

Writers' Circle of Durham Region  
Scribe Logo Sign

# THE WORD WEAVERVER

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A NEWSLETTER FOR WRITERS AND EDITORS  
PRODUCED BY  
THE WRITERS' CIRCLE OF DURHAM REGION  
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# Creative Gardening

By Barbara Hunt

How many times have we heard someone say – 'Oh, you're so creative – I could never do that'? It is easy to recognize and admire the creativity that we see in others. Their accomplishments shine magnificently at harvest time.



In a community such as ours, we applaud each other because we understand the diligence necessary to nurture a crop to fruition. As writers, we water our work with time and effort then let it bask in the light of supportive feedback or strong editing. We are all familiar with the tools that strengthen us and our material. But, creativity only produces vibrant results when we devote some attention to the 'seed'. With the right seeds for our soil conditions, climate and crop selection, we can all have 'green thumbs'.

Closet gardeners may prefer to gather seeds from their own private garden. Some writers are avid journalers and find their seedbed perpetually rife with opportunity.

In order to dig deeper however, we need to achieve what Heidegger called 'forge]fulness of being'. Making a habit of

free writing will produce buckets of such kernels. The idea is to put anything on paper on a regular basis. That's what Janet Burroway cites as the literary equivalent to practicing scales on the piano. She sees writing as "mind-farming".

Some other focused exercise examples are:

- ♦ Flow-charting - the first word flows to successive words down the page without the writer pausing to think or edit.
- ♦ Clustering - one central subject-word spawning new words around itself, in turn spawning more to form a cluster.
- ♦ Mind-mapping - a central word branching out into related ideas which branch further to create a web.

These tools can be potent. Poet Carolyn Forché developed a random-word method using parallel lists (one of nouns, one of modifiers) which are then teamed into the most unlikely combinations to form creative nuggets.

Novelist Lee Smith advises choosing which acre of "stalking ground" to let your machinery plow up. It could be a "seed-list" of costly experiences or real-life incongruities; striking connections or stunning revelations; vivid memories or burning injustices that hold great potential.

Some of us thrive with the interaction of fellow enthusiasts, talk of seeding and weeding or the advice of a master gardener. Our germination might be more effective in a larger community.

Pat Schneider suggests that your greatest guidance may come from someone other than a teacher that can inspire, challenge and encourage you to grow in your writing. Mentoring or writing

partnerships may be a useful tool in your hands.

Writing workshops, reading circles or retreats such as the ones offered by the Writers Circle of Durham Region ([www.wcdr.org](http://www.wcdr.org)) and other associations can also be a powerful source. There is the opportunity to share material in exercises and feedback, which may propagate entirely new species.

Free writing groups may serve a function in the cross-pollination of ideas as well. Exchanging in this fashion will not only produce healthy plants and rich fruit, but also nourish the soil that each writer tills.

If these routes are not enough to coax hardy blooms, then heading to the nursery for the desired seedlings may be an option. Libraries and bookstores are filled with thousands of inspiring seedlings. Our own WCDR Book Swap provides such a setting thanks to Kevin Craig.

Whether books are bought or borrowed, they carry a wealth of



motivation. Canadian poet/writer Olive Senior, for example found the inspiration for her upcoming volume of poetry about indigenous Jamaican plantlife in technical, botanical journals.

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*Creative Gardening Cont'd*

Material about writing as a craft, be it in *Poets & Writers* ([www.pw.org](http://www.pw.org)) or the books of Pat Schneider, Janet Burroway, Natalie Goldberg, Anne Bernays, David Morrell or Gabriele Rico can help to fertilize the ground you cultivate. Publications like *Writer's Digest* ([www.writersdigest.com](http://www.writersdigest.com)) contain a monthly calendar of daily writing prompts as well as opening lines, brief responses or chronicling contests.

The Internet offers word-of-the-day and thought-for-the-day services to encourage your productivity. Merriam-Webster ([www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com)) will even email you daily for free. One Look ([www.onelook.com/wotd](http://www.onelook.com/wotd)) and

Dictionary.Com ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)) are useful and free tools for your gardening kit. If you're digging in the dirt anyway, just for fun check out the worthless word for the day ([home.mn.rr.com/wwftd](http://home.mn.rr.com/wwftd)). There are also many sites that charge for their services.

It is important to remember at Thanksgiving that produce is not born of a falling star, but gleaned, plowed, planted and nurtured along. If we are receptive and innovative with the tools in our garden shed and begin with the finest seeds available, we cannot be disappointed. We can then boast that our 'seed money' was well spent.

*B.E. Hunt, a mother of four ranging in ages from 5 to 22, has always written and yet came to it late. She writes poetry, fiction and non-fiction. She has had work appreciated in Canada and the U.S from her home in Port Perry, Ontario.*



## WCDR Who's Who : Florence Taylor

*by Philippa Schmiegelow*

November 29, 1925. There's fifteen feet of snow on the ground, the doctor is drunk, and in a mining cabin over a gold mine on the BC border of Alaska, Florence is born. As her Italian-Canadian mother hears her first cry, the whistle blows indicating a shift-change for the hard rock-miners, among them her Tuscan father. He snow-shoes to Stewart, BC, to register her birth.

A few months later, the small family moved to Victoria and a gentler life in the home of her composer musician grandfather, Joseph, and uncle, cellist Frank Balagno. Music was central to her young life: piano from the age of five; summer treats in the Empress Hotel sitting in a high backed chair listening to Frank and the Billy Tickle trio play for the "swells" in their elegant gowns and tuxedos. Her grandfather dreamt of a concert pianist granddaughter but by sixteen Florence knew her nerves would never endure performances, and so she turned to writing.

At eighteen, she walked into the Victoria Times for an interview with the editor. First, secretary in the newspaper "morgue" in '44, then into the newsroom



where dashing war correspondents made the cub reporter's heart flutter. Finally, to Ottawa where assignments as assistant to the Women's Editor of the Ottawa Citizen, and then as Editor, took her to Embassies, Government House, elegant balls at the Chateau Laurier, interviews with leading Ottawa women...

Life with NFB photographer husband Herb changed all that. They filmed across Canada and in Montreal. Six months in Spain on a UNESCO assignment followed, then it was on to Italy to trace her Tuscan roots and to TV assignments in Manchester, England where their first son was born. Another assignment and another son in Indonesia, followed.

EXPO '67, Greece, the list goes on. Finally it was time to settle down in Toronto. Florence worked in art galleries, happy to be back in Canada. In 2002, she began a new venture under the auspices of the WCDR. Florence Taylor began to write poetry.

If you'd like to suggest someone for a future profile in Who's Who, drop a line to [wordweaver@wcdrr.org](mailto:wordweaver@wcdrr.org).

## A Message From THE BOARD

By Annette McLeod, President

It continues to be a distinct pleasure to work with this group of dedicated, creative and fun people who comprise the WCDR board. We've managed to establish a comfy pattern of meeting to discuss current business and new ideas, going off to perform our assigned tasks, then reconvening to report. We stay in touch electronically over the web, and have found that in-between-meetings e-mails have subsequently trickled down to almost nothing. All have put in enormous hours and huge efforts to make sure the membership is served as well as possible. Thanks to them, my job is probably the easiest one on the board.

But boards don't operate in a vacuum. Without feedback from you, we won't know if what we're making are improvements -- or just changes.

We are always open to your feedback and look forward to hearing your take on this year's goings on at WCDR. We make our decisions with the best intentions, and we may defend them

heartily, but it still boils down to you -- are you getting what you need from WCDR?

The biggest board initiatives this year have included our short fiction and online creative non-fiction contests, which are off to great starts. Toronto Sun columnist Gary Dunford and Toronto Star columnist Linwood Barclay are confirmed to serve as final-tier judges in the non-fiction contest (thanks, Dorothea), and thanks to the efforts of our past-president, Aprille Janes, the stellar final-tier judging lineup for the short story contest is now confirmed as novelist Joan Barfoot, who was great at last year's Words in Whitby, *Storyteller* editor Terry Tyo and novelist Gregory Ward.

Our kickass PR chick, Dorothea, has made sure our contests are listed in *The Writers' Market* and other vehicles to which writers look for opportunities, but the most important measure of success will be if YOU enter. Don't let these terrific opportunities pass you by. Visit [www.wcdr.org](http://www.wcdr.org) today and check out the details.

We have also undertaken to put together the WCDR's first evening event, which will include readings, mingling, maybe even a game or two.

Tradition has turned our July breakfast into a morning of readings by the writing

circles. Whether because it's the dog days of summer, or because the readings simply aren't to everyone's tastes, it hasn't historically been as well attended as others. For this reason, we're conducting a little experiment this year -- July's breakfast is going to be something entirely new: a panel discussion. We're theming the panel around publishing -- after all, that's the paramount goal for many of us -- and it's set to include three industry professionals who hold the power to purchase. We're working on an acquisitions editor from the book realm, a newspaper editor and a magazine editor.

The workshop schedule is astonishing. Whether you're looking for technical help getting the most out of your word processing program, or the emotional and creative support to make the most of that love scene, there is something for just about every taste and talent on the agenda.

April is turning out to be a writer's dream. Words in Whitby is back with its excellent lineup of guest speakers from April 2 to 4, and we've decided to offer a regular breakfast on April 10. Stay tuned to the web and the Word Weaver to find out who our speaker will be.

That's a thought that bears repeating: there's a lot going on, so keep your eyes on WCDR's communications hubs, namely the *Word Weaver* and [www.wcdr.org](http://www.wcdr.org).

## Odds & Eds

By Aprille Janes, Word Weaver Editor

Bet when you spotted the title on the lead article you thought you had the wrong newsletter. But creativity is a subject near and dear to my heart and Barbara Hunt's imaginative take on the subject just begged for a little fun. And creative license.

This Valentine's Day, my gift to you is an issue with a creative theme. Hope you find something in it to inspire you to keep on keeping on.

After all, if you don't write it, who will?

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I had quite a scare while putting together this issue of the Word Weaver. I'm relieved to get it into your hands.

Just as I was polishing the last tiny bit, trying to make it the best issue yet, my cat jumped up on my desk and a full mug of

tea rained down on my laptop.

I hollered. The cat hid. The screen went black.

Luckily, when my laptop is on my desk, I connect to a regular monitor and keyboard. The laptop lid remains closed.

A large pile of paper towels and three hours later I turned my system back on and held my breath.

I'm sure you heard my scream of joy in South Durham. But that three hour wait was tough. It had been too long since I'd backed up my files.

Needless to say, once my computer was up and running, I made sure the current Word Weaver still resided on my hard drive and then I backed up all my files. That's one chore I won't let slide again.

So my advice to one and all is, if you use

a computer, back up often. Don't wait for your cat to remind you.

And place your mug on the far side of the desk...

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The theme of the April/May issue will be

'Real Writers'.

Anne Louise Currie never thought of herself as a 'real writer' because she lives a typical suburban life, with nary a starving garret in sight. Heather Whaley will offer insight into how a songwriter struggles to be seen as a 'real writer'. And Gwynn Scheltema will wrestle with the thorny issue of when you can consider yourself a real writer.

If you'd like to give us your spin on 'Real Writers' send an e-mail query to [wordweaver@wcdr.org](mailto:wordweaver@wcdr.org).

This is your newsletter. Let's hear from you!



# The Creative Process

By Cathy Ireland

As children, our creativity was spontaneous. We couldn't help ourselves from falling down to make snow angels, gathering wildflowers for bouquets, building sandcastles hundreds of miles from the ocean or sewing doll clothes for Barbie.



Somewhere along the way, though, we forgot how to play. In doing so, our adult self shelved creativity like preserves stored up in the pantry for winter. I don't believe it was ever the intention that we allow ourselves to become non-creative. It just happens.

Life and adult responsibilities crowd out play time and our creativity is reduced to garnishing food plates and writing only in our most morose moments. Funny how it seems our creative self peeks out during difficult life transitions. I've found I have written some of my best poems then. I wonder why?

As adults we busy ourselves with doing things and accumulating things. It isn't until our health fails, or we listen to our honest heart crying out because of lack of meaning and purpose, that we realize that something is amiss. We are creative beings, made to play! Without creativity in our life, we become unbalanced and are destined to be unhappy.

Living a creative life is being involved. It's focusing outwardly and in the moment. It evokes a feeling of freedom and a sense of vital energy. People who are creative have a strong sense of independence and live life with purpose. They believe that life is important!

Non-creative types are uninvolved in life. They focus inward, are pressured by time and oppressed by circumstances. They are tired and depleted, having an unclear sense of self. They find life

arbitrary and dull and are not a lot of fun to be around.

As an adult we must learn to play again to find balance. In my Turning Sorrow Into Joy Workshop, my closing exercise invites participants to create a "joy" toolkit. This isn't hard to do at all because everyone helps build it.

In this segment of the workshop, each person is asked to share something they love doing, or they'd love to do if they gave themselves permission or opportunity to do so.

There are no wrong answers and everyone is asked to record each idea without judgment or determining whether it is something that they want to do. It's amazing to see the room come alive as each person participates and begins to give way to the sea of endless possibilities.

The very first time I ran this workshop to an audience of over 300, an elderly woman was so inspired to be creative that she asked to come up on the stage and play a song on the grand piano beside me. She did and the entire group gave her a standing ovation. What else could I say?

In 1997, while putting together my workshop on grief recovery using creative outlets, I came across Robert Fritz's book, *Creating*.

The author discloses the three parts of the creative process:

Germination - the idea to create;

Assimilation - engaging in the creative act;

Completion - celebrating the creative accomplishment.

According to Fritz, every creative act goes through this process, but is not automatic. Initially renewing the "childish" play factor requires a choice to be creative. Following that it is important to choose that one thing that you want to do. This is the germination stage in the creative process.

Depending upon what you decide to do, you may need to purchase materials, register for a class, or join an association that fosters your creative fire. This is the assimilation stage in the creative process.

Next, do whatever it is you decided to do and accomplish that special something. This is the completion stage of the creative process.

Once you have made room for this activity in your life the sheer joy of it fosters the desire for the next project and an unstoppable wheel of activity is set in motion. Creativity will spiral out, repeating itself in one activity after another, whether you are painting pictures or your walls, dancing ballet on stage or in your living room, writing articles for the *Toronto Star* or your church paper, having poetry published in an anthology or for a memorial service and writing a lullaby for your new born baby or a song for Celine Dion.

Each creative act builds and expands from wherever you start, bringing you and the lives that touch yours inspiration, meaning, enjoyment and purpose. In the end you find yourself incapable of being anything less than that which you were designed to be - creative.



*Cathy Ireland is an international public speaker, writer, songwriter and artist.*

*She also facilitates workshops and seminars utilizing creative methods to help individuals through difficult life experiences.*

## E-WordWeaver

Thanks to those who have opted to receive *The Word Weaver* by e-mail. This helps the WCDR save printing and mailing costs. If you'd like to give it a try, contact Kevin Craig to try the test PDF file (it's in full colour, folks!) and let him know you'd like your name added to the E-Word Weaver mailing list.

# Workshops Etc.

## Sunday Feb 15

Tasting the Page:  
Use of the Sensuous and the Sensual  
In Your Writing  
Gwynn Scheltema & Susan Lynn  
Reynolds  
10:30 to 4:30  
Location: TBA

## Saturday Feb. 21

Poetry Boot Camp  
Stuart Ross  
10:30 to 4:30  
Location: TBA

## Saturday, Feb. 28

Non-Fiction Workshop  
Karen Stiller  
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Location: TBA

## Saturday, Feb. 29

Textures of the Storytellers Mosaic:  
Workshops in Appreciation  
of Oral Literature  
Heather Whaley, Diane Chandler,  
Sharon Henry, George Blake,  
Micki Beck, Sher Latooze  
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Location: TBA

## Saturday, March 6

The Business of Writing  
Dorothea Helms  
Location & Times: TBA

## Saturday, March 20

It's Not What You Earn  
It's What You Keep  
Taxation Tips for Writers  
Gwynn Scheltema  
Location & Times: TBA

For More Information Check Out Our Website at [www.wcdr.org](http://www.wcdr.org)  
To Register

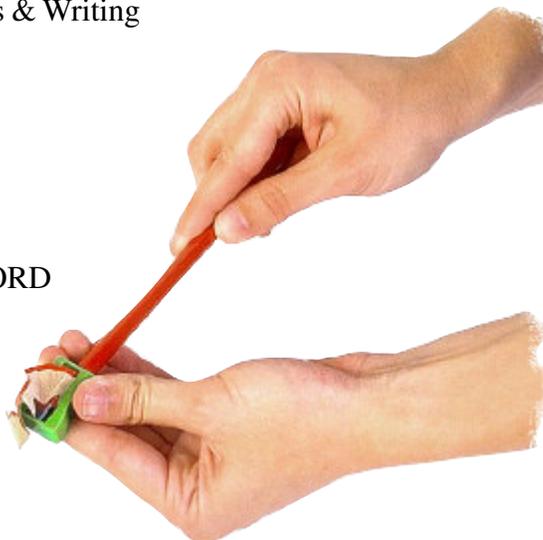
Contact [workshops@wcdr.org](mailto:workshops@wcdr.org) or Leave a Message at  
905-259-6520

## Saturday, March 27

Conducting Effective Interviews & Writing  
Inspired Leads  
Paul Lima  
10:30 to 4:30  
Location: TBA

## Two Thursdays, Mar 11 & 25

Powertools for Writers : MS WORD  
Aprille Janes  
6:30 to 8:30  
Pickering Public Library  
Computer Lab  
Maximum 10 Students



## Saturday, April 17

Writing from the Core  
Vicki Pinkerton  
10:30 to 4:30  
Location: TBA

## Saturday April 24

Healing Writing  
Martin Avery  
10:30 to 4:30  
Location: TBA

## Saturday, May 1

Conquering Corporate Markets  
Paul Lima  
10:30 to 4:30  
Location: TBA

# Grammar Puss



As far as punctuation goes, it's not the most elegant — it's not very big, it perches awkwardly in the centre of a line, and its uses are often misty. Yes, I'm talking about the misunderstood hyphen.

At its most basic level, it's useful for dividing words that are just that much too long to fit completely on one line.

But the beauty of the hyphen can only be appreciated fully when dealing with compounds: two or more words brought together by the power of that innocuous little line to represent a single idea.

As with all its punctuation peers, the hyphen exists to help us clarify our thoughts. When we create compounds, we let our readers know that those two words aren't to be taken as their customary separate entities, but as one unit, inextricable.

The most common example is probably the compound modifier, in which two (or occasionally three) adjectives or an adjective and a noun are linked together to form one new modifier with a meaning distinct from its parts: one-man band, first-class holiday, old-fashioned values. This construction only applies when the modifier comes before the noun. If, for example, one were to refer to one's son-in-law (we'll address that use in a moment) as good for nothing, one would dispense with the hyphen. If, however, one were to refer to one's good-for-nothing son-in-law, the

hyphen should come into play. Likewise, one enjoys a first-place finish if one finished in first place.

However, the dynamism of our language extends to the ubiquitous hyphen as well, so if one is going to take an inflexible stand with the hyphen, one should be prepared to defend one's self often. The hyphen's use in compound modifiers can vary from publication to publication, or even from editor to editor.

Resist the temptation to hyphenate compound modifiers in which the first word is an adverb, most commonly ending in "ly." Whether a matter is highly urgent or it is a highly urgent matter, the hyphen is unnecessary. As with all punctuation, one's goal is clarity, and since the "ly" ending alerts the reader that a modifier is coming up, we can do without it. One adverb that will stir up a tempest in almost any publishing teapot is "well." A well-educated gentleman is a construction one sees often, but GrammarPuss makes the argument that the word "well", much like the "ly" adverb ending, is enough of a tip off for one's readers. (Canadian Press Style begs to differ, and GrammarPuss must certainly respect that well-known publication. GrammarPuss would also argue that if one is in charge of editorial policy for a publication, one is free to do as one chooses, as long as one's decisions are defensible, and consistent.) Further to

the aim of clarity, hyphens used in compound modifiers often help clear muddy editorial waters. An old car collector is something entirely different from an old-car collector. The former refers to the age of the collector; the latter to the age of his cars. The same would apply to a new-home buyer, as opposed to a new home buyer.

If the meaning is immediately clear, one can do without the hyphen, as in the case of high school students or task force findings, as long as one's meaning is unmistakable.

Compound nouns make use of hyphens as well, such as light-year, or when the compound contains a hyphen: bull's-eye springs to mind.

The hyphen is certainly a jack-of-all-trades. One wants to keep it handy for words that begin with "self": self-confidence, self-esteem, self-love. And for one's vices also: vice-president, vice-chairman.

There are myriad other uses as well, but as long as we make clarity and consistency our goal, the hyphen will prove a valuable component of our writer's tool kit.

Send your grammar, punctuation and style questions to GrammarPuss at [wordweaver@wcd.org](mailto:wordweaver@wcd.org)

## March/April Challenge

Sorry, Dear Reader, but no one had a single creative tip to share with the rest of us. Obviously everyone has fallen victim to the deadly winter doldrums.

So WordWeaver scoured the web for a little something to help get your creative juices flowing and put you in the mood for the next challenge.

Surf over to [www.ivillage.com/books/expert/writecoach](http://www.ivillage.com/books/expert/writecoach) for interesting articles and writing exercises. It's an informative site and the exercises may help give you a jumpstart on spring.



Once you have your pens (or keyboards) warmed up and ready to go, try out this month's challenge.

It's been a while since we gave our poets a chance to express themselves so your assignment for the next issue of Word Weaver is to send in your 'Ode to Spring'. The challenge is that you can't use the words 'spring', 'warm', 'sunshine' or 'flower' in the body of the poem.

Show us that it's springtime, don't tell us. And help us all beat those winter blahs.

Keep your poems under 30 lines. The deadline is March 8.

# Making Her Passion Pay

by Catherine Daley

I met Ulrika shortly after she moved to Canada from Sweden. The company my husband was working for at the time recruited her husband's specialized talents, and through that association I assisted her with a few things as she settled into our culture. She thanked me with hand-sewn garments for my newborn son. They were exquisite!

On my recommendation she designed and made the dresses for an entire wedding party. Word of mouth spread and her talents were quickly recognized. We encouraged her to design and make clothes full time, but her biggest concern was to take her passion – that creative outlet that gave her the most pleasure - and turn it into a business.

I now get it, after all these years. Writing was my outlet, my bliss. It allowed me to escape and delve into my own thoughts. Over the years I was asked to write letters on behalf of friends and family members, since I seemed to have a flair for expressing a particular concern and getting favourable results. I enjoyed being an advocate for those that couldn't find their own voice.

For ten years I climbed the corporate ladder in the field of advertising and was having a difficult time fitting the role of parenthood into my career plans. A new opportunity presented itself and I decided to let fate take its course. Motherhood was quick to respond and I turned down the job. I was adamant that I would have no trouble going back to work after the miniscule three months of leave I was granted. How wrong I was.

This unexpected turn of events caused me to look at new moneymaking

options to help support our household while I stayed at home with our child. 'Bundle of Joy' was the name of my first entrepreneurial attempt. I put together gift baskets to announce the arrival of precious little bundles, like the one I now had in my possession.

We moved out of Toronto and I tried to



come up with something that would allow me to stay at home for a few more years. I was still being asked to write various pieces of promotional material, letters and proposals for people that I knew.

I placed an ad in the local paper for writing services. One woman responded and suggested that we combine our talents. For three years we took turns taking care of each other's children while each of us fulfilled our clients' requirements in our specific areas of expertise. We wrote and prepared numerous training manuals and implemented a support service for small businesses.

She moved, then I moved, and I still wasn't in any rush to return to the corporate world but needed something to enrich my creative spirit and contribute to our income. What was I going to be when I grew up?

This pressing question started to reveal itself, but I wasn't quick to respond. I was in the midst of writing a historical book on the resurrection of the house we built and was working on a fictional piece. If I pursued writing fulltime, would I be like the carpenter that built homes for other people, but could never find the time to finish his own house?

There are days when I feel I'm suffering from solitary confinement and numb bum. It's an ongoing quandary to sort out time for my own artistic fulfillment when paid assignments and deadlines take priority. Like the seamstress and the carpenter, I've taken my passion and made it my livelihood and wouldn't have it any other way.

*Over the past ten years, Catherine Daley has become a regular contributor to various local and national publications. She writes promotional material for Harrowsmith Country Life magazine, as well as PR firms and advertising agencies. Catherine is currently developing a children's writing workshop and expanding her horizons with editorial contracts.*

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## Cathie's Handy Hints for Staying Connected to Your True Passion

- ◆ Set writing dates for yourself, away from your work environment.
  - ◆ Schedule writing time in your calendar so it has the same level of importance as the paid assignments.
    - ◆ Gain the support of partners and family members to gain uninterrupted time.
      - ◆ Stay connected with others for inspiration and social interaction.
      - ◆ Make arrangements to write with friends or with a writer's group.
      - ◆ And, by all means, if you work from home don't stop to do the laundry.
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**Ingrid Ruthig** was recently awarded an Ontario Arts Council Writers' Reserve grant to complete her manuscript of poetry *Water From The Moon*. Her poetry is forthcoming in the March issue of *Books in Canada* accompanied by a piece of non-fiction she was commissioned to write.

**Dorothy Sjöholm** is pleased to announce that three of her poems were published in the latest issue of the Canadian Poetry Association's Members' anthology, *Handprints on the Future*.

**Nancy Del Col** presented a piece on First Person Singular. Her personal essay was about her first teaching experience and it aired on CBC Radio One. Nancy has also been published in *Post City Magazine*, where she is now doing a semi-regular stint as an education reporter. The magazine's January issue features Nancy's article for parents on how to read a report card.

**Graham Ducker's** poem, "Legislative Lethargy" recently appeared in the Canadian Poetry Association's Member's Anthology, *Handprints on the Future*.

# Paeans



**Ruth Walker** was delighted to start out the new year with a poem in the January issue of the US online journal, *Literary Mama*. Look for "Mothers Song" at [www.literarymama.com](http://www.literarymama.com). Ruth also has two poems in the just-released Canadian Poetry Association's Member's Anthology, *Handprints on the Future*.

**Barbara Hunt** received an acceptance from CBC Radio's First Person Singular for her piece entitled 'The Map'. She also has a poem, called 'The Matador', in the just released Canadian Poetry

Association's Member's Anthology, *Handprints on The Future*.

**Susan Lynn Reynolds** published an article on Buddhism, "Buddhism: Peace in Every Breath", in the e-zine *Timeless Spirit!* You can read her article at [www.timelessspirit.com/JAN04/sue.shtml](http://www.timelessspirit.com/JAN04/sue.shtml). Sue also had her erotic short story, 'Gargoyles in Montmartre' accepted for publication in the British anthology, *Erotic Travel Tales 3*.

**Andrea Adair-Tippins** received a contract from the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* folks. Her piece entitled 'Tasting the Moment', will run in the June publication of *Chicken Soup for the Preteen Soul 2*. Andrea's piece is a story about a first romance.

**Aprille Janes'** piece 'Yukon Odyssey' was accepted for inclusion in the women's travel anthology *Mosaic Voices: An Anthology of Women's Travel Stories*.

**February 14th**  
**Birgit Davis-Todd**

**So You Want to Write for Harlequin...!**

Executive Editor Birgit Davis-Todd will explore the myths and realities about writing for the world's largest romance fiction publisher, Harlequin Books, which is based in Toronto. She'll provide writing tips and guidelines for their current publishing programs as well as new ventures. Come find out why the romance market may be right for you.

In honor of Valentine's Day, Birgit will be raffling off a free gift basket filled with an assortment of Harlequin novels.

Birgit Davis-Todd loves romance--romance novels that is. And as an Executive Editor for many years at Harlequin Books, the world's largest romance publisher, she has read more than her share.

She is pleased to have the chance to meet local writers in Durham.

## Breakfast Info



**BREAKFAST MEETINGS RUN FROM 8:30 A.M. TO 11 A.M. AT IROQUOIS PARK SPORTS COMPLEX 50 VICTORIA ST. W. (AT HENRY STREET) IN WHITBY • MEMBERS, \$12; GUESTS, \$15**  
**IF YOU ARE NOT ON THE REGRETS-ONLY LIST, YOUR PLACE MUST BE RESERVED NO LATER THAN THE WEDNESDAY PRIOR WITH SHERRY HINMAN AT 905-259-6520 OR AT [BREAKFAST@WCDR.ORG](mailto:breakfast@wcdr.org)**

**March 13th**  
**Max Haines**

**Come to the Scene of the Crime...**

A native of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Max Haines began researching murders from around the world, past and present as a hobby. His 'Crime Flashbacks' column made its debut in *The Toronto Sun* in 1971. Since then, Max has researched over 2000 crimes. Today "Crime Flashbacks" is syndicated across Canada and in several Latin and South American countries with a total readership of over 3 million per week.

A member of Crime Writers of Canada, Mr. Haines resides in Etobicoke, Ont. with his wife Marilyn and his daughters.

In March, Max will be the guest speaker at WCDR's regular breakfast meeting. Be sure to let Sherry know you're coming. It would be a crime to miss out!

# Finding Sebastian: A Story

By Jessica Outram

Once upon a time there was a boy named Sebastian. He dreamed of becoming a writer. From the time he learned the Alphabet song, he recognized the power of letters. While other children played with blocks, Sebastian played with letters—building words and phrases and sentences—until he was writing whole stories. From lost snowflakes and found puppy dogs to ferocious dinosaurs and sleeping turtles, he wrote.

Sabastian's mother called his gift 'sunshine' because whenever Sabastian was lost in the thrill of a story, sunshine radiated out of him. He glowed. 'The sun always shines for Sabastian,' she chimed.

One day it rained. It rained so heavily that Sabastian didn't write for days. Days turned into weeks. Weeks turned into months. Sabastian, now a forty-year-old man, had a family of his own. He ached to write. At nights, after his family was asleep, he would sneak into the kitchen with his yellow pad of paper and stare at it. After an hour, he sadly put the paper away, writing nothing. For years he couldn't figure out how to recapture his sunshine.

Something drastic needed to be done. A month later, Sabastian kissed his wife on the forehead, squished his children

close to his heart, and set out on a pilgrimage to find his sunshine, using the money he had saved for a rainy day.

His first stop was London, England. When he arrived at the theatre, his heart skipped a beat. The whispers of great playwrights danced on his shoulders.

"What brings you to the Globe, love?" A woman wrapped in a turquoise shawl slipped beside him as he admired the grand stage.

"Shakespeare. You?"

"I'm not visiting, love." Her brown eyes were electric and piercing.

As she turned her lips up to smile, he knew. It was the great Dame—the most illustrious actress in London.

"Where do you find it? How can you capture magic onstage every night without fail?"

"It's all right here." She tapped her heart.

His next stop: Florence. From statues to architecture to paintings in the Uffizi, sunshine greeted him at every turn.

"How did you do it?" He whispered while relishing the glory of Michaelangelo's David. "How did you create so much? How could you hold onto your passion and vision?"

In the quiet of the gallery, the answer came to him. Diligence.

Finally, Sabastian journeyed to Greece. Sunshine blanketed him as he reread his favourite myths from the top of Mount Olympus.

"How have these stories lived for centuries?"

A scrunched flyer tumbled to his feet. 'Understand the mystery of life and humanity...' He didn't need to read further.

Returning home, Sabastian felt inspired to write. Late that night, after everyone was asleep, he tiptoed to the kitchen with his yellow pad of paper. He sat. He stared. Nothing.

Then, he looked up beyond the page. The kitchen was bathed in a most peculiar light. He saw colourful letters dancing in the orange juice on the counter, stories swimming with the goldfish on the shelf, and beautiful phrases glowing in the artwork on the fridge.

Sabastian closed his eyes and listened to the words tumbling from the sunshine in his heart. He began to write, surrounded by the most valuable treasures in his life.

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### CANADIAN AUTHORS ASSOCIATION TORONTO BRANCH

Northern District Library, Room 200  
40 Orchard View Blvd.  
(1 Block North of Yonge & Eglinton)  
Visit [www.tacob.org](http://www.tacob.org) for details.

**Thursday February 19, 2004, 7 p.m.**

Featured speaker, Priscila Uppal, is a Toronto fiction writer and poet, and also Professor of Humanities at York University.

Free for CAA, PWAC members  
General Public - \$5 suggested donation.

**Saturday, February 28, 10.00 am 3.30 pm**

Workshop by Edward OConnor  
Self-Editing for Writers.  
Registration 9.30.

Cost not including lunch is \$55 (\$35 for members of the CAA and PWAC).

To pre-register or for information, please e-mail:  
[caa\\_workshops@yahoo.com](mailto:caa_workshops@yahoo.com).

### PERIODICAL WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

#### Jam 4 Justice

Date: Friday, February 20, 2004; 7 pm  
Place: Only in Paradise Café, Toronto  
360 Queen St. E. (Queen E. & Parliament)  
Price: \$10 at the door

Writers Support Writers Rights & Robertson  
Electronic Copyright Class Action Lawsuit

Want to see your fellow scribes play rock star for an evening to support writers' rights? If so, swing on by the "Only in Paradise Café" on Friday, February 20, 2004, as the Periodical Writers Association of Canada (PWAC) presents a night of song and celebration in support of electronic rights.

Jam 4 Justice Web page:  
<http://www.jam.pwactoronto.org>.



# WORDS IN WHITBY CELEBRATES

By Andrea Adair-Tippins



Words in Whitby is celebrating their fifth anniversary in the style we have come to expect – cutting-edge authors, rising stars and a couple of best sellers thrown into the mix. Add in two knowledgeable and engaging hosts, Ted Barris and Neil Crone, an elegant location, and you know what you will be doing on April 2, 3 and 4.

Returning to the newly renovated and completely wheelchair-accessible Centennial Building, this gem of a series is loaded with excitement.

The line-up features some of the most interesting writers in Canada today. Award-winning author Wayson Choy, is sure to delight readers and writers alike. His first novel, *The Jade Peony*, spent 26 weeks on the *Globe & Mail's* bestseller list, won the Trillium Book Award and was awarded the American Library Association Notable Book of the Year. The highly anticipated sequel, *All That Matters*, will be published this summer.

Hold onto your seats Saturday morning as SciFi's hottest rising star Nalo Hopkinson reads from her latest novel, *The Salt Roads*. Spider Robinson calls her *Midnight Robber* "One of those books it's almost impossible NOT to read aloud to loved ones... because it's so damn musical and such an engaging story."

Expect Rosemary Sullivan to generate some excitement on her own. The author of *Labyrinth of Desire: Women, Passion and Romantic Obsession* and *Shadow Maker: The Life of Gwendolyn MacEwen*, Sullivan is a professor at The University of Toronto. She is sure to be unforgettable.

WCDR members Ted Barris and D'Arcy Jenish will be sharing their writing secrets in a joint interview session. Barris' most recent book, *JUNO, Canadians at D-Day, June 6, 1944* will be released this month while Jenish's latest, *Epic Wanderer: David Thompson and the Mapping of the Canadian West* is a hot item in bookstores across Canada.

Our Saturday luncheon guest will have you in stitches (or maybe staples!) Canada's very own tool girl, Mag Ruffman, beloved for her "Olivia" role in

down." Her latest novel, *Lost*, chronicles the disappearance of a young actress and the turmoil this causes her mother.

And our children's authors promise to thrill parents and children alike on Sunday afternoon. Loris Lesynski (*Nothing Beats a Pizza*) is a rollicking rhymer who will have you tapping your toes to the beat. And award-winning author Eric Walters (*Camp X, Run*) reads to Standing Room Only audiences wherever he goes.

As of press time, organizers were still finalizing acceptances but with writers these diverse and gifted, you can be sure the final slate of guests will make for yet another memorable weekend of words.

The Regal Room at the Centennial Building will seat a maximum of 110 for the gala luncheon. To make sure that this popular highlight is available to as many series attendees as possible, luncheon tickets will be available through the purchase of either the entire series package (excluding the children's program) at a cost of \$78, or through the Saturday-only package for \$60. Individual session tickets for the readings on Saturday will continue to be available at \$20 each, the Friday session will be available for \$25 and the children's series on Sunday remains a family bargain at \$5 each.

Tickets will be available at the February and March breakfast meetings and at all branches of the Whitby Public Library.



*The Road to Avonlea*, started wielding power tools on TV's *A Repair to Remember*. Now, Ruffman has a column with the *Toronto Star* along with a newly released book *How Hard Can It Be? Adventures of the Tool Girl*, and a new series, "Anything I Can Do" on Global's Prime network and PBS.

The wows don't stop there though. New York Times best-selling Canadian author Joy Fielding is bringing her own excitement to the Words in Whitby stage. Dividing her time between Toronto and Florida, Fielding writes books that Chapters says are "Deftly written, chilling, they are also impossible to put





# Writers' Circles

To join one of the circles below, please call the contact person indicated. Group leaders, please notify *The Word Weaver* editor of changes to times or locations.

## Christians Who Write

The second Saturday of each month  
after the breakfast meeting  
Call for location  
*Caroline Davidson*  
905-683-4854

## Circle for Children's Writers

First Wednesday of each month  
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Oshawa Public Library  
Northview Branch  
250 Beatrice St. E., Oshawa  
*Mike Ward*  
wardswords@hotmail.com

## Durham Write-On

Tuesdays, every other week  
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Call for location  
*Cynthia Green*  
cynwriter@rogers.com

## Markham Village Writers' Group

Monthly  
*Donna Marrin*  
donna.marrin@staples.ca

## Newcastle Poetry Club

Third Monday of each month  
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Call for Location  
*Philippa Schmiegelow*, 905-982-1012

## Northword Edition

Tuesdays, every two weeks  
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Uxbridge Public Library  
*Dorothea Helms*, 905-852-9294

## Oshawa Scribes

First and third Tuesday of each month  
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Oshawa Library, Northview Branch  
250 Beatrice St. E., Oshawa  
*Grace Stevenson*, 905-725-0760

## Richard Ferrier Writers' Group

*Formerly Volume Two*  
Third Tuesday of each month  
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
History Room at Pickering Central  
Library  
*Tina Ivany*, 905-427-1270  
or *tdivany@sympatico.ca*  
*Ron Dixon*, 416-284-5673  
or *retro@pathcom.com*

## Senior Scribes of Uxbridge

Second and fourth Friday of each  
month  
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Township Hall, Uxbridge  
*Joyce Whitney*, 905-852-3414

## Word Players

Every second Tuesday  
7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.  
Oshawa Public Library, Northview  
Branch  
*Mike Ward*, wardswords@hotmail.com

## Write in Whitby

Second and fourth Tuesday of each  
month  
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Whitby Public Library  
*Lloyd Blair*, 905-430-0075

## Write Now

*A group for on-the-spot writing*  
Every second Thursday  
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Uxbridge Public Library  
*Vicki Pinkerton*, 905-473-1284

## Writers' and Editors' Network

*Breakfast meeting*  
Third Saturday of each month  
9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
Canadiana Restaurant and Banquet  
Hall  
5230 Dundas St. W.  
Six Points Plaza  
Toronto  
*Mickey Turnbull*  
905-824-5035  
or *mickeytc@ica.net*



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 14  
**Breakfast**  
**Birgit Davis-Todd**  
Harlequin Editor

February 15  
**Workshop**  
**Tasting the Page**  
Scheltema/Reynolds

February 21  
**Workshop**  
**Poetry Bootcamp**  
Stuart Ross

March 6  
**Workshop**  
**Business of Writing**  
Dorothea Helms

March 11/25  
**Workshop**  
**Powertools:MS Word**  
Aprille Janes

March 13  
**Breakfast**  
**Max Haines**

March 25  
**Workshop**  
**Taxation Tips for Writers**  
Gwynn Scheltema

March 27  
**Workshop**  
**Interviews & Leads**  
Paul Lima

April 17  
**Workshop**  
**Writing from the Core**  
Vicki Pinkerton



FOR WORKSHOP INFORMATION, CONTACT SUE REYNOLDS AT [WORKSHOPS@WCDR.ORG](mailto:WORKSHOPS@WCDR.ORG)  
TO REGISTER FOR BREAKFAST MEETINGS, CONTACT SHERRY HINMAN AT [BREAKFAST@WCDR.ORG](mailto:BREAKFAST@WCDR.ORG)

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### Famous Last Words

*The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be ignited.*

Plutarch