



The WORD WEAVER

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A newsletter for writers and editors
produced by
The Writers’ Circle of Durham Region
May/June 2007 Vol 13 No. 3

Panning for Voice of the Heart

By Gregory M. Cook

Flying [further] north of Air Canada, mountains and rivers unfold their lonely story in hieroglyphics of transportation tracks, communication lines, and prospectors’ scratches. Air North takes you from Whitehorse to Dawson City on its route to Inuvik—above the Arctic Circle.

Descent to Dawson reveals herringbone patterns of stone larger than your fist in tailings the size of skating rinks. These are deposits of recent gold extracting from leavings of previous generations since 1898. Then Dawson was a Yukon moose swamp of nearly 40,000 gold panners and hangers-on. Fleeing the world’s “Long Depression,” they created the Klondike Gold Rush.

Today’s population of 2,000 is dwindling toward 1,200 when I arrive in October 2006. Most of the yearly 60,000 tourists have left, the earth tilts away from the sun, frost arrests mining, and many year-round residents are “out-bound”—to shop, visit southern family and friends, or holiday in Mexico and Hawaii.

I am the 34th guest in 10 years to resident in Berton House Writers’ Retreat—thanks to its namesake Society. Thanks as well to The Canada Council for the Arts, The Yukon Arts Council, and, not least of all, the late Pierre Berton and his family.

Had I come here panning for poems I would tell you more about how frost, gold prices, fire, and floods make the buildings walk—on the spot, across town, and through the centuries and heritage law—to remain almost more like the past than they were; how the talking raven dances with mating dogs; how art is installed in the bush and bars; how frozen boardwalks speak lines of poems wanting writing; how regiments of trees stand to attention, ghostly in hoarfrost and thaw-stripped overnight; how

solar flares paint 360 degrees of night sky here—where earth spins, at the top of the world.

Had I come here as journalist, I would pan more architecture—how homes and commercial buildings still standing were constructed of lumber from derelict river boats or sided with recycled beef tins; how the simple style in Jack London’s and Robert Service’s log cabins has been sophisticated for modern homes of physicians, nurses, teachers and successful miners.

I would show you signage of the sense of humour in a land used to exploitation and abandonment, a land of winter darkness and summer midnight sun, like: “Cowboy Parking Only / Violators Will Be Castrated,” or “Free Ride / In a Police Car / For Theft or Break-in or Damage,” or “Manic Depressive Tours.”

A native fish camp before the gold rush, Dawson’s three economic engines are now government, tourism and gold mining. Recently 11 of 14 Yukon First Nations undertook self-government. Their land claims settled, first nations are entrepreneurs integrated in Dawson, where the “Community Library” is attached to the school. Dawson’s newspaper is run by a not-for-profit literary society.

In Dawson City, time is collapsed into an eternal frontier. At the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike rivers, wedged between Alaska and The Northwest Territories, and just under the tundra meeting the tree line, weather and wildlife are the day’s determinant. The leading issue of environment is a matter of daily experience.

Were I a historian, I’d read the house library of Pierre’s 60 books and their many complements; tell you about the junior high school history fair featuring adolescents costumed as long-dead explorers, writers, and Klondike Kate—as well as a native boy representing his grandmother, who cures hides and does moc-

casin beadwork that might be among the finest in the world.

If I were writing fiction, the people who opened their homes and minds to me, toured me toward Alaska and the Arctic Circle, and up Bonanza Creek—as well as the eccentrics, like Dawson’s “Caveman”—they’d all have a place in my book.

Under the working title “Voice of the Heart,” I retreated to Berton House to write a biography of the shy, reclusive Nova Scotian, Ernest Buckler (1908-1984), author of the classic novel, *The Mountain and the Valley* (1952). His major career breakthrough occurred while Pierre Berton was an editor at *Maclean’s* in 1948, when Ernest won the magazine’s \$1000 fiction prize. Ernest later wrote to Pierre: “I know you’ll be glad to hear that Henry Holt and Company have just accepted my novel, for publication next fall.” (January 17, 1952). Ernest expressed gratitude for Pierre’s and the magazine’s assistance during the “long years I was carrying it.” [The novel].

I am writing these few words to express my gratitude to the Berton family and all those individuals and institutions responsible for the opportunity to complete 50,000 more words towards Ernest’s biography—and for the magical experience of being mirrored in the land-and-commune-scape of the Yukon.

If you qualify, consider applying for a retreat to Berton House. See:

www.bertonhouse.ca.

Gregory M. Cook’s latest books are: *Alden Nowlan: Essays on His Works* (Guernica), *Songs of the Wounded: new and selected poems* (Black Moss), *One Heart, One Way. Alden Nowlan: a writer’s life*, (Pottersfield). Cook lives in Saint John, New Brunswick.

A Message from THE BOARD

By Sherry Hinman

As I put fingers to keyboard on my last Message from the Board as president of this wonderful organization, I'm feeling a little melancholy about the whole thing. I've had the supreme privilege of sitting in the president's chair, swivelling around in that great, black, leather thing, still warm from the "seats" of presidents past Marge Green, Ruth Walker, Aprille Janes, Lynda Allison and Annette MacLeod. As you may imagine, swinging around like that can be humbling, but it can also be a lot of fun.

These are interesting times. As I write this, we are preparing for the last stage of our strategic planning process. In our first session at the end of February, we revisited our mission, a statement that reminds us why we do what we do. We've tweaked the wording, but didn't want to finalize it until we'd heard from you.

And hear from you we did! One of our other activities during our first session was to devise a survey that would take us to the heart of that mission, to help us understand where you, our

members, would like the board to take the organization over the next few years. We had an overwhelming response to the survey—nearly 50 per cent of you wrote back. Most of you said, "Bravo—we like what you're doing!"

But fortunately you didn't stop there. You also gave us direction on how to improve, how to incorporate positive change and keep growing the organization while holding on to those elements that form our foundation. Your feedback was rich in detail and we are thrilled to be able to use it as one of the main ingredients in the next stage, a full day of planning on April 22nd, which will have already taken place by the time you read this.

We will be summarizing the outcome of the survey as well as the strategic planning process, and will provide you with this information as soon as it is complete. We will also be incorporating the goals and objectives we set as part of the process into our regular monthly meetings, so that they will be discussed and updated on a monthly basis, and the hard work that went into them will not be lost.

As I pass the baton to the next runner, I'm looking forward to my next year on the board as past president. One of my responsibilities will be to chair the WCDR Ontario Writers' Conference, which will take place in May, 2008. Details are starting to come together, and

the organizing committee will be presenting a preliminary budget to the board in the next few weeks. Stay tuned for details.

One last note, I strongly encourage you to consider running for the board. I would not be exaggerating to say that the experience has changed my life. I have learned so much about writing, about team dynamics, and about how such very different people can come together to work successfully toward a common goal. I've also made friendships with people I hope to hold dear for the rest of my life.

Always remember, we are a volunteer-run organization—volunteers are truly the lifeblood of WCDR. It's just us—you and me. Members run the activities; members sit on the board; members run the whole darn thing. If I've convinced you, let us know by the deadline, May 19th. Contact Brian Baker at: secretary@wcdr.org for further details.

Thank you for the privilege. I'm just going to take one last twirl around in the president's chair and then I'll get up and make room for the next person. It's been a blast.

Sherry Hinman, President, WCDR



Odds & Eds

By Deborah A. Rankine,
Word Weaver Editor

The day was brilliant, the air warm with perfumed notes of citrus that flowed harmoniously on Mid Atlas breezes. My early morning arrival "postcard perfect" until I landed inside Fez's Saïss Airport terminal.

The Moroccan official scanned my customs declaration. "Chef?" she queried.

She eyed me, and then scrutinized my Canadian passport. Excerpts from *Rough Guide to Morocco* played in my head. "Yes," said I, timidly.

"Chef de Cuisine!" she proclaimed firmly.

I summoned up my best foreign accent, "Oui," I declared, this time a little louder.

"SSalamn 'lekum," she smiled.

"Pardon?" I asked, forgetting my limited French-as-a-second-language.

"Peace be upon you."

I returned her smile. "And upon you."

And with that, she stamped my passport and allowed me entry into the gastronomic capital of the universe where even the most humble of cooks are honoured and revered.

Within 15 minutes I was transported to my version of Mecca, Riad Ibn Battouta, located in the Batha region on the periphery of Fez el-Bali. The riad—named after Mococco's "voyager of Islam"—was my jumping off point, a five-minute walk to Bab Boujloud and my gateway into the culinary wonderland that is the oldest part of this ancient medina; my portal to a cornucopia of neighbourhood souks offering an artist's pallet of fruits, nuts, poultry, meat, dairy and pastries, to name but a few.

Acknowledging my incredible lack of direction, I commissioned Ahmed Cohen—a government-certified guide—to take me down into the medina for the day. In Ahmed's affable care, I perused hundreds of vendors' stalls and rested for a while to enjoy the age-old mint tea ritual at the carpet, textile and pottery souks along the way. We lunched at Restaurant Najjarine, a popular Fassi eatery replete with floor-to-ceiling zellij mosaics (a complex mathematical geometry of tile work of which there are more than 360 shapes), intricate hand carved plaster archways, cedar scented panels inlaid with marquetry of lemonwood and mother-of-pearl, and an enormous canopy of black and white gathered fabric that filtered the daylight and protected diners from the outside elements. I feasted on several tapas-style plates of cooked and raw salads—their juices mopped with wedges of "khubz" (a dense bread made from whole meal flour with a crunchy cornmeal top), a tajine of steamed couscous, braised root vegetables and tender-crisp chickpeas and, of course, mint tea served

with a dessert course of just picked seasonal fruits.

Satiated beyond my waistline, we continued our sojourn.

Next we entered the leather district to lay witness to the back breaking work of the men in the tanneries—a time-honoured trade proudly passed from father to son—fingering fine tooled leather purses, belts and jackets, and donning "babouches" (traditional pointed slippers that are still the most common footwear worn by Moroccan men and women, albeit the vibrantly coloured and decorated ones are reserved for the people of the female persuasion). At the copper souks I discovered lavishly hand-hammered, etched and embossed cooking vessels, some so immense they are "rented out" for wedding and circumcision celebrations. We ended our day, Ahmed and I, back at Riad Ibn Battouta, sipping mint tea and exchanging business cards and cellphone numbers.

At first I thought my odyssey to Fez-el-Bali was to (finally) meet and cook with world renowned Berber chef Lahcen Beqqi at his cooking school at Riad Tafilalet. I soon discovered, however, that one cannot embrace the gastronomic delights of this city, this country, this continent, without encompassing the richness of...

Now it's your turn. Check out page seven to find out what your next "themed" writing challenge is!

Breakfast Reloaded

By Fred Ford

I have good news and bad news. The bad news is that flu caused me to miss the March breakfast. The good news is my fabulous network of spies kept me informed.

Heather O'Connor read from her fantasy novel *Twice a Ghost*. Everyone praised the details that let her audience know that we weren't here and we weren't now. The setting was vaguely medieval, but not our middle ages. Into the midst of this world a stranger arrives. By using taut dialogue and concise telling descriptions, Heather immersed the room in an atmosphere of mystery and strangeness. She read with confidence, and soon held the audience in the palm of her hand: so much so that when she stopped reading, the reaction was "Wow!" mingled with "But you can't stop there!" I wish I'd been there, and I'm buying the book when it comes out.

Our speaker was **James Gillam**. He had a rough childhood—the smallest kid in his class—and decided to become a child therapist. He first wrote a book about space for kids, but learned there's a huge population of elementary school-age boys who don't read. His brilliant idea? Rather than write a story that interested him and try to market it, he approached teachers and the school board, asking them what was needed to get boys reading. Then he wrote the books.

The books are designed to interest boys: very short chapters, each ending with a cliff hanger, not much description, lots of dialogue and several plot lines at once. Each is more complicated

than the last, so he moves up with his readers. Although he wrote the books for boys, girls love them too.

James started in the Stoney Creek area, but now he's expand-

ing across the country. While these books are a fabulous idea—getting boys to read is a noble cause—it is also a great business plan. James sets an example that should inspire every one of us who finds the traditional path to publication strewn with thorns.

Right now he has more interest in his products than he can fill, but he's moving ahead at a rate that makes sense for him. Fortunately he has found that rarest of commodities: a supportive publisher. Well, the publisher probably went home very happy, since they sold out of books after the talk. Both of them were stunned by the group's response. Now, why am I not surprised?

For April we had a vaudeville act. **Jessica Outram** presented a scene from *Once Upon a Rocking Chair*, a play about strained family relationships. Since Jessica didn't want to be speaking to herself, she was joined by co-star **Ruth Walker**. Jessica played the young single woman who laments that fairy-tale endings don't work out, and no one should try to impose one on her. Ruth played the single-minded mother who is determined to protect her daughter from being single, and [keeping her] from being a fully-realized individual. There were plenty of laughs as they battled over the "happily ever after" that never comes. More than one person around me remarked, "this sounds very familiar." Ironically, Ruth had to leave the breakfast early for her daughter's wedding dress fitting!

Our speaker was **Catherine Graham** who has published two collections of poetry, teaches creative writing, and is also

writer-in-residence at several institutions. Despite these formidable qualifications, Catherine's speech "Comfort Zones in Creativity: My Personal Journey" was personable, intimate and insightful. Catherine defined a comfort zone as "conditioning resulting in artificially created mental boundaries, within which an individual derives a sense of security."

As a child, Catherine was painfully shy. Her comfort zone at school was the red brick wall in the playground where she stood, observing the other children, but never participating. She did not speak, but her wall of silence provided a space where imagination and creativity flourished.

The death of her parents during her university years shattered her comfort zone. Encased in grief, she kept a journal where her writing blossomed: images and rhythms evolved into the poems that formed her first collection, *The Watch*. Positive things arose from the fragments of her shattered comfort zone.

She then willingly stepped out of her comfort zone to write about dolls. These poems became her second collection, *Pupa*. As she told the story of her life: the comfort zones that nourished her, and the times she left them behind, Catherine read from her poems. These illustrations in verse were both apt and moving. Now Catherine's taking singing lessons. Wildly outside her comfort zone!

For those of us who have ever had our creativity derailed by life's events, Catherine's story provided a chance to rethink where we need to be within ourselves, and how picking up impossibly broken pieces can lead to newer and greater achievements.



The Ontario Ministry of Culture is very interested in supporting artists in the early and growth stages of business. Artists starting or growing their businesses have many of the same needs as other small businesses. In some cases, however, they require additional information (such as dealing with cultural grants, accessing tax credits, etc.) or may believe they require information to be delivered to them in different ways. Additionally, artists may not access information from the same sources as other small businesses and may need targeted marketing to attract them to the Business Advisory Centre Durham (BACD) for assistance. The Ministry believes that the best way to encourage stability and growth in small cultural businesses is to encourage them to access the business services already being delivered by BACD, and to assist BACD in delivering artist-specific training.

If you are interested in learning more, or you have suitable candidates who may benefit from this type of initiative, kindly contact me directly, as soon as possible. The target group includes artists (painters, sculptors, etc.), artisans (potters, knitters, etc.), writers, television/film producers, and others.

Regards,
Carol Ann Walker
Executive Director

Business Advisory Centre Durham
50 Richmond Street East . Suite 9 .
Oshawa, ON . L1G 7C7
PH: 905.438.4008 X234 .
1.866.632.5151 . FX: 905.438.4009

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www.wcdr.org— New! New! New and Improved!

By **Sherry Hinman**

Have you visited the new website? Last October, WCDR launched its new website. We interviewed webmaster and WCDR board member Rich Helms to get the story behind the new site.

Sherry Hinman: Why did you decide to redesign the website?

Rich Helms: I wanted to present a fresh, professional look and to make it easier to find things. I needed to clean up the site and centralize links to web groups, people and resources. The old site was very easy to navigate but limited in its growth capabilities. I had started to use WordPress for other things and was so impressed by what you could do. It just makes things easier and more searchable for general users.

SH: I have to ask—why a blog site?

RH: Blogs give you a way to add information. They're made up of pages, posts, links and categories. Blogs also support multiple people on the same site. So board members can each maintain their own section. While the WCDR website is not a blog, many of the characteristics of a blog could be used on our site such as searchability and having multiple people working on the site.

SH: What are some of the improvements of the new site over the old one?

RH: One of the benefits is that it's searchable. If you enter a word such as "workshops" in the Search window, you'll get all the posts related to workshops. Also, all the buttons help you find the topic more quickly.

SH: Do you have any hints for visitors on how to navigate the new site?

RH: The left menu is the whole thing. When you go onto the home page, there's a list of all the categories and then events listed at the bottom. On the main part of the page, there's an introduction and a table of contents to tell you where to get the information you're looking for.

SH: How long did it take you to transfer all the information over from the old site?

RH: About 40 hours. But it's starting to pay off for me. It's easier to administer. Since converting I have also put in many hours to tune and enhance the site.

SH: Tell me about the Links pages.

RH: This is one of the best parts of our site. The site has about 140 working links now. If you click on Links, you'll see this page divided into sections: Books for Sale, Links to WCDR Members, Magazines/Journals, Web Resources, Writing Fun Sites, Writing Organizations, and Sites for Young Writers. If you "float" your cursor over the link you're interested in, you'll get a description of each one. Members can suggest new links to add. They should let me know if there are any dead links. I've "scrubbed" the old list but there could still be dead ones any time.

SH: The new site is amazing. What kind of feedback have you been getting?

RH: I've had a lot of suggestions on improving usability. Some have said they had trouble finding something. So I've made some changes because of their suggestions.

SH: How much traffic does the website get?

RH: Take today as an example. So far we've had about 78 visits, and that includes about 150 pages.

SH: Where are the visits from?

RH: We're all over the world: across the U.S. and Canada, the U.K., Jakarta, Shanghai, Australia... We have better tracking now. We use Google Analytics, which is a powerful tracking system. I can find out how they entered the site (direct or from which other site) and much more, including whether the visitors are new or returning.

SH: What is the future of the site? Will there be an interactive portion, that is, will people be able to take advantage of the blog structure and enter comments?

RH: We definitely have that capability but, unfortunately, we can't do it yet because of the spammers. We get approximately 100 spam messages per day on the site. No matter what I do, they figure out ways to get in. We're trying to work this problem out but, until then, we can't open up the site. In the future, I hope to set up the site so that only registered users (members) can add comments.

Also, I saw this as a way to move the website into whole new areas like meeting rooms, comments, group pages and such. One of the keys is building a strong foundation and that is where we are right now. Building that foundation.

SH: Thank you Rich. Your work has helped take WCDR even further into a strong, dynamic, internationally-recognized organization.



WCDR's webmaster extraordinaire,
Rich Helms

Creativity often consists of merely turning up what is already there.

Did you know that right and left shoes were thought up only a little more than a century ago?

—Bernice Fitz-Gibbon—



SONGS
OF THE
WOUNDED

new and selected poems

Gregory M. Cook

Songs of the Wounded: new and selected poems

By **Gregory M. Cook**

Black Moss Press, 2004.
ISBN 0-88753-389-2

"As he will tell you, in a way all poems become love poems, and art, like love, is an act of faith. If that is the case, this book transcends the ordinary and takes us into the extraordinary experience of being alive."

—*Black Moss Press*

"Always, a poignant, elegiac tone haunts these lyrics, whether Cook speaks of love, or nature, or family. Any risk of sentimentality is cut by his usage of hard particulars."

—George Elliot Clarke, (Halifax) *Sunday Herald*, November 2004.

One Heart, One Way. Alden Nowlan: A Writer's Life

By **Gregory M. Cook**

Pottersfield Press, 2003.
ISBN 1-895900-59-X.

Finalist for the 2004 Atlantic Independent Booksellers' Choice Award
and 2004 The Dartmouth Book Award (Non- Fiction).

"Cook can claim to have written the definitive biography... [he] has compiled an authoritative life."

—Shane Nielson, *The Fiddlehead*, Autumn 2005.

"Essential reading for anyone interested in Canadian literature."

—Jeanette Lynes, *Sunday Herald*, January, 2004.

"A profound and truly innovative study, full of grace and passion."

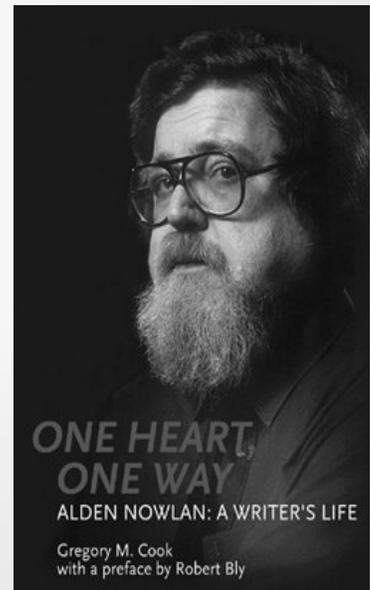
—George Fetherling, *Vancouver Sun*, January, 2004.

"Mr. Cook has written a compelling biography of a great man who he knew and loved."

—David Adams Richards, book jacket

"Greg Cook has given us a book full of detail, full of letters, poems and stories,
and free of judgment. We can make up our own minds."

—Robert Bly, Preface, *One Heart, One Way. Alden Nowlan: A Writer's Life*



—Advertisement—

Breakfast info...

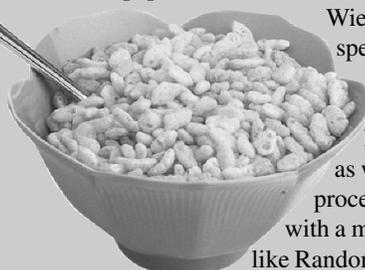
May 12th... Adrian Michael Kelly

Professor **Adrian Michael Kelly**, in addition to his short stories and articles which have appeared in various Canadian periodicals, is the author of ***Down Sterling Road***—a novel. Having taught worldwide since 1995, Kelly presently teaches at Trent University.

This morning Kelly will be sharing from his vast experience within writing retreats such as Sage Hill as well as his own writing life.

June 9th... Robert J. Wiersema

Robert J. Wiersema is a bookseller and reviewer who contributes regularly to *the Vancouver Sun*, *the Globe and Mail*, *the Ottawa Citizen*, and numerous other newspapers. Wiersema is also the event co-ordinator for Bolen Books. He lives in Victoria, BC, and is riding high on the success of his debut novel, ***Before I Wake***, soon to be released in paperback.



Wiersema will be speaking to the challenges and pleasures of his writing life as well as the process of working with a major publisher like Random House.

Breakfast is held from 8:30 to 11 a.m. at the Sports Garden Café in the Iroquois Park Sports Centre. (Victoria and Henry Streets in Whitby).

The cost is \$13 for WCDR members; \$16 for guests.

To confirm your space, please leave a message at **905-686-0211** or respond by e-mail to **breakfast2006@wcdr.org**, by no later than noon on the Thursday before the next breakfast meeting.

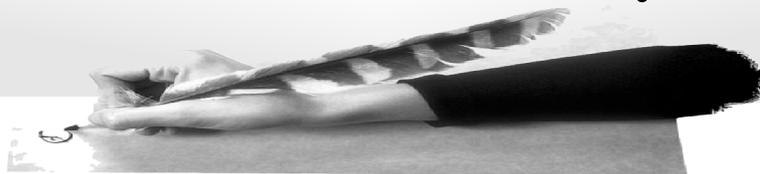
You can help shorten the lines at breakfast by:

Paying ahead by *PayPal*. Go to **www.wcdr.org**, click on Breakfast Meetings and About Breakfast. Then scroll down to *PayPal* payment.

Or, by bringing the exact change (if paying by cash).

Hope to see you there!

May/June “Themed” Writing Challenge Submissions National Celebration Day!



National Pay It Forward Day

By Janet Boccone

What if there was a day dedicated to giving?

Unlike Thanksgiving, this day wouldn't be about giving thanks, but giving people something to be thankful for.

We would celebrate “National Pay It Forward Day” on a sunny day in June and watch as our good deeds—our random acts of kindness—blossomed for months to come.

Although the concept of paying it forward has been around for years, its popularity has just recently started to skyrocket. You may have heard the phrase a few years back when Catherine Ryan Hyde's novel, *Pay It Forward*, was turned into a movie, but the phrase itself was originally discovered in a letter written by Benjamin Franklin in 1784.

So what does it mean to pay it forward? Well, simply put, pay it forward or *paying* it forward refers to repaying the good deeds one has received by doing good things for other unrelated people.

In Catherine Ryan Hyde's book, she describes paying it forward as an obligation to do three good deeds for others in repayment of a good deed that one has received. These good deeds should be things that one cannot accomplish on one's own. If it sounds a little complicated, then think again. It's like Christmas without the commercialism. Giving for the pure joy of making someone's life a little happier is not only addictive, but also so much easier than one might think.

As a national observation day, “National Pay It Forward Day” could take the dreams and goals of The Pay It Forward Foundation and make them a reality. Committed to bringing the idea of paying it forward to school-aged children, parents and educators, The Pay It Forward Foundation promotes the simple idea that doing good deeds for others to repay the good that has happened to you is an ideal way to teach our children—our fu-

ture—to be socially aware and take a role in improving the world in which we live.

Last October, Oprah Winfrey challenged all 300 members of her audience to come up with inspiring and creative ways to help others. Each guest was given \$1,000 and a camcorder to record how they were able to pay it forward. The rules of the challenge were very specific: the money had to be spent within one week and could only be used to help charitable organizations or an individual person, but not a relative. From helping terminal cancer patients to saving a battered women's shelter, Oprah's viewers changed the lives of those they touched and amazed themselves in the process.

Of course, you don't need to spend a lot of money to make a difference in someone's life; “National Pay It Forward Day” wouldn't be about writing a cheque to your favourite charity. Instead, this day would be dedicated to stepping outside our own world and thinking about others. And by observing this day each year, we would be showing our children the power they have to affect change.

Whether you want to pay for the coffee of the person behind you in the Tim Horton's drive-thru line, buy lunch for a homeless person, prepare food for the elderly or volunteer your time in a local shelter, by paying it forward, the need to help each other will spread exponentially through society and create a social movement with the sole purpose of making the world a better place.

And if that's not a perfect reason to declare a “National Pay It Forward Day,” then I don't know what is.

Janet Boccone runs Second Glance Writing Services from her home in Pickering, Ontario. She has spent the past seven months as WCDR's breakfast co-ordinator and is excited to be on the organizing committee for the 2008 Ontario Writers' Conference. Her parenting blog “Kidding Around” appears on www.durhamregion.com.

National “Eh” Day

By Susan Statham

The baby boomers of Canada have declared February 16th National “Eh” Day. Following Flag

Day, Eh Day is meant to continue and enhance Canadian pride and for those born between the years 1946 and 1962 Eh Day celebrates a country coming into its own. Many boomers grew up at a time when their native soil suffered from both an inferiority complex and an identity crisis. Sandwiched between Mother England and their powerhouse neighbour, the United States, Canada was like an angst-filled teenager, envious of the lifestyles of the rich and famous and embarrassed by the family's meagre resources. But that was then and this is now and it's time for Canada to enjoy its Eh Day!

Although “Eh” Day arose from the inherent politeness of Canadians, it also acknowledges that they have risen above their feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt. Eh Day rejoices in a Canadian sense of pride.

Almost as versatile as the people it represents, “eh” can be added to a declarative sentence and may or may not turn it into a question. It is used to ensure the comprehension of one's listener, to verify continued interest and/or to call for his or her agreement. With variations in tone it may be soothing, “You'll feel better soon, eh,” or threatening, “Get over here, eh!” A suggestion for the elementary report card

could see the demoralizing “F” replaced by the encouraging “Eh?”

A Northern people buffeted by the cold and snow, Canadians have a special need to be understood and a sincere desire to encourage reciprocity in conversation. “Eh” Day recognizes the importance of convivial dialogue and the valuable role ‘Eh’ has in receiving a supportive response.

When travelling, Canadians frequently display their maple leaf. It can be worn as a lapel pin or as a crest on a backpack but with or without this emblem, a Canadian need only engage in conversation to make his or her identity known. One word sets them apart and invariably results in the statement, “You're a Canadian.”

So if you're living in the True North Strong and Free this February 16th, don your Scarlet Eh, grab a favourite toque, and get on down to the local rink where you can support your Eh team. A tradition before each game is the singing of Take the Eh Train. Written in the early part of the century, it is a ballad that celebrates the building of the National Railway, especially the year 1885 when the last spike united one of the largest countries on the planet. Cool, eh?

As an artist and writer, **Susan Statham** has written and illustrated children's stories and a mystery novel. President of the Cobourg Art Club, she often pens poems for her pictures. Recently asked to develop a program for the Cobourg Public Library, Susan created the writing course, Word Play.

Spanish Proverb: **Tomorrow is often the busiest day of the week.**

National Sock Day

By Cheryl Jack

During a Sunday testimonial, Marnie Madden, a dedicated member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Martinfield, British Columbia, let it slip that years of frustration, which neither prayer nor praise had been able to relieve, was taking its toll.

An audible gasp filled the sanctuary.

Raising herself to her full four-feet-ten on tiptoe behind the pulpit, Marnie continued, "Where have all the socks gone? Twenty years of marriage and four children and a basket filled with unmatched socks. What have I done to deserve this?"

The members of Emmanuel are an astute group dedicated to environmental issues, equality and poverty. A moment of edgy silence and then Reginald Argyle leapt from his seat, shouting, "I've got it!" and bounded to the front.

Reginald, looking more like a storm trooper than an accountant, outlined his plan. "This is what we'll do. Every year on this day, the second Sunday of April, everyone will bring in his or her mismatched socks and we will hold a sock swap. For every sock that you bring in you will be entitled to find a match. Next, we'll match up the leftover socks as best we can and send them to..."

A Sock Committee was formed with Reginald as Chair and Marnie as Secretary. They met the next

Wednesday at 2 p.m. and plans unfolded in a straightforward manner. People would be responsible for affixing their name or initials to each of their socks. Each sock owner would sign in next to their name and indicate the number of socks requiring a mate. Although highly unlikely, owners would be entitled to leave with an equal number of matched pairs. After sign in, socks would be relinquished to laundry baskets representing a variety of colours.

Who knew there were so many shades of brown?

Tensions arose over one very significant factor. What constitutes a pair? Could a black ribbed sock be paired with a black plain; an all-white athletic sock with one with a grey toe; a mostly cotton with a polyester/spandex/nylon blend?

If not for Reginald's leadership the plan would have been abandoned. Everyone paid attention as he introduced the concept of individual decision-making and two level matching. First, people would look for exact matches. Then they would decide for themselves what sort of pairing they could either live with or make a contribution to the Martinfield Homeless Shelter. Only then, when all possible matches were made—both personal and for the Shelter—would any leftovers go to the Ladies Auxiliary to be crafted into sock dolls and animals. The enthusiasm over sharing the bounty led to ecstatic applause. Reginald glowed.

The next year on the second Sunday of April all 700 members of Emmanuel brought in their un-

matched socks. The sock exchange began promptly following the pot-luck lunch. With only a few minor glitches and good-natured tussles the first Sock Day proved a huge success.

In the town of Martinfield, Sock Day at Emmanuel was a big-ticket news item. The Martinfield Courier devoted Wednesday's front page to the story. The mayor announced that from now on the second Sunday of April would be known as Sock Day throughout Martinfield. All citizens would gather at the Community Centre at 2 p.m. and exchanges would occur. The rallying cry became "Socks of Martinfield Unite."

The homeless were overwhelmed.

Three years later the initiative was picked up by *the Globe and Mail*. The Prime Minister declared the second Sunday of April as National Sock Day. Thousands of leftover socks matched by colour and little else were sent to the Yukon where warmth wins out over fashion every time. Canadians, true to their generous nature, united across political divides to share the bounty of this great country. "Socks of Canada Unite!"

Cheryl Jack loves to discover the humour in everyday situations. Contemplating what animals at the zoo think of the behaviour of the two-legged ones staring in at them gives her a chuckle. Cheryl was thrilled to see her article "The thin, blue equalizer" published recently in *the Globe and Mail's* "Facts and Arguments."

A Warm WCDR Welcome to Our Newest Members

**James Gillam • Katie Virtue
MJ. Jaffray • Tricia Chapman
Pat Lycett • Freya Turppa**



Noteworthy...

— WCDR's Mission Statement —

The Writers' Circle of Durham Region encourages writers at all levels; offers opportunities for support, education and networking; and promotes the value of writers and writing.

www.wcdr.org

July/August Themed Writing Challenge

Whet your
appetite
before
you go on holiday...

Describe, in lush detail,
this summer's
dream
vacation!

Word count: 800

Submit to: wordweaver@wcdr.org
by June 20, 2007

Secret Agent Woman... Part Two

By Rosalyn Cronin

When an agent gets hundreds to thousands of query letters a month, how do you make your work stand out? How do you get your query letter, book proposal or manuscript in front of the right representative?

I have chosen writing conferences to get my work noticed.

Attending the right writers' venue gives me a chance to meet an agent face to face and pitch my work. When I attended the Surrey International Writers' Conference in October 2006, a 10-minute pitch session with an agent of my choice and a 15-minute Blue Pencil session with a writer were included in the fee. This was my opportunity to shine, to wow an agent and be published.

Yeah. Sure.

I was woefully unprepared, even after reading the information package on the organization's website. I have attended various seminars over the years—all business related, from accounting and legal administration to non-profit gatherings—but this first writers' conference was an unexpectedly exhausting, albeit uplifting, experience.

I spent a lot of time researching the agents available for pitches, and my sister got up early the morning registration opened to book our chosen targets. I didn't research "how to prepare for an agent pitch," as the first workshop offered Friday morning covered this topic in detail. How was I to know my selected agent

time slot was 10 minutes *after* the first workshop commenced?

I arrived early at the pitch-an-agent waiting area, determined to use my few minutes wisely, and promptly fell into a conversation with a man who had an entire book prepared—complete with colour photographs—to show the agent he had chosen. All I had was my book proposal and Chapter One in a bright yellow folder: This was my first indication I might have overlooked something important, like having a professional package.

I had scouted my agent's location and headed straight to her table. She was in a suit, perfect make-up and hair, slim, relaxed demeanor, the complete opposite to my disorganized, dressed-for-comfort-bad-hair-day self. I sat down, yellow folder in hand, and promptly forgot to shake her hand. I could tell she was used to novices; she smiled kindly, held out her hand, and asked if this was my first conference. Wearing a T-shirt proclaiming "Writers' Conference Virgin" would be superfluous by this point. A little chitchat—which my scattered brain barely responded to—before she asked for the name of my book and a quick synopsis. This was another huge mistake—I KNEW my subject matter inside and out, had been telling people about the content for months, but did not have a concise, *dust jacket* outline. The "elevator pitch"—pithy and short enough to be delivered between floors, but enticing enough to make the listener want to get off at your floor just to hear more—is the most important tool any author can possess.

Luckily, the agent was intrigued enough to request three chapters and my proposal.

I walked out of that room three feet off the floor with a smile that didn't quit until I got home a week later. I quickly lost it, however, when I had to sit down and do a massive rewrite

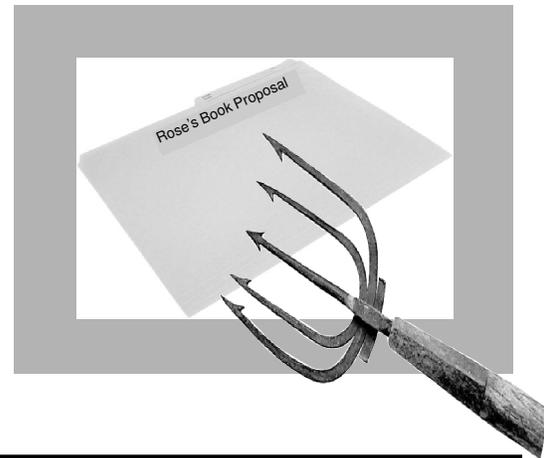
on another two chapters. Writing the first draft—all 12 chapters—was much more fun; editing for public purview was exhausting. Last lesson: Do not market until the package is ready.

I was not prepared for the agent's request. I did not mail the package as quickly as she expected, and my work, I assume, went to the bottom of her slush pile: I sent it in November, she looked at it in January, responding, "...put it aside for a closer look." I have yet to receive another e-mail from her.

It is time to become proactive again?

Being face to face with an agent is a powerful tool, jumping you to the front of the slush pile. My first conference was selected because it fit in with a trip to Vancouver to visit my family. My next conference, in Boston, has me booked with an agent who includes personal finance in her wish list. I am packing a suit, three chapters, and the proposal, and will bore my husband during the nine-hour drive with refining, repeating and rewriting my elevator pitch. I wonder if he will offer to drive me to book signings in the future?

Stay tuned for the results from my second foray into the world of writers' conferences.



Attention Writing Circles...

Word Weaver no longer publishes a writing circles page.

Kindly log onto

www.wcdr.org

and click on "writing circles"

for up-to-date writers' circle information.

Additionally, kindly forward your writing circle updates to webmaster@wcdr.org.

NOVEL_{n.}

A short story — padded.

The Devil's Dictionary, 1911

Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914)

WCDR's

Who's Who

featuring...

Heather Tucker

By Heather M. O'Connor

Modest Heather Tucker is still learning to call herself a writer, even though she convinced the rest of us last year by scooping a first prize and an honourable mention in WCDR's short fiction contest, a second place win in The Writing Fairy's humour writing contest and an honourable mention in WCDR's 24-hour creative non-fiction contest. Not bad for an emerging writer!

WordWeaver: How did you come to writing?

Heather Tucker: I've come lately to it. It's been a bit of a journey. Thirteen years ago, my youngest daughter died. A year later, I started writing children's stories and discovered that, for the first time since her death, I was able to breathe again. I wasn't sure I wanted to breathe, so I put it away.

Ten years after that, I thought, maybe I do want to breathe. I started to do some creative writing, stories about my experiences.

Frank McCourt said, in *Angela's Ashes*, that "happy childhoods don't make interesting sto-

ries." That sparked in me that there's something redemptive about writing. And I found that there's oxygen in writing.

Suddenly, Elizabeth's death and her absence became a presence on a page; it became a story. It's probably been the most healing thing in my life.

WW: What advice would you give an aspiring writer?

HT: It was my belief that I had waited too long to start, but it's never too late. It could be, perhaps, too early. At 20, maybe I could have written something; I'm not sure I'd have had the voice.

And that nothing's a waste unless we waste it. We turn what we see as waste and loss into our stories, into gold.

WW: Have you found any mentors?

HT: I've discovered friends as well as mentors in the Writers in Progress Group (WIP). That spiritual, creative connection, the honesty you get from other writers looking at your work and giving you constructive feedback—it's amazing.

WW: Your WIP colleague Sherry Hinman says you critique very thoroughly; not in a negative way but in an extremely positive way.

HT: It's okay to say, "This isn't working for me," or "I'd like to know more about this character." In a course I took at U of T, I really learned to critique. The rule [the professor] set down was that people should hear positive things, but they also need honest reflection. As other people speak, you find new and fresh perspectives. Every time I was critiqued, it felt like Christmas: it was a gift.

WW: In what unanticipated direction has WIP critique taken your work?

HT: It was the first time I'd ever heard the phrase show, don't tell. But in technical writing, you tell; you don't show. You're very specific: you give instructions, you outline policy.

People would say, "Show me what happening here." Suddenly my writing came alive.

WW: What was your reaction when they announced that you'd essentially won both first and second place in the contest?

HT: There was a ringing in my ears. I thought, Am I standing up here, but it wasn't really my name that was called?

WW: A friend of mine calls that *imposter syndrome*, when you don't believe you deserve a place among "real" writers.

HT: I feel that all the time. I'm at the Humber School for Writers, working with Joan Barfoot. I read her novels and I think, this is good writing. Then I look at my work and think, this is crap. But she'll come back and say, "This is great!" and I think, she's just saying that because I paid to take the course. I think there's a part of that in all of us.

WW: What comes first for you—setting, characters, plot?

HT: My book is set in Ethiopia; I was a nurse there. Initially, I just wanted to get some of those memories down. Then I read a book by Anne Lamott [Bird by Bird]. She said let your characters tell the story. Suddenly the plot wasn't very important anymore; I just wanted to see where the characters went. For me that's been the most amazing part of this whole process: letting the character tell the story, letting him or her grow and change and evolve. They're becoming who I wish I could be. And that's the beauty.

Subject: *Arts News Canada's* Open Discussion

Date: Sun, 22 Apr 2007 21:15:42 -0400

An e-mail from **Steven Laird**, editor, *LICHEN Arts & Letters Preview*, bard of *Charlatan* (2005, Ronsdale Press) and author of numerous reviews, interviews and essays. Visit Steven at: <http://www3.sympatico.ca/poet.peasant/index.html>

[Published in *The Word Weaver* with author's permission.]

On Wednesday evening [April 18, 2007] I took part in a poetry reading in Oshawa, Ontario, organized by the Writers' Circle of Durham Region to celebrate National Poetry Month.

Dubbed "Pickings From A Shipwreck: An Evening of Great Lakes Inspired Poetry," the organizers pulled together 13 poets (Barry Dempster was to round it out to 14, but illness kept him away) for a two-hour performance. Now, that might sound deadly-dull, but turned out (as these things often do) to be a delight. Normally, a poetry reading involves two or three featured writers and, often, an open-mic set. This event, however, managed to present the audience with a wide range of styles and voices, from the gravel-voiced earnestness of relative newcomer Tony Valuch to the folksy seamless delivery of veteran Phil Hall. The poetry was a blend of formal and free-verse styles, with a prominent dose of ear-pleasing harmonies and cadences in each.

Poetry resists celebrity and the star system, and Canada's poets are largely unheard of outside the occasional prize announcements. Everyone, it is said, writes poetry. Some are fortunate to find organizations and events that give them the opportunity to perform their work, to bring it up off the page and into the air of a pub, library, gallery or auditorium. Read aloud, the poem exists only for a moment, but for the baker's dozen of us who performed in Oshawa on Wednesday, that moment was charged, the audience was listening to something that had no commercial value whatsoever, and enjoying itself. The real value was in whatever experience was shared between the artist and the audience.

As we go about the business of art, it's good to remember that the whole point of what we do is to make sure that that experience happens.

Comment on this or any other issue in *Arts News Canada's* Open discussion forum: <http://tinyurl.com/kolqk>. Join the current discussion in their Cultural Leadership forum: tinyurl.com/295u24

Paeans

WCDR Writers
are on a
roll!

Where's The Minister?—a play written by WCDR's own **Michael Khashmanian**, was performed on May 2–5, 2007, at St. Mark's United Church in Whitby, Ontario.

WCDR member **Dey Brownlee** had an article in the *Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser* in April, 2007. The story—requested by the owner of Curves—was well received by readers. Congrats, Dey!

Cheryl Jack was pleased to announce the publication of her essay, "The thin blue equalizer," which appeared in the April 19, 2007 edition of *the Globe and Mail's* Facts and Arguments page. Way to go, Cheryl!

James Dewar was very pleased to announce the publication of his first full length book of poetry, *The Garden in the Machine* by Hidden Brook Press. In his foreword to the book, Allan Briesmaster said, "Dewar extends the invitation both to gaze deeply with an inner eye and to see panoramically: igniting some brilliant metaphorical fireworks that light the way."

As a result of *The Garden in the Machine*, James was invited to join The League of Canadian Poets as a full member, taking his place alongside such luminaries as Margaret Atwood and Michael Ondaatje as well as Stuart Ross, Barry Dempster and Catherine Graham. WOW!

Michael Khashmanian scored twice! Six of his poems were included in the chapbook *Osna* by the St. Mark's Poetry Society and a band called "Louder View"

used his lyrics for three songs on their CD entitled, "Times Like These."

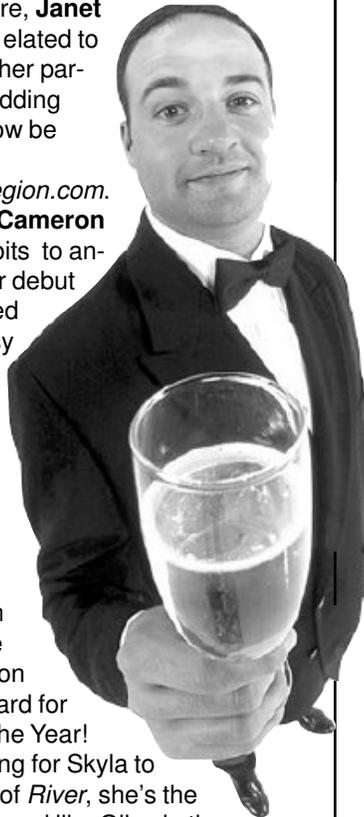
Barbara Hunt was both thrilled and relieved to see her personal essay, "The M.O.M. Project," in print in the May issue of *Homemakers* magazine with a photograph from the stage production (April 2006). Way to go, Barb!

Graham Ducker's screen play, *Muddy Memories*, was a semi-finalist in the Write-Movies.com International Writing Competition #11.

WCDR's breakfast/workshop co-ordinator extraordinaire, **Janet Boccone**, was elated to announce that her parenting blog, "Kidding Around," will now be appearing on www.durhamregion.com.

Skyla Dawn Cameron was thrilled to bits to announce that her debut novel, *River*, tied for Best Fantasy Novel at the 2007 EPIE Awards (along with *Dragon's Gold* by Piers Anthony and Robert E. Margoff). As if that weren't enough excitement, the book's cover won the Quasar Award for Best Cover of the Year!

If you're looking for Skyla to sign your copy of *River*, she's the one running around like Olive in the movie, *Little Miss Sunshine*, screaming "I won! I won! I won! I won! I won!"



Free-for-all Writing Challenge

A Writer's *stock-in-trade*...

REJECTION LETTERS!

Most writers have received a rejection letter (or eight).
Now it's time to turn the tables...

Write
a rejection letter
to
a rejection letter.

Outline why you find it
unacceptable.

Maximum word count: **500**

Deadline: **June 20, 2007**

send to:

wordweaver@wcdr.org

Remembering Kurt Vonnegut

By Annette McLeod

Reading Kurt Vonnegut for the first time was a revelation to me—I had no idea there were such vivid imaginations in the world. I was probably only 11 or 12, and the book was *Slaughterhouse Five*. I'm sure most of it went over my head, but I was so infatuated with the language and how downright naughty I felt reading him that I gobbled up *Cat's Cradle* too.

Vonnegut was born on November 11, 1922. He was profoundly influenced by a variety of

hardships including the suicide of his mother on Mother's Day in 1944, and his being captured by Wehrmacht troops in December of that year. He was subsequently one of only seven American prisoners of war to survive being held in Dresden, where he witnessed the city's 1945 bombing and was held in an underground meat locker called "Slaughterhouse Five." He later called the period "carnage unfathomable."

In addition to *Cat's Cradle* and *Slaughterhouse Five*, his most famous works included *Player Piano*, his first novel, and *Breakfast of Champions*.

In giving advice to short story writers in his own *Bagombo Snuff Box: Uncollected Short Fiction*, Vonnegut said that writers should "use the time of a total stranger in such a way that he or she will not feel the time was wasted."

Vonnegut's time was most certainly not.

Vonnegut died on April 11 [2007] as the result of a fall in his Manhattan home several weeks earlier, during which he suffered irreparable brain damage. The idea of the body dying when the brain is gone is surely apropos for this master.



May/June Professional Development Workshops



Writers' Sanctuary Sundays

Date: May 27 and/or June 24, 2007

Time: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Fee: \$50 per session

Location: Uplands Writing Retreat

Register: 905-243-4836
edgewood@accglobal.net

Do you feel like there's never time for your writing?

This Spring Uplands Writing Retreat will host Writers' Sanctuary Sundays. The morning will be spent doing a series of writing exercises to lubricate the machinery, get the creative writer in you feeling more relaxed, focused and perhaps even a little experimental.

After lunch (provided), there will be a *silent* afternoon to work on whatever project is preoccupying you as a writer these days. (If you don't have a laptop you will be provided with a computer and your Word file can be e-mailed to you at home at the end of the day.)

Uplands is a peaceful rural location, so if you want to get out for a walk and think, that is also possible.

For participants wishing to extend the day, there will be an opportunity to sit a while longer, to share some of what you've been working on and to debrief, discuss issues of craft, etc.

You can attend one or more Sanctuary days, as you choose. Space is limited to six writers each day.

Writing with a Slow Hand: from Romance to Erotica and Beyond

Date: May 6, 2007

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Fee: \$75 (\$70 for WCDR members)

Location: Uplands Writing Retreat

Register: 905-243-4836
edgewood@accglobal.net

Go where the energy is and go *fearward!*

There are few places in our writing more fearful to us than writing about sex. What will our mothers think? What will our partners think? Omigod, what will our children think?

Also, there's the question of... what if our characters are the kinds of people who do

things that we would never! Not in our wildest! How do we write about that and make it believable? And if we do write about it (once again) what will our mothers think? Or our spouses?

Yet castrating the electricity of our romantic scenes (and many of our other scenes as well because, as we know, sex isn't always about romance) by being afraid of the erotic, robs our work of so much of the power available to us in writing. If literature is all about casting pure light on every aspect of human experience, then to ignore the sexual also robs our work of veracity and courage.

To step away from the higher intellectual and philosophical truths for a moment, sex also sells! Romance and erotica are two burgeoning categories in fiction, and publishers are always looking for new voices in this field.

In a series of on the spot exercises, participants will discover:

- the difference between romance, erotica and pornography
- how to fine tune their writing to fill the particular niche they're aiming for
- how to introduce sex into their regular fiction
- about sex in genre
- about the markets and resources available to them

Write-Up Writing Camp

Date: July 9–13, 2007

Time: Grades 3–8, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
teens and adults 6 to 9 p.m.

Fee: Grades 3–8, \$150, \$100 for siblings
teens and adults \$100

Location: 605 Ritson Road N.
Oshawa, ON

Register: Lynda Allison 905-623-0365
lynda@writeupwriting.ca

Facilitators are all WCDR members. Children: Judy Bagshaw, Tweens: Skylia Dawn Cameron, Teens: Lynda Allison, Adults: Barbara Hunt. Guest authors Ted Staunton, Richard Scrimger, James H. Gillam Great opportunity to set aside time to take writing off the back burner, turn up the heat and write sizzling stories. For brochure, check the website.
www.writeupwriting.ca

Narrative Yoga: Advanced Creative Writing to make your Fiction Flexible

Date: Eight Monday nights starting
April 30, 2007

Time: 7 to 10 p.m.

Fee: \$30 per night or \$25 per evening to WCDR members
(\$230 for whole course, or \$200 for WCDR members)

Location: Uplands Writing Retreat near Port Perry

Register: Contact Sue Reynolds at:
susanreynolds@trentu.ca or call
905-243-4836

This course is for writers who have been writing for some time and have unfinished pieces. Maybe they were produced during writing on the spot sessions—they came out of nowhere and you don't know where they should go. Maybe they're short stories you started and just never completed. Perhaps they're already pieces of short fiction that honest readers have told you gently "aren't working" but you don't know why, or you're sending them out but they keep coming back.

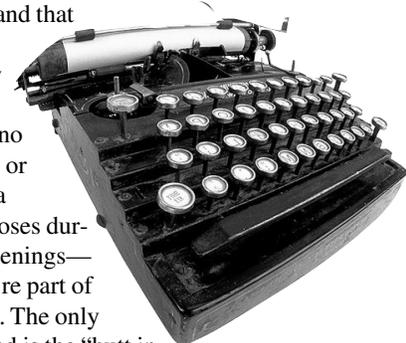
This course will explore more sophisticated elements of writing to develop your fiction such as Diction, Voice, Image, Metaphor, Symbol, Point of View, Character, Narrative Structure, Plot, Conflict, and Closure.

What you need:

This course will include both writing on the spot and workshoping work-in-progress. To register for this workshop you should already have two or three pieces at least that you want to work on and that you're not emotionally attached to.

There are no rubber mats or special yoga clothes or poses during these evenings—unless they're part of your stories. The only pose required is the "butt in chair" pose—one which should be familiar to and comfortable for most writers.

For complete details visit:
www.goforwords.com



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WHAT'S HAPPENING?**WCDR Short Story Contest**

Opens: March 1, 2007. Closes: June 1, 2007, midnight EST

Open to: International. Open to all writers 18 years and over

Entries: Stories may be of any subject matter, type or style. Entries must be original, unpublished, not submitted or accepted elsewhere for publication, and not entered simultaneously in any other competition.

Length of each entry must not exceed 1,500 words (not including title).

Only winners will be contacted. Winning entries will be announced on September 8, 2007.

For complete details, log on to **www.wcdr.org**,
 go to "WCDR Writing Contests" and click on "short story."

The Word Weaver

The *Word Weaver* is published by the Writers' Circle of Durham Region as a service to its members and other interested parties. No one should act upon advice given without considering the facts of specific situations and/or consulting appropriate professional advisors. Publications are invited to quote from the *Word Weaver* upon obtaining written permission from the President, The Writers' Circle of Durham Region, Bayly Postal Outlet, Health Rite Pharmacy, P.O. Box 14558, 75 Bayly Street West, Ajax, ON L1S 7K7.

Phone 905-686-0211. Web address: **www.wcdr.org**

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We reserve the right to edit or reject submissions at our discretion.

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 Deborah A. Rankine

Copy Editor
 Sherry Hinman

We welcome your input!

Send comments to

wordweaver@wcdr.org

or

The *Word Weaver*, c/o WCDR
 Bayly Postal Outlet, Health Rite Pharmacy
 P.O. Box 14558, 75 Bayly Street West
 Ajax, ON L1S 7K7