

Tribute to Frank Soos Opening Remarks:

Good afternoon and welcome everyone to this tribute to our dear Frank. I am Lila Vogt and Sue Sherif and I are your hosts today. We are both long time members of the ACFB. The CFB is an all-volunteer nonprofit that is affiliated with the Library of Congress. There are Centers for the Book in all 50 states and U.S. Territories. This year marks 30 years that the Ak CFB has been providing events and projects that celebrate the literary arts in Alaska. One of our biannual projects is Alaska Reads. Every two years, one Alaskan book is chosen and promoted throughout the State to encourage people to read the same book. The author makes visits to communities and libraries across the State doing readings, workshops, discussion and other activities related to the chosen book.

Frank joined our project in 2015 and lead the selection committee in choosing the book for Alaska Reads. I was responsible for the budgeting, grant proposals, reporting and assisting Frank with logistics. I had the pleasure of working closely with Frank on all aspects of the project. As I attempted to school Frank in the budgeting process, he said many times, "I'm not a numbers guy".

He may not have been a numbers guy, but he was passionate and devoted to the success of the program, and he provided inspired guidance to all who worked with him on this uniquely Alaskan project. To say he is missed, is a gross understatement.

I first met Frank in 2001 when he was the guest writer at the WMC week long writer's workshop in McCarthy. As everywhere he went, we all fell in love with him and his gentle ways, as he encouraged the creative endeavors of his students. He fell in love with the Wrangell Mountains and came back four more times to guide writing workshops, some on Copper River float trips. In 2010, he and Margo both came to McCarthy and shared their talents with a grateful group of students.

With that said, please welcome Kes Woodward as our opening moderator. Welcome Kes!