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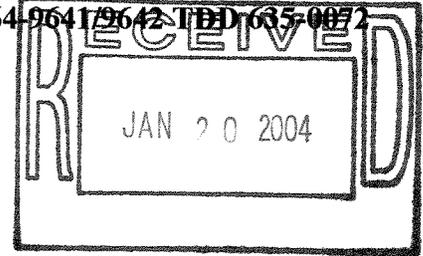
Acton Memorial Library

486 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720

(978) 264-9641/9642 TDD 635-0072

January 15, 2004

Mr. Walter Foster, Chairman
Acton Board of Selectmen
Acton Town Hall
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720



Dear Mr. Foster

You are aware I am sure of the outstanding poetry readings started in 2001 honoring Robert Creeley, who grew up in Acton and went on to become one of the world's finest poets. Mr. Creeley was the principal reader at the inaugural event in April 2001. In 2002, we had Galway Kinnell, a Pulitzer Prize poet, and in 2003, Grace Paley, another renowned author of both prose and poetry. The quality of the poets we have attracted and the size and enthusiasm of the audiences we have drawn have made this now annual event the cultural highlight of the year in Acton, and indeed among the foremost cultural events in the area.

We have been successful in getting outstanding authors to perform in Acton due to the knowledge and hard work of Robert Clawson, the Acton citizen who first envisioned the Creeley Day event and still acts as our "talent scout" and ace publicist. This year Martin Espada, who teaches at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and is considered to be the leading Latino poet of his generation has agreed to read for the 2004 event (see attached biography). Those who have heard him say he is a powerful and effective reader - a most worthy successor to the outstanding poets who have preceded him.

Though the prestige and support of Mr. Creeley (and Mr. Clawson's negotiating skill) continues to allow us to get talented poets to read for modest fees, we need to raise approximately \$3,500 to support this year's event. In the past we have gotten support from the Friends of the Acton Libraries, the AML Foundation, Community Education and the A-B Cultural Council; and we are asking them for their support again,

We also asked for and got the Board of Selectmen, the Superintendent of Schools and the High School principal, as Trustees of the Georgia Whitney Fund, to provide support from this fund last year. This trust fund, which had not been used in quite a few years, was left to the town specifically to support cultural and educational events for the students of the high school and Acton citizens. Since the principal readers always go into the high school to talk with students about their work and many students attend the readings in the evening, this is precisely the sort of event specified by the will setting up the Georgia Whitney Fund (see attached excerpt). This fund now has approximately \$15,000 of earnings available for use.

I respectfully request that the Board of Selectmen approve \$1,500 to be expended this year to support the 2004 Creeley Day poetry reading, which is scheduled for April 28, 2004.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

F.M. Joyner, Jr., Trustee, Acton Memorial Library

Approval of Expenditure from Georgia E. Whitney Fund

The will which established the Georgia E. Whitney Fund, named an advisory board consisting of 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 citizens of Acton and the students of the Acton schools.

The undersigned have reviewed such a request for \$1,500 to be expended to support the 2004 Robert Creeley Day poetry reading to be held in the Acton Town Hall, room 204, on April 28, 2004, and approve this request.

Walter Foster, Chairman
Town of Acton Board of Selectmen

William Ryan, Superintendent
Acton & Acton-Boxborough Schools

Steven Donovan, Principal
Acton-Boxborough High School

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Martín Espada

Poet and educator Martín Espada was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1957. His latest collection of poetry is *Alabanza: New and Selected Poems 1982-2002* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2003).

Espada's other books of poetry include *A Mayan Astronomer in Hell's Kitchen: Poems* (2000); *Imagine the Angels of Bread* (1996), which won an American Book Award; *City of Coughing and Dead Radiators* (1993); *Rebellion is the Circle of a Lover's Hands* (1990), a bilingual collection; and *Trumpets from the Islands of Their Eviction* (1987). He has edited several anthologies including, *El Coro: A Chorus of Latino and Latina Poets* (1997) and *Poetry Like Bread: Poets of the Political Imagination* from Curbstone Press (1994). His prose collection, *Zapata's Disciple: Essays*, was published in 1998. The recipient of numerous awards and fellowships, his honors include the PEN/Voelker Award for Poetry, the Paterson Poetry Prize, two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, a PEN/Revson fellowship, and a Massachusetts Artists Foundation fellowship. Martín Espada lives with his wife and son in Amherst, Massachusetts, where he is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

[Alabanza: In Praise of Local 100](#)

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This bio was last updated on Mar 31, 2003.

photo © Paul Shoul

THE GEORGIA E. WHITNEY MEMORIAL FUND

Presented at Town Meeting Nov. 17, 1958

VOTED: 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."