Tenth Anniversary of Poetry/Short Prose Contest
by Susan F. Whitt

The staff of the then Sampson-Livermore Library had high hopes for the Poetry/Short Prose contest when it debuted in 2000. However we have been pleasantly surprised by its popularity and longevity. The Mary Livermore Library is excited to team up once again with the Kiwanis of Robeson in our annual spotlight on good writers and writing. First place winners will receive $250; second place, $150; and third place, $50. (In the case of a tie, the prize money may be divided.) The Kiwanis are providing the first place prize for the high school student category.

The deadline for submission of entries this year is March 2, 2009 (the later date is due to the 28 of February falling on a weekend.) The entry form is included in this newsletter and a link is included from the Library’s website: http://www.uncp.edu/library.

Each year we get frequently asked questions. These include:

♦ What happens if I have 501 words? Do you really count the words?
Yes, we really count the words; with 501 words, your entry will be discarded.

♦ Can I just write my entries neatly? What if I print them by hand?
Writing the entry by hand is against the rules and your entry will be discarded.

♦ What happens if I sign my name? Can I include it in the story or poem?
If you include your name in any fashion, including dedicating it to your parents or other relatives, your entry will be discarded.

♦ What if I have trouble with spelling? Will that disqualify my entry?
Misspelled words do not disqualify an entry, but the judges tend to mark down an entry with misspelled words and bad grammar, so it does hurt your chances for winning.

♦ What about the form? Do I have to fill it out completely?
Yes. We need to know in which category to place your entry and how to contact you.

♦ What if it rains and I can’t get to post office by March 2?
If the Public Schools of Robeson County close, we will accept entries postmarked on the day they next open.

♦ I have two great entries. Can I send in both of them?
If you do, the first one opened will be entered (if it qualifies) and the other one discarded.

♦ What about pictures or graphics? Can I include them?
You may, but the judges will be getting photocopies. Sometimes graphics can obscure the words and that hurts the chances that the entry will win. If you include graphics, you might want to photocopy your entry to see what the judges will get.

♦ I work at UNCP? Can I enter?
Yes, in the “General” category.

We welcome the entries we see each year. Help us celebrate our tenth anniversary by making it the biggest yet! Submit your creative works and encourage others to do the same.

Friends of the Library Highlight Spring Programs
by Susan F. Whitt

The Friends of the Library of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke is an organization committed to sponsoring educational and cultural activities for our community. This goal has been actively achieved this academic year. Not only have the Friends sponsored programs during the fall semester, they have planned interesting and engaging programs for the upcoming spring semester.

On February 3, 2009, please join the Friends for an evening celebrating Black History Month. Featuring Anita Spring Council, the daughter of Mildred Council better known as “Mama Dip,” the event promises to be interesting. You may know “Mama Dip” from her appearances on the North Carolina Public Broadcasting System or from eating at her restaurant in Chapel Hill. I personally have a hard time sharing the sweet potato biscuits when I have the opportunity to eat there. Spring Council will discuss her mother and her mother’s cookbooks, Mama Dip’s Kitchen and Mama Dip’s Family Cookbook, which are published by the University of North Carolina Press. This event will be held in the Library and will begin at 7:00 p.m. with a reception to follow. Signed books will be available for purchase.

In their continuing effort to highlight campus authors, the Friends are planning a program on March 15, 2009. Dr. Charles Beem and Dr. Shelby Stephenson will be featured. Dr. Beem will discuss his new book The Royal Minorities of Medieval and Early Modern England. Dr. Stephenson will discuss his recently published work Family Matters: Homage to July, a collection of poems about slaves, slave owners, and slave ownership in North Carolina. This title was selected as the winner of the 2006 Belday Poetry Prize. The program will begin at 10:15 a.m. in the main reading room of the Library. A reception will follow the program, which is free and open to the public.

The Friends are delighted about their upcoming 2009 benefit “Celebrating Your Southern Self @ the Library.” Featured speaker will be Celia Riverbank. Her humor, often described as “an edgy Erma,” is the result of her growing up in the poor but colorful countryside of eastern North Carolina. Ms. Riverbank is known for her syndicated humor column that appears in papers throughout the country. This column was the inspiration for her first book Bless Your Heart, Tramp. It was a best selling title in the Southeast. We’re Just Like You, Only Prettier was her next book and was the winner of the Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance Award for Non-Fiction Book of the Year in 2004. In 2006 her next release, Stop Dressing Your Six-Year-Old Like a Skunk, was named best title of the year by the magazine Entertainment Weekly. Her new book Belle Weather: Mostly Sunny with a Chance of Scattered Hissy Fits was released in August 2008. There is no doubt that her presence at our benefit will be entertaining.

UNCP music students will entertain and a truly elegant Southern dinner will be available. Live and silent auctions will offer exciting items on which to bid. More information on this benefit will be in the next issue of Library Lines. Be sure to mark your calendar for April 17, 2009. This is our eighth annual benefit and we expect tickets to go quickly. Over $16,000 was raised from last year’s benefit, “A North Carolina Evening @ the Library.” Proceeds raised from our benefits go to support the Friends of the Library initiatives such as funding four scholarships and book scholarships established to assist students at UNCP, funding the McNaughton leasing program for popular reading materials and movies on DVD, and underwriting projects in the Library’s archives and special collections areas.

To find out more about our Friends group, the programs it sponsors, or to join this very worthwhile organization, call the Library at 910.775.4242 or go to the Library’s webpage at http://www.uncp.edu/library/friends.