



## from the Bookshelf

**M**olly Levite Griffis is a bona fide character, delightfully so. An effervescent 1960s coed from tiny Apache, Oklahoma, she left her mark on the OU campus by plunging into every student activity that would admit her, but was perhaps most unforgettable for her Sooner Scandals fire baton act that threatened the very survival of venerable Holmberg Hall. She was a soccer mom before there were any, taped books for the blind, helped start a private school and opened a shop that specialized in the unlikely combination of books and Pendleton blankets.

When she discovered that notable works by notable Oklahoma authors were out of print, she started her own publishing company to reissue them. She promoted fledgling writers and illustrators by non-stop verbal salesmanship and other means both creative and outlandish. After rewarding yet frustrating years in the world of the small, independent book dealer/publisher, she dipped her toe into literary waters herself, producing two charming children's books, *The Buffalo in the Mall* and *Five Two, Five Blue*. An inveterate letter-writer, the old-fashioned kind, she pulled together her correspondence with the equally entertaining, best-selling author Billie Letts (*Where the Heart Is*) into *You've Got Mail, Billie Letts*.

With enough success from these disparate first efforts goading her on, Griffis closed her shop and publishing company and rented a secluded office she calls "the cave." Having graduated from pencil and Big Chief tablet to typewriter (but not computer), she declared herself a writer



and launched a series (two volumes so far) for the middle-school set that well may prove her point.

The setting is Griffis' hometown of Apache as small-town America grapples with the realities of the war, as seen through the eyes of its children. Well researched and chock full of 1940s trivia that will delight today's youngsters and bring nostalgic smiles to their grandparents' faces, *Rachel's Resistance* and the just-published sequel, *The Feester Filibuster*, are multi-generational treats.

### Rachel's Resistance

by Molly Levite Griffis

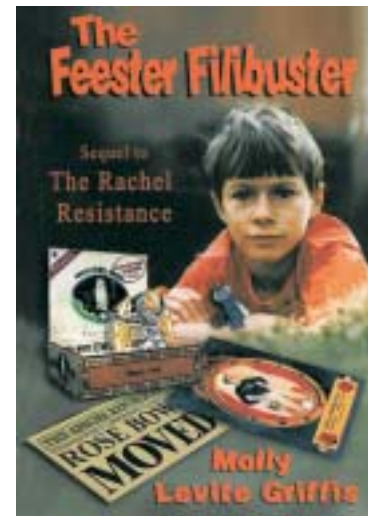
\$17.95 hardcover

\$8.95 paperback

Eakin Press

When 1940s radio hero Captain Midnight warns the nation's youngsters of the threat to the security of America, his devoted fans grab their Code-O-Graph badges and take heed. Fifth-grader Rachel Dalton and her pal, Paul Griggs, are convinced that spies and saboteurs lurk in their hometown, perhaps in the person of her archenemy, John Alan Feester Jr.

Their rollicking adventures during this first year of World War II are the basis for this winner of the 2002 Oklahoma Book Award, but Griffis educates as she entertains. *Rachel's Resistance* is a recounting of small-town patriotism and sacrifice, families separated by military service and uprooted to work in defense plants, even the persecution of a local Chinese launderer for the slant of his eyes.



*Rachel's Resistance* is on the Master List for the Volunteer Award in Tennessee to be presented next year.

### The Feester Filibuster

by Molly Levite Griffis

\$18.95 hardcover

\$8.95 paperback

Eakin Press

The war continues into its second year—and so do the humorous escapades of Apache's young patriots. This time, although Rachel Dalton remains a central character, the viewpoint is that of John Alan Feester Jr., the school superintendent's son. Paul Griggs has moved to California, his place in Rachel's plots taken by a mysterious new boy, Simon Green, who tries to reconcile his warring classmates.

The sequel, in this case, is the better book, still full of the details of civilian life in wartime, but also touching on the heartaches of loss and loneliness, the servicemen's mothers with blue stars in their windows, Paul's letter home about Japanese-Americans being taken away in cattle trucks to detention camps.

*The Feester Filibuster* concludes on an up note in 1942, with three war years to go—and the new characters Griffis introduced in book two simply must be pursued.

—CAROL J. BURR

Available in bookstores or from Eakin Press, Austin, Texas, at 1-800-880-8642.

# Notable from the University of Oklahoma Press



The University of Oklahoma Press earned its international reputation as a distinguished publisher of scholarly works, significantly in the areas of the American West and the American Indians, but also in archaeology, classical studies, military history, language and literature, natural science and women's studies. For most of its 70-year history, fiction was not a part of OU Press offerings.

Over the last decade, however, the Press has launched three series with fiction as a major component. Not surprisingly, the first two focus on familiar territory: American Indian Literature and Critical Studies and Literature of the American West. The first volume in the third series, *Chicana & Chicano Visions of the Americas*, was issued in fall 2002.

## American Indian Literature and Critical Studies

*Gerald Vizenor, series editor*

A leading force in American Indian studies and literary scholarship, Gerald Vizenor is professor emeritus of Native American Literature and American Studies at the University of California Berkeley. Inaugurated in 1990 while Vizenor was a distinguished professor at the University of Oklahoma, the series has become widely recognized for its contributions to the field and to date comprises over 40 titles, including the work of such authors as Louis Owens, Diane Glancy and James Ruppert. Vizenor has more than 20 books to his credit, including *Griever: An American Monkey King in China*, winner of the American Book Award, and is the author of *Dead Voices: Natural Agonies in the New World*, and *Chancers: A Novel*, both published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

## Literature of the American West

*William Kittredge, series editor*

Author of many books, including *Who Owns the West?* and *Hole in the Sky: A*

*Memoir*, and co-editor of *The Last Best Place: A Montana Anthology*, as well as co-producer of the film version of *A River Runs Through It*, William Kittredge retired in 1997 as Regents Professor of English and Creative Writing from the University of Montana. The intent of the series, which was launched in 1996, is to publish original contemporary fiction, personal essays, short story collections, and book-length essays, memoirs and critical studies. To date, published authors in the series include Mary Clearman Blew, Jim Houston, Ann Ronald and Max Crawford.

## Chicana & Chicano Visions of the Americas

*Robert Con Davis-Undiano, series editor*

The aim of this series is to offer the best of recent writing from the Chicano and Latino worlds, including new fiction, both from established writers and to serve as a forum for new voices and viewpoints. While based in a Mexican-American perspective, the series will explore cultural borders throughout the Americas and the multiple intersections of Latin American and U.S. culture. The first volume in the series, *La Promesa and Other Stories*, by Leroy V. Quintana, was published in fall 2002. Executive director of *World Literature Today*, Davis-Undiano has co-written or edited 13 books and more than 40 articles and also hosts "The Power of Ideas," an award-winning television series now on national public television.

For a catalog of titles available in these three series, write the University of Oklahoma Press, 4100 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.W., Norman, OK 73069-8218 or visit online at [www.oupress.com](http://www.oupress.com).

