

east word

What's a Poet Laureate? Thoughts on laurels and legacies

by Lorri Neilsen Glenn, Halifax Regional Municipality Poet Laureate

Now, in the fourth and last year of my term as Halifax's Poet Laureate, I can't match Hank Snow for being everywhere, but I have been everywhere I didn't expect. And I've loved it all.

I might never have met the Snowking, eaten moose meat pie, or stood on the marge of Lake LaBarge. I might never have heard Candace and Najet in a standing-room-only crowd, been a country mouse at Rideau Hall wobbling in high heels, or been transfixed by Toni's reading in his native Arabic in the basement of the Spring Garden Road library.

Panels, open mics, introductions, juries, random acts of poetry? Yes.

Civic events, library readings, radio gigs, school visits? Of course.

Working with new poets and new Canadians, youth groups, and fundraisers? You bet.

Galas, limos, benefactors, or that lifetime supply of wine, a tradition begun by Chaucer, England's unofficial poet laureate? No, not so much.

I've lost track of the number of times people have asked me what a poet laureate does. (One wag asked once, "Where's the poet Lorri at?").

Here are the basics. A poet laureate represents and promotes poetry, literacy, and the literary arts in the community. In Canada we have laureates appointed by municipalities (Sackville, NB, Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, St John's, Moose Jaw, Owen Sound, Brantford, Cobalt), provinces (Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island), as well as the national appointment, the Parliamentary Poet Laureate of Canada (currently John Steffler). The average term is two years.

Do I, as Halifax Regional Municipality poet laureate,

write poems for official occasions, or paeans to Peter?

No, that's not in the description. In fact, the HRM Terms of Reference require only that I attend certain local literary and civic events, draw a stipend of \$1,500 a year, plan a legacy project if I wish, and promote the arts.

But what's basic, as all writers know, tends to grow like thoughts in a freewrite. Within months of receiving a



Bernadette Derry of the Wordfishers at the Keeshan Goodman Library in Halifax participated in Random Act of Poetry week.

eastword

WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

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phone call from an HRM cultural officer offering me the appointment, I found myself hosting, supporting, advocating, and responding. Showing up to read or be read to, leading a workshop, sitting on committees, and learning more than I could give back. My own writing and my university work – well, on occasion they were done by midnight oil.

How much time do you spend doing laureate-related work, people ask me? On average, one day a week. Recently, England's poet laureate, Andrew Motion, claimed the post was "very, very damaging to his work" and a "thankless job", and he plans to quit early. (No word yet, however, on whether he plans to return his barrel of Spanish "sack").

Highlights for me are too many to count. I think of the Poetry in Many Languages sessions with the Halifax library that showcased new Canadians who brought poetry in their first language to read to enthusiastic audiences; the cross-Canada poet laureate tour funded by the Ontario Arts Council (and organized by Brick Books); and meeting and exchanging ideas with other laureates (see Owen Sound laureate Liz Zetlin's website, www.poetrymap.ca).

I think of the many pieces hesitant poets have slipped into my hands, wanting a reading, and of the hundreds of passionate writers across Canada I never might have met. Closest to my heart, however, is the Wordfishing youth group a local teacher, Shaun Sheehan, and I organized late in 2006. This group of poets and songwriters continues to meet at the Jade W. Bookshop on Prince and online at their Facebook site. Their first chapbook and CD, published in time for Word on the Street last month, will be officially launched in November. Proceeds go to sending young poets to writing workshops, such as those the Fed offers.

What would I have changed? The HRM folks are first to admit that during the first three years of my appointment I was left to fly on my own. I became resourceful, a trait common to writers. Now, cultural staff is available to work



Luke Collins and Alexa Dodge at the Word on the Street launch of Wordfishing.



on Laureate activities, one of which will be an HRM authors' night in the winter to be co-hosted by HRM and Mount Saint Vincent University.

Together, we are revising the Terms of Reference to rewrite (and make more transparent) the application process, increase the stipend, open up eligibility to spoken word poets, and shorten the four-year term so that more, not fewer, residents will be able to represent the HRM in the literary community in the years to come. Stay tuned for announcements about these activities, and the upcoming round of applications.

So, what is a poet laureate? Busy, for certain. And blessed, as well. I've been a literacy advocate and researcher for three decades; a poet for only one. Being given this opportunity to represent the Halifax region – in essence, a license to promote the arts and get out into the community – was literary serendipity, a rare bird, like poetry itself, that comes when you least expect it. ■

Lorri Neilsen Glenn, HRM Poet Laureate for 2005-2009, is the author of several books, including Combustion (Brick Books 2007).

Kathy Kacer in NS for kids book week and workshop

The Canadian Children's Book Centre has declared 2008's TD Canadian Children's Book Week the year of Classic Canadian Reading. Honouring the 100th anniversary of the publication of *Anne of Green Gables*, 29 authors, illustrators and storytellers will spend November 15th to 22nd visiting school, libraries, bookstores and community centres from Nunavut to Newfoundland.

Barbara Reid, the Queen of Plasticine, has created this year's Book Week poster. A classic herself, Barbara has illustrated more than 25 books for children and has won innumerable awards including the Governor General's Award for illustration.

The Book Week tours will reach close to 35,000 children and teens nationwide with over 400 readings hosted in more than 175 communities. Our own Susan Tooke will be among the participants this year, travelling to Ontario. Visiting us here in Nova Scotia is Kathy Kacer. Kathy is not a stranger to kids and teens in Atlantic Canada as they awarded her the Hackmatack Children's Choice Award for nonfiction for *Hiding Edith*.

Kathy was born in Toronto and has lived there all her life (with the exception of three years spent in New Brunswick). She has a Masters degree in psychology and was a psychologist for many years, working with troubled teens and their families. In 1998 she pursued her dream of becoming a children's author. That dream came true with the publication of her first book in 1999, the award-winning *The Secret of Gabi's Dresser*. She has been writing ever since. *The Diary of Laura's Twin* (2008, Second Story Press) is Kathy's tenth book. Kathy's books have been translated into more than 15 languages and rights sold to publishers in Germany, China, Italy, Thailand, England, Japan, Korea, Israel, Brazil, Belgium, and other countries.



Kathy's parents were both survivors of the Holocaust. Her mother survived the war by hiding. In fact, *The Secret of Gabi's Dresser* is based on a true story about Kathy's mother who hid in a dresser that was in her mother's dining room while Nazi soldiers were searching through the house looking for her. Kathy's father was a survivor of the concentration camps. The stories of survival that her parents told her were an inspiration to her as she was growing up. As an adult, she was determined to write their stories and pass them on to young readers. In that way, future generations would never forget that time in history.

Second Story Press has published Kathy's *Night Spies* (a 2005 sequel to *The Secret of Gabi's Dresser*) and *Clara's War*, and her historical nonfiction – *The*

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Underground Reporters (2004) and *Hiding Edith* (2006). Kathy has also written four books for the Our Canadian Girl series published by Penguin Canada – *Magrit: Home Free*, *Magrit: A Bit of Love and A Bit of Luck*, *Magrit: Open Your Doors*, and *Magrit: A Friend in Need*.

In addition to writing, Kathy teaches a course called Writing for Children at the University of Toronto (Continuing Studies). She also speaks to children in schools and libraries around the country, about the importance of understanding the Holocaust and keeping its memory alive. In addition, she lectures in universities and colleges on the topic of teaching sensitive material to young children. Kathy has generously agreed to lead a writing workshop for WFNS during her Book Week visit. ■

Writing from Life — Telling True Fictions with Kathy Kacer

Where: WFNS, 1113 Marginal Road, Halifax

When: Saturday, November 22, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (coffee and buns served)

Cost: \$45 WFNS members; \$65 general public

Writing stories about actual people, events and places can be an intriguing challenge. How do you maintain your creative independence in the face of 'Historical Fact'? Drawing on her own experience writing historical fiction for young readers, Kathy will talk about creating stories around the history of a person, event, place as well as the role history plays in fiction and how important it is that stories be captured and passed along to future generations. ■

Banks up for GG Award for Drama

It's October 21 and the shortlists for the Governor General's Literary Awards have just been announced. And our own **Catherine Banks** is up for the GG's Award for Drama for her play *Bone Cage*, published by Playwrights Canada Press. A big play about tough lives in rural Nova Scotia, *Bone Cage* puts these lives under a microscope and scrutinizes them with piercing intelligence. The play resonates far beyond its rural setting to probe the struggles and hopes of people everywhere, particularly those trapped in dead-end jobs. At times it's a struggle to dream. This play spans history but is a play for today – tragic, funny, nuanced and poetic.

Catherine Banks was born in Nova Scotia in 1957. Her interest in writing began early. Her love of drama and her understanding of its power comes from time spent in her grandmother's kitchen, listening to her stories and ravings of real life dramas. But it was the work of Michel Tremblay that inspired her to begin writing plays. She says she's been lucky to have several mentors who have encouraged and supported her development as a playwright, including Tessa Mendel, Marina Endicott, Laura McLauchlan, Mary Vingoe, Paula Danckert, Lois Brown, Pam Halstead, and Janis Spence.

Catherine's first play *The Summer of the Piping Plover* was produced in 1991. Mulgrave Road Theatre toured her play *Three Storey, Ocean View* throughout Nova Scotia in the fall of 2000 and the play got the all-important second production when it was produced by Equity Theatre Showcase Toronto in 2003. Her one-person show *Bitter Rose* has been produced several times and taped for



BRAVO! Singular Series 2. *Bone Cage* was selected for On the Verge '05, a national showcase for new work at the National Arts Centre, and was first produced in the fall of 2007. Catherine's newest plays are *Rilla-my-Rilla*, based on *Rilla of Ingleside* by L.M. Montgomery, and *Missy and Me*.

Catherine is a founding member and Past President of Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre and is currently the Atlantic rep for Playwrights Guild of Canada.

Also nominated for drama are Ronnie Burkett, Toronto, for *10 Days on Earth*, Paul Ciufu of Grand Bend, Ontario, for *Reverend Jonah*, Marie Clements of Galiano Island, BC, for *Copper Thunderbird*, and Judith Thompson of Toronto, for *Palace of the End*.

The winners of the 2008 Governor General's Awards for fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, children's literature (text and illustration) and translation will be announced on November 18. ■

When two giants cash out, maybe a ceiling's been reached

by Ron Foley Macdonald.

This year's Atlantic Film Festival had just wrapped when news of two Halifax filmmaking figures cashing out flashed around the scene. Oscar-winning Michael Donovan sold Halifax Film to Toronto-based Entertainment One for \$68 million. About the same time, word trickled down that animation company co-owner Steve Comeau was closing up his Collideascope Shop.

To say that Donovan and Comeau are giants of the local motion production scene is putting it lightly. And when two giants exit the stage, the rest of us are obliged to wonder why. These are the kind of guys who are two to five years ahead of everybody else. Donovan and his brother Paul started Salter Street Films just before Telefilm Canada was established in the early 1980s, when the production scene consisted of the CBC, the National Film Board and a couple of very small companies that produced short educational flicks and not much else. With a stated objective to produce feature films in Halifax, the brothers initially faced a steep climb in a sea of disbelief.

A quarter century later and the Donovans are the cornerstones of the industry here. Having survived a buy-out and a forced shut-down by Alliance Atlantis (who acquired their company to get the rights to the IFC specialty channel awarded to Salter Street at the turn of the century), the Brothers Donovan recreated themselves as the Halifax Film Company. With several long-term contracts with the CBC for shows such as the long-running political satire *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, along with a passel of kids animation series (*Bo On the Go*, *Animal Mechanicals*, *The Mighty Jungle*), topped off with Michael Donovan's high-profile prestige features such as *Shake Hands With the Devil*, the company has an enviable status within the industry. Its new national spelling bee show (*Super Spellers*), which has just wrapped its first season, has the potential to be as long running and durable a franchise as the old *Reach For the Top*.

So why sell out now?

It could just be good timing. Shortly after the sale, the stock market went south. Way south. And the price reflects some of the realities of the industry. Last time out, the Donovans got \$80 million; this time \$68 million.

It's certainly possible that the motion picture production industry has reached a ceiling. Dreams of making Halifax a kind of Hollywood Northeast have dwindled to a grudging slugfest just to keep the industry at its \$120 million a year average. The rise in the Canadian dollar – thankfully reversed in the last month – sapped our service productions for the Americans. And the impact of last year's ill-advised ACTRA strike still lingers – that year's production dropped to about \$75 million from the previous year's near-record \$136 million.

In the case of Canadian productions, it could be that despite film schools churning out hungry graduates, and interest in the process of filmmaking at an all-time high, there simply isn't any more public money in the Great White North's production system. Unless a great deal of new private money can be accessed – and a couple of filmmakers such as Paul Kimball and the makers of the AFF closing film *Summerhood* have done just that – we may see a leveling off and maturation of the industry that will see no serious new growth for the next decade or so.

In Steve Comeau's case, it's astonishing to see someone who's been acclaimed "the future of the industry" leaving it so prematurely. A regular panelist at the Banff Film Festival and the Atlantic Film Festival, who represented "the next generation of producers," he apparently became tired of a flighty industry unable to make up its mind on whether to renew successful and nationally broadcast animation programs such as *Oliver's Adventures* and *Delilah And Julius*. His departure – and the closure of a company that employed up to 150 animators over seven years – leaves a large hole in the motion picture production scene, as their office (festooned with gigantic pictures of many of their personnel) at the corner of Sackville and Barrington Streets in the city's downtown, seemed Ground Zero of Halifax's vibrant artistic milieu.

It's a puzzling and troubling turn of events when people like Comeau and Donovan depart the scene. Even with the arrival of Tom Selleck for the filming of a sixth Jesse Stone CBS TV movie – right in time for an 84-cent-dollar – there's a sudden chill flickering through

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the industry. And despite some news trickling from the U.S. about abuses and disasters coming from their film incentive systems, there's no question that the East Coast motion picture production scene is pausing once more to consider all those variables that plague the financing of a chancy industrial and artistic sector.

Punters can take some heart from that U.S. news. The sub-prime mortgage market wasn't the only place where financial skullduggery was going on. Louisiana's film commissioner has been investigated for bribery. That state put \$20 million into the new Brad Pitt vehicle *Benjamin Button*. Michigan has topped out its tax credit incentives at \$80 million. And a think-tank in Boston has poured cold water on the whole process, opining that this kind of public funding for massive Hollywood studio productions is a very bad way to create jobs.

Indeed, considering that such southwestern states as Arizona and New Mexico have been providing 20 percent of all below-the-line budgets, the numbers are mind-boggling. The latest *Terminator* film, at \$200 million overall, would have received \$40 million from state governments. Compare that to Alberta's \$5 million input into Paul Gross's epic *Passchendaele*. It's a risky business, especially in these troubled economic times.

Still, with the departures of two experienced captains of the industry, the filmmaking scene on the East Coast is definitely in flux. ■

Fed brightens the darkest days

Sure the days are still golden. The trees a blaze of colour. But wait ... the dark's already nibbling away at dawn and dusk, and the time of shovelling, schussing and shape-shifting (from bikini to bivouacked parka) will be upon us. Before we all hunker in to finish a good manuscript, time to call a halt in plot's progress, don your sparkly best, and sashay down to the Fed for our annual Meet, Eat and Greet.

The Fed's the place to be at **3 p.m. on Thursday, December 11**. The perfect setting to rub more than elbows, drop sotto voce comments into idle chitchat about your recent advance, or whinge about the mingy pittance from In-Yer-Dreams Press. Your writing kith and kin will all be there. Jane always weights the tables into submission. The cider steams and the punch bowl introduces democracy to wit. It's your Fed's annual Open House and all Fed family and friends are warmly welcome, as are any tasty tidbits you'd like to contribute. Come on down and make merry. ■

Woozles is 30!

Thirty years ago the day was overcast, the balloons were ready and the homemade cookies, still warm. The question buzzing in everyone's head was "Would people come to the opening of the only children's bookstore east of Ottawa?" It was October 14, 1978, and 600 customers and cookie crumbs later the answer was a resounding "Yes!"

Liz Crocker, a founding director, feels the success comes from being much more than simply a store. People know when they come to Woozles, they'll be walking into a place that supports children and families in many ways – not just good books and imaginative toys – but also a staff who truly understands and loves children, knows what's on the shelves and what's going on for children in our community. Kids can crawl around on the floor; parents can cuddle their children in the big, comfy chair and read.

When the store opened, founding director Brian Crocker wrote receipts by hand and there was a cash drawer. Woozles didn't get a cash register until December 1987, and progress to computer didn't happen till 1995. The first newsletters were churned out on an old gestetner machine.

Manager Trudy Carey was there right from the beginning, and over the years has led the Music and Movement for Preschoolers over a hundred times. In fact, Woozles has offered more than 1,000 different workshops from Cat's Cradle and String Games to Writing Workshops for the very young led by Ken Ward. The famed Battle of the Books began in 1989, and today, Lisa Doucet hosts three book clubs for elementary, junior high and senior high school students at the stores.

In fact, Woozles has always been a leader of children's initiatives in the community – supporting Young Canada Reads, Read to Me at the IWK, the Nova Scotia Children's Literature Roundtable, the Ann Connor Brimer and Atlantic Book Awards, and hosting a multitude of readings and launches with some of the country's finest writers, storytellers and illustrators.

Happy birthday, Woozles ... and if you don't know what a woozle is, put on your hunting hat, grab a heffalump and head for 1533 Birmingham Street in Halifax today. Or you can visit virtually by surfing to Woozles website – www.woozles.com ■

BusSTOP

by Jane Buss, Executive Director WFNS

Hurricane September hits the Federation with enough velocity to make scheduling breathing a necessity.

WITS – Writers in the Schools – is the first blast and it began early this year with an orientation session for new writers led by Gary Blackwood, Kristen Domm, Sue Goyette and Stephen Kimber. It's daunting for a newly published writer to head out into the schools: hearing how others handle the situation is comforting, and understanding that WITS is a golden opportunity simply to teach kids to express themselves by writing ... just as you have ... is an epiphany.



Katia Canciani, one of the Fed's WITS, works with elementary students at a school in Digby.

In mid September, the tempo ratcheted up with the actual WITS booking. A gale-force of e-mail requests meant that the almost \$100,000 WITS budget was allocated in just over five hours. Two years ago the Nova Scotia Department of Education joined the Department of Culture in assisting with WITS funding. That – added to our own incessant fundraising efforts, and the generosity of Canada Post and Aliant who make it possible to add

actual books to the mix – means that our resources have more than doubled in a very short time.

Not that it's ever quite enough, but it is becoming nearly enough to flatten us here at the office. We've redesigned the WITS website and spent the summer revising details for the 90-plus participating writers. Making booking an electronic process has eliminated a lot of paper shuffling, and creating a complex database that tracks visits and budget was helpful. But there are still innumerable hours of generating invoices, preparing confirmation packages for teachers and writers, and trying to keep all the details of those who only do half days within 100 kilometres of home and those who only do full days but will travel the province!

It's all worth it to realize that WITS will be part of about 38,970 students lives in the coming year. Now, if we could just get those book orders finalized!

The Gala blows in on WITS heels. A flurry of press releases flocks the air highlighting the valiant writers who'd tremulously entrusted an unpublished submission to the post box last December for the annual Atlantic Writing Competition ... and waited while a phalanx of judges read and read and read. Eight months later, we have winners to celebrate.

Alderney Landing Theatre was dazzling and packed to the gunnels; the crush at the bar never-ending. MCs



Part of the crowd browsing the tables showcasing the Silent Auction of Literary Lunacy during the Gala honouring Atlantic Writing Competition winners.





Susan Mersereau, Jake Mooney and Sue Goyette at the Writers' Fed hangout at Word on the Street.

Sue Goyette and Jack Julien sparked and crackled. Joanne Yhard had conjured the best Silent Auction table ever: bidding wars for Don Sedgwick, Brier Island Inn, and a legal Last Will & Testament broke out. There was no retreat. The stakes were high. The result? Almost \$4,000 raised while the rapt audience delighted in readings from Heather Craig (poetry), Brenda Tate (Joyce Barkhouse Writing for Children Award), Victoria Lynn Hirtle (Budge Wilson Short Story Prize) and Chris Benjamin (Bill Percy Novel Award).

Nimbus Publishing's 30th birthday was roasted with Joan Payzant's hysterical recounting of their first launch ever (everyone lost in the fog and no books available), and the Federation recognized Program Officer Susan Mersereau's herculean efforts with the presentation of a bicycle wheel. The rest remained at the office to ensure her return to work.

The next day dawned and whoooooosh – Word on the Street...well, Pier. The crowd ambled lazily through all day. Strollers filled with young readers, face-painted urchins lining up to read at the Open Mic, manuscript-clutching writers pale as they waited to pitch the publisher.

Jake Mooney – who'd mentored with Lesley Choyce at the Fed five years ago – back from Upper Canadian

studies bubbling with his first published book (M&S, no less) – stopped by for a visit, echoing a refrain that played out throughout the hours at the Federation booth as writers stopped and stayed, gossiped and visited. Lorri Neilsen Glenn with a full catch of Wordfishers, Carol Bruneau exuberant with a recent sale of German rights, Ami McKay fresh from hearing her script for *Jerome* fleshed out with juggling actors and kaleidoscopic clowns, Robert Morgan herding the impossible history of Cape Breton so richly delivered by Mike Hunter at Cape Breton University Press.

Such a day! An extraordinary harvest of riches! A compelling and nurturing community out for a family day.

Winter ahead. Workshops in progress all over the province. Entries for next year's competition already flowing in. Books piling up for Awards consideration. Open House on the horizon.

The Federation is such a number of things. It's the inspired collaborative creation of all the many efforts of almost a thousand members, working to achieve a dream but sharing it, thoughtfully and wisely, with each other. Thank you. ■

imPRESSed — new titles by WFNS members



Flutter

Alice Burdick

Mansfield Press, 2008, \$17.93
ISBN: 978-1894469418

Flutter is a cat's cradle of startling imagistic leaps and quiet meditations. Alice Burdick sets her lateral gaze on small-town news stories, banal occurrences, and the tiny things of a semi-rural life. In the tradition of John Ashbery or Lorine Niedecker, these cubist portraits and landscapes are imbued with a joyous wordplay, even when the poems are heartbreaking – each is a journey of surprise, bewilderment, and perhaps even revelation.

Alice Burdick's poems have been published in anthologies, chapbooks and journals. Her first collection, *Simple Master* (Pedlar Press), was published in 2002. She moved to Halifax in 2002 from Toronto, where she was born and raised. She has also lived in Espanola, Vancouver, and on the Sechelt Peninsula in BC. Alice now lives in Mahone Bay with her husband and daughter.



Looking for Lucy

Wanda Campbell

Leaf Press, 2008, \$16.95
ISBN: 978-0-9783879-5-2

Beginning with several Lucys who made a difference – saint, suffragette, author, artist, comedienne, cartoon character, mother, muse – this poetic journey continues with the unlikely love story between Lucy Adaline Hurd and William Cornelius Van Horne, the man responsible for building the railroad that joined Canada from east to west. Using a variety of verse forms, including free verse and found poems, sonnets and sestinas, this collection explores the lives of women who inhabit the margins of history and the ways in which they shine.

Wanda Campbell's poems and stories have appeared in journals. She has also published a collection of poetry, *Skyfishing* (Black Moss Press, 1999), and a chapbook, *Haw [Thorn]* (Gaspereau, 2003). Wanda lives in Wolfville, where she teaches Creative Writing and Women's Literature at Acadia University.



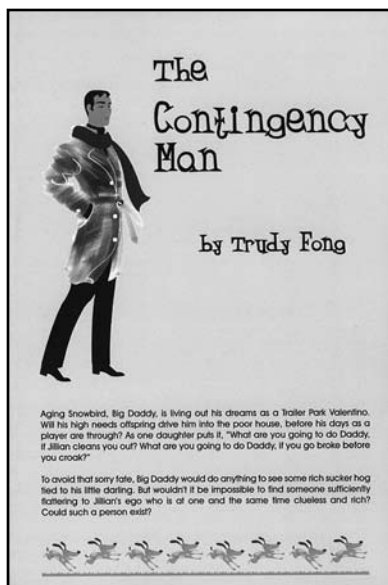
I & I

George Elliott Clarke

Goose Lane Editions, 2008, \$22.95
ISBN: 978-0864925138

In the "Boogie Nights" era of the 1970s, Betty Browning and her lover, boxer Malcolm Miles, travel from the fog-anchored grime of Halifax to sunburnt Corpus Christi, Texas, and back – meeting tragedy and bloodshed along the way. *I & I* smoulders with love, lust, violence, and the excruciating repercussions of racism, sexism and disgust.

George Elliott Clarke was born in the Black Loyalist community of Windsor Plains, Nova Scotia, and raised in Halifax. George was inducted into the Order of Canada in 2008. His work has been published in many periodicals and anthologies. His novel *George and Rue* was longlisted for the IMPAC literary award, and his numerous books of poetry include *Execution Poems* (2001), which won a Governor General's Award. He currently lives in Toronto.



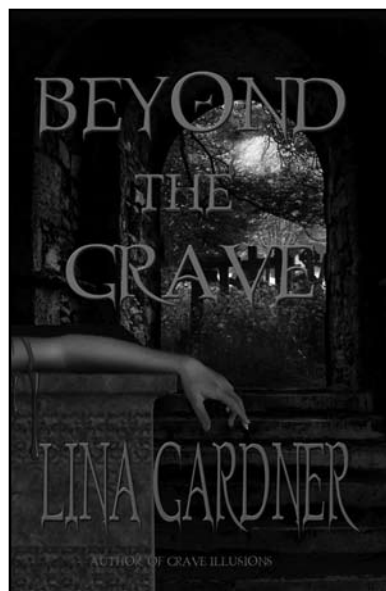
The Contingency Man

Trudy Fong

Available at Lulu.com, 2008, \$21.50

The Contingency Man is the story of a gorgeous moocher, who becomes an overnight success, and the people who think he's the answer to their prayers. After trading on his good looks and charm for 29 years, Matt has bombed out of university yet again. When his father cuts him off financially, he turns to odd jobs to keep up with his satellite television payments and beer expenses. When an accident involving Matt's incorrigible dog, a drop sheet and a couple of cans of paint suddenly makes Matt the new darling of the art world, he discovers the fun and hazards of sudden, thoroughly unearned, success.

Nova Scotia native Trudy Fong has written for regional and national publications, as well as a travel book, *Off the Beaten Path in the Maritime Provinces*, now in its sixth edition. She also wrote for the *Hong Kong Standard* and published travel articles.



Beyond the Grave

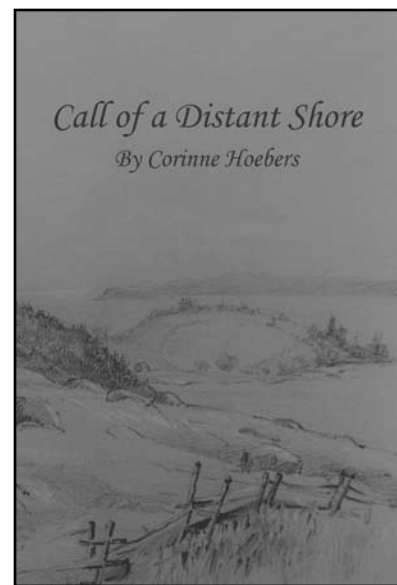
Lina Gardiner

ImaJinn Books, 2008, \$14

ISBN: 978-1-933417-43-1

Captain Jess Vandermire, vampire and leader of a Black Ops team hunting vampires in New York City, is under attack. There's a serial killer in town of the worst kind – a vampire with a penchant for women who look like Jess. The killer is murdering these women and leaving clues that incriminate Jess. John Brittain, tough cop and lieutenant under Jess's command, makes it his mission to find the murderer and prove Jess innocent, because each time another woman dies, he has the horrible feeling the next one will be Jess.

Lina Gardiner was born in St. Stephen, New Brunswick. Her first book, *Grave Illusions*, was published in 2006 by ImaJinn Books and is currently in development into a series. She lives in Geary, NB.



Call of a Distant Shore

Corrine Hoebers

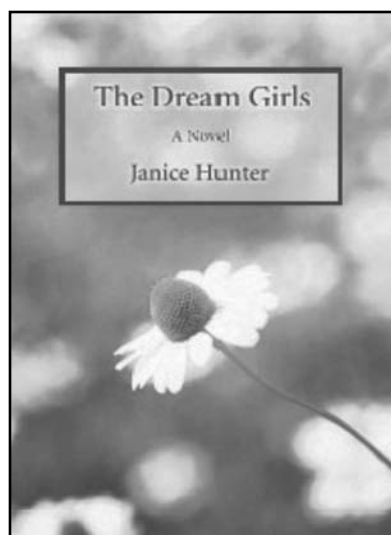
4th Floor Press (Calgary), 2008, \$24.95

Available at <http://www.4thfloorpress.com/>

ISBN 978-1-897530-02-3

Call of a Distant Shore follows Elisabeth Heber and her family as they struggle under the rule of a tyrannical prince in 1750s Germany and their subsequent journey to Nova Scotia. Unmarried, pregnant, and only 16, Elisabeth faces emigration with her family with one goal – to find her lover, Peter, who had abandoned her months before when his own family emigrated. When her secret is revealed, she weds the village doctor, yet swears never to consummate the marriage. As she boards the *Snow Pearl* to her new homeland, all her hopes are pinned on finding Peter and changing the circumstances of her life.

Corinne Hoebers was born and raised in Dartmouth, and from an early age showed a curiosity and interest in the history of both her family and the geographic area in which she lived. *Call of a Distant Shore* is her first book. Corinne and her husband Pierre live in Calgary.



The Dream Girls

Janice Hunter

iUniverse, Inc., 2008, \$28.95

ISBN: 978-0-595-49779-9

Five women with nothing in common (except the universal bond of womanhood and their mutual interest in dream analysis) are at a conference on dream interpretation and discover they live within a few minutes' drive of each other. They decide to meet on a regular basis to continue their study and discussion of dreams. During their times together, they explore the symbolism and veiled messages their dreams present. As the women unlock their dreams' secrets, they grasp the key to their individual and collective futures.

Janice Hunter has spent many years in a dream study group and has presented workshops on the topic. She lives in rural Nova Scotia where she is currently at work on her next novel.



The Storyteller and other Tales

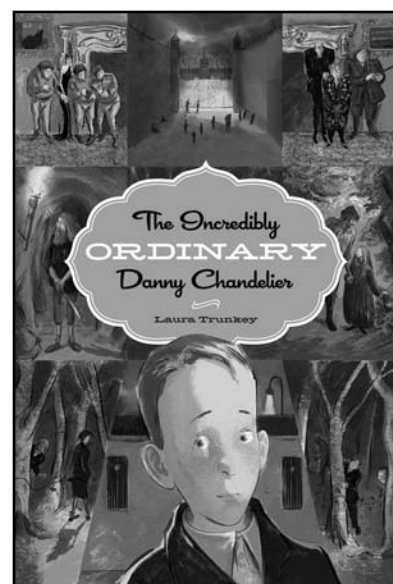
K.V. Johansen

Sybertooth Inc., 2008, \$9.99

ISBN 9780973950588

A collection for adults and older teens, *The Storyteller and Other Tales* takes readers on a journey through exotic worlds and times. Demon bears take human shape and devils walk in the north of a world where every hill hosts a god and every river and spring, a goddess. Ulfleif, a warrior-princess who would rather carry a lyre than a sword, is drawn into an unfinished tale by the storyteller Moth, and old lays of vengeance and betrayal wake into bloody new life around her. In all these tales, the common thread is otherness – other worlds, other times, other ways of looking at heroism and tragedy, faith and betrayal, and victory.

K.V. Johansen is the author of many YA books, including *Nightwalker*, which won the 2008 Ann Connor Brimer Award for Children's Literature. She lives in Sackville, New Brunswick.



The Incredibly Ordinary Danny Chandelier

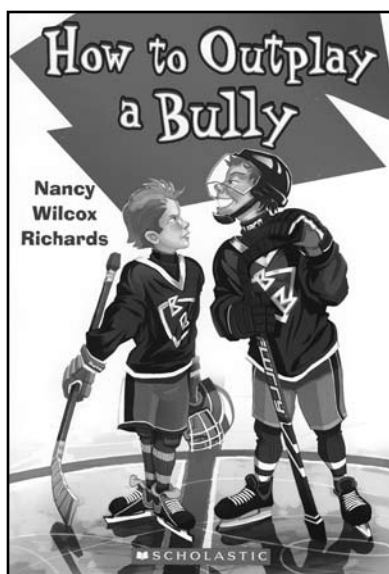
Laura Trunkey

Annick Press, 2008, \$19.95

ISBN 9781554511396

Unlike his sisters, Danny Chandelier isn't brainy, good-looking or athletic. When his parents discover a boarding school where "being not so good will finally be good enough," they pack him off to Lily Brook in Poplovastan. Danny discovers there is no school – only a compound with windowless buildings. There are whispers about a ghost, meals of leftover scraps, and endless days spent cutting a path through a magical forest ... a forest that fights back. When a friend disappears into those woods, Danny goes after him. There, he discovers unexpected wonders: wishing wells, magic spells and volcanoes that erupt lost children. Poplovastan turns out to be one extraordinary place, where Danny thrives in a not-so-ordinary way.

Laura Trunkey works as an educational assistant in an elementary school in Victoria, BC. This is her first book.



**How to Outplay A Bully/
Le bon et la brute**

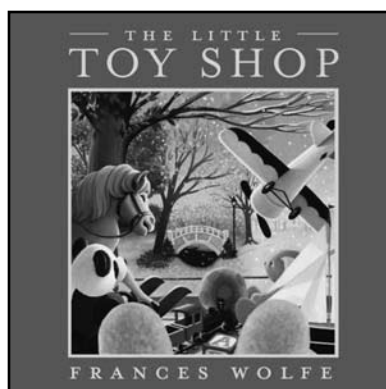
Nancy Wilcox Richards

Scholastic Canada, 2008, \$5.99/\$7.99

ISBN 9780545993845

Tony is excited about signing up for hockey. But right from the start, he's bullied by a teammate. In various ways, Tony is supported by a neighbour, his school friends and the coach. As the bullying continues at practices and games, he begins to learn how to deal with it. This is an early chapter book about a serious matter, but the tone is funny, light and positive, and in the end, the bully's behaviour changes and both boys learn social skills that will stand them in good stead in the future.

Nancy Wilcox Richards is a teacher who lives in Bridgewater with her husband, two kids, a spoiled golden retriever and a cantankerous cat. She is the author of *How to Tame a Bully*, as well as the Farmer Joe series of picture books, *Farmer Joe's Hot Day*, *Farmer Joe Goes to the City* and *Farmer Joe Baby-sits*, all published by Scholastic Canada Ltd.



The Little Toy Shop

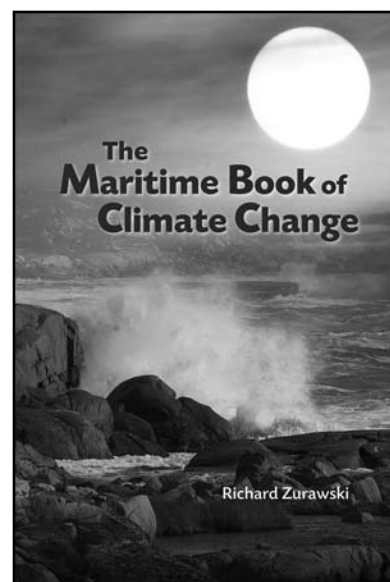
Frances Wolfe

Tundra, 2008, \$21.99

ISBN 978-0887768651

Come and explore Mr. Kringle's special little toy shop, where he spends his days helping every customer find just the right toy. When a box arrives at the shop with a small stuffed bunny inside, Mr. Kringle is determined to find him a loving home in time for Christmas. Could the little girl who peers through the shop window be the one to provide just the home he seeks? Frances Wolfe's vibrant paintings complement her poignant prose in this heartwarming tale of love lost and found for the young and the young at heart.

Frances Wolfe makes her home in Portuguese Cove. Her first book, *Where I Live*, won the Ann Connor Brimer Award for children's literature as well as the Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Award for illustration. Her second, *One Wish*, was awarded the Mayor's Award for Excellence in Book Illustration. Frances is a self-taught artist and an accomplished storyteller, puppeteer, and children's programmer.



The Maritime Book of Climate Change

Richard Zurawski

Pottersfield Press, 2008, \$16.95

ISBN 978-1895900972

What would you do if the Maritimes were transformed into a mini ice age? What if the Gulf Stream shut down and we were plunged into a twenty-year winter? Can this really happen? Atlantic Canada has the dubious distinction of being the global canary of climate change. By a strange confluence of geography and meteorology, not only will we feel the effects of climate change first and most dramatically, but we will also experience a host of seemingly contradictory climate and weather effects.

Richard Zurawski is a meteorologist, documentary filmmaker, and television and radio personality who has called Halifax home for almost two decades. His first book – *Richard Zurawski's Book of Maritime Weather* – was also published by Pottersfield. Richard is currently heard predicting the fickle Maritime weather on Rogers Radio in Halifax, Moncton and Saint John.

Who's doing what?

■ **Racked** – members' work appearing in the astonishing array of journals, mags and ephemeral electronica fleeting across your editor's desk to assemble alphabetically in the Fed Reference Library (open 9:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday for your amusement and edification): **Ryan Turner's** short story "The Bear" has been accepted for *Front & Centre's* winter edition and "Isaac the Brain" graces the October issue of *Inscribed* ... that's five from his linked story collection to date ... about time for a publisher to consider his first story collection, eh? It was with great gusto that **Phil Moscovitch** digested his front cover bylined pieces in October's *Reader's Digest* – "The Secret Men Won't Admit" examined men and depression and Lantz volunteer firefighters were the focus of his second feature; the Fall *LRC* (*Literary Review of Canada*) features a new poem from **Sue Goyette** and **Dean Jobb's** look at a new book by Rick Rennie that focuses on unsafe workplace issues in Newfoundland; when *Rural Delivery* plops into Ma Fed's rural route delivery box, there's a breeze of all that's green and growing, most recently stretching from **Gary Saunders'** reminiscences of growing up with hens, one of whom defied expectation and neighbourhood bullies by taking to the water and swimming, to **Frank Macdonald's** tentative flirtation with New Zealand approaches to vermiculture septic alternatives; *Strange Horizons* features a new story from **Joanne Merriam**; **Carol Moriera** had a pre-election conversation with incumbent Halifax Mayor Peter Kelly between the pages of *Halifax* magazine; 'A

Breath Before the Collision" is the first time that **Jennifer Stone** has seen her byline in professional print in *Other Voices* ... bravo Jennifer ... there's only one first-time, but you'll love the second, and the third is ...; **Karen Kelloway** is writing a regular business coaching column for *Atlantic Business Magazine* that will make its debut in the January issue; **Kate Watson** reviewed Ship's Company's production of *Bump* by Richard Merrill (a powerful recollection of the days following the "bump" at the Dominion Coal Company's mine in Springhill in October of 1958), for Canada's independent labour magazine, *Our Times*; a Christmas story from **Heddy Johannesen** is set to appear in *Canadian Stories*; storing veggies is a fall focus and who better to offer solutions than **Jodi DeLong** with root cellars in the Fall edition of *Saltsapes*, with **Sandra Phinney** taking us all away to Brier Island and **Darcy Rhyno** getting to know Gene Fowler, animated cartoon maker, on the closing page; "Colouring the Road to Calvary" by **Donna D'Amour** makes a timely appearance just before Christmas in *Chicken Soup for the Catholic Soul*.

■ **On the launch pad and heading for the stratosphere:** Following on from the uproar she created with *Quid Pro Quo* – shortlisted everywhere and winner of the Arthur Ellis Award for Juvenile Crime Fiction – **Vicki Grant** stages a return-by-popular demand of Cyril MacIntyre, teen sleuth for his ex-street-kid lawyer Mom in *Res Judicata* (Orca) with opening arguments heard at her October launch; **Joan Baxter** says there's an African saying – "Before you rush in to help your neighbour, remove the straw from his eye" –

which informed the writing of her new book, *Dust From Our Eyes: An Unblinkered Look at Africa*, which she launched in Halifax to a SRO crowd in October before heading out to read at the Ottawa International Writers Festival and at York University. Her publisher, Wolsak & Wynn, has used stream casting at their website (www.wolsakandwynn.ca/section.asp?id=9) to promote the book to marvelous effect; Weaving a jam-packed room at the Lord Nelson into her spell, **Donna Morrissey** launched her latest, *What They Wanted* (Penguin) in Halifax before hitting the road for Greenwood, Montreal, Calgary, Ottawa, Vancouver and Toronto, where she appeared at the International Festival of Authors at Harbourfront and participated in Cocktails and Conversation, hosted by the LCBO (that would be the Liquor Control Board of Ontario); the Centre Courtyard at the Federation will be a-buzz and a-bubble on November 6 to greet the arrival of **Jill MacLean's** first young adult novel, *The Nine Lives of Travis Keating*, from Fitzhenry & Whiteside. Not one to waste lives, Jill's already hard at work on the contracted sequel; **Lesley Crewe** spent most of October crisscrossing the province with her new Vagrant novel, *Ava Comes Home*. After a bubbling launch at Frog Hollow Books, Ava went home to signings in Sydney with side jaunts to relatives in Antigonish and New Glasgow; **K.V. Johansen** was at the Graphic Novels and YA Reading Booth at Word on the Street Halifax. Hard to miss her in the Captain Star T-shirt and gleaming blonde locks. She was launching her latest book, *The*

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Storyteller and Other Tales, a collection of tales of other worlds, other times, other ways of looking at heroism and tragedy ... perfect stuff for the long winter's night ahead; **Carol Little** launched her debut novel, *Hide Your Live Away*, originally drafted during the International 3-Day Novel Competition, in the glimmering Vere Studio & Gallery in Summerside, PEI, before heading on to Ottawa for further readings; **Bill Conall**, who made the escape from Ontario and is now ensconced in Cape Breton, will see the release of his new book, *The Rock in the Water*, from Hidden Brook Press this fall; not long after she completed her mentorship with **Carol Bruneau**, **Laura Trunkey** wended her way west but she didn't stop writing ... and if miles were no object, we all wanted to be there at Union Pacific Coffee House in Victoria to toast the release of her first novel for young adults, *The Incredibly Ordinary Danny Chandelier*.

■ **Kudos ... and break out the bubbly!** — Among those shortlisted for the 2008 Nova Scotia Masterworks Awards are **Don Domanski** for his Governor General's Award/Atlantic Poetry Prize winning collection *All Our Wonder Unavenged* (Brick) and **Jennifer Overton** for *God's Middle Name*, a play that she developed from her book *Snapshots of Autism: a family album* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers). Now in its third year, the Award will be announced November 25 and each finalist presented with \$1,000; **Lina Gardiner's** debut novel, *Grave Illusions*, has won a Daphne du Maurier Award from the Romance Writers of America, placing first in the Fantasy, Futuristic and Paranormal category. She's looking forward to the release this fall of her second book in the Jess Vandermire vampire hunter series;

Dave Johnson has recently won the We Are Many fiction contest! He worked on the story during a Rural Writes workshop with **Susan Haley**, who encouraged him to send it out ... **Scott Campbell's** story was a runner-up; the annual harvest of children's choice book award nominations is beginning to roll in: first out of the gates are **Pam Hickman** with *Turtle Rescue* and *Animals Hibernating*, **Vicki Grant** with *Quid Pro Quo* and **Allison Maher** with *I, the Spy* ... all nominated for British Columbia's Red Cedar Awards; **K.V. Johansen** has been nominated for Atlantic Canada's Hackmatack Award for *Torrie and the Snake-Prince*.

■ **No time to Budge** — keeping up with a schedule that would lay an adolescent low, **Budge Wilson** has been dancing a fancy dance ever since the release of *Before Green Gables* last spring. Summer found her at the National Conference of School Administrators talking about the writing process (about all she has time for these days: not many moments to steal quietly away to the writing cabin!) before she headed off to become Writer in Residence for a week in Charlottetown at the Montgomery Conference; thence to readings, workshops and signings at Read by the Sea in River John, Books at the Bistro in Saint John, the Annapolis Valley Library Conference in Bridgetown, and in Red Deer, Alberta; returning to Halifax to be feted at Word on the Street (... er, Pier?), off to a keynote at Trent University in Peterboro, Ontario, and concluding October in the blaze of delivering the MasterMinds Lecture for Dalhousie University Alumni Association, the august body that also presented Budge with an Alumni Achievement Award.

■ Les Editions David has accepted **Katia Canciani's** second novel with a publication date for next March. Her first novel, *Un jardin en Espagne. Retour au Généralife*, which appeared in 2006, was shortlisted for the Prix des lecteurs Radio-Canada 2007 and for the Prix Éloizes 2007.

■ A fascinating collaboration between **Anne Simpson** and John Berridge has been lighting up the space at Lyghesome Gallery in Antigonish. Photographer Berridge is exploring natural light and refraction with a camera; Anne, with words.

■ *Kiss the Joy As It Flies* has gone into a second printing and has bussed **Sheree Fitch's** travels around the country. Calgary International Wordfest scheduled a special interview event that featured Sheree with her Vagrant editor, Sandra McIntyre, on a stage shared with Andrew Davidson and his Random House editor for *Gargoyle*, Anne Collins, to talk about the author/editor relationship. From Calgary it was on to the Vancouver International Festival and sharing the stage with Marina Endicott and Austin Clark to talk about *Lives of Girls and Women*. Sheree's currently inhabiting the skin of an 18-year-old boy for a new YA novel for Doubleday, and she's looking forward to a reissue of *Sleeping Dragons All Around* which first appeared in 1989 and will be re-released through Nimbus.

■ Live Bait Theatre in Sackville, New Brunswick, staged the world premiere of *There is a Land of Pure Delight* by **Don Hannah** in October. Based on the true story of Henry Aline and Amos Babcock, whose

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paths crossed in 1805, it's a story of the nature of faith in our world today. Aline was a Protestant mystic and Babcock one of his followers, who became the first man hanged for murder in the newly created province of New Brunswick. The play centers on the harrowing journey of Mercy Hall who abandoned her husband and children in order to seek a mystical union with God. Don takes a theatrical look at why faith is both necessary and dangerous.

■ After taking a Merrit Award for Outstanding New Play last year in Theatre Nova Scotia's annual awards, **Jennifer Overton** is on the road with *God's Middle Name*, produced by In Good Company Theatre. Not content simply with playwright's kudos, Jennifer also stars with Christian Murray. An evocative parable about crashing into the unknown, and accepting the unknowable, *God's Middle Name* is the compelling tale of a mother's journey through the uncharted territory of raising an autistic child. The production opens in Vernon, British Columbia, before heading cross country with stops in Banff, Edmonton, Kitchener, Brampton, Deep River, Perth, and Barrie before finishing up with a tour of the Maritimes.

■ And while applauding things theatrical: local members of the Playwrights Guild of Canada, including **Josh MacDonald**, **Virginia Hayden** and **Carol Sinclair**, took the spotlight late in October at The Space on Agicola Street in Halifax to share work.

■ **Carol Bruneau** is giddy at the prospect of becoming the first-ever Writer in Residence in a new program being inaugurated by the

Dalhousie English Department in January. She's also buoyed by the sale of foreign rights in Germany for her most recent novel, *Glass Voices*.

■ Tightrope Press has decided to take the pulse of Canadian poetry on an annual basis, beginning with the release of *The Best in Canadian Poetry 2008* early in the new year. Advisory Editor Molly Peacock will provide continuity from year to year, and this past year she's been working with Guest Editor Stephanie Bolster. Members whose work is charted for the inaugural volume are **Brian Bartlett**, **John Wall Barger** and **E. Alex Pierce**.

■ On the West Coast, **Ann Graham Walker** is delighted with the anthology mode and is included in the first anthology of contemporary BC poetry in 31 years with her poem, "Tom's Old Boots." She's also included in a chapbook, *A Small Grace*, with a collection of poets who have been involved in a master class led by Patrick Lane.

■ Esther and **Richard Provencher** were delighted to see the release of their new fantasy adventure novel, *Into the Fire*, which may be ordered online at www.synergebooks.com.

■ **Carole Langille** has a new book on the horizon. *When I Always Wanted Something* (Mercury Press) is a collection of short stories which will be launched at the Special Collections Reading Room, 5th Floor, Killam Library at Dalhousie University at 7:30 p.m. on April 30, 2009. Get your new date book now!

■ If a picture is worth a thousand words, **Margo Metcalfe** is one of the finest short story artists around. Her new exhibiton of photographs at the Jo Beale Gallery in Peggy's Cove

featured small collections of objects that people keep in their homes – objects imbued with the memories/stories of their collectors.

■ Since moving cross-country from Victoria just over 10 years ago to settle in the Annapolis Valley, **Sandra and Ron Lightburn** found themselves once again drawing inspiration from the surrounding landscape. Acclaimed for his illustrations that often drew from his West Coast landscape (*Waiting for Whales*, *Eagle Dreams*, *How Smudge Came ...*), Ron had previously collaborated with his wife Sandra on *Driftwood Cove*, set amidst the wild beauty of a Pacific beach. As they looked out their Valley kitchen window at the brilliant fall colours, they noticed a curious phenomenon ... and *The Pumpkin People* began to fall into place. The book from Nimbus was launched in Kentville on the first day of the Harvest Festival, and readings, signings, colouring contests have followed. Definitely a treat from the Lightburns this Hallowe'en.

■ In honour of **Joyce Barkhouse's** 95th birthday, **Marcia Harding** – retired teacher and writer – had a splendid idea. Marcia had read *Pit Pony* to hundreds of students over the year, and knew it was the perfect read-aloud book. So she assembled a team – Richard Donat to narrate, **Richard Rudnicki** to illustrate, **Zoe Lucas** with a photo of Gem, the Sable Island Pony – and an audio version of *Pit Pony* is now available. It's the perfect gift at \$20 and may be ordered by e-mail at pitponyaudiobook@hotmail.com

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■ **Brad Kelln** will see the release of his latest thriller online. *In the Tongues of the Dead* can be seen at www.new.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2390280357 where you, the reader, can work with Brad as the plot thickens.

■ Written, directed and produced by **Sylvia Hamilton**, with music by Joe Sealy, *The Little Black School House* aired on Knowledge Network at the start of the fall season. Many don't know that the last segregated school house in Nova Scotia didn't close its doors until 1983. *The Little Black School House* tells the story of the women, men and children who studied and who taught at Canada's segregated schools.

■ 2008 marks the centennial of the publication of *The Tent Dwellers* by Albert Bigelow Paine, a book that chronicled a canoe and trout fishing expedition the author made through the interior of southwest Nova Scotia in the early 1900s. A celebration of the publication was held from May to October on the south shore, that included a writing workshop led by **Joanne Jefferson**.

■ **Kathy-Diane Leveille's** looking forward to starting the new year with the release of her novel, *Let the Shadows Fall Behind You*, from Kunati Books.

■ Following on from the success of *How to Tame a Bully* (Scholastic Canada), **Nancy Wilcox Richards** has tied on her trainers to follow through with *How to Outplay a Bully*, both of which exemplify strategies she was able to employ for CBC TV recently as she talked with a group of 10 to 12 year olds pitched in battle for the Corp's new show, Canada's Super Speller.

■ When does the girl breathe? When Shauntay Grant's not cajoling harmony from the NS Mass Choir, lending dulcet tones to CBC Radio-One's *All the Best*, a cappella-versing with the Word is Bond spoken word collective, collaborating with **Susan Tooke** on *Up Home* (Nimbus) she's boarding a plane for a 'quick' hop to Newcastle, Australia to participate in Write! National Young Writres' Festival. Now in its tenth year, NYAWF is a DIY, hands-on conversation that celebrates with 'bogan stubby-holder poetry, radical new forms of decentred publishing and hyper-nerdy discussion of plot and character development.'

New Members

The Directors, members and staff of WFNS are delighted to extend the warmest welcome, or welcome back!, to the following member writers:

Diane Aucoin, Digby
Kate Baltais, Hopewell
Doug Booth, Brossard, QC
Cheryl Ann Carpenter, Dartmouth
Kathy Chapman, Dartmouth
Tom Cogswell, Aylesford
Madeline Reid Comeau, Halifax
Bill Conall, Baddeck
Bob Connon, Wolfville
Brittany Curran, Halifax
Joan Dawson, Halifax
Denise Dixon, Crowells
Janet Donohue, Dartmouth
Paul Ford, Dartmouth
Ivan Fraser, Glen Margaret
Rosemary Furlong, Mount Uniacke
Brad Hall, Granville Ferry
Margaret Hastings-James, Halifax
Norma Johnson, Truro
A. Maureen Kempton, Halifax
Carol Little, Kensington, PEI
Bosko Loncarevic, Bedford
Mary-Elizabeth Luka, Halifax
Elizabeth Lusby, Halifax
Ian M. MacIntyre, Antigonish

Margaret MacKay, Trenton
Theresa MacKay, Bras d'Or
Alex MacLean, Salmon River
Clare Marshall, Halifax
Dolores McEvoy, Halifax
Carmel Mikol, Baddeck
Samantha Muise, Dartmouth
Taryn O'Brien, Kentville
Cheryl O'Neill, Enfield
Kathy Peill, Halifax
Alicia Petroff, Trenton
Munju Ravindra, Halifax
Tim Reeves-Horton, Port Medway
Tom Sheppard, Caledonia
Paula Simon, Porters Lake
Scott Vrooman, Halifax
M. Cecilia Webb, Lunenburg

Markets

■ **Crow Toes Quarterly:** (www.crowtoesquarterly.com) A literature magazine published in Richmond, BC, for children ages eight to 13. Content consists of short stories, poetry, and artwork primarily by Canadian authors and artists. "It is presented in a sophisticated, highly imaginative style designed to open minds and challenge creativity."

■ **Black Woman and Child:** c/o NuBeing International, P.O. Box 47045, 300 Borough Drive, Toronto, ON M1P 4P0 (<http://nubeing.com/bwac/>) Canada's only culture and lifestyle magazine for the family-focused African woman. A pregnancy and parenting magazine strongly rooted in African culture, BWAC tackles the practical and political sides of parenting from a unique cultural viewpoint to engage readers simply not reached by other publications. Writers guidelines on website.

Books beyond bars

by Kate McKenna

Every day, on my way to the photocopier, I walk past the Fed's table of pamphlets, notices, and the stack of back issues of literary magazines. I often imagine all the work that went into each journal: the hours of writing, the cups of coffee and tea, the editorial meetings with stale muffins, the letters of rejection, the signatures on cheques, the late layout hours fiddling with InDesign – all that human and technological momentum moving forward toward this slim volume, now lying out, free for the taking. I hoped that each one would find an appreciative home, but with my bookshelves already brimming with unread gems, I knew I could not be that home. Guiltily, I continued to skulk by, eyeing that stack of hard work.

Well, lucky me, I have found them a happy home. As a volunteer with Books Beyond Bars, a prison library project, I occasionally lead poetry writing workshops. I loaded 10 journals into my old knapsack, hopped on my bike, and headed west to Nehiley House, a residential facility for female offenders, to facilitate a workshop. What followed was a totally revelatory, inspiring workshop and to cap it all off, I presented the residents of the house with this small library of literary magazines. They were devoured immediately.

Books Beyond Bars is a Halifax initiative that goes into the women's section of the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility in Burnside twice monthly to improve access to books, writing, and literature for incarcerated women. For the last four years BBB has also run a Read Aloud program – incarcerated mothers tape record themselves reading children's books and then send the book and tape to their children at home. And the volunteers at Books Beyond Bars collected writing, artwork and poetry from women in prison to create a publication called *Words Without Walls*, which was self-published in 2008.

The Central NS Correctional Facility is a provincial facility for minor offences with a maximum-security design, even though authorities have acknowledged that in general women prisoners pose a very low risk to public safety. The women from various Nova Scotia communities are serving terms of less than two years or are awaiting trial. Worldwide, women are the fastest growing prison population, and poverty, abuse, mental health disabilities and drug addiction play a role in most offenses. Poor mothers, whose primary offences are most

often fraud, theft, prostitution or non-payment of fines, are desperately trying to provide for their children, and then end up isolated from their families. Racism also plays a role in incarceration – Aboriginal people are nine times as likely as non-Aboriginal people to go to prison. 72% of provincially sentenced women have histories of physical and/or sexual abuse, and 69% of women in prison in Canada indicated that drugs and/or alcohol played a major role in their criminalization.

Incarceration serves to perpetuate poverty and cycles of abuse due to lack of programming and a penalization structure based on punishment instead of support. Books Beyond Bars helps to fill a gap within this structure. The library in the Correctional Facility is inadequate (filled with romance novels and *Reader's Digest*), with limited access for inmates. Books Beyond Bars brings materials that provide valuable resources (health, self-help, and education) and promoting literacy, supplying novels and poetry of all reading levels and subjects according to individual women's requests. The writing workshops give these women the opportunity to express themselves through writing and art and Books Beyond Bars publishes their work. *Words Without Walls* allows the women to share their words and experiences of prison with people outside, as well as with other prisoners.

BBB is one of many independent books to prisoners groups in North America. It is however, one of the few projects that actually meets with inmates to support their needs. This allows for a meaningful connection to be made between people inside and outside of the prison system. BBB offers support that is non-judgmental and outside of the client/expert-worker model that pervades these women's lives. We hope that the work we do and the materials we bring in give these women hope and strength to survive an unjust system and to use information and creative expression as a tool for change in their lives.

We are forever in need of blank writing journals and self-help books (especially about overcoming physical abuse, addiction, and childhood trauma). If you have anything that fits this description that you would like to donate, please contact us at booksbeyondbars@gmail.com. You can buy *Words Without Walls* at Venus Envy on Barrington Street, Halifax, or through us, for \$10. ■ Kate McKenna is Membership & Outreach Coordinator at VANS, Visual Arts Nova Scotia. She is a visual artist, writer and volunteer with Books Beyond Bars.

Be a good property owner

Every time you put pen to paper and perspire a fiction into fact on the page, you are creating intellectual property. As the property holder, you have certain inalienable rights. These are called your copyrights. The property you've created is intellectual property, and believe me, it's a growth industry, and as real as the towels in the hotel room that you don't want stolen. You have the right to use your creations and to benefit from their exploitation. You have the right to license your work to publishers. Depending on your agreement with that publisher, you also have the right to license others to photocopy selections from your work.

In Canada, and in many other jurisdictions, copyright holders have joined together in collectives and rights societies which charge a modest levy to give permission to those who wish to use copyright materials. The Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency, or Access Copyright, administers the rights in published work in Canada outside of Quebec (creators there have joined together in Copibec).

As a creator of intellectual property, it's vital that you register with Access Copyright and let your collective know where you live. Only by doing so can the Agency send you the royalties earned from the photocopying of your work that is reported to Access Copyright. You also become part of the collective of creators eligible for the annual repertoire payment.

What's a repertoire payment? Well, oversimplified: for practical reasons, not all of the works copied are tracked by the user. Even in cases where the works are tracked by the user, and despite Access Copyright's best efforts, there are times when the agency is not able to identify the specific work that has been copied or who the publisher or author is. In these cases, the royalties are allocated to a repertoire pool. The royalties in the repertoire pool are distributed to creators and publishers

annually. These distributions are called repertoire payments.

The administrative overhead for the collective is provided as a part of the licensing fees negotiated, so there is no charge to you, a copyright owner, to register. And it's a whole lot simpler than filing a tax return and the cheques move in a more interesting direction. So if you're not registered, be a good copyright holder: do it today. Visit www.accesscopyright.ca ■

U of M seeks Writer- or Storyteller-in-Residence

A professional writer or storyteller is sought for a four-month term position (Sept 1 – Dec 20/2009) of Writer/Storyteller-in-Residence at the Centre for Creative Writing and Oral Culture at the University of Manitoba. Application deadline is December 1. The incumbent will provide mentorship and practical artistic advice to developing writers and storytellers at the University of Manitoba, and give a limited number of readings or performances on campus. The remaining time will be devoted to the writer or storyteller's own artistic projects. Salary is commensurate with credentials and experience. Return transportation will be provided. Further information is available at http://umanitoba.ca/centres/ccwoc/writer_in_residence/index.html ■

Banff Centre deadlines

Check out the Banff Centre website for the details and deadlines for next year's Literary Arts Programs (www.banffcentre.ca/writing/programs) – January 30, 2009, for Spoken Word 2009; February 2 for Writing with Style (Spring) 2009; March 15 for Literary Journalism; April 24 for Science Communications; May 13 for the fall session of Writing with Style; May 22 for Mountain Writing; and June 19 for the Wired Writing Studio 2009-2010. ■

Humber School for Writers

January 30, 2009 is the deadline to apply for Humber's Correspondence Program in Creative Writing – http://creativeandperformingarts.humber.ca/content/writers_correspondence.html ■

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Louise Christie, Heritage Maker Consultant
902-826-2004

or from my website www.pleasureofprint.com

Journaling ...

Grain magazine

A handsome quarterly based in Saskatoon, *Grain* magazine has been publishing new writing from Canada and abroad since 1973. The current editorial staff includes Sylvia Legris, Editor-in-Chief; Terry Jordan, Fiction Editor; and Mari-Lou Rowley, Poetry Editor; all of whom have taken their posts within the last year.

Fiction and poetry is *Grain's* main focus, but they will occasionally publish creative non-fiction and drama. Issues are usually loosely themed, such as "Industry," "Evidence," "Scorn," or "Look Around!" Although they do not list any subject limitations, before submitting your work to *Grain* — or to any literary journal — read back issues and become familiar with the publication's particular aims and aesthetic. Sample issues of *Grain* can be purchased for ten bucks through their website (www.grainmagazine.ca).

Grain accepts typed, unpublished work which has not been simultaneously submitted elsewhere. Writers may submit up to eight poems, two short stories, or 30 pages of a novel-in-progress. They have a nine-month reading period, accepting submissions from September 1 to May 31 only. As with all reputable journals, they purchase first Canadian serial rights only, and copyright remains with the author. Payment ranges from \$50 to \$225, depending on the length of the piece.

Use one-sided 8½ x 11 inch paper. Poetry may be single-spaced, but fiction must always be double spaced. Type your name and address on the title page or first page of each work. On subsequent pages, type your last name and the abbreviated title of the piece. Number every page of a poem or story other than the first page. Address the appropriate editor in your cover letter and include: the number of poems or stories you're submitting, your address, phone number, e-mail, and a brief description (1 or 2 lines) of your writing history.

Grain does not accept e-mail submissions, but it's a good idea to include your e-mail address, as many editors prefer to send notices electronically. NEVER USE STAPLES. If you are compelled to use something, use a paperclip only. Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope (SASE). *Grain* receives more than 200 submissions a month, and will usually respond in 2 to 4 months. Hold onto your second submission until you've received notice on your first one.

Send to: PO Box 67, Saskatoon, SK, S7K 3K1.

For more information about *Grain*, including the annual Short Grain contest, visit their website at www.grainmagazine.ca

A comprehensive listing of North American literary journals, with links to submission guidelines, is available at the WFNS website: www.writers.ns.ca/periodicals.html ■

Contests

■ The 2009 Herman Voaden National Playwriting

Competition: Department of Drama, Queens University, Kingston ON K7L 3N6. Deadline November 28. Details and entry form on website (www.queens.ca/drama/voaden/Voaden.htm). First prize \$3,000; second \$2,000. The two winning plays receive a one-week workshop and public reading with a professional cast. Entry fee \$40. Looking for full-length plays in English. Plays cannot have been produced, published, contracted or commissioned by a professional theatre.

■ Prairie Fire 2008 writing

contests: (www.prairiefire.ca/contests.html) Deadline November 30. **The Banff Centre Bliss Carman Poetry Award** (up to 3 poems per entry, max 150 lines). **Short fiction** (1 story per entry, 15,000 words max). **Creative non-fiction** (1 story per entry, 5,000 words max). Entry fee \$27. 3 prizes in each contest: 1st \$1,250, 2nd \$500, 3rd \$250. Details on website.

■ **The Fiddlehead:** The Fiddlehead Contest, Campus House, 11 Garland Court, UNB PO Box 4400, Fredericton NB, E3B 5A3 (www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Fiddlehead). Details on website. Entry fee \$30. Deadline December 1 postmark. **Ralph Gustafson Prize for Best Poem**, \$1,000 first prize, \$500 each for 2 runners-up (one entry is up to 3 poems with no more than 100 lines per poem). **Best Story** \$1,000 first prize, \$500 each for 2 runners-up (one entry is a short story of up to 25 pages). The winning entries will be published in the Spring 2009 issue. The winning authors will be paid for publication in addition to their prizes.

Markets, etc.

The Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia does not necessarily endorse the markets or competitions listed here. Please make every effort to check any market or competition before submitting material. Read several issues of the magazine first. Publishers usually sell single, sample copies of back issues and you can check their websites for back issues and writers' guidelines. Your local library has public access computers. A good place to look for markets is Places for Writers – www.placesforwriters.com – a website maintained by Canadian writer Barbara Fletcher.

■ **Our Hockey Net:** (http://hockeynet.typepad.com/hockey_net) An online community for parents of minor hockey (A, AA, and AAA, house league or AE/select) players in Canada to read and share informative articles about the lifestyle of minor hockey. Its audience includes parents of girls and boys at all levels of minor hockey. Pays \$30 for up to 500 words. Overall theme is education and inspiration, so looking for service articles of broad interest to parents of minor hockey parents – lifestyle, team spirit, team memories, etc. Welcomes first time and established writers. Detailed submission guidelines (http://hockeynet.typepad.com/hockey_net/submissions.html).

■ San Diego City Works Press is looking for manuscripts for its anthology, **Lavandería: A Mixed Load of Women, Wash and Word:** Fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and other dirty deeds signifying sorting, washing, ironing, folding laundry, and life. See www.cityworkspress.org/submit.html for submission guidelines. Deadline: December 15. Maximum: 5,000 words or 5 poems. Include bio.

E-mail Word DOC submission only to lavanderiazspot@gmail.com.

■ **Sea Stories**, an international online quarterly (www.seastories.org), seeks poetry, personal essays, artwork, and music about the sea, coast, and sea life. Contributors come from a range of backgrounds. Current and back issues, submission guidelines, and writing suggestions on website, click on “further information.” Published by Blue Ocean Institute (www.blueocean.org). Welcomes memoir, poetry, descriptive prose, and imaginative nonfiction, as well as photographs, drawings, or other visual arts.

■ **Scroll** is a print, PDF and online magazine for web professionals. (<http://scrollmagazine.com>). Features in depth articles on concepts and practice for web professionals, interviews with leading industry thinkers, book reviews, and more. “The key to Scroll is high quality, insightful writing. If you think you can deliver that for our readers, then please drop us a line. We are also on the look out for graphic design and photographic works to feature in the publication. If you are interested in having your work featured in Scroll, please contact us.”

■ **Ascent: yoga for an inspired life:** (www.ascentmagazine.com) A quarterly journal of yoga and engaged spirituality published in Montreal. Seeks writers with fresh, diverse perspectives and a story to tell. Prefers e-mail queries. Read writers guidelines on website before querying. Pays on average 20 cents a word. Deadline for story proposals for Issue 42 Faith (summer 2009) is January 8 – What is faith? What fuels faith? Collective faith and individual faith. Religion and how it's covered in the media. Is there a connection

between faith, hope and optimism? What about faith and gratitude? Losing faith and/or seeking faith – searching for something to put your faith into. Is faith a part of our genetic make-up – are we hard-wired to believe in something, whatever that thing is? Faith and trust: how are they different?

■ **The Walrus** (www.walrusmagazine.com) is a Canadian general-interest magazine with an international outlook. It's “committed to publishing the best work by the best writers from Canada and elsewhere on a wide range of topics for readers who are curious about the world.” Detailed writers guidelines on website.

■ **sub-TERRAIN Magazine:** P.O. Box 3008, MPO Vancouver, BC V6B 3X5 “A stimulating fusion of fiction, poetry, photography and graphic illustration from uprising Canadian, U.S. & International writers and artists” is published three times a year. Publishes contemporary and sometimes controversial fiction, poetry, non-fiction, and visual art. Submission deadline for Issue #52 (Spring 09), the “form” issue, is February 6. “We’re looking for (you guessed it) a variety of forms here, both old and new: haiku, sonnets, ghazals, polemics, satires, flash/sudden fiction, and more! Discussions and interpretations of ‘form’ are also encouraged: configurations, shapes, castings, compositions, patterns ... let your twisted minds run wild.”

■ **The Capilano Review:** 2055 Purcell Way, North Vancouver, B.C. V7J 3H5, (www.thecapilanoreview.ca). Interested in experimental, venturesome writing and art. Contributors are paid \$50 per published page to a maximum of \$200. Publishes three issues a year