

Geography of Hope 2009

March 20-22, 2009, Point Reyes Station, California

The Geography of Hope Conference is sponsored by the following organizations to benefit the Tomales Bay Library Association's Writer in West Marin Program. For more information, please visit

www.ptreyesbooks.com/wiwm.html

Point Reyes Books

Marin Agricultural Land Trust www.malt.org

Tomales Bay Library Association

Marin Organic www.marinorganic.org

Heyday Books www.heydaybooks.com

Marin Arts Council www.marinarts.org

Author and peach farmer David Mas Masumoto will chair the 2009 Geography of Hope : A Conference Celebrating Writing on Farming & Rural Life, in Point Reyes Station from March 20 to 22, 2009.

The first Geography of Hope conference, held in 2008, was one of the most exceptional literary events ever to take place in northern California. It was dedicated to Wallace Stegner, whose writings often reflected on the relationship between people and the land. Building on that theme, this year's event will take as its focus writing on farming and the rural life featuring authors who are farmers, ranchers, and growers, people who—to paraphrase Barbara Kingsolver—have devoted their lives to the health of their habitat and food chain.

Conference chair David Mas Masumoto grows organic peaches and grapes on his family farm in Del Rey, in the San Joaquin Valley of California. Author of *Harvest Son*, *Epitaph for a Peach*, and *Four Seasons in Five Senses*, the author has won numerous awards for his writing, which also has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *USA Today*. You can visit his website at www.masumoto.com.

Held in the heart of Marin County where the predominant land use is agriculture, the “Geography of Hope: Writing on Farming and the Rural Life” will explore the duality of inspiration and cultivation as expressed by some of the finest writers in the nation.

Joining Masumoto will be leaders in publishing, arts, culture, conservation, and literature, including Malcolm Margolin, Wendy Johnson, Verlyn Klinkenborg, Patricia Klindienst, Stanley Crawford, Rose Castillo Guilbault and Greg Sarris (partial list).

Field trips to nearby family farms and ranches will give conference attendees a chance to experience local agriculture, a tradition in western Marin County since the mid-19th century. Art installations, spirited panels and conversations, and delicious meals prepared with food from local farms and ranches will be hallmarks of the weekend as attendees gather in barns, gymnasiums, and community buildings, on farms and in parklands to explore the relationship between people and the land.

The phrase “geography of hope” ended Wallace Stegner's famous 1961 Wilderness Letter and was a major factor in the passage of the landmark Wilderness Bill a few years later. The ideas in the letter also encompassed his wider concepts of the American West. Point Reyes Station, located adjacent to Point Reyes National Seashore, is the commercial hub of an area where many land use concepts advocated by Stegner have taken root, including both wilderness protection and farmland preservation.

Full conference tickets are priced at \$250 per person, and include passes to all panels, one fieldtrip, and some meals.

Friday only tickets are priced at \$125 per person, and include a pass to one fieldtrip, the opening conference panel, and dinner at Toby's Feed Barn.

Saturday only tickets are priced at \$125 per person, and include a pass to the three conference panels offered on Saturday, the boxed lunch with a pair of panelists, and dinner at Toby's Feed Barn.

Attendance is limited to 150 people. A limited number of per panel tickets will be available at the door at a cost of \$25. Tickets to some fieldtrips may be available for \$25 per person, on a first come, first served basis. See the Field Trips section below for a complete list of destinations and schedule.

A limited number of partial scholarships are available. For an application, please email books@ptreyesbooks.com or call 415.663.1003

For more information, or to receive an invitation, please email books@ptreyesbooks.com or call 415.663.1003

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Friday, March 20th

11:00am – 6:00pm Conference registration at Toby's Feed Barn
1:00 – 4:00pm Fieldtrips
4:00 – 7:00pm "Point Reyes Art Walk" featuring Gallery Route One (GRO), Marty Knapp Gallery, Pelican Studio and Toby's Feed Barn Gallery.
5:30 – 7:00pm Supper, no-host wine bar and live music at Toby's Feed Barn
7:30pm West Marin School Gymnasium
-Welcome by Steve Costa, conference organizer
-Introduction by Mas Masumoto, honorary conference chair, writer & organic peach farmer.
-Opening Conference Panel: "The Language of the Land"
Does the language we use shape how we regard the land? How have traditional cultures kept their stories alive? How does an urbanized society learn to speak the language of the land? Listen in as these authors describe how the land inspires them.
Taiko Drumming: Mas Masumoto & Nikiko Masumoto
Moderator: Mas Masumoto
Panelists: Patricia Klindienst, Verlyn Klinkenborg, Judith Larner Lowry, Malcolm Margolin, Greg Sarris.

Saturday, March 21st

~~8:30 – 9:30am~~
10:00am Coffee and tea at the West Marin School gymnasium
Conference Panel: "Planting the Seeds of Story"
How does working the land plant the seeds of stories? Does writing, like farming, have seasons? How do these authors balance the jobs of farmer/rancher and writer?
Taiko Drumming: Mas Masumoto & Nikiko Masumoto
Moderator: Mas Masumoto
Panelists: Stanley Crawford, Linda Husa, Wendy Johnson, Wes Jackson, Verlyn Klinkenborg.
12:00 – 1:30pm Boxed lunch with paired panelists
-Mas Masumoto & Rose Castillo Guilbaut
-Millie Kalish & Nikiko Masumoto
-Lisa Hamilton & Stanley Crawford
-Verlyn Klinkenborg & Mike Madison
-Wes Jackson & Linda Husa

- 2:30pm -Wendy Johnson, Patricia Klindienst & Judith Larner Lowry
-Malcolm Margolin & Greg Sarris
Conference Panel: “Stories from the Land”
Learn about the experiences, characters, successes, or hardships that have influenced these authors and inspired them as storytellers.
- Moderator: Wendy Johnson
Panelists: Rose Castillo Guilbaut, Millie Kalish, Mas Masumoto, Patricia Klindienst, Lisa Hamilton, and Greg Sarris.
- 5:30 – 7:30pm Supper, no-host wine bar and live music at Toby’s Feed Barn
8:00pm Conference Panel: “Farming As Personal, Farming As Political”
Taiko Drumming: Mas Masumoto & Nikiko Masumoto
The rural life is about hard work, land, family, community—belonging to a place. But it’s also about politics—from water issues to land use concerns to the price of eggs in China. Is writing about farming where the personal and political intersect?
Moderator: Warren Weber
Panelists: Stanley Crawford, Linda Husa, Wes Jackson, Verlyn Klinkenborg, Nikiko Masumoto, ,Mike Madison

Sunday, March 22nd

- 9:30am Gather at West Marin School parking lot to carpool to Giacomini Dairy
10:00 – 11:30am Conference Gathering: “Rooted in Place” at the Giacomini Dairy
View the newly restored Giacomini Wetlands from the rolling hills of a Point Reyes Station ranch while listening to stories of the local landscape told by West Marin farmers and ranchers.
Welcome by Wendy Johnson
Stories from Greg Sarris, Sam Dolcini, Peter Martinelli, Vivien Straus, Lynn Giacomini Stray, Phyllis Faber.
- 12:00 – 1:30pm Screening of “Hidden Bounty of Marin” film at Pelican Studio
1:30 – 3:30pm Conference: “The Writing Life” followed by “Speed Dating for Writers”
An informative and fun discussion of thinking, writing, trying to get published, re-writing, editing, etc. followed by a freewheeling question-and-answer session with many of the conference panelists.
Moderators: Malcolm Margolin & Mas Masumoto
Panelists: All
FREE EVENT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

FIELDTRIPS

Meet at 12:30pm, Friday, March 20th. Fieldtrips will depart at 1:00pm sharp.

Meeting Place: The Dance Palace parking lot (located at the corner of 5th St. and B St. in Point Reyes Station)

Transportation: We will be car pooling to the tour sites. Bring your car to the meeting place and we will organize car pools from there.

What to bring: Tours will be offered rain or shine so be prepared for all kinds of weather. Bring hiking boots, rubber boots, rain gear, backpacks, water, hats, and sunblock.

Readings on the farm: On each tour a local writer will be a featured guest and give a short reading of some of work inspired by the rural West Marin landscape

Walking tour of Historic Point Reyes Station with Historian Dewey Livingston

This historic town, once a hub of the dairy industry laid out along a narrow-gauge railroad line, has experienced ups and downs since its founding in 1875. Dewey Livingston provides an illustrated talk on the history of the town and surrounding area, followed by a walking tour. Learn about the history and listen to the stories of this dynamic small town as you visit the old Cooperative Creamery, the old Northwestern Pacific Rail Road engine house and depot, as well as many other fascinating buildings. Dewey has written several books on West Marin and its history and will share many of his stories with us.

Black Mountain Hike

with Constance Washburn, Education Director, Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) and Rancher Sally Gale.

Black Mountain, overlooking Point Reyes Station and Tomales Bay, is one of the largest properties protected by a MALT agricultural conservation easement. The spectacular lands that we will view from the top of the 1,280-foot peak are a valuable resource. They provide not only food for the body, but food for the soul as well. Black Mountain is named for pioneer cattle rancher James Black. In 1851, he bought a tract of land which included the landmark for \$2000. Sally's family has been ranching in Marin County for five generations. She and her husband raise grass-fed beef and organic apples in the Chileno Valley.

Hog Island Oyster Co. & Straus Organic Dairy

with Hog Island owner Terry Sawyer and Dairyman Albert Straus and Playwright Vivien Straus

Learn all about oyster farming and water issues as you tour Hog Island Oyster Company. Taste oysters grown in Tomales Bay, while enjoying great views. Then tour the Straus family's organic dairy at milking time and learn about their innovative methane digester which turns manure into energy and reduces greenhouse gases. Straus Dairy is a member of Marin Organic and protected by a MALT conservation easement. Albert has time and again proven himself an innovator in the world of sustainable food production. Vivien is a playwright and will read from her new work.

Star Route Farms and Gospel Flats farm in Bolinas

With author Wendy Johnson

These farms in Bolinas are part the Pine Gulch Creek watershed, are certified salmon safe and support a diversified ecosystem. Learn about their organic techniques, see the cover crops, greenhouses, and wander along the creek searching for salmon. Star Route farms, founded in 1974 by Warren Weber, is the oldest continuously certified organic farm in California. They grow salad greens, lettuce, leafy greens, cool-weather vegetables, herbs, edible flowers. All crops certified organic by Marin Organic. Gospel Flat farmer Mickey Murch and his family grow food in a variety of styles, raising organic vegetables and flowers along with pigs, rabbits, chickens, ducks and geese. This farm is increasingly dedicated to its role in the community, not only as a provider of local vegetables, but inspiration towards handmade food through mobile kitchen workshops, after-school education, and school tours. You will be informed of the efforts of Marin Organic to support local organic agriculture for the health of the community and the planet. Organic Farmer and Educator Wendy Johnson has recently published a book on gardening and will read from her work.

Drakes Bay Family Farms, Oyster and Beef operations

with Rancher and Oyster Farmer Kevin Lunny and author Mark Dowie

Take a tour of this oyster farm on Drakes Estero which has been in commercial production for 100 years. Learn the process for creating single oysters and growing the oysters in the rich tidal waters of the Estero. Then visit the beef ranching operation which has been in his family for three generations and produces certified grass fed organic beef. The Lunny's were the first to certify their pastures organic and raise grass fed beef on 1,500 organic acres. Enjoy the scenery of the gorgeous Point Reyes National Seashore as you hike over the pastures and walk along the shores of the Estero. Mark Dowie is teaches science and environmental reporting at UC Berkeley and has written extensively on land issues. He will share an excerpt from his upcoming book.

Worsley Organic farm, Bianchi Organic Dairy, and Point Reyes Vineyards

With writer Elisabeth Ptak

Visit Peter Worsley at his small organic farm where he grows a variety of produce; from greens and herbs, to apples and raspberries. Then tour the Bianchini family's organic dairy at milking time where three generations of the family has farmed the rich, fertile lands of Marin County. Then end with a wine tasting at the award winning Point Reyes Vineyards planted in 1990 where the quality of Marin County's soil and the diversity of its microclimates provide the perfect

conditions to grow grapes for premium wines. Elisabeth Ptak, Associate Director at Marin Agricultural Land Trust and long time columnist for the Point Reyes Light will read from one of her Homeward Bound columns.

ART EXHIBITIONS

Conference attendees are invited to the first annual “ArtWalk” in Point Reyes Station on Friday, March 20th from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. Take a stroll through town, with stops for art viewing and refreshments at Gallery Route One, Pelican Studio, Marty Knapp Gallery and The Gallery at Toby’s Feed Barn. THIS IS A FREE EVENT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. Please see below for exhibition information.

The Wild Book Show: Farm Books

February 20th – March 29th, 2009

Closing Party & final bidding, Sunday, March 29, 4:00 – 5:00pm

Gallery Route One, 1101 Shoreline Hwy, Point Reyes Station, CA

(415) 663.1347 website: www.galleryrouteone.org

In its sixth year, the annual “Wild Book Show” has established itself as a unique opportunity for some 35 artists to create an original book on a changing theme, such as ocean, forest and wetland. This year’s theme is food and farming. The event is sponsored by Point Reyes Books and GRO to benefit GRO’s Artists in the Schools Program. Books will be for sale through a silent bidding process. Artists interested in participation should visit the GRO website for more information.

Barn Art: A Public Art Installation

March 15th – March 31st, 2009

20 established and emerging artists will contribute their work to a major outdoor public art installation on sites in and around Point Reyes Station, and at the Marin French Cheese Company in Petaluma.

Participating Artists:

Diane Bouchard, Sheri Clyde, Colleen Connelly, Nick Corcoran, Lucie Duclos, Paula Fave, Vickisa Feinberg, Kathleen Goodwin, Toni Littlejon, Richard Lyttle, Reuben Margolin, Miz Maze Theater, Hannah Mott, Pamela Palma, Heather Pratt, Stephen Pring, Lorca, Stephanie and Sage Rossman, Laurie Sargent, Irwin Segal, Nancy Stein, Will Thoms, Betty Woolfolk.

Art on the Farm

March 8th – March 29th, 2009

Claudia Chapline Gallery, 3445 Shoreline Hwy, Stinson Beach, CA

(415) 868.2308 website: www.cchapline.com

Ten years ago, **Alan Mart** of the Internatural Harvesters organic farm founded Art on the Farm, an effort to bring artists and organic farms together. This group of artists selects a day, often Sunday, and goes to a particular farm. There the artists pick out images that are of interest and paint, draw, or photograph whatever image seems right. They produced a benefit art exhibition for the Marin Organic Loan Fund. Their most recent exhibition was at Toby’s Feed Barn in Point Reyes Station during the Point Reyes Harvest Festival last November.

Artists-in-the-Schools

March 20th-22nd, 2009

West Marin School

11550 Shoreline Hwy, Point Reyes Station, CA

Photography and poetry created by West Marin students.

Growing Art from the Land: Ranches & Rolling Hills

March 4th – March 25th, 2009

An exhibit of the artistic process by artists who participate in Marin Agricultural Land Trust’s annual landscape art show

The Gallery at Toby’s Feed Barn, 11550 Shoreline Hwy, Point Reyes Station, CA

(415) 663.1223 website: www.tobysfeedbarn.com

Since 1998, artists from Marin County and from Santa Barbara’s Oak Group have joined forces on the third weekend each May to participate in *Ranches & Rolling Hills*, a landscape art show and sale to benefit Marin Agricultural Land Trust. Their work depicts farms protected by MALT easements, ranches located in Point Reyes National Seashore, and other

private farmlands—all of them reflecting the human and natural history that make West Marin such a special and beloved place. As a prelude to this year's *Ranches & Rolling Hills* show, several of the artists will illustrate how their art "grows from the land." Each participating artist in this unique exhibit will present a series of studies to demonstrate the artistic process that shows their particular style that culminates in a finished landscape painting. Except for the stunning quilts created specially for this installation by local organic grower Sandy Dierks, the artwork at Toby's Feed Barn will not be for sale.

Farming in Bolinas

An exhibit of the history of farming in Bolinas, featuring photography, interviews and historical documents.

March 4th – March 25th, 2009

The Gallery at Toby's Feed Barn, 11550 Shoreline Hwy, Point Reyes Station, CA

(415) 663.1223 website: www.tobysfeedbarn.com

Marty Knapp Photographs

Marty Knapp Gallery, 11245 Shoreline Hwy, Point Reyes Station, CA

(415) 663.8670 website: www.martyknapp.com

Photographer Marty Knapp specializes in traditional Black and White photographs of the Point Reyes wilderness area.

Movement of the Liberation of the Coca Plant by Amy Franceschini in collaboration with Wilson Diaz

March 1st – April 10th, 2009

Closing Party, April 10, 5:00 – 7:30pm

Beulah Gallery, 9980 Shoreline Hwy, Olema, CA

(415) 663.0380 website: www.futurefarmers.com

Amy is a new media artist and educator. Her work is pervaded with images of growth - reminding us that both nature and our own creative natures are precious commodities that must be nurtured and sustained whether it is on the web or in our own backyards. Amy founded Futurefarmers in 1995, as a means to bring together multidisciplinary artists to create new work. She is currently teaching Media Theory and Practice courses at Stanford University and the San Francisco Art Institute.

Wilson Diaz is an artist and organizer living and working in Cali, Columbia. He creates videos, drawings and installations that focus on the social and cultural impact of the politics. His work has been exhibited internationally including the Utopia Station at the 50th Venice Biennale, Portikus Gallery in Frankfurt, 2009 Havana Biennale and James Colman gallery in London.

Perspectives on Land, Hope and Optimism: Photography by Art Rogers, Madeleine Blake, Robert Campbell & GRO Latino Photography Project

March 1st – March 22nd 3rd, 2009

Pelican Studio, 11101 Shoreline Hwy, Point Reyes Station, CA

(415) 456-1739 website: www.pelicanstudio.com

Pelican Studio exhibits local fine art, with an emphasis on West Marin landscape photography.

Terroir: A Sense of Place

March 20th – June 21st, 2009

Art at the Marin French Cheese Factory, 7500 Red Hill Rd, Petaluma, CA 94952

(800) 292.6001 x112; www.artatthecheesefactory.org

A juried outdoor sculpture exhibition.

2009 GEOGRAPHY OF HOPE PANELISTS

David Mas Masumoto (Honorary Chair) grows organic peaches and grapes on his family farm in Del Rey in the San Joaquin Valley of California. Author of *Harvest Son*, *Epitaph for a Peach* and *Four Seasons in Five Senses*, he has won numerous awards for his writing, which also has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times* and USA Today. You can visit his website at: www.masumoto.com

Stanley Crawford farms and writes in Northern New Mexico. He is the author of five novels and three works of non-fiction, including *A Garlic Testament: Seasons on a Small New Mexico Farm*, and *Mayordomo*:

Chronicle of an Acequia in Northern New Mexico. Active in the Santa Fe Farmers' Market for the past 20 years, he was instrumental in the creation of its new \$4 million permanent facility.

Rose Castillo Guilbault is the author of *Farmworker's Daughter: Growing Up Mexican in America*. She was born in Sonora, Mexico, and grew up in the Salinas Valley of California. She is currently Vice President of Corporate Affairs at AAA of Northern California, Nevada, and Utah, and is Publisher of *Via Magazine*. She serves on the Board of Governors for the Commonwealth Club of California where she previously served as Chairperson.

Lisa Hamilton is a journalist who focuses on agriculture, particularly the stories of farmers and ranchers. As a writer and photographer she has traveled from sacred rice paddies in the Philippines to castration time on a Wyoming sheep ranch, and her work has been published in *The Nation*, *Harper's*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *Orion*, and *Gastronomica*. She is the author of *Deeply Rooted: Unconventional Farmers in the Age of Agribusiness* (Counterpoint, 2009).

Linda Hussa is the author of *Sharing Fencelines* (2002) which elaborates on issues facing rural communities and their desert landscape; *Lige Langston: Sweet Iron* (1999) and *Diary of a Cowcamp Cook* (1990). She is on the Board of Directors of the Western Folklife Center. Her most recent book, *The Family Ranch* offers readers a personal, inside view into the lives of six diverse ranching families and the land that shapes their days and nights. Photographer Madeleine Graham Blake provides engaging and often moving images that portray each family at work and at play.

Wes Jackson is the founder and current president of The Land Institute. Jackson is the author of several books, including *Roots for Agriculture* and *Becoming Native to This Place* and is recognized as a leader in the international sustainable agriculture movement.

Wendy Johnson is one of the founders of the organic Farm and Garden Program at Green Gulch Zen Center in Marin County, California, where she lived with her family from 1975-2000. She is the author of the recently published *Gardening at the Dragon's Gate: At Work in the Wild and Cultivated World*.

Patricia Klindienst is the author of *The Earth Knows my Name: Food, Culture, & Sustainability in the Gardens of Ethnic Americans*. In her own description, this book is the first to "restore the cultural meaning of gardens created by ethnic Americans, including Native Americans, Gullah descendants of West African slaves, Hispanics whose ancestors came with the conquistadors, and immigrants from across Europe and Asia." She has taught at Yale, Wesleyan and Connecticut College.

Verlyn Klinkenborg is a writer for *The New York Times*. He is the author of "Making Hay" (1986), "The Last Fine Time" (1991) and "The Rural Life" (2003). His work has appeared in many magazines, including *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *Esquire*, *National Geographic*, *The New Republic*, *Smithsonian*, *Audubon*, *GQ*, *Gourmet*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *Sports Afield* and *The New York Times Magazine*. He has taught literature and creative writing at Fordham University, St. Olaf College, Bennington College and Harvard. He lives in rural New York.

Judith Larner Lowry has been the proprietor of Larner Seeds, specialists in California native plants and seeds, for the last thirty years. Her work involves wildland seed gathering, seed propagation and increase, designing homeowner restoration projects, and promoting native plants as food. She is the author of two books published by UC Press, *Gardening with a Wild Heart* (1999) and *The Landscaping Ideas of Jays* (2006). In 2005, she won the John Burrough Society Award for Best Published Nature Essay. She lives in Marin and Mendocino County with her husband.

Mike Madison is the author of *Blithe Tomato*, and *Walking the Flatlands: The Rural Landscape of the Lower Sacramento Valley*. He lives with his wife Diane in Winters, California, where they grow olives, melons, apricots, citrus and flowers on thirty three acres on the Lower Putah Creek. They also operate Yolo Press, an olive oil processing mill serving Yolo and Solano counties.

Malcolm Margolin founded Heyday Books in 1974. Heyday publishes books on California history, natural history, literature, travel and Native American life. Among the books that he has written are *The East Bay Out: A Personal Guide to the East Bay Regional Parks*, *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area*.

Nikiko Masumoto holds a B.A. in Gender and Women's studies from the University of California, Berkeley. She is the daughter of David Mas Masumoto and grew up on their 80-acre family farm in Del Rey in California's Central Valley. She is committed to building a foundation for the next generation of farmers and runs Central Valley school youth leadership programs that focus on issues of self esteem, sexism, body image, racism and language barriers. Nikiko is also a Taiko Japanese drummer, writer and poet.

Greg Sarris is a college professor, author, screenwriter, and current Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. He has published several books, including the widely anthologized collection of essays, *Keeping Slug Woman Alive; A Holistic Approach to American Indian Texts*.

Warren Weber, owner of Star Route Farms, operates the oldest continuously certified organic farm in California. He began farming 5 acres in Bolinas in 1974 with a horse-drawn plow and a lot of "long-haired ambition". He's long since cut his hair and grown his acreage, and now produces some of the Bay Area's most sought after leafy greens, herbs, edible flowers, legumes and tender seasonal vegetables. Weber says that from the beginning "we have really been in business for the people who consume our products, rather than in business for the yield."