

# Will Rogers Medallion Award Honors Vaughan for Lifetime Achievement

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- With more than 500 books—80

percent of them Westerns—to his credit and over 10,000 fictional characters springing from his creative mind, 84-year-old Robert Vaughan of Gulf Shores, Alabama, has been named the 2022 recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the [Will Rogers Medallion Award](#) (WRMA).

“

Author Robert Vaughan is a classic. He is among the best and most popular Western writers in the history of the genre. His body of work is vast and worthy to be celebrated.”

*WRMA Executive Director  
Chris Enss*

Vaughan sold his first book when he was 19 with seven of his subsequent volumes appearing on the New York Times bestseller list, including two at No. 1. If his name is unfamiliar outside of the publishing industry, it is because he has done the bulk of his work in mass market paperbacks, has been published under 52 pseudonyms and has ghostwritten books for multiple celebrities.

His previous honors include a Pulitzer Prize nomination, a Lifetime Achievement Award from Western Fictioneers, induction into the American Writers Hall of Fame, and a

1994 Spur Award for best original paperback from Western Writers of America for his novel *Survival* published by Berkley under his pseudonym K.C. McKenna. As recently as this spring, his western novel *The Tenderfoot* from Wolfpack spent more than eight weeks at No. 1 on three different Amazon bestseller list. Released in July his latest Wolfpack book *The Lost Herd* was a top 10 bestseller on three Amazon lists.

In announcing Vaughan as the 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, WRMA Executive Director Chris Enss said, “Author Robert Vaughan is a classic. He is among the best and most popular Western writers in the history of the genre. His body of work is vast and worthy to be celebrated.”

Vaughan will be recognized at WRMA’s annual awards dinner Oct. 29 in the historic Stockyards District of Fort Worth. The WRMA awards, named in honor of American cowboy, humorist and writer Will Rogers, recognize excellence in literature about the American West.

Mike Bray, Wolfpack founder and Vaughan’s current publisher, calls him “a real-deal, honest-to-goodness legendary Western author.” Bray said, “With a career spanning six decades, Mr.

Vaughan has contributed to the Western genre—and others—in ways that are hard to quantify. His love of the craft is evident in everything he’s written, and he’s been known to share all that he’s learned over the years with eager authors who are willing to learn. That aspect of the man, coupled with his incredibly impressive career, encompasses everything that the Will Rogers Medallion Award stands for.”

Though he’s written in multiple genres, Vaughan loves historical novels set in the West the most. “Westerns are recognized and appreciated all over the world as the quintessential American art form. What story is more American than a lone wolf with a rifle, pistol, pony and a mission to put things right? There is nothing in literature that is more representative of good versus evil than a cowboy who reluctantly dons the mantle of hero to rescue a damsel in distress, defend a small town from a corrupt sheriff, or save small ranchers from a malevolent land baron.”

After high school Vaughan joined the Army, spending 23 years in service to his country, including three tours in Vietnam. Today he says, “Vietnam was but three years out of my 83 years of life ... but the impact those three years had on me is incalculable.” While in the Army, he ghost wrote technical articles for other officers. While assigned to the Seventh Cavalry, Vaughan served as historian for George Armstrong Custer’s legendary unit.

During his military career, the writer William “Bill” Butterworth, who would become known as best-selling author W.E.B. Griffin, encouraged him in his writing ambitions and suggested he write paperback novels for the mass market. Vaughan followed that advice and at 19 received his first paperback contract with a hundred-dollar advance and a royalty rate of half a penny per copy sold.

As a fledgling author Vaughan never forgot Butterworth’s encouragement and throughout his career has been generous with his time, support and advice to other writers. “Bill is the one who convinced me I could write. I tell aspiring authors that the most important thing they can do is write a book. It might be a terrible book, but at least they will get past the great obstacle of actually getting a book done. Then do the second book, and because the obstacle of actually doing a book is behind them, they can free their mind to make this one a really good book.”

Today he considers “my work ethic and writing discipline” as his strongest assets as a writer, but his love of writing and the research behind it has driven his career. As a Western writer, he is known for staying true to the history of the times.



WRMA Lifetime Achievement Recipient  
Robert Vaughan

"I have written several historical novels, and I am of the belief that historical novels written with accuracy as to specific events teach history better than a regular textbook," he said. "That's because the reader is able to interact, through the fictional characters in the story, with the authentic figures of history. If the story is well told and the reader is fully involved, he or she is traveling through time to relive the events."

Through his writing the history of the American West has come alive through the characters he created, the men and women of every race who found love and drama on the frontier. His characters, both Texan and Mexican, fought at the Alamo; rode with Custer and the Buffalo Soldiers; or roamed the West, robbing banks, holding up stagecoaches and trains, facing each other down over smoking six-shooters in the streets of Fort Worth, El Paso, Lincoln County, Tombstone, or Cheyenne, and some stood on the gallows as a rope was placed around their necks.

For the breadth of his work, his affection for the American West, his thorough research and his commitment to teaching frontier history through his fiction, Robert Vaughan is the 2022 recipient of the WRMA Lifetime Achievement Award.

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