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## Acton Memorial Library Board of Trustees

486 Main St., Acton, MA 01720 \* telephone (978) 264-9641 \* www.actonmemoriallibrary.org

February 4, 2009

Ms. Lauren S. Rosenzweig, Chair  
Town of Acton Board of Selectmen  
472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720

- Attachments: 1. Biography of Sonia Sanchez  
2. 2009 Georgia Whitney Fund Approval Form

Dear Lauren,

The AML Board of Trustees requests the approval of the Board of Selectmen to use some of the accumulated earnings in the Georgia Whitney Fund, which are designated to be used to fund cultural events that benefit the students and citizens of Acton to help fund the 2009 Robert Creeley Award and associated Helen Creeley Prize competition. The estimated cost is about \$4,000. We have gotten some funding from a foundation that supports cultural endeavors and from individual contributions. We also have plans for additional fundraising associated with the event. However we still cannot fully cover the costs without support from The Georgia Whitney Fund and others (Friends of the Acton Libraries, AML Foundation and Community Education), who have supported us in the past.

The poet selected to receive the 2009 Robert Creeley Award is Sonia Sanchez. After selecting Ms. Sanchez as the 2009 Robert Creeley Award winner, we were pleased to hear that she had also been selected to read at one of the major inauguration events. Ms. Sanchez read at the "Realizing the Dream" event honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, that this year presented its top award to Senator Ted Kennedy. Ms. Sanchez has written over a dozen books of poetry and received many literary awards. Combined with her having read as part of the inaugural ceremonies, this should assure high interest in her reading here in Acton on March 23 and the school events the next day.

The Robert Creeley Award program continues to grow in scope and popularity. Last year, between the evening audience and the overwhelming turnout of students the next day, well over 1,000 people heard last year's winner John Ashbery. Last year, for the first time the student poetry competition was extended to surrounding towns, with two students, one from Concord Academy and one from ABRHS reading as opening poets. This year, the ABRHS faculty and student members of the Robert Creeley Award group extended the competition with invitations to 20 high schools extending from Athol to Boston, and notices to all Massachusetts high schools. They got 29 responses from 7 schools and a student from Concord-Carlisle High School and one from ABRHS have been selected to be this year's opening readers.

We hope the Board of Selectmen will agree that this program is of great value to the community and the schools and will approve expending \$1,000 from the Georgia Whitney Fund (which now has an expendable balance of \$28,283.00). This funding, along with what we hope to receive from other supporters and what we have been and will be able to independently raise will, we believe, meet the cost of this year's events.

Sincerely,

Frank Joyner, Trustee  
Acton Memorial Library



## Sonia Sanchez

Sonia Sanchez was born Wilsonia Benita Driver on September 9, 1934, in Birmingham, Alabama. Her mother died a year later, and Sanchez lived with her paternal grandmother and other relatives for several years. She earned a B.A. in political science from Hunter College in 1955 and did postgraduate work at New York University.

During the early 1960s she was an integrationist, supporting the philosophy of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). But after considering the ideas of Black Muslim leader Malcolm X, who believed blacks would never be truly accepted by whites in the United States, she focused more on her black heritage from a separatist point of view. Sanchez began teaching in the San Francisco area in 1965 and was a pioneer in developing black studies courses at what is now San Francisco State University, where she was an instructor from 1968 to 1969. In 1971 she joined the Nation of Islam, but by 1976 she had left the Nation, largely because of its repression of women.

Sonia Sanchez is the author of more than a dozen books of poetry, including *Homegirls and Handgrenades* (White Pine Press, 2007), *Shake Loose My Skin: New and Selected Poems* (1999); *Like the Singing Coming Off the Drums: Love Poems* (1998); *Does your house have lions?* (1995), which was nominated for both the NAACP Image and National Book Critics Circle Award; *Wounded in the House of a Friend* (1995); *Under a Soprano Sky* (1987); *Homegirls & Handgrenades* (1984), which won an American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation; *I've Been a Woman: New and Selected Poems* (1978); *A Blues Book for Blue Black Magical Women* (1973); *Love Poems* (1973); *Liberation Poem* (1970); *We a BaddDDD People* (1970); and *Homecoming* (1969).

Her published plays are *Black Cats Back and Uneasy Landings* (1995), *I'm Black When I'm Singing, I'm Blue When I Ain't* (1982), *Malcolm Man/Don't Live Here No Mo'* (1979), *Uh Huh: But How Do It Free Us?* (1974), *Dirty Hearts '72* (1973), *The Bronx Is Next* (1970), and *Sister Son/ji* (1969). Her books for children include *A Sound Investment and Other Stories* (1979), *The Adventures of Fat Head, Small Head, and Square Head* (1973), and *It's a New Day: Poems for Young Brothas and Sistuhs* (1971). She has also edited two anthologies: *We Be Word Sorcerers: Twenty-five Stories by Black Americans* (1973) and *Three Hundred Sixty Degrees of Blackness Comin' at You* (1971).

Among the many honors she has received are the Community Service Award from the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, the Lucretia Mott Award, the Outstanding Arts Award from the Pennsylvania Coalition of 100 Black Women, the Peace and Freedom Award from Women International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Excellence in the Humanities, a National Endowment for the Arts Award, the Robert Frost medal for poetry and a Pew Fellowship in the Arts.

Sonia Sanchez has lectured at more than five hundred universities and colleges in the United States and had traveled extensively, reading her poetry in Africa, Cuba, England, the Caribbean, Australia, Nicaragua, the People's Republic of China, Norway, and Canada. She was the first Presidential Fellow at Temple University, where she began teaching in 1977, and held the Laura Carnell Chair in English there until her retirement in 1999. She lives in Philadelphia.

## **Approval of Expenditure from Georgia E. Whitney Memorial Fund**

The will which established the Georgia E. Whitney Memorial Fund, named an advisory board consisting of the members of the Board of Selectmen, the Superintendent of Schools and the Principal of the high school. This board is to review and consider requests for expenditures from the fund for events of a cultural and educational nature for the benefit of the students of the Acton schools and the citizens of Acton.

The undersigned have reviewed such a request for \$1,000 to be expended to support the 2008 Robert Creeley Day poetry reading and associated school activities to be held in Acton on March 23 and 24, 2009, and approve this request.

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Lauren S. Rosenzweig, Chair  
Town of Acton Board of Selectmen

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Date

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William Ryan, Superintendent  
Acton & Acton-Boxborough Schools

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Date

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Alix Callen, Principal  
Acton-Boxborough High School

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Date

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**Subject: FW: Expendable balance in Georgia Whitney**  
**Date:** Thursday, January 29, 2009 13:22  
**From:** Marcia Rich <mrich@acton-ma.gov>  
**To:** Frank Joyner <ford.joyner@verizon.net>  
**Conversation:** Expendable balance in Georgia Whitney

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**From:** Karen Kucala  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 29, 2009 11:46 AM  
**To:** Marcia Rich  
**Subject:** RE: Expendable balance in Georgia Whitney

Marcia,

As of 6-30-08 , there is 28,283.00 in expendable funds.

Karen

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**From:** Marcia Rich  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2009 12:15 PM  
**To:** Karen Kucala  
**Subject:** Expendable balance in Georgia Whitney  
**Importance:** High

Hi Karen,

What is the current expendable balance in the Georgia E. Whitney Memorial Fund/fund 7005, please? It is the fund AML has applied to several times for funds to help support the Creeley poetry program; the fund is intended to benefit town/school programs. Frank Joyner writes the letter of request to the BoS and schools and likes to include that information. His goal is to get the letters out this week.

Thanks for your help in this,

Marcia

THE GEORGIA E. WHITNEY MEMORIAL FUND

Accepted at Town Meeting Nov. 17, 1958

FILE COPY

RESOLVED: To accept the gift of Fifteen thousand (\$15,000) dollars, made to the Inhabitants of the Town of Acton by Section 2 of Clause C of the Thirty-second item of the will of Jennie A. Tuttle, late of Somerville, Mass., deceased, the same to be forever safely invested and held and known as "The Georgia E. Whitney Memorial Fund" and the income therefrom forever used, all as set forth in said Section 2 of Clause C as follows: "To provide education and uplifting instruction and influence for the pupils of the Acton High School and through such school for the inhabitants of the Town of Acton. I direct that the method of spending this income shall be left to the discretion of an advisory board consisting of members of the Board of Selectmen, the principal of the High School and the Superintendent of Schools having supervision of said High School, all in said Town of Acton. A majority of said Board shall decide all questions. I recommend that the purposes above set forth be accomplished either by maintaining a course of free lectures each year to be given in said Town of Acton primarily for the benefit of said pupils, the members of their families and their teachers, but incidentally for other residents of said Town who may be accommodated thereat, or by providing special instruction in music, in the arts or industry or any combination of all of said methods or a part of them or such other methods as said Advisory Board shall deem best from time to time. It is my desire that said income be used to provide for such pupils, their families and their teachers in said Town of Acton educational advantages which would not be furnished by said Town and which they probably would not otherwise have, such as the best thought concerning government, law, jurisprudence, ethics, moral standards, fine arts, science, industry and the better things of life. I do not desire that this income be so expended that it will be used for general maintenance of said High School nor lessen the burdens of taxation."

more time to review this document. Lauren said the purpose of this was to give BOA a chance to ask other boards what they think and then make their decision about the waiving of some items to facilitate the projects. Steve said that the BOA has the power to reject this or accept these regulations. Steve asked that the BOS send a memo to BOA to see if they will review. The Board will discuss this at the next meeting.

**BROOKSIDE SHOPS TRAFFIC LIGHT** - Don spoke about sending out a letter reminding them about the traffic signal commitment. ANDREW MAGEE - Moved to send the letter. DORE' HUNTER -second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

**BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL** - Andy Magee outlined the letter that was sent to Carlisle and Westford discussing the contracts for services. The BRRT Voted to offer \$5,000 for review and defray the required services. Tom Michlaeman asked for help in phrasing the Gift for Board acceptance.

**POWERS GALLERY REQUEST FOR SUPPORT** - Letter of support to Mass Highway for street cut relief - DORE' HUNTER - Moved to approve the letter as written. LAUREN ROSENZWEIG - second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

**ACTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY** - The Board asked to have staff report back after more review, and suggested the possible use of the Town Hall Lot for this purpose on Patriots Day. It was noted that the Lot in South Acton fills even on Patriots Day as it is not a holiday for everyone.

**GEORGIA WHITNEY FUND REQUEST** - The Acton Memorial Library is asking for \$750 for the Creely poetry reading program. DORE' HUNTER - Moved to approve the Grant of \$750 for the event. ANDREW MAGEE - second. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Herman Kabakoff took note of expenses for chairs and felt the \$250 allotted for Chairs could be lessened if they used chairs we already have. The Board will pass his suggestion on to the Acton Memorial Library Director.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Lauren updated the public about a series of zoning hearings at the Planning Board meeting in the Library.

Lauren spoke about the Commuter Rail Forum, there was standing room only. The committee will be looking and gathering information they might need.

Andy spoke about Bruce Freeman Rail Trail letter that was sent out to Carlisle and Westford and noted they will be meeting tomorrow night.

Andy spoke about his breakfast at the Senior Center. He also toured the facilities. John, Steve and Brian will be going up to the Senior Center on Wednesday at 12:30 to discuss taxes and programs available to seniors.

Dore' reported on the commuter meeting and the rail line issues.

ALG tomorrow morning. Walter will be attending since the chair is out of town. Walter will bring back any items to the Board for discussion.

Morrison Meeting, 50 people attended and will meet again Feb 16, at the Public Safety Building at 7:30 p.m. to talk about the historical importance of the Morrison Property.