



Author C.W. Smith Announces Fall 2011 Book Signings for New Novel Steplings

Dallas: September 29 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at DeGolyer Library on the SMU campus, 6425 Boaz Ln. 214-768-2253

Fort Worth: September 30 from 5 to 7 p.m. at TCU Bookstore, 2950 W. Berry St. 817-257-7844

Houston: October 11 from 7 to 8 p.m. at Brazos Bookstore, 2421 Bissonet St. 713-523-0701

San Antonio: October 12 from 5 to 7 p.m. at The Twig Book Shop, 200 E. Grayson St. 210-826-6411

All these events are free.

About Steplings

Kirkus Reviews says the story is “realistic and poignant” and “rich in psychological insight and lit with occasional flashes of humor.”

Library Thing declares that the characters of Jason and Emily in *Steplings* “take on vivid personality and the relationships deepen in a delightfully believable way...The two make page-turning strides toward responsibility and maturity as they learn what an awesome task it is to take responsibility for each other.”

The Story

It's 2003 with the country embroiled in a war in Iraq. Nineteen-year-old Jason Sanborn feels lost. He dropped out of high school just two months shy of graduation, and now his former classmates are off to college, the military, or minimum-wage jobs. The only pressing date on his calendar is an upcoming appearance in court on an assault charge, and when his over-achieving, beloved girlfriend, Lisa, departs for UT Austin to study premed, Jason can hardly abide his hometown of Mesquite. When his mother died two

years back, his father Burl, fifteen years sober, fell off the wagon briefly, but he has since met a new wife, Lily, in AA. Lily brings a daughter into the house: Emily, an eleven-year-old know-it-all whose existence irritates Jason. Three days before Jason's court date, he gets a "we can still be friends" letter from Lisa. Heartbroken and determined to convince Lisa of his worth, Jason decides to hitchhike to Austin. Since Emily also hates the new family circle, she is desperate to rejoin her father, a UT professor, so she demands to accompany Jason on his mission. When Burl and Lily find their children missing, Lily puts out an Amber Alert for Emily, accusing Jason of abducting her daughter. The frantic search that ensues threatens to destroy the tentative household that Burl and Lily have just begun to establish, and the end of the journey brings surprises for both the children and their parents.

About C.W. Smith

C.W. Smith is the author of nine novels, a collection of short stories, and a memoir. Aside from a long career in teaching, he has worked as a musician, a newspaper reporter, a swamper on a pipe truck, a roustabout, a paper delivery boy, oil field hand, frame carpenter, and roofer. When he's not teaching and writing and reading, he likes to be in his kayak or on his bike accompanied by his wife, Marcia.

He has twice received the Jesse H. Jones Novel Award from the [Texas Institute of Letters](#); the Southwestern Library Association Award for Best Novel; the [Dobie-Paisano Creative Writing Fellowship from the University of Texas](#); National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowships in 1976 and 1990; the Texas Headliner's Feature Story award; the Frank O'Connor Memorial Short Story Award from Quartet magazine; the John H. McGinnis Short Story Award from [Southwest Review](#); a Pushcart Prize Nomination from [Southwest Review](#); Special Merit Award for Feature Writing from the Penney-Missouri Foundation; the Stanley Walker Award for Journalism from the [Texas Institute of Letters](#), an SMU Research-Travel Grant, and an award for Best Nonfiction Book by a Texan in 1987 from the Southwestern Booksellers Association, and an award for Outstanding Book of the Southwest from the Border Regional Library Association. The Texas Institute of Letters named him a Lon Tinkle Fellow for "sustained excellence in a career," and gave him the Kay Cattarulla Award for Best Short Story of 2009. He belongs to [PEN](#), [The Authors Guild](#), [Writer's Guild of America West](#), and the [Texas Institute of Letters](#).

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