



Declaration of Statewide Celebration For the William Stafford Centennial of 2014

Whereas, William Edgar Stafford, one of the most prolific and admired American writers of the 20th century, was born on January 17, 1914, and

Whereas, Stafford moved to Oregon from his native Kansas in 1948 and settled with his family in Lake Oswego for most of the next 45 years, and

Whereas, Stafford published more than 60 collections of poetry and prose, including 12 full-length books of poems, and won many prestigious literary awards, including the National Book Award, and

Whereas, Stafford served as Poet Laureate of Oregon from 1975 to 1989 and as Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress (now called United States Poet Laureate), and

Whereas, Stafford was a beloved and influential teacher at Lewis & Clark College for more than 30 years, and

Whereas, Stafford wrote daily and advised students who complained of writer's block to lower their standards and keep on writing when it got difficult "because you are doing something original," and

Whereas, Stafford was a superb listener and a generous man of unquestioned integrity who stood for inclusion and the bedrock American values of religious tolerance and respect for opposing points of view, and

Whereas, Stafford was a pacifist and a conscientious objector during World War II, and a lifelong voice for peaceful reconciliation, and

Whereas, Stafford's plain-spoken poems – quiet yet tough-minded – gained a wide following, even among readers who did not think they liked poetry,

Therefore, the Oregon Heritage Commission hereby declares the 100th anniversary of the birth of William Stafford an event of statewide significance and cause for statewide celebration in 2014, and encourages all Oregonians to learn about Stafford's life and work and to participate in activities inspired by the year-long centennial.



Approved by the Oregon Heritage Commission
January 28, 2013


Jan Mitchell, Chair