

John Updike dies at 76

BY HILLEL ITALIE
AP National Writer

NEW YORK | John Updike, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, prolific man of letters and erudite chronicler of sex, divorce and other adventures in the postwar prime of the American empire, died Tuesday at age 76.

Updike, best known for his four "Rabbit" novels, died of lung cancer at a hospice near his home in Beverly Farms, Mass., according to his longtime publisher, Alfred A. Knopf.

A literary writer who frequently appeared on best-seller lists, the tall, hawk-nosed Updike wrote novels, short stories, poems, criticism, the memoir "Self-Consciousness" and even a famous essay about baseball great Ted Williams.

He released more than 50 books in a career that started in the 1950s, winning virtually every literary prize, including two Pulitzers, for "Rabbit Is Rich" and "Rabbit at Rest," and two National Book Awards.

Although himself deprived of a Nobel, he did bestow it upon one of his fictional characters, Henry Bech, the womanizing, egotistical Jewish novelist who collected the literature prize in 1999.

His settings ranged from the court of "Hamlet" to postcolonial Africa, but his literary home was the American suburb, the great new territory of mid-century fiction.

Born in 1932, Updike spoke for millions of Depression-era readers raised by "penny-pinching parents," united by "the patriotic cohesion of World War II" and blessed by a "disproportionate share of the world's resources," the postwar, suburban boom of "idealistic careers and early marriages."

He captured, and sometimes embodied, a generation's confusion over the civil rights and women's movements, and opposition to the Vietnam War. Updike was called a misogynist, a racist and an apologist for the establishment. On purely literary grounds, he was attacked by Norman Mailer as the kind of author appreciated by readers who knew nothing about writing. Last year, judges of Britain's Bad Sex in Fiction Prize voted Updike lifetime achievement honors.

But more often he was praised for his flowing, poetic writing style. Describing a man's interrupted



In this 2006 photo, author John Updike takes part in a panel discussion at BookExpo America 2006 in Washington.

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quest to make love, Updike likened it "to a small angel to which all afternoon tiny lead weights are attached."

Nothing was too great or too small for Updike to poeticize. He might rhapsodize over the film projector's "chuckling whir" or look to the stars and observe that "the universe is perfectly transparent: we exist as flaws in ancient glass."

In the richest detail, his books recorded the extremes of earthly desire and spiritual zealotry, whether the comic philandering of the preacher in "A Month of Sundays" or the steady rage of the young Muslim in "Terrorist." Raised in the Protestant community of Shillington, Pa., where the Lord's Prayer was recited daily at school, Updike was a lifelong churchgoer influenced by his faith, but not immune to doubts.

"I remember the times when I was wrestling with these issues that I would feel crushed. I was crushed by the purely materialistic, atheistic account of the universe," Updike told The Associated Press during a 2006 interview.

"I am very prone to accept all that the scientists tell us, the truth of it, the authority of the efforts of all the men and woman spent trying to understand more about atoms and molecules. But I can't quite make

the leap of unfaith, as it were, and say, 'This is it. Carpe diem (seize the day), and tough luck.'"

He received his greatest acclaim for the "Rabbit" series, a quartet of novels published over a 30-year span that featured ex-high school basketball star Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom and his restless adjustment to adulthood and the constraints of work and family. To the very end, Harry was in motion, an innocent in his belief that any door could be opened, a believer in God even as he bedded women other than his wife.

The series "to me is the tale of a life, a life led by an American citizen who shares the national passion for youth, freedom, and sex, the national openness and willingness to learn, the national habit of improvisation," Updike would later write. "He is furthermore a Protestant, haunted by a God whose manifestations are elusive, yet all-important."

Other notable books included "Couples," a sexually explicit tale of suburban mating that sold millions of copies; "In the Beauty of the Lilies," an epic of American faith and fantasy; and "Too Far to Go," which followed the courtship, marriage and divorce of the Maples, a suburban couple with parallels to Updike's own first marriage.

DEATH NOTICES

Jill R. Beese

ROCHESTER | Jill R. Beese, 44, of Horseheads, died Sunday, Jan. 25, 2009 at Strong Memorial Hospital.

She was a teacher at Cohen Elementary School in Elmira Heights and a coach at Thomas A. Edison High School.

Survivors include her husband, Rob Beese; four children, Kate, Allison, Jocelyn, Garrett; her mother and stepfather, Jone and Bob Sleeper of Horseheads; her father and stepmother, Rob and Rhonda Roy of Idaho; two sisters, Michele Lester of Florida, Jill Elliot of North Carolina; a brother, Michael Sleeper of Oklahoma; grandparents, John Keller and Ruth Roy.

Calling hours are 2-4 and 7-9 p.m. Thursday at First Baptist Church of Horseheads, 2293 Grand Central Ave.

Services will be held there at 10 a.m. Friday, Pastors Brian Kain and Robert Finch officiating.

Burial will be in Maple Grove Cemetery, Horseheads.

Arrangements are with Lynch Funeral Home, Horseheads.

James A. Brownell

CORNING | James A. Brownell, 73, of Clendenning Road, Painted Post, died Sunday, Jan. 25, 2009 at Corning Hospital.

He had been employed by Ingersoll Rand and had worked as a salesman for Wilkins Recreational Vehicles. He also owned and operated Jim's American service station in Painted Post.

Survivors include his wife, Shirley Stockdale; a daughter, Kim Brownell of Campbell; two sons, Joseph of Douglasville, Ga., Daniel Brownell of Red Bank, Tenn.; a sister, Marjorie Layton of Beaver Dams.

Services will be held at 5 p.m. today at Phillips Funeral Home and Cremation Service, 17 W. Pulteney St.

Leon H. Clark

WELLSBORO, PA. | Leon H. Clark, 94, of Wellsboro, died Monday, Jan. 26, 2009 at Green Home.

He was a retired farmer and a retired employee of Borden Inc.

Survivors include two daughters, Beatrice Hetrick of Boalsburg, Elaine Blazosky of State College; a brother, Irvin Clark of Wellsboro; two sisters, Ermina Lyon, Margaret Neal, both of Wellsboro.

Calling hours are 1-2 p.m. Saturday at Tussey-Mosher Funeral Home, a "Life Celebration Home," 139 Main St.

Services will be held there at the conclusion of calling hours at 2 p.m. Saturday, the Rev. Eugene A. Charsky officiating.

Burial will be in Shumway Hill Cemetery.

Marie G. Ferris

ELMIRA | Marie G. Ferris, 89, of Bethany Courtyards, Horseheads,

formerly of Lawrenceville, Pa., died Monday, Jan. 26, 2009 at Arnot Ogden Medical Center.

She had worked as a telephone operator and had been a school bus owner and operator.

Survivors include her husband, Freeman Ferris; a daughter, Linda Wolcott of Honeoye Falls; two sons, Ronald Young of Boiling Springs, Pa., Jack Young of Lawrenceville, Pa.; a stepson, Norman Ferris of Elmira; three stepdaughters, Janet Kester of Macedon, Judy Jaworski of Bernardsville, N.J., Nancy Ferris of Whitehouse Station, N.J.; a sister, Lois Lauper of South Carolina.

Calling hours are 6-8 p.m. Friday at Kenyon Funeral Home, Inc., 214 W. Main St., Elkland, Pa., and 1-2 p.m. Saturday at Calvary United Methodist Church, Lawrenceville, Pa.

Services will be held at the church at the conclusion of calling hours at 2 p.m. Saturday, the Rev. Eunice Lusk officiating.

Burial will be in Nelson Cemetery, Nelson, Pa.

Lawrence C. O'Brian

ERIE, PA. | Lawrence C. O'Brian, 57, of West Fourth Street, died Thursday, Jan. 22, 2009 at Erie VA Medical Center.

He was a U.S. Air Force veteran, serving during the Vietnam War. He had been employed as a glass technician for Corning Glass Works.

Survivors include his wife, Linda O'Brian; three sons, Michael O'Brian of Nashville, Tenn., Mark O'Brian and Matthew O'Brian, both of Olean, N.Y.; his father, Robert Montgomery Sr.; two sisters, Dawn Button of Thurston, N.Y., Barbara Knapp of Chesapeake, Va.; two brothers, Charles Allen of Addison, N.Y., Robert J. Montgomery of Texas.

Calling hours are 5-7 p.m. Thursday at Carpenter's Funeral Home, LLC, 14 E. Pulteney St., Corning, N.Y.

Services will be held there at 11 a.m. Friday.

Burial with military honors will be in St. Catherine's Cemetery, Addison, N.Y.

Robbie J Vaughns

ELMIRA | Robbie J. March Vaughns, 59, died Saturday, Jan. 24, 2009 at Arnot Ogden Medical Center.

She had worked for St. Joseph's Hospital.

Survivors include her husband, the Rev. Johnny Vaughns; a daughter, Carmen Bell; her mother, Gladys March; a brother, Arthur March Sr.

Services will be held at noon Friday at the Church of Christ, 165 Miller St., Horseheads, Brother Stephen Connors officiating.

Arrangements are with Acly-Stover Funeral Home, Corning.

MASSA

Continued from 3A

Massa blasted former President George W. Bush for funding the invasion of Iraq largely through borrowing from countries like China.

"I do not like deficit spending," Massa said. "Ideologically I am against it, but the cost of not acting will potentially spiral this country into a great depression. The question is, how to get it right?"

Massa said the two major risks of deficit spending are the deflation of the dollar and an increasing debt for future

generations.

"If we don't do this today, our children may not have an economy where they can seek employment," he said.

Massa said there's broad support from both sides of the aisle for Obama's stimulus package.

"I think, as I said since day one, there is a tremendous sense of urgency in Congress," Massa said. "That urgency is being translated into action."

Massa dismissed the complaints of some Republicans in Congress who say Obama's stimulus package is too heavy on new spending and does not contain enough tax cuts.

TRUCK

Continued from 3A

the fire district with a truck that incorporates all of the new National Fire Protection Association safety features, Smith said. The purchase would avoid the 2010 emissions upcharge and chassis cost increase, which is estimated to be \$8,000 to \$10,000.

The public vote is necessary because the fire district commissioners will likely need to borrow money to purchase the truck.

"When we talk about paying \$315,000, you have to think my life is worth it, the residents' life is worth it," said Doug Crooker, a 32-year member of the fire department. "When firefighters go out to a fire, we have to protect ourselves and the people."

OBITUARIES

LORETTA MAY CLARK

BATH, NY | Loretta May Clark, age 89, of Spring Meadow Apartments in Bath, New York, passed away Monday, January 28, 2009 at the Vincent House in Wayland, New York, surrounded by her loving family.

She was born July 27, 1919 in Bath, New York to the late Erwin and Emma Burley. Loretta married Forrest H. Clark on October 21, 1941. She was a very devoted wife, mother, and grandmother.

Loretta worked in retail sales for W.T. Grant Company, M Cohn and Sons, and K-Mart for over fifty years. She also volunteered for the Steuben County Office of the Aging and was a devout, long-standing member of the St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Bath, New York.

Loretta was predeceased by her husband, Forrest H. Clark, Sr. in 1998 and her son, Daniel B. Clark in 2006.

She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Forrest and Mary Beth Clark of Hammondsport, New York; sister, Margaret Failing of New Cumberland, PA; four grandsons, Christopher (Mary Clark) of Corning, New York, Patrick (Sarah Clark) of Sanders, Arizona, Andrew Clark of Hammondsport, New York, and Justin Clark of Colorado; granddaughter,

Alyson Clark of Saratoga Springs and six great-grandchildren, Madison, Connor, Carter, McKenna, Landon, and Bryce.

Friends may call on Friday, January 30, 2009 from 11:00 AM to 12:15 PM at the St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Liberty Street, Bath, New York. Her funeral service will follow at 12:30 PM with Father Brad Benson officiating. All are invited to a reception in the church hall following the service. Her burial will be held in Nondaga Cemetery, Bath, New York.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Vincent House, 310 Second Avenue, P.O. Box 566, Wayland, New York or the St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Bath, New York 14810.

Arrangements by Bond-Davis Funeral Home of Bath, New York.

KIM BERLEE J (BARRETT) CECIL

NASHVILLE, TN | Kimberlee Jeanne (Barrett) Cecil, 54, of Smyrna, died Sunday, Jan. 25, 2009 at the Centennial Medical Center after a long battle with cancer.

She was born July 16, 1954 in Bath, N.Y. to Charles and Dorothy (Pierson) Barrett of Avoca, N.Y. and is a 1972 graduate of Avoca Central School.

She was an office administrator and had been employed by American Airlines.

She is survived by her husband of 35 years, Charles Cecil of Smyrna; two daughters, Valerie Cecil and Pamela Cecil, also of Smyrna; parents, Charles and Dorothy Barrett of Avoca, N.Y.; three brothers, Lonnie (Linda) Barrett and Michael Barrett, of Avoca, N.Y.; Donald Barrett (Regina VanDerhoff) of Savona, N.Y.; three sisters, Dorothea (Dan) Snyder, Jennifer (Brad) Gleason and Colleen (Barry) Chrysler, of Bath, N.Y.; numerous nieces and nephews; and her beloved dog, Bella.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Kim's name to the National Breast Cancer Foundation at www.nationalbreastcancer.org.

LAWRENCE C. O'BRIAN

ERIE, PA | Lawrence C. O'Brian, age 57, of 224 West Fourth Street, Erie, PA died Thursday, January 22, 2009 at the Erie VA Medical Center in Erie, PA. Lawrence was born October 18, 1951 in Corning, NY. He is the son of Lawrence and the late Lucille Evelyn Phillips O'Brian Montgomery, Sr. He married Linda Orvek on October 30, 1976 in Addison, NY.

He served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War from July 6, 1971 to June 12, 1974. He was employed by Corning Glass Works, in Corning, NY, as a Glass Technician.

Lawrence enjoyed hunting, Nascar, and all kind of sports. He was a

staunch Jeff Gordon fan. He especially liked football and baseball. Lawrence was a workaholic who loved spending time with his family and thought the world of his children.

He is survived by his wife, Linda (Orvek) O'Brian; three sons, Michael O'Brian of Nashville, TN, Mark O'Brian of Olean, NY, and Matthew O'Brian of Olean, NY; his father, Robert Montgomery, Sr; two sisters, Dawn (Eugene) Button of Thurston, NY, and Barbara (Robert) Knapp of Chesapeake, VA; and his two brothers, Charles (Connie) Allen of Addison, NY and Robert J. Montgomery of Tuscarora Street, Addison, NY 14801.

Galeton, PA.

He was predeceased by his mother, Lucille Evelyn Montgomery.

Calling hours for Lawrence will be held at Carpenter's Funeral Home, LLC on Thursday, January 29, 2009 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. The funeral will be held at 11:00 AM on Friday, January 30, 2009 at Carpenter's Funeral Home, LLC, 14 East Pulteney Street in Corning, NY. Burial will be at St. Catherine's Cemetery in Addison with Military Honors.

Those wishing may send donations in Lawrence's name to the Lawrence O'Brian Memorial Fund, 34 Tuscarora Street, Addison, NY 14801.

OBITUARY & DEATH NOTICE POLICY

■ The Leader publishes death notices free of charge. Obituaries are paid advertisements.

■ The deadline for death notices is 8 p.m. every day. They may be faxed to 936-9939. Death notices will only be accepted from funeral directors.

■ Paid obituaries may be submitted: Weekdays | Between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, by calling 936-4651.

Weekends and holidays | Between 9 a.m. and noon by calling 936-4651, Ext. 652.

■ Paid obituaries may also be faxed during the above hours to 962-0782.

■ To e-mail obituaries: c_service@the-leader.com

I n M emory Of
M e g a n F r a n c e s P h i l i p
1983 ~ 2001



*You are sadly missed
by your family and
we think of you everyday.*

*Until we meet again,
Your Mom*