

For Immediate Release

February 4, 2022

Contact: Michele Cobb, Executive Director, PubWest  
executivedirector@pubwest.org, (401) 354-9100

## **PubWest Announces 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award to Honor Cinco Puntos's Lee and Bobby Byrd**

PubWest, the leading trade association of small- and medium-sized book publishers, has awarded its 2022 Jack D. Rittenhouse Award to Lee and Bobby Byrd, publishers at Cinco Puntos Press.

The Rittenhouse Award was established in 1990 as a way to thank and honor those who have made an important contribution to the Western community of the book. The award is given annually in memory of Jack D. Rittenhouse, the West's legendary bookman.

In its 36 years, Cinco Puntos Press has published some 130 books, including *Everything Begins and Ends at the Kentucky Club* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz, a short story collection which won the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction in 2013. Sáenz was the first Mexican American to win the award.

“We started Cinco Puntos because we wanted more time to write and we found as we have moved further and further into the publishing life, that publishing, like writing, is an act of self-discovery,” they share on their website. “Every book takes us to a new place. Each book leads us into unexpected intellectual terrains. These are places we might have never experienced without the provocation of new books and the business of making and selling them.”

Founders of Cinco Puntos Press in 1985, the Byrds recently sold their El Paso, Texas, publishing company to Lee & Low Books. “It is critical that a collection of strong diverse books like the ones that Cinco Puntos Press has published remain in print,” said Lee & Low publisher Jason Lee. “We have always held the books that Cinco Puntos Press published in high regard. The books that Lee and Bobby Byrd have chosen to publish amplify marginalized voices and reflect the ideal of a truly inclusive publishing industry.”

The Byrds told *El Paso Matters* that they explored selling the press for a decade. Lee Byrd, who is 76, said, “I find myself really tired. I don't want to sit around and dream about another book and pitching it to somebody.” Bobby Byrd is 78.

Sáenz, who lives in El Paso and has published poetry, novels, children's books and young adult literature with Cinco Puntos Press, said of the Byrds: “They have truly been a remarkable trailblazer in the field of multicultural literature, particularly the literature of the border and border writers. And they have contributed to our literary community, and we should all be immensely grateful to them.”

Other important Cinco Puntos Press books include *The Story of Colors/La Historia de los Colores*, a 1999 children's book by Subcomandante Marcos, who led an indigenous uprising in the Mexican state of Chiapas in the 1990s, and *Ringside Seat to a Revolution* by David Romo, which tells how Ciudad Juárez and El Paso served as the intellectual inspiration for the Mexican Revolution in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Byrds accepted the Rittenhouse Award during the PubWest 2022 conference, February 3-5 in Denver, Colorado.

**About PubWest:** PubWest is a nonprofit trade association for North American book publishers—from small independent presses to publishing companies with worldwide operations—and related professionals, such as printers, designers, binderies, and publishing freelancers. For more information, please visit [www.pubwest.org](http://www.pubwest.org).

For more information on PubWest, PubWest 2022, Jack D. Rittenhouse, the Rittenhouse Award, and past recipients, please visit <http://pubwest.org/>.

###