endowment. For information on contributing to this endowment, please call Michael Gulley at (919) 513-7315 or send an electronic-mail message to michael_gulley@ncsu.edu. ❖

COMING SOON . . .

Friends of the Library Book Sale • April 26 through 28, 2007

Details: www.lib.ncsu.edu/friends/booksales.html



Focus, a newsletter published three times a year, seeks to promote the services, activities, needs, and interests of the NCSU Libraries to the university, the Friends of the Library, and beyond.

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