

east word

The 2010-11 Mentorship apprentices

The 2010-11 WFNS Mentorship Program wrapped up at our June 4 AGM, with this year's four protégés delivering tantalizing tastes of their work from the podium. Katrina Nicholson, who worked with mentor Philip Roy, read from her YA manuscript "Born Yesterday," a highly original science fiction story concerning a time-travelling teenage girl. Catherine Cooper, mentored by Carol Bruneau, read from her novel "White Elephant." Anna Mancini presented the poems "The Eldest" and "Undergraduates," just two of the many pieces she developed with mentor Brian Bartlett. Jack Florek, who worked with mentor William Kowalski, read from his as yet untitled novel-in-progress. We asked these four future literary stars to tell us a bit about their experience and what makes their writing brains tick.

Catherine Cooper is a graduate of Concordia University's MA Creative Writing Program, where she completed "The Western Home," a collection of short stories about the American folk song "Home on The Range." She was recently a finalist for the *Glimmer Train* Short Story Award for New Writers, and her work has appeared in the *Headlight Anthology*, the *Soliloquies Anthology* and *New Fables Magazine*. She is currently working on her first novel with the support of the Nova Scotia government's Grants to Individuals Program.

What drew you to the WFNS Mentorship Program, and who did you work with?

I had just finished my MA at Concordia before moving to Halifax in September, and I was missing the mentorship of my thesis supervisor and the community of writers that I had in Montreal, so I thought the mentorship program would be a great opportunity to work one-on-one with an experienced writer as I wrote the first draft of my first novel.

My mentor was Carol Bruneau. I'm not sure how mentors and apprentices are paired, but I can't imagine a better person to have worked with. I feel so fortunate





WRITERS' FEDERATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

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HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA B3H 4F7

TEL: 902-423-8116

FAX: 902-422-0881

WWW.WRITERS.NS.CA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: NATE CRAWFORD

E-MAIL: DIRECTOR@WRITERS.NS.CA

PROGRAM OFFICER: HILLARY TITLEY

E-MAIL: PROGRAMS@WRITERS.NS.CA

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER: SUE GOYETTE

E-MAIL: EVENTS@WRITERS.NS.CA

WITS OFFICER: HEIDI HALLETT

E-MAIL: WITS@WRITERS.NS.CA

EASTWORD EDITOR: PEGGY AMIRAUT

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to have been able to get to know her and benefit from her insight, experience and encouragement, which got me through some of those inevitable moments of serious doubt.

Why/how did you start seriously writing?

I started writing short stories the summer after I finished my BA, and I used those stories to apply to the MA program at Concordia. That program turned out to be one of the best things I've ever done, and I think my lack of experience was actually an advantage in a lot of ways, because I didn't have an established idea of myself as a writer when I got there. So I found it easy to accept criticism and change my approach, and I wasn't as afraid of failing as I might have been if I'd been invested in the idea of being a writer from a young age.

Can you tell us a bit about the piece you worked on?

The piece I worked on is the first draft of a novel about a family who decide to leave behind their newly completed home in Nova Scotia to do humanitarian work in Sierra Leone, despite warnings that the country is in the early stages of a civil war. The story goes back and forth between what happens to them in Sierra Leone and what happened to make them leave Nova Scotia, and how those things are connected.

My father has spent a lot of time working as a surgeon in the developing world, and we lived in Sierra Leone for a short time at the beginning of the civil war. So I wanted to draw on those experiences in a fictional story while exploring some questions I have about the humanitarian impulse, among other things.

Is there a particular book or writer that caused you to fall in love with writing, or a book or writer you wish everyone could read?

There aren't any writers or books that I wish everyone would read, because different things will resonate with different people, but some of the books that have had a big impact on me are *Lolita*, *Barney's Version* and *The Corrections*. I also love the short stories of Flannery O'Connor, Mavis Gallant and George Saunders, and the travel writing and war correspondence of Ernie Pyle. ■



Katrina Nicholson was born in Halifax but raised in Cape Breton. She was first published at eight years old, but didn't want to be a writer when she grew up for fear of ending up living in a cardboard box. It was only once she tried and hated all the other careers that she came around. Now she has a degree in history from Dalhousie University, a diploma in Writing for Film and Television from the Vancouver Film School, five published short stories, two screenplays that have made the finals in several prominent contests, and a movie reviews website. She avoids living in a box by writing freelance and working in a library.

Why did you want to be mentored? What did you end up getting out of it?

I never had any formal training in novelling like I did in screenwriting, so after my novels got rejected a few times I thought I should check if I'm doing this right before I waste any more of my time. The mentorship program seemed like the obvious choice, because they match you up with someone who's already successful.

I got paired with Philip Roy, who also writes YA. He had all sorts of things to pass on about themes and markets and what to do *after* you get published, which I hadn't really thought about before. He also helped me get the second draft of my third novel to a place where it would appeal to me and, hopefully, the maximum number of people who are not me.

Why did you decide to try and make a go of writing?

Near the end of my senior year in college I had a bit of a quarter-life crisis when I stopped to figure out what one could do with my degree – answer: nothing. I had always written things for fun, but never wanted to try making a career out of it because there was no set path to follow to get into it. I tried engineering and physics and Russian language and history and oceanography and astronomy, and just about everything else instead. Although I'd get excited about imagining myself as an engineer or a translator or whatever, I wasn't interested enough to do only that forever.

I realized what I really needed was a job that would let me have a bunch of different careers ... or at least pretend to. So I didn't have much of a choice. It was writing or becoming like that guy from *Catch Me If You Can*.

What's this thing you were working on, anyway?

My project was a young adult science fiction novel called "Born Yesterday." It's about a teenage girl from the future who was programmed to be a fighter pilot when she was a baby and sent back in time to grow up. No one's supposed to even know she's there, but her minders get killed so she ends up living with a normal Halifax family and has no clue why she has this burning drive to fly fighter planes. World War II has just started, so when a young engineer from her own time comes back to get her, he ends up having to chase her across a continent at war.

If you knew you were going to be stranded on a deserted island, which books would you take with you?

Bridget Jones: the Edge of Reason because it always cracks me up, even though I've read it a million times, *Bleak House* so I can look smart in front of the monkeys, and *The SAS Survival Guide* for obvious reasons. ■



Jack Florek has been writing for more than 20 years. He earned his MFA in Theatre from Rutgers University in 2000. He is a recent recipient of a creation grant from the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, and Heritage. He has taught fiction and playwriting to both children and adults, worked as a theatre director, served as a senior editor of a weekly newspaper, worked as a theatre critic, sports reporter, business writer, medical reporter, freelance journalist, and pretty much anything else that has come down the pike. Jack worked with mentor William Kowalski on his first novel.

What drew you to the WFNS Mentorship Program?

I was aware of the WFNS and the Mentorship Program even before moving to Halifax in 2008. I'd found the website online while living in New Jersey and was impressed with the support offered to writers. I also came across several Canadian writers' online biographies and they had glowing things to say about the mentorship process at WFNS. It seemed perfect for me. I knew if I was lucky enough to get to Halifax, the Writers Federation and the mentorship program was something I hoped to become a part of. I applied as soon as I got here and the following year too. The third time was the charm.

Why/how did you start seriously writing?

I've always written. As a kid I kept secret journals and wrote stories and poems about football heroes, TV stars, and ghosts that I imagined were occupying our basement. Even as a little boy, writing was an attempt to try to make sense of the world around me.

In adulthood my initial writing experiences were primarily for the theatre. For a time I served as a kind of

playwright-in-residence of a loosely conceived guerrilla theatre company in Rochester, New York. We focused mostly on my original work – lucky me – as well as more obscure works from the likes of Sam Beckett, Sam Shepard, Artaud, Ionesco, Brecht, and that ilk.

Then I focused on straight ahead realism at graduate school at Rutgers University in New Jersey. This was pretty much the focus of the program. We wrote realistic plays, movie scripts, TV shows, radio plays, and whatever else came around the corner. After graduating I worked as a journalist and editor for a local weekly magazine, interviewing politicians, school board members, business types, and the occasional celebrity.

I've been writing fiction for about 10 years, mostly keeping it to myself. When my son was born in 2004, I continued working as a freelance journalist and focused hard on my fiction, starting several novels, novelettes, and poetry – keeping it all hidden in my journals or in a box under my bed.

Can you tell us about the piece you worked on?

The novel has been sliced and diced several times over the past few years. During the mentorship with Bill Kowalski it has been cut in half, refocused in terms of story, killed off, slapped around, stabbed in the chest, tickled, and taken out for drinks on the town. I'm hoping it's now emerging as something both beautiful and engaging. As yet untitled, it tells the story of a magician, a rationalist and a cynic, who clings to the reality and trickery of stage magic in order to find the source of real magic in the world.

Is there a particular book or writer that caused you to fall in love with writing?

I've always loved Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. Marsha Norman's play *Night Mother*. I love the novels, and pure guts of Beckett. Camus. Haruki Murakami's story telling. Carole Maso's poetic prose. I love Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg.

If there was an artist or writer I'd want everybody to experience, it would have to be two: Elizabeth Smart's *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept* and the films directed by John Cassavetes, particularly *Love Streams* and *Faces*. These artists were not afraid to risk it all in order to express themselves and didn't mind failing marvellously. They worked from the inside out, told the marketplace to go screw itself, and created some of the most beautiful and poignant work of the twentieth century. They are my ghosts. ■

Aнна Mancini was born in Sydney, Cape Breton, and raised by artists disguised as lawyers. She moved to Halifax in her early teens and attended Dartmouth High School, before receiving her BA from the University of King's College in 2010. Anna's writing highlights include the Sage Hill Writing Experience in Saskatchewan and being short-listed for *Descant's* Best Canadian Poem and doing mental somersaults in Sue Goyette's creative writing class. When she's not writing, Anna can likely be found running hills in Point Pleasant Park, wandering aimlessly at Video Difference, or churning up mud on a rugby pitch. Anna lives in Halifax with her partner, Madeleine and their cat, who has too embarrassing a name to put in writing.

What drew you to the WFNS Mentorship Program, and who did you work with?

I first heard of the Mentorship Program last summer, while I was working in Ottawa. I was feeling pretty lost at the time – I had just graduated with my BA and had no idea what I was going to do with my life. On top of that, I missed the ocean terribly. The Mentorship Program seemed like a sign that I was destined to return to the east coast and work on my poetry. The very day that I submitted my application to the program, I jumped on a plane and flew back to Halifax. I spent the winter and spring working with Brian Bartlett, who helped me find stability and routine in my creative-writing life.

Why/how did you start seriously writing?

My writing life grew out of a deep satisfaction in making my parents sit through hours and hours of elementary school talent shows, various poetry reading competitions and award ceremonies for young writers. Just kidding. Although that part was fun (sitting in stuffy gymnasiums and waiting in long lines for a chance to perform), my writing life has just always been with me. It was further enhanced when I took a poetry writing class at Dalhousie University taught by Sue Goyette and when I attended the Sage Hill Writing Experience in Saskatchewan, where I was mentored by Elizabeth Bachinsky.



Can you tell us a bit about the pieces you worked on?

You know the movie *The Big Chill*? Well, it's kind of like that, except without sexy Hollywood stars or a wonderful soundtrack. My poems came out of reflecting on the years spent in school, from elementary school right through university. Whenever I got stumped, I wrote about queens getting beheaded. Don't ask ... I think it has some subconscious connection to writers block.

Is there a particular book or writer that caused you to fall in love with writing?

The book *Awake and Dreaming* by Kit Pearson was the first book that made me truly respect the written word. One of the main characters in the novel is the ghost of a writer, so I suppose that may have had some influence. More than anything, the book left me with a feeling of awe. On top of that, the author is Canadian, so I felt it had a particular connection to home. ■

Mentorship Program 2011-12

Application deadline is Sept. 30, 2011

All applicants will be notified of the jury's decisions by late fall, 2011. Please note there is a \$25 application fee.

The Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia invites applications from writers who wish to be considered for apprentice positions in the 2011-12 mentor program for emerging Nova Scotia writers.

This program is designed to address the needs of developing writers who are committed to their writing and creative development. This is not an introductory creative writing course; it is an intensive, hands-on opportunity intended to provide a disciplined and focused period of work during which developing writers may stretch and hone their craft in a supportive environment. The program is designed to be of support to writers who are on the cusp of professional publication.

The Federation welcomes applications from writers working in all disciplines, including poetry, fiction, non-fiction, writing for children and young adults, and short fiction. The selection of the apprentices will be made by a jury of established writing professionals who will then match successful candidates with appropriate senior writers in this region. The decisions of this jury will be final.

How to Apply

There is no application form. To be eligible for this program, writers must provide the following information and materials.

Applications must be typewritten, double-spaced, on one side of standard 8¹/₂ x 11" paper. Do not staple your application. Do not send more material than is required. Apprentice applicants must be at least 19 years old.

In addition to supplying us with a 10-page sample of work in the genre in which you propose to work (samples that are longer than the requested 10 pages will be truncated at 10 pages), please send us a short cover letter (complete with postal address, e-mail and phone number where you may be reached during business hours) that addresses the following (don't squander on a quire of paper what can be reduced to a glittering paragraph):

How long have you been writing? Summarize your writing activity for the past 12 months.

Provide an outline of what you specifically propose to work on during the mentorship period.

Give a description of the work you'll have available for the mentorship (i.e. number of poems written, number of pages completed of your fiction or prose manuscript).

What goal have you set yourself to try and achieve during the relatively short time available (approximately five months)? Be specific.

Are you willing and able to make writing a priority during the full course of the program? If not, please don't apply.

Why do you need to participate in the mentor program?

Time Period

Participants will work together over a fairly flexible five month period starting in January 2012. Apprentices will be matched with mentors. WFNS provides an honorarium to the senior writer to work with the apprentice, who agrees to contribute time, work and effort without financial compensation during the mentorship period. At the conclusion of the mentoring cycle, emerging writers will participate in a celebratory public reading at the Federation.

Applications must be received by the Writers' Federation by 5 p.m. Friday, September 30, 2011. These applications must include a \$25 application fee. Faxed and e-mailed materials will not be accepted. Address your applications to:

Mentoring at the Fed,
Writers Federation of Nova Scotia
1113 Marginal Road, Halifax, NS, B3H 4P7.

For further information,
please call our office at 902-423-8116.

This program would not be possible without the generous support of the Canada Council for the Arts. ■

Who's doing what



■ In May **Shauntay Grant** (left) passed the title of HRM Poet Laureate to singer/songwriter/poet **Tayna Davis**, a two-time winner of the CBC National Poetry Face-off. You may have been one of the three million viewers who saw Tanya's videopoem, *How to be Alone*, on YouTube. With support from Bravo, Tanya collaborated with filmmaker Andrea Dorfman to produce the videopoem, which has been featured at numerous film festivals; it also won the Video of the Year at the Nova Scotia Music Awards in 2010. Tanya was commissioned by the Canada Games to write and perform a poem for the opening ceremonies. Tanya has three albums to her credit – *Make a List*, *Gorgeous Morning* (nominated for the 2009 ECMA female recording of the year), and *Clocks and Hearts Keep Going*. Acorn Press has just released her first book of poetry, *At First, Lonely*.

■ **Kathy Chisholm** promises to bring her purrfectly delicious cat cookies to the Keshen Goodman Library in Halifax on July 20 at 7 p.m. when she reads from her novel *Urban Tigers – Tales of a Cat Vet*. An enthusiastic crowd of more than 200 attended the launch in May at the Atlantica Hotel. Kathy will be appearing at the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association Annual Convention in July. The book is available at Bookmark on Spring Garden Road and through Amazon as a paperback or e-book. Kathy can be found at www.kathychisholm.ca.

■ The full page ad from HarperCollins Canada in *The Chronicle Herald* of June 4 was hard to miss. It announced, in very large type, **10 NOMINEES, 22,000 TEEN VOTES, 1 WINNER – CONGRATULATIONS TO VICKI GRANT, ACCLAIMED NOVA SCOTIA AUTHOR AND WINNER OF THE FOREST OF READING 2011 RED MAPLE AWARD!** Kids in grades 7 and 8, ranging in age from 11 to 15, in Ontario schools selected Vicki's book *Not Suitable for Family Viewing* as their favourite. It was also shortlisted for the CLA Young Adult Book Award, the Arthur Ellis Award, the Snow Willow Award (Saskatchewan), and the Manitoba Young Readers' Choice Award. Orca Books released *B Negative* in May. *Betsy Wickwire's Dirty Secret*, is due out from HarperCollins in August.

■ The Ship's Company Theatre in Parrsboro will feature *Sunnyside Café* by **Pam Calabrese MacLean**, from September 6 through 11. The Forerunners Playwrights' Theatre Production is directed by Lee J. Campbell and stars Sherry Smith portraying the life, difficulties, and joys of a small-town waitress. Pam, who lives in Antigonish, was featured at the 5th Annual 6 Women Playwrighting Theatre Festival. Her play, *Is It Wednesday*, which features two elderly women who make a surprising discovery while chatting at the bus stop, was produced as part of the annual festival in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in April.

■ **Wanda Campbell** of Wolfville is one of two honourable mentions in TWUC's Postcard Story competition, which essentially means she was one of the top three writers in the popular nationwide annual contest.

■ **Anne Emery's** latest book, *Children in the Morning*, not only won the Dartmouth Book Prize for Fiction, but also picked up a silver medal at the Independent Publisher Book Awards in New York.

■ **Heddy Johannesen** is happy to report a publisher has expressed interest in her book proposal, asking her for some revisions. *Circle Magazine* published two of her articles in its Summer 2011 Sacred Dance issue, and her article about hidden toxins in the home will be in the August-September issue of *The Source Health and Wellness Journal*.

■ **Julia McCarthy** of Kennetcook is on the short list of three in the poetry category of the Canadian Authors Association Literary Awards for *Return to Erebus* published by Brick Books. The winners will be announced at the CAA Literary Awards banquet on July 23, during the Leacock Summer Festival in Orillia, Ontario.

■ For two weeks in May **Shauntay Grant** and nine other writers were in Sackville, New Brunswick, for PARC's annual playwright's colony. The Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre's colony provides the most intensive writing opportunity for playwrights in this region, where they can get away from daily distractions and focus on writing new scripts in a supportive and nurturing environment. It provides assistance to the playwrights to develop their work with housing, travel, and per diems, as well

as a company of professional dramaturges and actors.

■ Screenwriter, playwright and script consultant **Virginia Hayden** writes from the U.K. that her short screenplay, *Sandwiches*, won the Rushes Soho Shorts screenplay competition in London. The script will be filmed twice, by separate directors and crews, and the results screened at the BAFTA Rushes Soho Shorts Market in July. *Harassed* is now in post-production, having been filmed recently in London by Runaway Factory, directed by David London.

■ **Alexander MacLeod** was on the short list of five for the Danuta Gleed Literary Award, which recognizes the best debut collection of short fiction by a Canadian writer. The award consists of cash prizes for the three best collections, with a first prize of \$10,000 and two additional prizes of \$500. Billie Livingston won for her book *Greedy Little Eyes* (Vintage Canada). Runners-up were Alex for *Light Lifting* (Biblioasis) and Darcie Friesen Hossack for *Mennonites Don't Dance* (Thistledown Press). Also nominated were R.W. Gray for *Crisp* (NeWest Press) and Teri Vlassopoulos for *Bats or Swallows* (Invisible Publishing).

■ Volume 4 of the best-selling Submarine Outlaw series by **Philip Roy** and published by Ronsdale Press will be out in September. *Ghosts of the Pacific* begins with Alfred and his crew of Seaweed the seagull and Hollie the dog travelling through the Northwest Passage on the way to the South Pacific. Alfred sets his sights on exotic Micronesia – a beautiful place, but home to the nuclear testing of Bikini Lagoon; the Suicide Cliffs of Saipan; the airfields of Tinian, where the *Enola Gay* lifted

off with the atomic bomb; and the Marshall Islands, which may conceal secrets to the mystery of Amelia Earhart's final days. As Alfred and his crew sail into the Pacific, they encounter the ruthless killing practices of shrimp trawlers and an island of plastic the size of Texas. Alfred, Hollie and Seaweed befriend the crew of an environmental protection ship, who help to inspire them to take on a new goal – to protect the oceans of the world.

■ The results of the Atlantic Journalism Awards were announced May 7 at the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel. **Stephen Kimber** took the top prize in Feature Writing, Print for "Is Corey Wright the Wrong Man?" published in *The Coast*. (Stephen's also a finalist for the Second Annual PWAC Writing Awards in the features category for the same article.)

Lezlie Lowe was a silver finalist in Feature Writing, Radio for *The Other Side of the Fist* which aired on CBC's *Maritime Magazine*. In the Atlantic Magazine, Best Profile Article category, the gold winner was **Sandra Phinney** for "Only in Pubnico" published in *Saltsclapes*. **Jon Tattrie** was a silver finalist in this category for "That Far Shore" in *Halifax Magazine*.

■ **Mike Parker** has just handed over his next book to Pottersfield Press and in the spring of 2012 *Ghost Islands of Nova Scotia* will hit the shelves, weighing in at 50,000 words, 246 pages and 330 photos. It will join *Gold Rush Ghost Towns of Nova Scotia* and *Buried in the Woods, Sawmill Ghost Towns of Nova Scotia* as a trilogy filled with historic and archival photos of Nova Scotian communities and the people who built them. Mike is now shunting out of the station and chugging

down the track researching his fifteenth book, a pictorial tribute to the Dominion Atlantic Railway.



■ The Theatre Arts Guild, the country's oldest continually operating community theatre, produces plays from the Pond Playhouse, on Parkhill Road, at the intersection of Purcell's Cove Road and Williams Lake Road in Halifax.

Renée Hartleib is co-directing *Lone Star*, which is being staged with its companion play *Laundry and Bourbon* from June 23 through July 9. Next spring she'll be co-directing *Witness for the Prosecution*, a courtroom thriller by Agatha Christie. You can visit TAG and the Pond Playhouse at www.tagtheatre.com.

■ Don't be shy. Let us know what you're doing in your writing life. Attended any workshops or retreats? Any recent publication credits? Send your news to programs@writers.ns.ca with WDW or Who's Doing What in the subject line.

New & Renewing Members

Renee Sagebear Albrecht, Canso
Greg Clay, Halifax
Santina Cross, Dartmouth
Barbara DeLory, Halifax
Mark DeWolf, Halifax
Hanna Garson, Halifax
Timothy Gillespie, Shelburne
Martina Gröger, Lapland
Glenna Jenkins, Lunenburg
Elaine Jensen, Lower Sackville
Philip Kaye, Halifax
Janet McGinity, Halifax
Malcom Mills, Dayspring
Genna Murphy, Dartmouth
Jan Porter, Pine Grove
Thomas F. Robson, Halifax
Ralph Sabeau, Annapolis Royal
Jo Treggiari, Lunenburg

IYPAD CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

Celebrating the International Year
for People of African Descent

For young writers aged 13-22
short story • poetry • spoken word lyrics

HONOURARY JUDGE: Lawrence Hill, Author, <i>The Book of Negroes</i>	PRIZES: First Place: \$500 Second Place: \$250 Third Place: \$150 PLUS: Have lunch with Lawrence Hill	CONTACT: Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs 5670 Spring Garden Road, Suite 604 PO Box 2691 Halifax, NS B3J 1H6 ansa_newsletter@gov.ns.ca 1.866.580.ANSA (2672)
AGE CATEGORIES: • 13-17 years • 18-22 years		
CONTEST DEADLINE: July 15, 2011		

For full details, guidelines and entry forms, visit: www.gov.ns.ca/ansa

The Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia is delighted to assist the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs (ANSA) with promotion of their **IYPAD Creative Writing Contest**, celebrating the International Year for People of African Descent.

The contest is open to young Nova Scotian writers aged 13 to 22 to submit short stories, poetry and spoken word lyrics. While entry is open to all young Nova Scotians, their entries must express a connection to African culture, heritage and/or experiences.

There are prizes of \$500, \$250 and \$150 for first, second and third place as well as an opportunity to have lunch with the contest's honorary judge, Lawrence Hill, author of *The Book of Negroes*, when he visits Halifax to attend the African Diaspora Heritage Trail Conference, September 22-24.

Full contest rules and entry forms can be found at www.gov.ns.ca/ansa. The deadline for entry is July 15.

Canada Council grants

The Canada Council for the Arts offers a range of grants for professional Canadian writers, collectives and publishers. In addition to providing support for the creation, translation, publication and promotion of Canadian literature, the Writing and Publishing Section funds author residencies, literary readings and festivals, as well as new areas of activity such as rap poetry, storytelling and electronic literature. For details on the various grant programs visit The Canada Council's website at www.canadacouncil.ca/writing/

Grants for Professional Writers: Creative Writing

Deadlines: English-language grants October 1; French-language grants April 1

The Grants for Professional Writers program covers subsistence, project and travel expenses. The Creative Writing Grants component gives Canadian authors (emerging, mid-career and established) time to write new literary works, including novels, short stories, poetry, children's and young adults' literature, graphic novels, exploratory writing and literary non-fiction. Exploratory writing is writing that uses technology to present literature in an innovative manner and (or) explores forms of literature outside the conventions of the novel, short story or poem. Grants for emerging writers range from \$3,000 to \$12,000, while mid-career and established writers may apply for \$3,000 to \$25,000

Grants to Aboriginal Writers, Storytellers and Publishers

Deadline May 1. The program has four components: Aboriginal Emerging Writers Residencies; Storytelling and Creative Writing in Aboriginal Languages Grants; Creative Writing Grants; and Publishing Grants

Literary Performance and Spoken Word Program

Deadline April 15

There are two components:

The Creation and Production component supports literary projects that are not based on conventional book or printed magazine formats. Grants are for the creation, production, performance, broadcast or promotion of literary performance, spoken word and storytelling.

The Festivals and Performance Series component increases knowledge and appreciation of Canadian literary performance, spoken word and storytelling activities by providing opportunities for spoken word artists and storytellers to perform their works.

Nova Scotia grants to individuals

The Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage has a **Grants to Individuals Program** that supports the creation of new works by professional artists in all disciplines, including writers, and promotes a broad understanding and appreciation of art and artists through professional development, creation and presentation of work by artists. Annual deadlines are May 15 and December 15. The program consists of three components.

Professional Development Grants assist artists through formal study programs, or other professional development programs such as mentoring, workshops, apprenticeships, or conferences. The maximum grant is \$3,000.

Creation Grants assist artists and emerging artists working independently or collaboratively to create new work, in any art form, by contributing towards the artist's subsistence and the project costs. The maximum grant is \$12,000.

Presentation Grants assist artists in direct costs associated with public presentation of their works, including: framing, installation, costuming, venue rental, or promotion of arts activities. The maximum grant is \$5,000.

Details may be found at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/culture_funding.asp
Applications are available at www.gov.ns.ca/tch/pubs/individuals_app.pdf

The Nova Scotia Talent Trust

The Nova Scotia Talent Trust awards scholarships to Nova Scotian residents undertaking programs of study to further their artistic development who are not yet established in their disciplines. Deadlines are March 1 and May 1. Details are on the Talent Trust's website (www.nstalenttrust.ns.ca).

imPRESSed & E-pressed

The Fifth Rule

Don Aker

Harper Collins Canada, February 2011

In this sequel to the best-selling *The First Stone*, Reef has been living in Calgary, but he's back in Halifax for the funeral of Frank Colville, his mentor. Memories of Frank compete with memories of Leeza and the terrible way their relationship ended. Mindful that the restraining order against him has been renewed by Leeza's mother, he has no intention of staying. Circumstances quickly unfold to push Reef and Leeza ever closer to each other. At the centre of growing controversy, Reef must face his demons and make some tough choices or else risk losing everything, including the only girl he has ever loved.

Don Aker is a high school teacher in Middleton and an award-winning writer of 14 books.

Elizabeth Bishop

Nova Scotia's "Home-made" Poet

Sandra Barry

Nimbus Publishing, 2011, \$15.95, ISBN: 9781551098234

Best known as an American poet who won the Pulitzer Prize, Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979) called herself "three-fourths Canadian." Sandra Barry takes readers through the highlights and turning points in Bishop's life, from her formative years in Great Village, Nova Scotia, to her first publications, her travels abroad, and her years in Brazil. Barry discusses Bishop's poetic style and wide-ranging appeal, examining some of her most famous poems. With photos throughout, and sidebar features on Bishop's publications, profiles of some of her friends and mentors, the book is an introduction to one of the best-loved poets of the twentieth century and her connection to Nova Scotia.

Sandra Barry is a poet, independent scholar, and freelance editor who lives in Halifax.

Vanishing Schools, Threatened Communities

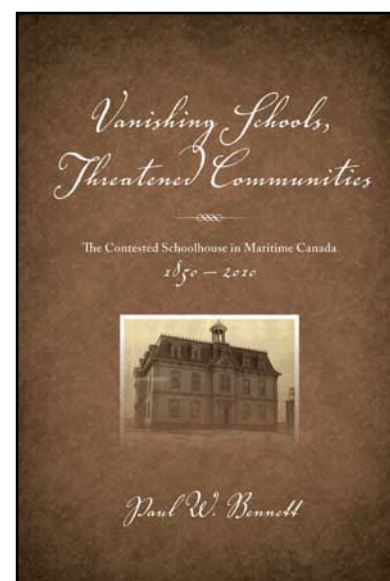
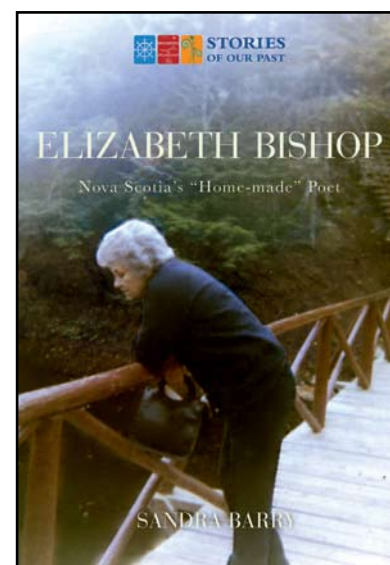
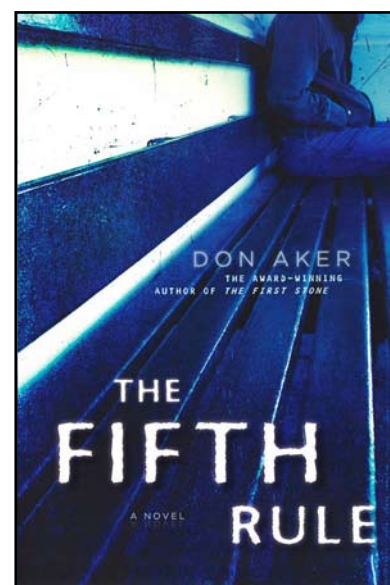
The Contested Schoolhouse in Maritime Canada 1850-2010

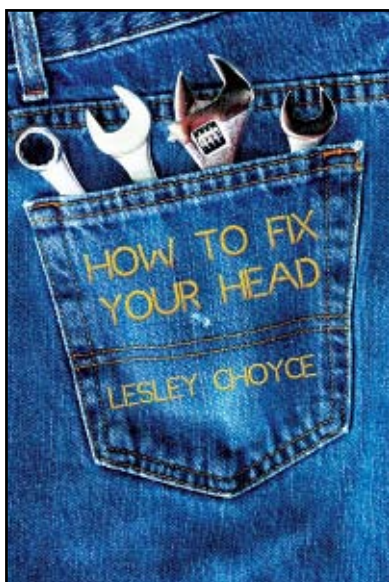
Paul W. Bennett

Fernwood Publishing, April 2011, \$24.95, ISBN: 9781552664018

Paul Bennett explores the phenomenon of school closures, focusing on Maritime Canada from 1850 to the present in this lively, stimulating book that examines the rise of common schooling from one-room schoolhouses that encouraged local democratic control through to the rise of super-sized, big box schools governed by a vast bureaucracy that silences public participation. Bennett reminds us of the principles that formed the basis of the public education system and urges us to return to these principles to better serve the needs of our children and communities.

Paul W. Bennett is a Halifax author and an independent educational policy consultant.





How to Fix Your Head

Lesley Choyce

Wolsak and Wynn, May 2011, \$19, ISBN: 978-1-894987-54-7

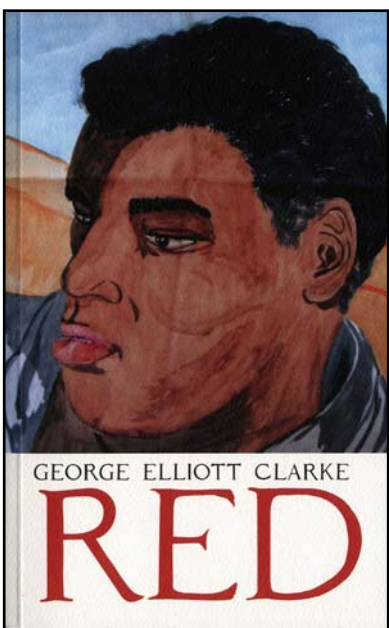
Whether he is yodelling into construction equipment, or driving his car over thin ice, Lesley Choyce believes that mistakes are what makes life interesting and offer us all a true learning experience. In this hilarious new work, Choyce freely shares his most entertaining misadventures along with some of his best advice on topics ranging from plumbing to bad jobs. With a lively, down-to-earth style and a wonderful talent for observation, *How to Fix Your Head* is sure to make the idea of self-help a lot more enjoyable.

Lesley Choyce lives and writes at Lawrencetown Beach.

Red

George Elliott Clarke

Gaspereau Press, April 2011, \$19.95



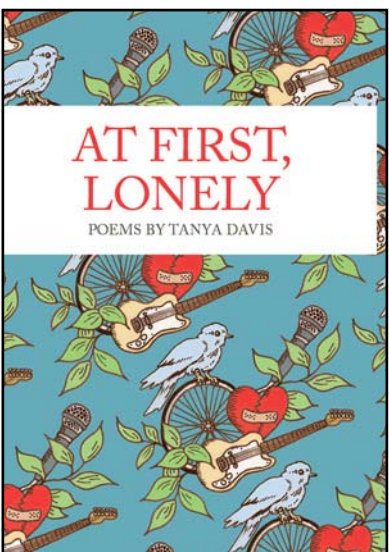
Red joins George Elliott Clarke's previous "colouring" books – *Blue* and *Black* – in which he displays an expansive range of poetic forms and rhetorical poses. Its poems mix the candid sexuality of pre-Christian Rome with the pop sentimentality of Italian screen scores of the 1960s and 70s, drenching us in the brute violence of Titus Andronicus, the reflections of Malcolm X, and the music of Charles Mingus (whose "bass sounds like a typewriter / Punctuating Ulysses"). Whether he situates his reader in his father's Halifax cab, on a beach in Rhodes, or in front of Alma Duncan's painting Young Black Girl, Clarke is ever sensitive to "the hard work of words, / The even harder work of love." *Red* rings with Clarke's lush voice, full-throated and unparalleled.

George Elliott Clarke won the 2001 Governor General's Award for Poetry for Execution Poems. His books include *I & I*, *Trudeau: Long March*, *Shining Path*, and *George and Rue*. The poet, playwright and literary critic is also the E.J. Pratt Professor of Canadian Literature at the University of Toronto.

At First, Lonely

Tayna Davis

Acorn Press, 2011, \$17.95, ISBN: 978-1894838-54-2



Musician and spoken-word performer, poet Tayna Davis has taken to the page, reflecting on life's many passages: falling in love and out, falling in faith and out, the search for personal truth, the search for home. Her style is a one-of-a-kind blend of contemporary phrasing and profound personal expression. Her message, though, is universal – over three million people have watched *How to Be Alone*, a film adaptation of her poem. Tayna Davis's poetry is an intricate weave of lucid words and clear concepts, an interplay to challenge the intellect, crumble the walls, and open the heart.

Tayna Davis is a singer/songwriter/poet, and two-time winner of the CBC National Poetry Face-off. Tayna was commissioned by the 2010 Canada Games to write and perform a poem for the Opening Ceremonies and she was chosen as the Mayor's Poet Laureate for the city of Halifax for 2011/2012.

Power Failure?

Richard Starr

Lorimer, 2011, Paperback \$24.95, ISBN: 978-0-88780-953-8,
ebook \$19.95, ISBN: 978-0-88780-955-2

For most of its history, Nova Scotia's leaders have tried to exploit the province's energy resources for jobs, revenue and political reward. For three centuries politicians and other prominent players have clashed over the ownership, control and development of energy resources – coal, electric power, offshore petroleum. This book traces the interplay between politics and energy, and documents the ongoing failure of government to use energy resources in ways that would create a prosperous and sustainable provincial economy.

Richard Starr has had careers as a journalist, public servant, broadcaster, political staffer, and freelance policy adviser. Starr lives in Dartmouth with his wife Wendy Lill, a playwright and former MP. He is the author of *Richard Hatfield: The Seventeen Year Saga*.

The Perimeter Dog

Julie Vandervoort

libros libertad (www.libroslibertad.ca)

An eloquent and moving collection of essays about defining the places where memory and imagination meet. Places that try to contain a family of "trained" adults that keeps losing the children, a witch's weighstation in Holland, a child in a confectionary, a passport caught up in a mixed media, cross-border pursuit, a human rights observer team in Esgenoôpetitj, the compartments of a sewing cabinet, an artist fighting the hypothetical in law school, drug runners dancing with privilege in Colombia, and a fishing community that plays catch and release. Creative non-fiction writer Julie Vandervoort examines how these places shift between safety and danger. Where are the lines drawn – and who are the perimeter dogs?

Julie Vandervoort has received several awards for her creative non-fiction essays and her biography of Dr. Elinor Black, *Tell the Driver*. She has worked extensively in human rights law and as an environmental activist and singer with the international Gaia Project.

Sinking Deeper

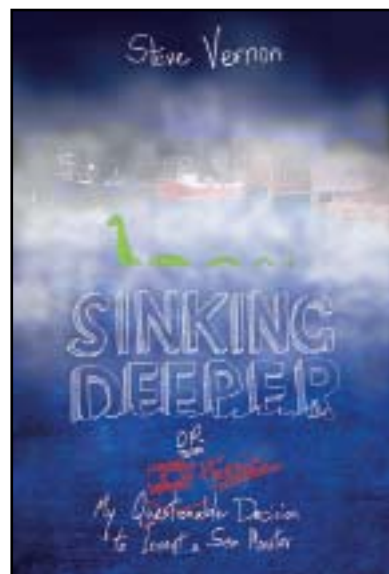
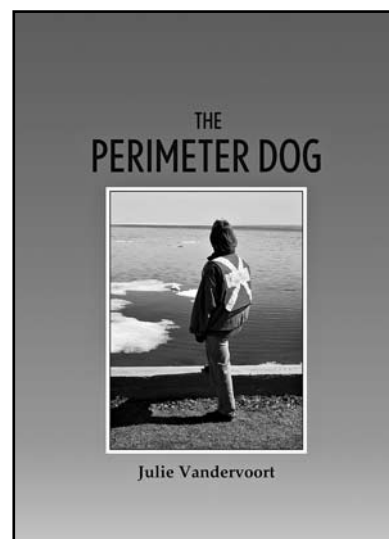
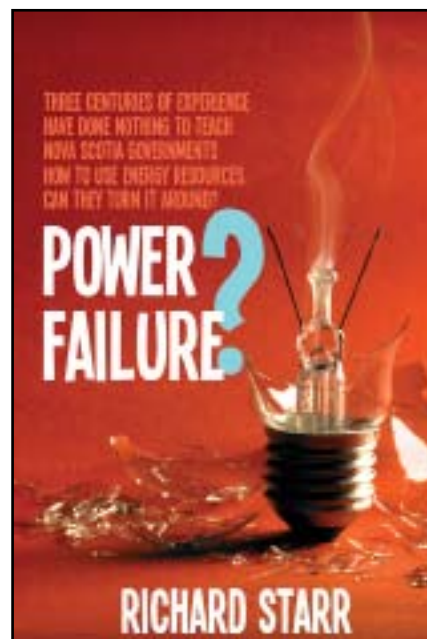
Or My Questionable (Possibly Heroic) Decision to Invent a Sea Monster

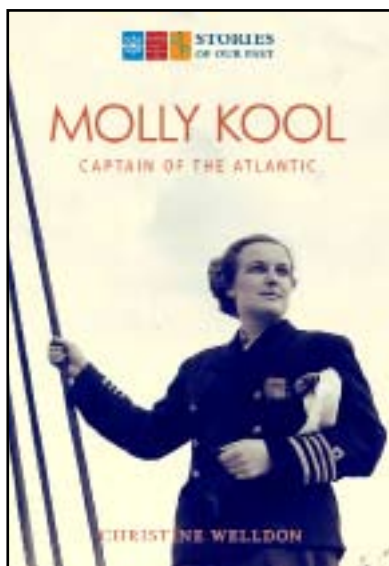
Steve Vernon

Nimbus Publishing, \$12.95, ISBN: 9781551097770

The community of Deeper Harbour is in deep trouble – and so is 14-year-old Roland MacTavish. Roland's mom wants to move with him to Ottawa, away from his father, his weird friend Dulsie, and his even weirder grandfather, Angus. So Roland does what any sane teenager would do: he invents a sea monster. The scheme quickly spins out of Roland's control. And then he must deal with a situation far more terrifying than any sea monster.

Bestselling author Steve Vernon has published more than 50 short stories, and several books – *Halifax Haunts*, *Wicked Woods*, *Haunted Harbours*, and a children's picture book, *Maritime Monsters*.





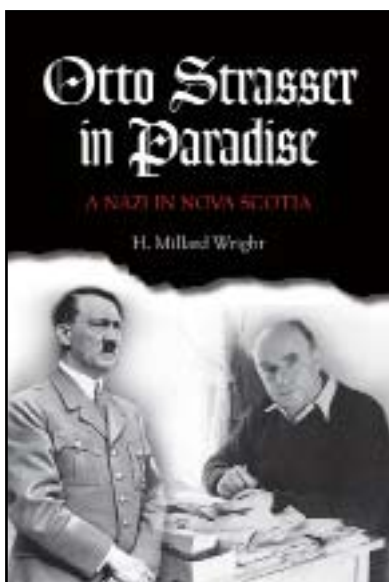
Molly Kool
Captain of the Atlantic

Christine Welldon

Nimbus Publishing, \$15.95, ISBN: 9781551098364

In 1939 Molly Kool became the first woman to be a licensed ship's captain in North America. While trying to find her way in a profession she loved, she opened doors for all women. Born in Alma, New Brunswick, in 1916, Molly sailed the rough and difficult waters of the Bay of Fundy. This book is filled with more than 40 photos of Molly's life plying the waters off New Brunswick and Nova Scotia during the Great Depression and World War Two, and interesting facts about how Canadian laws changed as women demanded equal rights, and how one woman in particular changed an industry forever.

Christine Welldon is the author of *Children of Africville* and *Canadian Pacific Railway: Pon Git Cheng*. She divides her time between Blue Rocks, Nova Scotia, and Toronto.



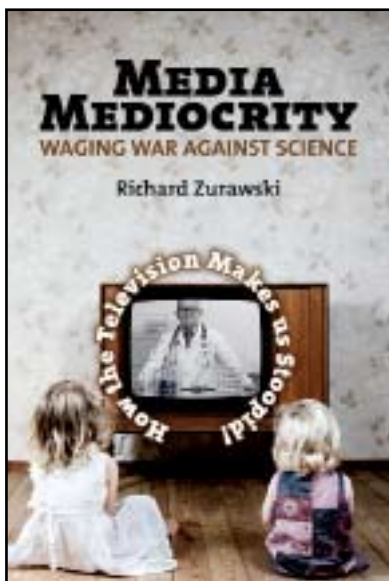
Otto Strasser in Paradise
A Nazi in Nova Scotia

H. Millard Wright

Pottersfield Press, May 2011 \$16.95, ISBN: 978-1-897426-25-8

Otto Strasser was a powerful force within the Nazi Party. But Adolph Hitler saw Otto as a serious threat and expelled him from the National Socialist Party. Otto then formed the Black Front, a breakaway Nazi movement. With a bounty on his head, Otto ran through Europe with Hitler's hitmen hot on his heels. So how did he end up living in bucolic, rural Nova Scotia – in Bridgetown, Clarence and Paradise – for 13 years, from 1942 to 1955?

H. Millard Wright was born and grew up in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley. After a successful business career, he retired in 1992. He has published eight books.



Media Mediocrity – Waging War Against Science
How the Television Makes Us Stupid!

Richard Zurawski

Fernwood Publishing, March 2011, \$24.95, ISBN: 9781552664001

Four out of five viewers gather the bulk of their scientific knowledge from television, making television an important intermediary between society and its understanding of science. We have all gleaned tidbits of scientific information while being entertained by our televisions. Or have we? How accurately do these programs represent science? Richard Zurawski argues the science we learn on television is inaccurate, misleading and even dangerous. He examines how the pursuit of ratings and profit trump any desire to provide an accurate knowledge of science – and argues there are real consequences for this lack of knowledge. Who is feeding us this false science? And what do they gain from doing so?

Richard Zurawski is a meteorologist, television and documentary film producer, TV host, writer, university lecturer, public speaker and media expert. He is the author of *Richard Zurawski's Book of Maritime Weather* and *The Maritime Book of Climate Change* (both from Pottersfield Press).

President's Message to the WFNS AGM June 4

Stephens Gerard Malone

At last year's AGM I had the crazy idea of sticking around for another term to see how things turned out at the Writers' Federation. Not that I didn't trust staff, most of them new and on the heels of a challenging year, but like a good story, I felt I'd come to a really good part and just had to see how it ended. I report today, the story has a happy ending. Rather, my ending as President, for the Federation continues on in capable hands. Very capable hands.

This AGM marks one full year with our Executive Director, Nate Crawford, flying on his own. There have been no mid-air collisions, no groundings due to fog. Nate's personal style has blossomed over the past year. The Fed continues to build strong relations with our sister organizations. The Board made a good choice with Nate.

Hillary Titley, our program officer, has also settled into her position admirably. In fact, she's become indispensable.

Sue Goyette continues to take time out from publishing glorious books of poetry to feed the appetite of her legions of e-loop followers. There has even been clamoring to gather her words of wisdom from the e-loop into a collection. And did you know that Sue is also a great idea person. Need an idea for a book launch or fundraiser? Ask Sue!

Heidi Hallett also serves the Fed part-time. There is no task that Heidi will shy away from and her financial background and book-world experience continues to be a much used and greatly appreciated resource.

All of our staff contributes many extra hours in the service of

the Federation, and I thank them for their extraordinary efforts.

Mary Jane Copps again demonstrated she is a friend to the Fed when she facilitated the Board's retreat in January to develop an action plan that would serve the Fed until March of 2012.

Some of our discussions centred around: Hiring a new accountant; Our website; Creating a volunteer database and a sponsorship package; Establishing a major new fundraising event; Getting a government sponsor or potential private sponsor to a WITS visit; Putting together a formal evaluation for schools and writers using the WITS program; Reviewing the Writers' Council for board member qualifications; Researching and refining criteria for our awards; and finalizing employee guidelines and formal staff reviews

The Board intends another retreat in January 2012 to help Nate plan for the next operating grant, which will cover a three-year period.

In the winter, after a less than successful round of workshops, the staff devised the 8-week Hungry Minds writing workshop, followed by the 4-week Hungry Hearts poetry workshop. Both sessions concluded with a salon-type gathering and were great successes. So successful, that staff is studying the feasibility of a Hungry Minds-style school that could be offered during the summer.

Fundraising continues to be a challenge, but the Fundraising Committee continues to look outside the box for new opportunities to add to the coffers. The Moveable Feasts, after a brief hiatus, have resumed

and we continue to look for more opportunities that fit well with our available resources.

One of the biggest successes this year has been moving the Fed's accounting practices to Quickbooks. I cannot underestimate how big a task this was. Were it not for our Financial Committee (Shandi Mitchell, Don Roy, and Judith Meyrick) and the long hours they, along with Nate and Heidi, spent in the migration, we would not have access to real-time financials that will help us ensure our financial strength.

Your Board continues to be committed and involved in all issues. It has been a pleasure to serve with them around a table where discussion is always civil and lively. A lot of time, it's even fun. During the year we lost Vicki Grant and Steven Laffoley to the pressures of the real world, and I thank them for their contribution to the Board and the Writers' Federation. Going forward, with technology removing the distances between us, we hope to make the Board strongly reflect all regions of Nova Scotia.

Shandi Mitchell, a great friend to the Federation, leaves the Board today. Even with a hectic schedule, and jetting off to accept the odd award here and there, she has devoted an extraordinary amount of time to the financial health of our organization and has brought invaluable skills to the table. I have depended on her wise counsel. I thank Shandi, on behalf of the Writers' Federation, for her four years of service.

Stephen Kimber, our Past President, also leaves the Board today. We owe him a huge debt for steering the

Federation through our transition period with calming and thoughtful leadership. Stephen is also a very busy man and I, on behalf of the Board, thank him for his many hours spent in the service of the Federation.

To our new President, Kathleen Martin, I offer no words of advice, no sage counsel. Kathleen is an old pro at this sort thing and the Federation is lucky to have her as president. I don't want to say she'll have an easy go of things, as that in the past has been a curse. Enough to say, good luck!

With today's AGM, the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia turns over another page in our history. These are challenging times for arts organization, but we are in great shape thanks to our committed staff and Board. And there's lots of innovative dialogue going on here to meet those challenges, so I'm excited to see what the next year brings for the Fed.

In closing, I'd like to offer one tangible benefit from membership in the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia, to you our current members, and to anyone who might be contemplating joining and wondering what is the value. On the day of the Atlantic Book Awards, I was asked to pick up this year's Raddall Prize winner, Kathleen Winter, from the airport. Imagine half an hour with Kathleen Winter driving back to Halifax, talking about her wonderful novel and all things writing. Yup, I was star struck. It's something that will stay with me, and that would not have happened had I not been a member.

So, I thank the Writers' Federation for being here. I'm glad I'm a part of this vital organization, and I thank you, the membership, for allowing me to serve our community of writers. ■

Writers Federation AGM Minutes, June 4, 2011

Members and Staff Present – Stephens Gerard Malone, Kathleen Martin, Don Roy, Brett Loney, Ryan Turner, Judith Meyrick, Brian Braganza, Randall Perry, Linda Bolton, Bosko Loncarevic, Philip Roy, Brian Bartlett, Steve Vernon, Carol Bruneau, William Kowolski, Gwen Davies, J. Michael Gauthier, Valerie Compton, Anna Mancini, Binnie Brennan, Catherine Cooper, Jackie Halsey, Jamie Leck, Jack Florek, Sue Goyette, Nate Crawford, Hillary Titley, Heidi Hallett, Susan Kerslake.

Call to order and Welcome: President Stephens Gerard Malone welcomed the group and called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda: Susan Kerslake moved approval of the agenda; seconded by Steve Vernon.

Approval of Minutes of the AGM held June 5, 2010: Susan Kerslake moved; seconded by Randall Perry.

Business Arising: None.

President's Report: Delivered by outgoing WFNS President Stephens Gerard Malone (see page 15)

Treasurer's Report and presentation of review engagement report; appointment of auditor for 2010-11: Treasurer Don Roy presented his report. Susan Kerslake moved the approval of the review engagement report for the 2010-11 fiscal year. Ryan Turner seconded.

Stephens Malone called for a motion to engage Darrell Cochrane, CA, to prepare the WFNS audit review for 2011-12. Judith Meyrick moved; Susan Kerslake seconded.

Standards Committee Report: Kathleen Martin announced that the 2010-11 Standards Committee has reviewed and recommended the following individuals for inclusion

in the WFNS Writers' Council:
James Leck, Dartmouth
Karen Kelloway, Halifax
Nina Munteanu, Upper Tantallon
Warren Heiti, Halifax
Megan Power, Halifax
Burris Devanney, Halifax
Heather Jessup, Halifax
Paul MacDougall, Sydney
Joe Blades, Fredericton
Lisa Harrington, Halifax
Joanne Light, Cornwallis
Syr Ruus, LaHave
Christine Welldon, Lunenburg
Susan White, Clifton Royal
Heather MacKenzie-Carey, Bridgewater

Maritza Miari is invited by the Committee to be listed as a professional illustrator on the Federation website.

Executive Director's Report: Delivered by Nate Crawford (see page 17)

Nominating Committee Report and presentation of proposed slate of directors for 2011-12:

Kathleen Martin proposed the slate of the WFNS Board for 2011-12:

Stephens Gerard Malone, Past President
Kathleen Martin, President
Ryan Turner, Vice President
Don Roy, Treasurer
Brett Loney, Secretary
Brian Braganza
Valerie Compton
James Leck
Judith Meyrick
Sherry Ramsey
Jon Tattrie

Stephens Malone called for a motion to approve; Moved by Sue Goyette, seconded by Gwen Davies.

Adjournment: Susan Kerslake made a motion to adjourn. ■

Executive Director's Report to the AGM

Nate Crawford

It's hard to know where to begin this report, as I consult everything from our most recently submitted operating grant to our program-tracking databases to my crammed and illegible datebook to get a handle on the many and varied things we've been up to since we last met in this room for my first WFNS AGM. I play a little game when someone asks what we do at this writers' federation, making bets with myself as to when their eyes will glaze over while I enumerate our programs, activities and events – so I'll try not to incur this phenomenon today.

Sometimes the best place to begin is with the numbers. In this fiscal year we've placed nearly \$100,000 into the hands of Nova Scotian writers through our various programs, chief among them Writers in the Schools, which has simultaneously grown and honed itself to a sharper focus under the stewardship of a new co-ordinator (Heidi Hallett). We've seen our membership grow by 120 since April of 2010. We've initiated relationships with 15 new organizations, and communicate extensively with no less than 30 people a week by e-mail, phone, and face-to-face consultation. Another recurring comment, when I tell people what I do, goes something like "oh, that must be a really peaceful job," like we work in a quiet used bookstore or something. Yet as statistics indicate, it's more like a doctor's office in here. And sometimes an ER.

Four people do all of this, with two of them working two days a week. I knew I wouldn't be long in this position before I asked myself the obvious question: with a demand this strong, with a community this active, how can we be making this happen with an operating budget that hasn't grown significantly in over a decade? Yet we do. Perhaps it's because both the previous director and I have backgrounds in that most impoverished of sectors, the theatre. Where a little spit, polish, and imagination can turn a dirty top-sheet and a card table into a bistro setting in the South of France.

In addition to my work here, I still keep a foot in the theatre world as an artistic producer. My company recently closed a show, and this was the first time I'd focused that heavily on a production since beginning work here. I was struck, when we had to turn Halifax's North Street Church into a graveyard out of Dante Rossetti's *London* in less than a day, at how efficiently this occurred, and how it wouldn't have occurred at all had not members of the theatre community, each with

a specific and finely honed skill, come together for little to no money and systematically transformed a space into something entirely new.

Why am I going on about my other life? I'm getting to that. The four of us have done much the same with WFNS over the past year, transforming the backstage of the Fed into something that can work efficiently, progressively, and in a way that speaks to our individual skills and talents.

By the end of 2010 we were in a position to look fully outward once again, convening our board of directors for a now-annual action planning session for the coming year. (The results of that session, annotated with updates on our progress, are available from the office on request.) In February 2011 we began our highly successful Hungry Minds workshop series – so much so that we doubled the program, holding sessions twice in a row each week – and spun this off into a similarly styled program during National Poetry Month in April. May found us jumping into Atlantic Book Week again, which recently culminated with the first presentation of the Raddall Fiction Prize at its current amount of \$20,000. That's a thousand dollars for each year of its existence, putting it a hair's breadth away from the Giller Prize kitty.

These are just some of the things we've done with eight little hands. But just as eight little hands cannot turn the North Street Church into downtown London, eight little hands cannot sustain the level of activity WFNS currently enjoys without being rubbed raw. What follows is not an embittered chastisement, but a gentle plea. Perhaps it's a sign of the increasingly busy lives people lead, but many member-based organizations are seeing less and less member participation, and are increasingly becoming little more than customer service departments for people with immediate needs and problems.

Now, dealing with individual and collective problems is a principal reason why WFNS exists, and working through a contract issue with a member or setting a writer on a path toward publication are among the most tangibly rewarding things we do. Yet here on the East Coast of Canada we're renowned for our sense of community, and it's surprising how isolated we can get to feeling in that office over there.

Lulls in collectivity when administrations change

at organizations are common. We'd love to see the membership rise up again to help one another and to help us; to get to know one another, and to know the Fed better. It's the missing piece of the puzzle as we move forward.

Some of those puzzle pieces are coming together into forms and shapes: we have begun to make excellent contacts with members outside of HRM, who we've dubbed our "regional delegates" and who are willing to be point persons on the ground everywhere from Shelburne to Wolfville to Mabou, arranging events and sending community activity reports from places too far away for our physical hands to reach.

Yet within our immediate environs in Halifax we're presently stretched thin by facilitating an increasing number of events – on a given week, one or another staff member could be in this building for up to 14 hours a day, three nights a week, beginning the day at 9 a.m. by addressing e-mail correspondence over a morning coffee, and ending it by stacking the final chair after an event at 11 o'clock in the evening.

So that's all by way of saying we need help in order to maintain the level of programming and service we aspire to. We'd love to put faces to the names we see every day, and to see more of the faces we already know. Whether we're bringing in visiting writers and instructors or welcoming members into the space to teach a class or launch a book, it would be wonderful for them to get a sense of embrace from the community we enjoy here, as opposed to the clammy handshake of an overworked arts administrator at the end of one work day, and the beginning of another. How we can help you and how you can help us was the subject of the cover story in our March issue of *Eastword*, and we've dug out some of those back issues for redistribution here today.

And now, I'll quit my sorry whining and thank the people who rolled up their sleeves and help take the Fed to the next level this year. First of all to Hillary Titley, Heidi Hallett, and Sue Goyette. What a great team. Being the only man of the bunch, it would probably sound like workplace harassment if I were to have complimented you each as much as I've wanted to on a daily basis. So allow me to do that now. You've each got such incredible strengths and talents and engender such implicit trust that there's never a moment when I don't think this place is in the hands of the best three people it could possibly need.

To our board of directors, thank you. You keep a close eye on our inner workings and have caring and

concerned hearts for the broader literary community we work with. Two are leaving this year.

If I began to detail what Shandi Mitchell has done for us in her time on the board, the sun would set and rise again. Trust, care, and honesty are, to my mind, the top three traits of any associate, and Shandi has them all. Her story is so interesting: from tentatively walking into a Fed Gala some years back through to winning the Raddall Prize last year, not only has she become a poster child for what the Fed can do for a writer, but for what a writer can do for the Fed. Shandi: thank you, thank you, thank you.

And what can I say about Stephens Gerard Malone, our president for the past year, that won't have another board swooping in to claim him as he relaxes into his year as Past President? Let me state, to any of those hungry recruiters who may come across this report, that, well, Stephens was more of a caretaker president than anything, really. He's that kind of board member who becomes an amnesiac as soon as adjournment is called, never goes to bat for staff, or the membership, or the organization as a whole. He's not at all approachable, or concerned, or good to offer up a fantastic idea that comes from a larger, carefully considered vision. Nope. You don't want him at all.

Well, as anyone who has worked with Stephens can attest, none of the aforementioned is true. Stephens, you've put a stamp on this place and left a legacy that will live on long after you've left us. We'll be thanking you for the things you've done here for years to come.

At one point this year I wrote in a memo: Can this be the last time I ever say 'This has been a year of change for WFNS?' And here I go saying it again. There are changes all around. From macro to micro: We've got climate change warming the oceans and blowing freakish storms across the continent. We've got a Conservative majority and an NDP opposition in Ottawa. Provincially, we have Arts Nova Scotia, which I suppose is less of a change than a return to the Arts Council model the province lost in 2002. And of course the ongoing changes in publishing that evolve daily, toppling venerated houses and making best-sellers out of forgotten backlist titles as they're digitized and sold online. We'll see where all of those changes take us, but for now we're done with change at WFNS and prepared to be a calm and focused centre amidst it all. We're ready to go forward, still learning and still exploring, with a little help from our friends. Keep on writing in the free world, and we'll see you on the journey. ■

New OnBoard at WFNS

A hearty welcome to our new president, Kathleen Martin, and welcome to the following new members of our board of directors:



Kathleen Martin is the president of Red Wheelbarrow Communications, a Halifax-based firm. Her background as a writer and editor is extensive, ranging from children's literature to peer-reviewed academic publications. The author of seven non-fiction books for children, her eighth book, *Kamakwie: Finding Peace, Love and Injustice in Sierra Leone*, is due this fall from Red Deer Press.

She is a columnist for *Progress Magazine*. She sits on the board of Word on the Street Halifax, on the executive of the NS Children's Literature Roundtable, and on the steering committee for the Ann Connor Brimer Award for Children's Literature. She has served on several juries for children's book awards, including the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award. She was the Nova Scotia representative for the Canadian Children's Book Centre, and was the Atlantic correspondent for the national biweekly *Marketing Magazine*.

Kathleen is also executive director of the Canadian Sea Turtle Network and adjunct professor

in the School for Resource and Environmental Studies at Dalhousie University. In 2007, she won the Gold Canadian Environment Award for Conservation.



James Leck has worked as an educator in Japan, Kuwait and Canada. In 2005 he won the Joyce Barkhouse Writing for Children Award in the Atlantic Writing Competition. His first book, *The Adventures of Jack Lime* (Kids Can Press), was released in February 2010 and was chosen as one of the Top 10 Crime Fiction Books for Youth of 2010 by *Booklist Magazine*.



Sherry D. Ramsey writes speculative fiction for both adults and young adults. She has been the editor/publisher of *The Scriptorium Webzine for Writers* (www.thescriptorium.net) for over 10 years, and is one of the founding editors of

Third Person Press. Her short stories, articles, and poetry have appeared in print, online, and over the airwaves in publications such as *Thoughtcrime Experiments*, *Speculative Realms*, *Neo-Opis*, *On Spec*, *Oceans of the Mind*, *Astropoetica*, *Semaphore Magazine* and in the anthology *Destination: Future*. Sherry lives with her husband, two children, and two dogs at their home in Cape Breton. Her online home is www.sherrydramsey.com



Valerie Compton has been writing for almost 20 years. She writes fiction and non-fiction and teaches fiction writing. Her short stories have been published in such journals as *The Malahat Review* and *The New Quarterly* and has garnered numerous grants and awards. Her non-fiction articles and reviews have been published in *The Globe and Mail*, *Gourmet* and many other publications. Valerie was born on Prince Edward Island and now lives in Halifax. Goose Lane Editions released her first novel, *Tide Road*, in March of this year to much acclaim.

To those without whose help ...

Endless thanks to those who payed it forward to your Federation in 2010-11. Our heroes:

Kent Baker
Blanca Baquero
Janet Barkhouse
Marcia Barss
Michael Bawtree
Joan Baxter
Margot Beck
Blair Beed
Lowell Blood
Brian Braganza
Binnie Brennan
Tyne Brown
Carol Bruneau
Timothy Brushett
Joanna Butler
Cynthia Chewter
Ethel Clark
George Elliot Clarke
Joan Cleather
Joan Cleveland
Tom Cogswell
Ian and Collette Colford
Christy Ann Conlin
Mary Jane Copps
Sheldon Currie
Gwen Davies
William Dawson
Debby Dobson
Rosemary Drisdelle
Judy Dudar
Ruth Edgett
Mary Ediger
Donald Eldon
Anne Emery
Anne Esslinger
Cynthia Etter-Turnbull
M. James Faulkner
Jane Finlay-Young
Sheree Fitch
Melanie Furlong

Gaspereau Press
J. Michael Gauthier
Shirley Godfrey
Vicki Grant
Joyce Grant-Smith
Doretta Groenendyk
Sylvia Gunnery
Heidi Hallett
Jacqueline Halsey
Renée Hartlieb
Margaret Hastings-James
Jennifer Hatt
Veryan Haysom
Michael Hennessey
Kathryn Herbert
Christina Hilchie
Fred Ted Hollett
Joanne Jefferson
Sarah Jewell-Mattinson
John Kennedy
Claudia Kingston
Mariolina Koller-Fanconi
Catherine Lambert
Heather Laskey
Bosko Loncarevic
Linda Little
Rose-Marie Lohnes-Hirtle
Jim Lotz
Zoe Lucas
Kathy Mac
Ron Foley MacDonald
Paul MacDougall
Jill MacLean
Sylvia Mangalam
Rowland Marshall
Lorne Matheson
Darlene T. McIvor
Ami McKay
William McKinnon

Keith McPhail
Heather Mead
Susan Mersereau
Robin Metcalfe
Judith Meyrick
Shandi Mitchell
Carol Moriera
Peter Moriera
Sharon Palermo
Joan Payzant
Sandra Phinney
Heather Pycz
Thomas Head Raddall II
Sherry Ramsey
Sally Ross
James Ruddy
Victor Sakalauskas
Pete Sarsfield
Judith Scrimger
Susan Sellers-Bain
Noreen Smiley
Jean Smyth
Val Spencer
Deborah Stiles
Jennifer Stone
Deannie Sullivan-Fraser
Jon Tattrie
Cheryl Theriault
Pat Thomas
Ryan Turner
Michael Ungar
Andrew Wainwright
Alice Walsh
David Weagle
Cecilia Webb
Mary E. Whelan
Jim Williams
Budge and Alan Wilson
Susan Zetell

Atlantic Book Week

Nate Crawford

The days between May 12 and 18 were peppered with readings, signings, panels, and general literaria, culminating with the Atlantic Book Awards ceremony on May 19, at which many WFNS members walked away with a win: **Alexander MacLeod's** *Light Lifting* received the Margaret and John Savage First Book Award, **Jerry Lockett** took home the Dartmouth Book Award for Non-Fiction for *Captain James Cook in Atlantic Canada*, **Elizabeth Peirce** was an APMA Best Atlantic Published Book Award winner for *Grow Organic*. **Anne Emery's** *Children of the Morning* took the Jim Connors Dartmouth Book Award for Fiction, and **Susan Tooke** was awarded the Lillian Shepherd Memorial Award for Illustration for her work in **Shauntay Grant's** *The City Speaks in Drums*.



Kathleen Winter at the Atlantic Book Awards, post-win

The prizes overseen by WFNS were awarded to Laura Penny (The Evelyn Richardson Non-Fiction Prize for *More Money Than Brains*), John Steffler (The Atlantic Poetry Prize for *Lookout*), and Kathleen Winter (The Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize for *Annabel*).

A particular highlight of the week was our now-annual trip to the Liverpool area to showcase the Raddall Prize nominees in Thomas Head Raddall's "homeland." Shortlisted writers Beth Powning and Alexander MacLeod, with eventual Atlantic Poetry Prize winner John Steffler subbing in for eventual Raddall Prize winner Kathleen Winter, presented readings from their work at Lane's Privateer Inn. We were welcomed with open arms by Lane's staff and an enthusiastic crowd of listeners.



Alexander MacLeod, Beth Powning, and John Steffler in the Raddall office.

In the morning we were given a personal tour of the office of Thomas Head Raddall, recreated at the Queen's County Museum down to the last detail with items from his original study. This room and the adjacent Thomas Raddall Research Centre were both established following Raddall's death in 1994, with the research centre continuing to grow as a resource for historical and genealogical work. Visiting this site served to remind us how the legacy these authors are now a part of was, in essence, created at a modest writing desk, where a man of great imagination and skill sat down to write.

Congratulations from WFNS to all involved with this year's ABAs.



Thomas Head Raddall's writing desk.

Markets, etc.

Uncle John's Flush Fiction: Amy Miller, Staff Editor, Flush Fiction, Uncle John's Bathroom Readers, PO Box 1117, Ashland, OR 97520 (<http://bathroomreader.com/flushfiction>). The editors of the bestselling *Uncle John's Bathroom Reader* series are looking for entertaining short fiction, suitable for bathroom (or anyroom) reading, for a new fiction anthology. 1,000 words max. All genres, themes, styles, and hybrids considered; humor is appreciated, but not mandatory. The series is family-friendly. Edgy's fine; erotica, not so much. Previously published material o.k. Payment: \$50. Deadline: August 31. Guidelines on website.

Room: PO Box 46160 Station D, Vancouver, BC V6J 5G5 (www.roommagazine.com) Canada's oldest literary magazine by and about women, *Room* celebrates its 35th volume in 2012. The anniversary issue has the theme journey. Looking for quality writing and art images that reflect all aspects of journeying – the milestones and lessons, the vehicles and companions, the maps and misadventures. Deadline August 31. Pays \$50 for 1-5 published pages, \$75 for 6+ pages and \$100 for cover art.

TCR: The Capilano Review: (www.thecapilanoreview.ca) Issue 3.16 (Winter 2012) will be a special issue on/of ecologies. Invites work that takes up relationships between writing and environment(s), between texts and activism, and also work that queries or examines these relationships. Welcomes a range of genres and practices: multimedia, prose (max 2,000 words), poetry, diagrams, transcriptions,

lists, ecopoetic/ecocritical work, procedural work, documentary, collaborations. Deadline: October 31, Pays contributors \$50/published page up to a max of \$300.

Maisonneuve: 4413 Harvard Ave., Montreal, QC H4A 2W9 (www.maisonneuve.org) A quarterly. Considers Artifice (poetry, short & long fiction, humour), Artifact (essays & reviews on any aspect of the arts or sciences), Visual Art (illustration, drawing, painting, photography, animation, cartoons, comics, graphics, web-based, design, etc.) and anything else that demonstrates curiosity, energy or elegance across all fields of human endeavour.

jubilat: (www.jubilat.org) Published by the Dept. of English, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Welcomes submissions of poetry and art, as well as other forms of writing on poetry, poetics or subjects that have nothing to do with poetry. Does not publish short stories. The magazine's reading period is September 1 to April 1. Only accepts online submissions. Guidelines on website.

River Styx Magazine: 3547 Olive Street, Suite 107, St. Louis, MO 63103 (www.riverstyx.org) Publishes 3 times a year. A multicultural journal of poetry, prose and art, publishes works of both new and established artists significant for their originality, energy and deft of craft. Reading period between May and November. Upcoming Themed Issues: In September will consider poems, essays, fiction, and art for Circles of Hell. Your interpretation could include the standard circles – those for the lustful, the gluttons, the miserly, the wrathful, the heretics, the violent, thieves, flatterers, traitors, "other people," reality tv or ones we haven't thought of yet.

Kugelmass, a journal of literary humor: (<http://firewheel-editions.org/kugelmass>) a new biannual based in Danbury, Connecticut, fiction and essay, 1,000 to 4,000 words. Online submissions only.

WORN Fashion Journal: (www.wornjournal.com) This Canadian publication is an alternative to mainstream fashion magazines. Instead of covering trends and pushing products, *WORN* deals with the ideas and concepts of clothing – exploring the culture, history, politics, personal and practical stories behind what is worn – and provides opinion and intelligent commentary untainted by advertisers' demands. Publishes twice a year.

Open Minds Quarterly: (<http://nisa.on.ca>) based in Sudbury, Ontario. A psychosocial literary magazine that publishes the writing of consumer/survivors of mental illness. Poetry, fiction, essays, first-person accounts, and more. Details on website.

Maple Tress Press: 10 Lower Spadina Ave, Suite 400, Toronto, ON M5V 2Z2 (www.mapletreepress.com) Welcomes book ideas of all kinds for children ages 3 to 12. For the most part, publishes non-fiction in the areas of science and nature, and activity and craft books.

Dramatics Magazine: 2343 Auburn Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45219 (www.schooltheatre.org) An educational theatre mag published by the Educational Theatre Association. Buys 4 to 8 articles for each issue, ranging in length from 800 to 4,000 words. Prefers to see finished manuscript but will respond to queries. Pays \$25 to \$400.

Teaching Theatre: 2343 Auburn Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45219. (www.schooltheatre.org) A quarterly educational theatre journal published by the Educational Theatre Association, a professional association for theatre educators and artists. Buys 12 to 15 articles a year, general length 750 to 4,000 words. Pays \$50 to \$350.

Descant: PO Box 314, Station P, Toronto, ON M5S 2S8 (www.descant.ca) Two theme issues. **The Hidden City**, an issue dedicated to that which escapes first notice in the world's myriad urban landscapes. From buried rivers to underground habitats to the city's silent/silenced citizens to the city transformed by darkness, *Descant* wants your best creative work on the creatures, geographies, and societies that elude our surface experience. What do we cover over? What escapes us? What have we forgotten or missed? Deadline June 15, 2012. **Masala:** In Indian cooking, masala is a delicate and savoury fusion of spices that changes from region to region. So the peoples of India, scattered throughout the world today, display a fusion of cultures and histories. *Descant* is looking for the stories of the Indian Diaspora, its triumphs and its tragedies. Essays, poems, fictions, memoirs, and art work which show the ways in which the Indian peoples connect with one another worldwide and also differentiate themselves from and yet are still linked to modern India. Deadline August 15, 2012

Contests

Riddle Fence and Ratling Books

Short Fiction Contest: Deadline September 14. The winning story will be published in *Riddle Fence* and professionally recorded as an audio short by Ratling Books (www.ratlingbooks.com). Winning author receives \$500, plus payment for publication and royalties for audio sales. Also-greats receive \$200 each and may be published. Stories must be in some form of English (any dialect), maximum of 4,000 words, unpublished and not currently submitted to any other publication or contest. One entry per participant. Blind judging. Entry fee \$35 (includes a one-year subscription to *Riddle Fence*). E-mail work to contest@riddlefence.com or mail it to: Riddle Fence, PO Box 7092 St. John's, NL A1E 3Y3.

The Malahat Review: University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1700 Stn CSC, Victoria, BC, V8W 2Y2 (www.malahatreview.ca) **Creative non-fiction contest:** deadline August 1, length between 2,000 to 3,000 words, no restrictions as to subject matter or approach, may be personal essay, memoir, cultural criticism, nature writing or literary journalism. **Open Season Awards:** deadline November 1; 3 categories – poetry, short fiction, creative non-fiction. **Novella Prize:** deadline February 1, 2012, a single work of long-form fiction between 10,000 and 20,000 words. **Far Horizons Award for Poetry:** deadline May 1, 2012, emerging writers may enter up to 3 poems. Details on entry fees, etc. on website.

TWUC Short Prose Competition

for Developing Writers: SPC Competition, The Writers' Union of Canada, 90 Richmond St. E, Suite 200, Toronto, ON, M5C 1P1. (www.writersunion.ca) \$2,500 Prize. Winner and finalists will have their stories submitted to three Canadian magazine publishers for consideration. Entry fee \$25 per entry. Deadline November 3 postmark. Open to writers who have not been published in book format, in any genre and who do not have a contract with a book publisher. Non-fiction and fiction prose, up to 2,500 words.

Prairie Fire 2011 Annual Writing

Contests: 423-100 Arthur St., Winnipeg, MB R3B 1H3 (www.prairiefire.ca) The Banff Centre Bliss Carman Poetry Award – up to 3 poems per entry, max. 150 lines per entry. Short fiction – 1 story per entry, max. 10,000 words. Creative Non-fiction – 1 essay per entry, max. 5,000 words. Deadline November 30 postmark. Contest winners and honourable mentions will be published. Entry fee \$32 (includes subscription to mag). Prizes in each category: 1st \$1,250, 2nd \$500, 3rd \$250. Details on website.

PRISM international: (www.prismmagazine.ca) **Literary nonfiction contest** – 1st prize \$1,500; entry fee \$28 for 1 story, plus \$7 for each additional piece, deadline November 30. **Short fiction contest** – 1st \$2,000, 2 runner-up prizes of \$200 each; entry fee \$28 for 1 story, plus \$7 for each additional piece, deadline January 27, 2012. **Poetry contest** – 1st prize \$1,000, 2 runner-up prizes of \$300 and \$200; entry fee \$28 for 3 poems, plus \$7 for each additional poem, deadline January 27, 2012. Details on website.

Port Medway Readers Festival

The Old Meeting House on Long Cove Road in Port Medway will host the annual Port Medway Readers Festival. Tickets are \$15 for each Saturday reading and \$10 for the Sunday reading. More information can be found at www.portmedwayreadersfestival.com.

Saturday, July 23, 7 p.m. Linden MacIntyre reads from *The Bishop's Man*, winner of the 2009 Scotiabank Giller Prize.

Saturday, August 6, 7 p.m. Howard Norman reads from *What is Left the Daughter* (2010), which is set in Nova Scotia during and after the Second World War, and his forthcoming novel, *Next Life Might Be Kinder*, set in and around Port Medway.

Saturday, August 20, 7 p.m. Margaret Atwood reads from *The Year of the Flood*, which expands on *Oryx and Crake's* storylines and characters.

Sunday August 21, 2 p.m. Graeme Gibson reads from *A Bedside Book of Beasts, a Wildlife Miscellany*.

Read by the Sea, River John, July 23

On Saturday, July 23, head for the Northumberland Strait shore and River John for Read by the Sea. It's on rain or shine.

The morning begins at 9:30 with WordPlay, the young people's portion of the event. Frieda Wishinsky of *Please Louise* and *You're Mean Lily Jean* fame will read to the younger children. Meanwhile **Jill MacLean** (*The Present Tense of Prinny Murphy*) will entertain the older, chapter book crowd. Writing and art workshops follow for kids of all ages. Young festival-goers can then share their work at the Kids' Open Mike.

Young people who are especially keen on writing can sign up for Frieda Wishinsky's Teen Writing Workshop which begins at 11:30. (Pre-register for this workshop at readbtsea@gmail.com. Lunch is provided and the cost is \$15.)

In the afternoon pitch your lawn chairs around the gazebo in the River John Legion Memorial Garden for the Centre Stage attraction. Beginning at 2 p.m., the four featured writers will present their latest work through readings and interviews – Johanna Skibsrud (*The Sentimentalists*), **Alexander MacLeod** (*Light Lifting*), multiple award-winning author Richard B. Wright (*Mr. Shakespeare's Bastard*), and Commonwealth Writer's Prize winner **Shandi Mitchell** (*Under This Unbroken Sky*). If weather is a problem the readings will be held indoors at the River John Consolidated School.

The Fest Feast follows. Tickets for the dinner – a choice of smoked pork chop or veggie lasagna – are \$15. The day wraps up with a cabaret style Open Mike event where anyone can sign up to read their own work. There is a five-minute limit for each reader. Budding writers can pre-register for a place on the roster at readbythesea.ca.

Admission is free for WordPlay, the Centre Stage readings and the Open Mike. Visit www.readbythesea.ca for details.

Shelburne Writers Festival, August 5-6

Come for the play on Friday night, the writing workshops on Saturday morning, and the readings and music Saturday afternoon. The fun ends with an outdoor dinner and convenes for an evening of meet/greet/talk at a local pub. Featuring: Bernice Morgan, author of *Random Passage* which was televised as a CBC mini-series; spoken word artist **Tanya Davis** who wrote *How To Be Alone*, the viral You Tube sensation and will be launch her first book of poetry at the festival; novelist and TV writer **Shandi Mitchell**, who wrote the award-winning *Under This Unbroken Sky*; poet **E. Alex Pierce** whose poems are often set in Shelburne County and who will be launching a collection of poetry later this year; and playwright Valerie Mason John who will perform her play *Brown Girl in the Ring*. Details can be found at www.ospreyartscentre.com

Elizabeth Bishop Centenary Arts Festival, Great Village, August 19-21

Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Elizabeth Bishop has strong ties to the small, rural community of Great Village, Nova Scotia. And Great Village will host the Elizabeth Bishop Centenary Arts Festival August 19-21. Writing workshops, readings, concerts, an art exhibit, film screenings, village tours, cardboard boat building and racing, and a beach party are on the agenda to celebrate 100 years of Elizabeth Bishop and her writing. For details, visit <http://elizabethbishopcelebration.ca>.