

The Winners' Circle

EACH YEAR WE PUBLISH the grand-prize-winning story of the Memphis magazine fiction contest. The 1999 winning entry entitled "Embraced by Bear" begins on page 92. Written by Dana F. Steward, this unusual story revolves around a woman whose encounters with bears, both in dreams and real life, reveal the truth about herself and her marriage. A resident of Little Rock, Arkansas, Steward is a former high-school teacher and currently an adjunct instructor of writing at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She received the \$1,000 grand prize for "Embraced by Bear," which is her first work of fiction.

The two honorable-mention award winners, each receiving \$500, were Ellen Prewitt, an attorney with Armstrong Allen Prewitt Gentry Johnston and Holmes; and James Pate, a Memphian who is currently a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Iowa.

Congratulations to these three fine writers. And our sincere thanks to the contest's cosponsors — Bookstar/Barnes and Noble, Burke's Book Store, Davis-Kidd Booksellers, and The Deliberate Literate — for their continued support.

While we're on the subject of winners, we should also mention the Mid-Southerners who made off with the spoils of two recent drawings held here at the posh *Memphis* magazine offices. With much fanfare one of our trusty interns pulled one winning entry each for our End of the Century Poll and Readers Restaurant Poll.

Kim Hendrix, a homemaker from Jonesboro, Arkansas, won the drawing for the End of the Century ballot, which was inserted in our September 1999 issue. Her winnings: a two-night stay in New Orleans.

The Readers Restaurant Poll winner was East End Grill owner Christian Georgi, who picked up a free dinner for two at Erling Jensen's, The Restaurant, which was voted best restaurant in our Readers Restaurant Poll, the ballot for which ran in our October 1999 issue.



Public relations pioneer Harold Burson.

surprise. "Because my father taught me to read when I was four, I actually started school in the third grade," recalls Burson, who first went to Lauderdale School and then in the seventh grade moved to Humes, where he graduated at age 15. Burson then went on to Ole Miss, where he worked as a stringer for *The Commercial Appeal* earning some \$50 to \$60 per month, "which was just enough to subsist in those days," he says.

It's safe to say that Burson now makes more than subsistence wage. The New York-based PR firm that he cofounded, Burson-Marsteller, earned revenues of \$260 million last year. Although he stepped down in 1989 as its CEO, Burson says there is rarely a day when he doesn't

Another *World* Champ

IT'S QUITE THE UNDERSTATEMENT to say that 1999 was a good year for Harold Burson. A native Memphian who was the architect and former head of the world's largest public relations firm, Burson landed a number of prestigious awards over the past 12-plus months, all of which marked the extraordinary achievements of this Humes High School graduate.

Actually, the latest round of accolades began rolling in for Burson, who will turn 79 this month, in late 1998, when he received the Champion of Democracy Award from the Anti-Defamation League. He then picked up the 1999 Alexander Hamilton Medal from the Institute of Public Relations (the Institute is the nation's only independent PR foundation) "for years of exceptional leadership in PR," an award that was followed by Burson being named *PRWeek's* most influential public relations person of the twentieth century. That Burson is atop the list that also included men such as Ivy Lee and Arthur Page, considered by many to be the fathers of the PR industry, is a testament to his influence.

Yet judging by Burson's beginnings here in Memphis, such achievements are hardly a

go into the office. And with a sister and other family members still here, Burson says it's rare that a year goes by when he doesn't visit Memphis. Yet, he says, "I have not spent enough time in Memphis [recently] to have firm views [about the city]. When I lived in Memphis, anyone who traveled east of Highland was thought to be 'up to no good,' because that's where the bootleggers and 'road houses' were located."

Indeed, Burson notes things have changed here since then. Even though he regrets "that downtown Memphis continues to struggle despite the Herculean efforts of Jack Belz," he adds, "I am delighted that the city began to appreciate its waterfront by populating it with housing, restaurants, and other amenities."

— Richard Banks



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