

Christian Western Novelist Dies

✖ Christian Western novelist Stephen Bly, winner of a Christy Award, died June 9 in Lewiston, Idaho, after a five-year battle with prostate cancer. He was 66.

Bly, who wrote more than 100 books and hundreds of articles, poems and short stories won the 2002 Christy Award for Western Novel for *The Long Trail Home* (Broadman & Holman). Some of his other novels included *The Senator's Other Daughter* (Crossway Books); *Memories of a Dirt Road Town* (Broadman & Holman); *One Step Over the Border* (Center Street); and *Throw the Devil Off the Train* (Center Point).

Prior to his death, he was working on a novel titled Stuart Brannon's *Final Shot*. His wife and sons hope to finish it for him for a 2012 release, according to the Christian Writers Guild Web site.

Besides serving as pastor of Winchester Community Church in Winchester, Idaho, he also served as the mayor. Bly was a member of the Western Writers of America and a mentor for the Christian Writers Guild.

Jerry B. Jenkins, owner of the Guild, was one of Bly's first publishers. "You always knew where Steve stood, and that was refreshing," Jenkins said. "He was a master titler of books besides being a fascinating storyteller. One of my favorite Bly titles is *One Went to Denver and the Other Went Wrong*. My youngest son was one of Steve's biggest fans. I already miss him."

Bly is survived by his wife of 48 years, Janet, three sons, three daughters-in-law, four grandchildren and a great-granddaughter. A memorial service was to be held yesterday at Winchester Community Church.