



CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL COMMISSION ON ARTS & LETTERS
Heman Park Community Center . 975 Pennsylvania
Thursday, September 12, 2024 . 7:00 pm

1. Call to Order / Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Citizen's Comments: General comments may be made prior to agenda beginning. Citizens must make written request to speak on specific agenda items as items are addressed. (Note: Comments are limited to 5 minutes.)
4. Presentation: Ackert Park Mural – Isabelle Heidbreder, Executive Director of Alliance Francaise de St. Louis
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Staff Liaison Report
7. Council Liaison Report
8. Committee Reports
 - Calendar Art
 - Finance
 - Literary
 - Marketing
 - Public Art
 - Returning Artists
 - Starlight Concert Series
9. New Business
 - City's Fund Allotment to Arts & Letters
 - UCity In Bloom "Art in Gardens" Project
10. Old Business
 - QR Code
 - Commission Binder Review
 - Starlight Concert Contract Update
 - Delmar Harvard Mosaic Murals
 - Proposed Sculpture Project – Karen Elshout
11. Announcements
12. Adjournment

Enclosures: Draft of July 11, 2024 Minutes; Financial Statement for July 2024; Draft – 2025 Calendar Photo Layout and Photo Bylines

**Please note: If you are unable to attend, please contact Staff Liaison, Lynda Euell-Taylor by or before Noon
Thursday, September 12, 2024**

314.505.8525 or 314.505.8625 or email: letaylor@ucitymo.org



REGULAR MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL COMMISSION ON ARTS & LETTERS

Heman Park Community Center . 975 Pennsylvania

Thursday, July 11, 2024 – 7:00 PM

Members Participating: Karla Brown, Marcie Dear, Grace Fitter, A'isha Hedges, Linda Jones, Richard Massey, Eleanor Mullin, Marian Reed, Olivia Steely, Charlene Temple, Larry Williams, Meg Zelenovich

Absent: Sophia Allen, Grace Fitter, Carol Jackson, Olivia Steely

Also participating: Staff Liaison: Lynda Euell-Taylor and Council Liaison: John Tieman

Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Commission President Jones

Minutes: Motion by Ms. Temple to approve June 2024 minutes; seconded by Ms. Dear; all approved.

Citizens Comments: No Citizen Comments.

Treasurer Report: Ms. Mullin provided an End of Fiscal Year Report:

July 1, 2022: \$5561.35 balance in general fund
June 20, 2023: \$7116.05 balance in general fund

July 1, 2023: \$7116.05 balance in general fund
June 30, 2024: \$5771.17 balance in general fund

July 1, 2022: \$15,878.82 balance in Levy fund
June 30, 2023: \$12,766.13 balance in Levy fund

July 1, 2023: \$12,766.13 balance in Levy fund
June 30, 2024: \$10,265.53 balance in Levy fund

President Jones requested a printed Treasurer's Report be included in the next and following meeting packets.

Motion by Ms. Jones to approve Treasurer Report; seconded by Ms. Brown; all approved.

Staff Liaison Report: Montez Miles reached out about a possible singular mural project that may be presented to A&L in the September meeting. Artist c215. Ms. Euell-Taylor recommended that a proposal for such projects be drafted by A&L.

Council Liaison Report: Mr. Tieman spoke with the city manager about creating a system/proposal to clarify and enforce art requests. Discussion ensued. Ms. Jones recommended someone create a proposal. Mr. Williams plans to look into some examples.

Committee Reports:

- **Calendar:** Ms. Zelenovich shared that the wording and half the photos for the 2025 calendar were submitted today to Ms. Euell-Taylor. Awaiting word on the other 6 photos. Possible 2026 theme: "Arts & Letters" with photos and descriptions from Literary events, Public Art, Returning Artists and Starlight Concerts.
- **Finance:** No Report.
- **Literary:** Ms. Mullin provided more details about the Sunday, October 20, 2024 literary event in the high school library. Poet Mary Jo Bang will be recognized as will the Adult Summer Reading program through the University City Library.
- **Marketing:** No Report, just a reminder to send any A&L event photos to ucityartsandletters@gmail.com
- **Public Art:** Ms. Allen reached back to citizen/artist Karen Elshout.
- **Returning Artist:** Ms. Brown will have a meeting in 2 weeks.
- **Starlight Concert:** Mr. Massey had no report. Ms. Mullin shared a revised contract. The committee will meet to discuss and share outcome in September meeting. Ms. Mullin also discussed the budget. Because there's a deficit and two September concerts, there will only be \$5323 for the June 2025 concerts. Hoping the Council will add \$5000. Mr. Williams will check with Councilman Smotherson.
- **New Business:** Ms. Mullin to look into a QR code with the bank. A&L binder review will happen via an email from Ms. Euell-Taylor with titles for the pages.
- **Old Business:** Ms. Mullin hoping U. City School district can store mural art.
- **Announcements:** Ms. Reed retired from the U. City school system after 25 years! Ms. Euell-Taylor has worked for U. City 38 years! No August A & L Meeting. Ms. Temple has done a great job of sharing her photos!

Adjournment: Motion by Ms. Brown; seconded by Ms. Reed; approved by acclamation.

Municipal Commission
 On Arts & Letters of Univ City
 General Fund
 7162 Delmar Blvd
 University City MO 63130-4303

**NN0003162



Bank Statement

Primary Account Number: XXXXX9999

*If you have questions about your statement,
 please call us at 800-453-BANK.*

Statement Date: July 31, 2024
 Page Number: 1 of 3

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Commerce Bank Deposit Agreement & Disclosures (the "Agreement") was updated, effective August 2024. Clarifying language has been added.

See Section VI. Funds Availability Policy, which has been revised to allow earlier access to certain deposits.

Real-Time and Instant Payments received at or before 11:59 p.m. Central Time on a Business Day will be available in nightly processing to cover items presented against your account that same Business Day. The previous time was 11:00 p.m. Central Time.

See the Deposit Agreement at <https://www.commercebank.com/personal/bank/deposit-agreement>

As a small business owner, you are always on the go. With Small Business Online Banking, you can keep tabs on your finances, transfer funds, manage accounts alerts and paperless statement options, when and where it's convenient for you. Enroll in Small Business Online Banking by visiting www.commercebank.com/ActivateSB.

myBusiness Select Checking Account # XXXXX9999

Account Summary Account # XXXXX9999

Beginning Balance on July 1, 2024	\$ 5,771.17
Deposits & Other Credits	+ 8,600.00
Withdrawals & Other Debits	- 5.00
Ending Balance on July 31, 2024	\$ 14,366.17

To calculate a daily running balance during this statement period, use the beginning balance as it is listed on the statement. Next, subtract checks and other debits as of the date they are listed as paid. For ATM and Debit Card withdrawals, use the transaction date. This is when these transactions were authorized. Deposits and other credits should be listed as of the date they were credited.

Connected Not Only By Words: The Authors of University City

1. JANUARY: Janet Majerus

CR: Linda Ballard

2. FEBRUARY: Christina Fletcher

CR: Christina Fletcher

3. MARCH: Michael Castro

CR: University City Public Library

4. APRIL: Mona Hope

CR: Olivia Steely

5. MAY: Sally Benson

CR: Library of Congress (orphan photo?)

6. JUNE: Carl Phillips

CR: Reston Allen

7. JULY: Stanley Elkin

CR: Washington University in St. Louis Archives

8. AUGUST: Maya Angelou

CR: Olivia Steely

9. SEPTEMBER: Tennessee Williams

CR: Tennessee Williams Photography Collection Literary File, P-10, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin (orphan photo?)

****NOTE:** The Tennessee Williams Estate (Casarotto Ramsay & Associates - Georges Bordchardt, Inc.) confirmed that they did not own this photo.**

10. OCTOBER: John Wright, Sr.

CR: John Wright, Sr.

11. NOVEMBER: Irma Rombauer

CR: Courtesy of Scribner)

12. DECEMBER: William Gass

CR: Washington University in St. Louis Archives

Janet Majerus (1936-2018)—After working as a science editor for a textbook company, Majerus, tired of marking up other writers' copy, decided to try her hand at fiction. It was a pretty good hand: Majerus had her first success in 1976 with the novel "Grandpa and Frank," which further made its mark as a 1978 movie starring Henry Fonda, "Home to Stay." Then she rolled up her sleeves for decades of public service in University City, first joining the planning commission, being elected to the city council and eventually serving 10 years as U. City mayor. After her long stretch in city government, she dusted off her typewriter, and 30 years after her first novel, Majerus began writing a mystery series: "The Best Laid Plans" (2006), "Thicker Than Water" (2010), and "The Ayes Have It" (2016), whose protagonist, popular children's book author Jessie Schroeder, keeps getting wrapped up in murder investigations, à la Angela Lansbury as mystery writer Jessica Fletcher in the long-running TV series "Murder, She Wrote."





Christina Fletcher-C.L. Fletcher is a 2003 U. City High grad who has enjoyed writing short stories ever since, penning everything from mystery and urban romance to detective fiction and yarns for young adults. Some of her short stories are available in anthologies with tales by other like-minded authors. She's graduated to novels, many of them available in paperback, others available for Kindle download. Her short stories run the gamut and her novels are available at amazon.com and reviewed there and on goodreads.com. They offer a little bit of something for everyone. Young adults may be scared, but for good reason, by her book about a teenage girl who vanishes and may be a victim of human traffickers. Fletcher's themes run from unrequited teenage love to adult infidelity to murder and mayhem, and she's really only just started. She holds a Master of Science degree in Human Services from Post University and works as a community support specialist, having relegated writing to her spare time while she and her middle-school sweetheart tend to their blended family. Samples of many C.L. Fletcher volumes are available to read online before purchase.



Michael Castro (1945-2018)—A poet and translator, in 2015 Castro was named the first Poet Laureate of St. Louis. As part of his laureateship he organized Unity Community, an art collective focusing on poetry. A professor at UMSL and Lindenwood for decades, he had moved from New York to St. Louis in the 1960s to attend Washington University for his doctorate. Notably, he founded the River Styx literary magazine in 1975. Except for a short hiatus due in part to funding challenges (it also went online

during the pandemic), the biannual publication has been in print since its founding. Devoted to promoting voices diverse in race, gender and age, the University City resident told St. Louis Magazine that the journal had been doing “multicultural programs since before the word existed.” Castro wrote more than a dozen books and hosted radio programs on poetry, including on KDHX-FM, for years. He also helped translate the poems of Hungary’s most prominent poet into English.



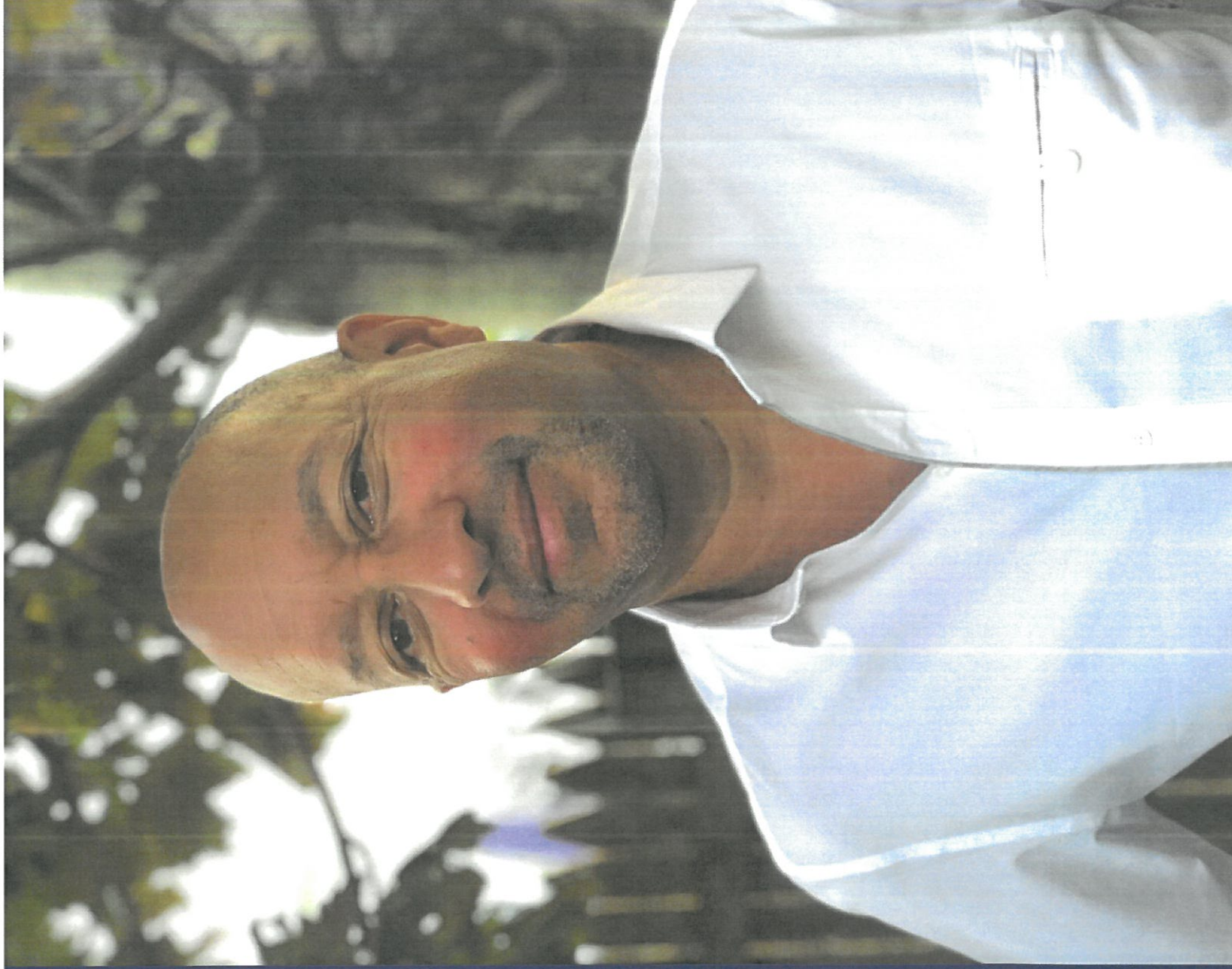
Hermione L. Crimson-Hope (Mona)—A University City resident since 1969 and graduate of U. City High, Hermione L. Rimson-Hope, Ph.D., has used her full name and title as the author of eight books self-published through Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) on Amazon. Her latest book available via KDP is "Fragments of My Mind." Rimson-Hope taught full-time in Riverview Gardens School District, then worked for more than 30 years in the Missouri Department of Social Services in St. Louis, coaching others to become self-sufficient, retiring as a case analyst in 2018. Since retirement, she

has journaled her thoughts and challenged life's myths in books, her passion since age 16. She hopes her words motivate readers to think and explore from within themselves. She also has operated two social-services businesses: LoveToHelpU and For Empowering Women, both focusing on helping people reach goals they never thought possible. Meanwhile, she serves as a Community Ambassador for U. City's 3rd Ward. Through her writing and volunteer efforts, Rimson-Hope aims to inspire others to think about how to make a difference in their community and the world.

Sally Benson (1897-1972)—Benson, née Sara Smith, the writer most famous for adapting her own short-story collections for the screen as "Meet Me in St. Louis," was a prolific short-story author best known for semi-autobiographical pieces collected for that volume and "Junior Miss," which The New Yorker published between 1941 and '42. "Junior Miss" also became a Broadway play, film, and radio serial with Shirley Temple, followed by Barbara Whiting, as the radio stars in the late 1940s and early '50s. The set where Judy Garland sang her famous numbers in the beloved 1944 Christmas musical film was fashioned after 5135 Kensington, a stately Victorian mansion in the Central West End, once the family home, which over the years fell into disrepair and was finally razed in 1994. The fair, of course, is the 1904 World's Fair, and some of the attraction's buildings remain in use at Washington University and in Forest Park.



Carl Phillips (1959)–Phillips, an English professor at Washington University, won the 2023 Pulitzer for poetry with his work, “Then the War: And Collected Poems 2007–2020.” There is not a war mentioned in the title poem, per se. Phillips was walking his dog near one of his favorite spots in Forest Park, the St. Louis Mounted Patrol stables, when his poetic image of a tender moment between partners was interrupted by uniformed horsemen trotting across a field; “marching.” Indeed, the reflection illustrates how any peaceful, pastoral moment can suddenly be spoiled by noise and commotion. The full collection chronicles our recent era of American history riven by strife, political polarization and turmoil, racial and gender identity, the culture wars, and the pandemic. Phillips, a Black man, has felt vulnerable in the wake of the deaths of Michael Brown here and George Floyd in Minneapolis at the hands of police. He recalls two brief, uncomfortable interactions with the police that turned out all right once he showed his university I.D. after traffic stops. Phillips has been a finalist for or won many other awards. A quick glance: He was a four-time finalist for the National Book Award. He received the 2002 Kingsley Tufts Award; in 2021 he won the Jackson Poetry Prize, which included a \$75,000 honorarium.





Stanley Elkin (1930-1995)—Elkin, a critically acclaimed novelist for whom praise did not necessarily equal wealth, was an English professor who taught at Washington University from 1960 until his death. It has been said that his satire is second to none, that language was more important to him than plot, and his prose was often extravagant. “He was like a jazz artist who would go off on riffs,” observed WashU colleague William Gass (also profiled in this calendar). Elkin, for his part, in talking about the influence of ethnicity on his work, said he most admired writers “who are stylists, Jewish or not. [Saul] Bellow is a stylist, and he is Jewish. William Gass is a stylist, and he is not Jewish.”

Elkin, who was Jewish, lived with multiple sclerosis for much of his life, but was not deterred by M.S. as much as one might think. The disease became a character in much of his work, as did a highly fictionalized city of St. Louis—he lived just one block away in Parkview Place. He viewed U. City not so much as a suburb, but as the city’s “logical western addendum.” Among his most notable honors, Elkin won the National Book Critics Circle Award twice: in 1982 for “George Mills,” as well as for his last novel, “Mrs. Ted Bliss” (1995). Elkin’s novella “The Bailbondsman” was adapted for “Alex & The Gypsy,” a 1976 film starring Jack Lemmon.

Maya Angelou (1928-2014)—A poet, memoirist, foreign correspondent, filmmaker, producer, director, professor, lecturer, dancer, and actress, Maya Angelou came into the world as Marguerite Annie Johnson at 3130 Hickory in the city's segregated Compton Hill neighborhood. Although U. City cannot claim her as our very own, the vivid mural painted on the east side of the Tivoli building in the Loop illustrates that we have adopted her: 'If you are always trying to be normal you will never know how amazing you can be.' (Notably, 'normal' is upside-down!) Her older brother nicknamed her Maya (or Mya, for "mya sister"). Her turbulent childhood and young adulthood began after her parents divorced and she moved to rural Arkansas to live with grandparents at age 3, but she eventually achieved international fame and had two residences in Winston-Salem and a brownstone in Harlem. Over a half-century, Angelou's credits include books, plays, movies and TV shows. Her first published triumph was "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" (1969), a searing account of her life to age 17 and the first of seven autobiographies in which she expanded the boundaries of the genre. As a civil-rights activist, she worked both with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Oprah Winfrey considered her a mentor. Angelou recited a poem she'd written at the first inauguration of President Bill Clinton in 1993. Although she never graduated from college, she received more than 50 honorary degrees. She spoke for many writers when she said, "Nothing so frightens me as writing, but nothing so satisfies me." If it's possible to sum up such an accomplished icon in one sentence, five years before her death a writer for a British newspaper of record, *The Guardian*, did so thusly: "To know her life story is to simultaneously wonder what on earth you have been doing with your own life and feel glad that you didn't have to go through half the things she has."



Tennessee Williams (1911-1983)—Born in Columbus, Mississippi, Thomas Lanier Williams III was a Pulitzer-winning playwright who adopted his *nom de plume* in part because of his Southern accent. Only dramatists Eugene O'Neill and Arthur Miller could compare in their unvarnished portrayals of the American experience in the mid-20th century. Williams drew on his dysfunctional family for much of his work; his father's alcoholism and violence caused numerous moves around metro St. Louis. Williams started at Soldan High School and graduated in 1929 from U. City High, where his love of writing was nurtured, as a teenager getting two stories published—long before fame and fortune. His first masterpiece, "The Glass Menagerie" (1944), first pulled back the curtain on his traumatic childhood and young adult life, and this semi-autobiographical narrative continued in works including "A Streetcar Named Desire" (1947) and "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1955). Both were honored with Pulitzers and made into movies, the former famously starring Marlon Brando. Every summer in recent years, St. Louis has produced a Tennessee Williams Festival, with plays, readings, discussions and other events to commemorate his complicated life and work ([visit twsti.org](http://visit.twsti.org)).



John Wright–John A. Wright Sr., Ph.D., a University City resident for 30-plus years and a member of the U. City Historical Society, has detailed much of Missouri's and our region's African-American history in many books, including "Extraordinary Black Missourians," "Ethnic St. Louis," and "Kinloch." Among his 18 works, several of them histories of particular municipalities, is "University City," a history of our inner-ring suburb featuring many of its unique, odd

and famous sites, including many amusing and amazing anecdotes. He's also written "Florissant," about the city where he served as superintendent of schools. The lifelong educator and Fulbright scholar holds a Bachelor of Arts from Harris Teachers College (now Harris-Stowe State University). Wright completed his M.Ed. and doctoral degrees at SLU.

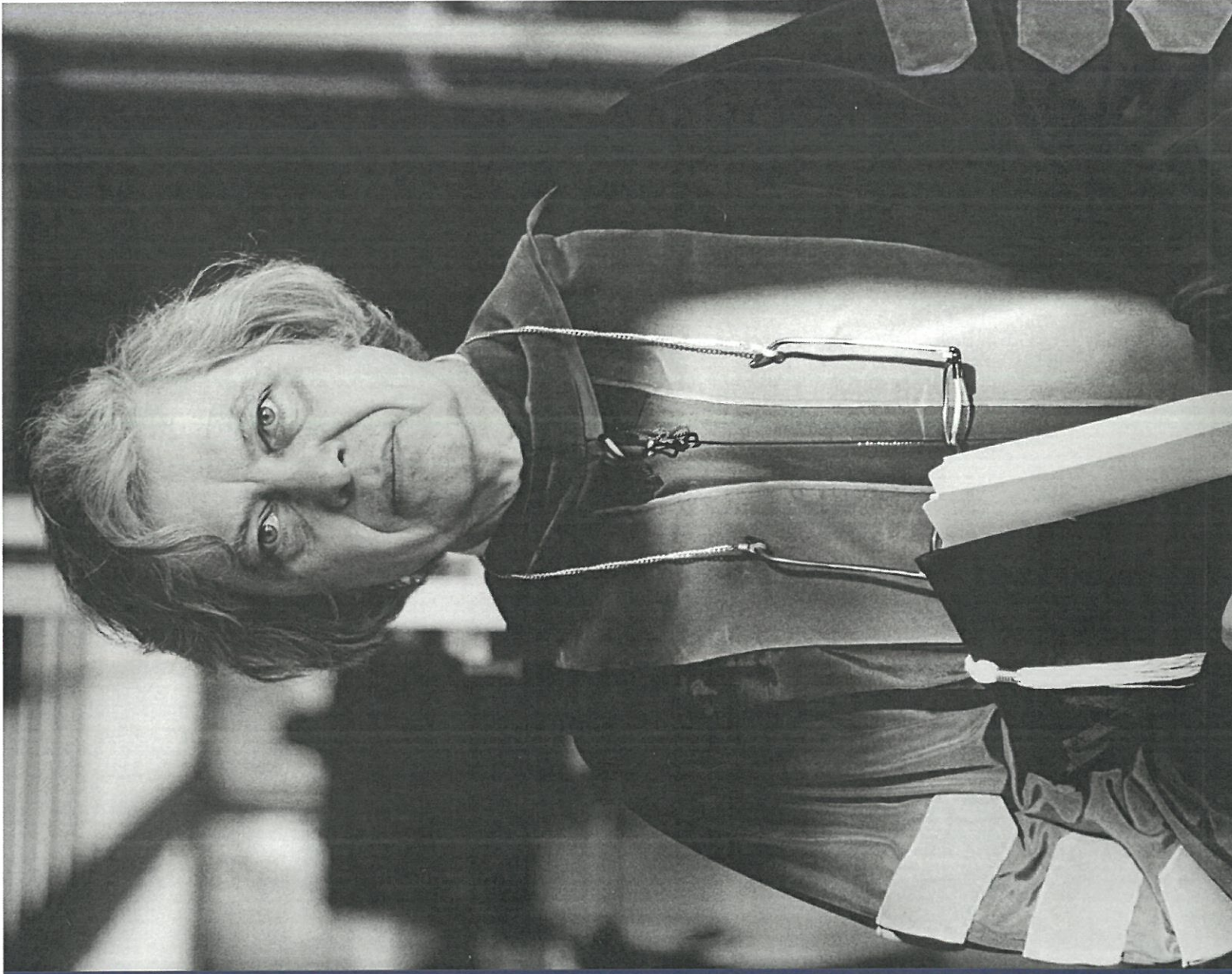
The Trusted Kitchen Classic
for a New Generation of **JOY**

JOY of COOKING

600 New Recipes
More than 4,000 Favorites
Revised and Updated

Irma S. Rombauer, Marion Rombauer Becker,
Ethan Becker, John Becker, and Megan Scott

Irma Rombauer (1877-1962)—Rombauer wrote "The Joy of Cooking," praised perhaps as much for the anecdotal style (and painfully bad puns) of its "casual culinary chat" than recipes. It remains in print, with 18 million copies sold over several editions. Readers of a certain age may even remember the distinctive, checked book cover of an early edition in someone's kitchen; perhaps your grandmother had one in hers. It remains a beloved and much dog-eared volume today, long after its first edition premiered in 1931. Rombauer was a popular society matron who loved to entertain but only started writing after her lawyer husband's suicide left her a widow, an unemployed mother of two during the Great Depression. Many cookbooks are basically dry instruction manuals that employ a simple list of ingredients and when to introduce them. Rombauer's approach was livelier, as though she were having a conversation with the reader in her kitchen. The Post-Dispatch reviewer at the time wrote, "It does not insult my intelligence." When declining health in her twilight years prevented her from continuing to smooth out disagreements with publishing executives—at least once, they wanted to tone down her anecdotal style, but she held firm—her daughter, Marion, stepped in and became co-publisher; later, her grandson Ethan took on the role. She attended classes in fine arts at Washington University in the 1890s but didn't graduate; nonetheless, she was honored by Wash U. with a Founder's Day Award in the 1950s.



William Gass (1924-2017)—Gass, a prolific writer and Washington University philosophy professor, was dubbed by *The Washington Post* as “the finest prose stylist in America.” Perhaps he shrugged it off, as he could be self-deprecating. For Gass, writing was excruciating: He took more than 25 years to complete “The Tunnel” (1995), a novel extolled by many as one of the 20th century’s best. It received the American Book Award. He said that such a slow and methodical pace was necessary because he wrote badly, having to revise his work time and again “just to achieve mediocrity.” Despite his perfectionism with sentence construction, Gass managed to write two other novels, as well as three collections of short stories, and a collection of novellas. One of his novellas included photos and unique typographical approaches that toyed with readers’ linear narrative expectations. He viewed metaphor as more than just a linguistic technique. Of his seven volumes of essays, three won National Book Critics Circle awards. “A Temple of Texts” (2006) won the Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism. His 2013 novel “Middle C” was honored with the 2015 William Dean Howells Medal. Another career highlight was founding the International Writers Center at WashU. in 1990, before many public and private universities did the same. (Stanley Elkin, also profiled in this calendar, was a member.) While still focusing on writers and literature and now officially the Center for the Humanities, its scope was broadened to include scholars in other disciplines.