



Religion Communicators Council
An Interfaith Association of Religion Communicators since 1929

Wilbur Awards

**2004 Wilbur Awards Recognize
Outstanding Religious Themes in Media**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. -- For the second year in a row, *The Boston Globe* was named the best major market newspaper by the Religion Communicators Council (RCC) in its annual Wilbur Awards competition. The Globe's Michael Paulson will be honored for coverage of the controversy involving the election and consecration of the Rev. Canon V. Gene Robinson as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire.

The Wilbur Awards, named for Marvin C. Wilbur, a pioneer in the field of religion public relations, recognize outstanding secular media entries that feature religious issues, themes and values. The awards for work in 2003 will be formally presented March 27 here.

Two films related to the Lutheran historic figures were awarded Wilburs in the categories of film documentary and film drama. In the documentary category, the winner was *Bonhoeffer*, distributed by Journey Films, and narrated and directed by Martin Doblmeier.

Luther was the winner in the film drama category. That motion picture was distributed by NFP teleart and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Producers were Christian P. Stehr, Brigitte Rochow and Alexander Thies; Eric Till was director; and Dennis A. Clauss, Kurt Rittig, Gabriela Pfandner and J. Daniel Nichols were executive producers.

The Dallas Morning News, Bruce Tomaso, religion editor, won again for best newspaper religion section; "Faith Matters," by David Waters, appearing in *The Commercial Appeal*, Memphis, Tenn., was named best newspaper column; and for other newspaper markets, "No-Name Religion: Modern Music, Casual Clothing and Practical Sermons Underlie the 'Personal Church'," in the *Anderson Independent-Mail*, Anderson, S.C., was best; Kelly Davis and Nicholas Charalambous were the writers. Ed Gamble, artist, *The Florida Times-Union*, Jacksonville, won in the category for editorial cartoons and comic strips.

"E.T. and God," by Paul Davies, *Atlantic Monthly*, was named best national magazine article. For regional or specialized magazines, *Daedalus: The Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences*, The MIT Press, won for "On Secularism and Religion," James Miller, editor.

Deanna Miller, author and publisher of *Sky Bounce*, won the Wilbur Award for a fiction book. The Rev. Heidi B. Neumark, author of *Breathing Space: A Spiritual Journey in the South Bronx*, was awarded the Wilbur for non-fiction books. Neumark's book is published by Beacon Press, Boston.

The best television drama was an episode from CBS-TV's *Without A Trace*, "Revelations." Producers are Jerry Bruckheimer Television in association with Warner Brothers Television and CBS Productions. *Lourdes* took the Wilbur for television films. Distributed by The Cinema Guild Inc., *Lourdes* was written and directed by Peter Hoffmann and produced by John Tenorio. *Trust Me*, by Hidden Treasures

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475 Riverside Drive #1355, New York, NY 10115 | 212-870-2985 | www.religioncommunicators.org



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Productions, was named best television documentary. Stuart Rekant is executive producer, Cheryl Miller is producer and Rob Fruchtman is director.

For television news, "Prison Ministry," produced by Twin Cities Public Television for *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* was the Wilbur Award winner. The segment was produced by Fred de Sam Lazaro and Nikki See. WSFA-TV, Montgomery, Ala., was the Wilbur Award winner for local television news for "The Power of Faith," produced by Kim Hendrix.

Minnesota Public Radio, St. Paul, will receive the radio award for *Speaking of Faith*, hosted and written by Krista Tippett. Bill Buzenberg is executive producer and Marge Ostroushko is managing producer.

Hosting the Wilbur Awards presentation will be Kathy Times, investigative reporter for WVTM TV, an NBCTV affiliate in Birmingham. The Wilbur Awards will be presented at ceremonies at the Birmingham Museum of Art. Winners will receive a stained-glass trophy.

The awards conclude the annual RCC convention, March 25-27, in Birmingham. RCC, based in New York, is the oldest and largest organization of professional communicators of religion. This year, the RCC is celebrating its 75th anniversary.

Wilbur Awards banquet tickets are still available. For information, visit the RCC Web site at <http://www.religioncommunicators.org> or contact the Rev. Eric C. Shafer, chair of the Wilbur Awards at 773-380-2960 or by e-mail at eshafer@elca.org.