

An impressionistic painting of a sunset or sunrise over a rocky coastline. The sky is filled with vibrant, blended colors of orange, yellow, and blue, with a bright light source creating a lens flare effect. The foreground shows dark, jagged rocks in shades of blue and purple, with the ocean waves crashing against them.

# eastword>

*breakthroughs*

SPRING 2016

THE MAGAZINE OF  
THE WRITERS' FEDERATION  
OF NOVA SCOTIA

## All the world's a stage.

*How commanding is your performance?*

## Poet laureate:

*tribune or sloganeer, balladeer or poetaster,  
lyricist or propagandist?*

## Books Start Here –

*and our local storytellers need local publishers.*

## The more things change, the more ....

*WFNS celebrates 40 years.*

THE MAGAZINE OF  
THE WRITERS' FEDERATION  
OF NOVA SCOTIA

#### Eastword

The magazine of the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia  
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and the profession of writing in the province of Nova Scotia;  
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**Cover Artist,** Kim Aerts  
Born in Halifax, Kim is a  
landscape oil painter who  
paints scenes from the  
coasts, forests and valleys  
around the Maritimes.



## A word from the managing editor

***I have a fabulous new bathtub.***

There are jets that transform a handful of bubbles into a small mountain of clouds. A

heated backrest keeps all of your bits warm even when you're not fully submerged. A series of lights add colour – literally – to the water, while an aromatherapy dispenser sends a small waft of lavender (or whatever scent strikes your fancy) into the air. Poof.

My new tub reminds me of the art and business of writing (so I realized the other night when a small buncha bubbles tickled my nose). While there is delight in finding the right massage level and the right word, there is also a learning curve in getting there. For writers, and maybe bubble bath lovers, that exploration never ends.

But as this issue of *Eastword* clearly reminds us, the joy we find in our profession also requires work of a different sort. We must be fundraisers, as the Writers' Federation's executive director Jonathan Meakin points out in his expert column on grant writing. We must be performers as Linda Marie Coakley notes in her article on how to engage audiences as well as readers. And for poet laureates as George Elliott



Clarke tells us, there are unique expectations.

Writers must also be experts in technology, business, and marketing, as some members from earlier issues of *Eastword* remind us in our celebration of WFNS's 40 years of service to Nova Scotia's writing community. Hard drive crashes, copyright protection, and submissions to publishers are all as relevant issues today as they were four decades ago. Admittedly, the hard drives have gotten smaller (and bigger), new legislation governs copyright in this country, and stamps have been replaced by email, but the issues themselves are with us still.

My fabulous new tub required a plumber, an electrician, and a tiler to install. Without them there would be no scented airwaves, floating bubbles and colourful shades of water. Writers are in the same boat. Our work requires editors and publishers, among others. The latter are struggling to ensure they can survive in Nova Scotia – and they are looking to writers for support in their discussions (or lack of them) with government as publisher Bev Rach and author Sheree Fitch make clear in our feature on Books Start Here.

It is our hope that this issue of *Eastword* will inspire you and inform you. It's my personal hope that you will find a special moment to leaf through these pages (virtual or tree-based), tune out the world and indulge.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'dm'.

donalee Moulton  
Managing Editor  
quantum@eastlink.ca

## Grant writing is a triathlon

By Jonathan Meakin

**Q** *How can I improve my grant applications?*

At the risk of over-generalizing, grant programs for individual artists, including writers, have three core elements on which success depends.

Know the requirements. A careful reading of the guidelines, followed by thorough re-readings, is always the first step to understanding a program and its elements. These guidelines outline application requirements, eligibility, the decision-making process, and more. If after multiple readings you still find a program's guidelines unclear, you should contact the grant program officer for clarification and advice. Do ensure you've read the guidelines thoroughly before contacting anyone though. By doing your homework, you may have only three questions rather than 30.

The mandate of a public funding agency shapes the scope and focus of its grant programs. Eligibility is determined by how your personal attributes (experiences, credentials, achievements in the relevant field) as well as the purposes and goals of your project meet program requirements. Sometimes applicants attempt to make a grant program fit their proposed projects rather than the other way round. Not surprisingly, such attempts are not successful.

Prepare yourself mentally. Perhaps the most challenging element of project grants is cultivating a state of mind about the process. You need to embrace the competitive nature of the peer-assessment process while acknowledging the strong odds against a successful outcome.



*Expectations by Joyce Glasner*

Peer assessment is based on merit. Your application must demonstrate your strengths, your commitment, and your experience, and this evaluation will be conducted within the context of all the other applications that have been received. Layered on top of the ranking process is the allocation of available funds, and funding for a grant program is often a fixed and limited amount. An applicant has no control over these elements. All you can do is present your best work in the best context that your grant application provides.

Integrate information. In my experience having assisted hundreds of grant applicants, the breakthrough in navigating the application process is in understanding the third, and perhaps most important, core element: your application should create a unified narrative that intertwines your career as a writer (no matter how modest), your artistic vision (no matter how humble), and the scope of and resources needed for your current project.

Your project description, budget, résumé, and support material should

collectively convey who you are as a writer, what vision, idea or opportunity drives your current project, and how the project aids your artistic growth and development. Now here's the rub: while sharing your passion for your work, you also need to detail a concrete plan. This plan must contain clear objectives, state what you want funded and expect to achieve, and position the objectives in the context of the grant program's mandate.

Ultimately, there is no silver bullet. Each and every grant application should be unique.

Your grant application is made vital and viable through sharing the complex interconnectedness of your career, your artistic growth, and your project activity. Your objective through a grant application's narrative is to make these links as clear as possible for peer assessors so that they will be able to draw the conclusions and connect the dots that your simultaneously pragmatic and visioning grant application requires.

Fortunately, you're a writer. You can do this. And if your application is still not successful, as is statistically more than likely, you should always, always, apply again.



Before joining the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia as its Executive Director, Jonathan Meakin was a grants officer for Alberta's provincial arts funding agency.

Joyce Glasner is a Halifax-based writer and visual artist. Her artworks are frequently inspired by literature and history, and text is a key component in many of her mixed-media collages.

*If you have a question you'd like an expert to answer, please send it to [admin@writers.ns.ca](mailto:admin@writers.ns.ca) with Ask the Expert in the subject line.*

# To speak power to truth

*Exactly what, you ask, is a poet laureate?  
Read on for the answer – and more.*

**By George Elliott Clarke**  
*7th Parliamentary Poet Laureate 2016-17*



Photo: Harvard University, Department of English

*I suppose that different jurisdictions* have different ideas for what the poet laureate should do, but in essence, the role is like that of the medieval court jester: To speak truth to power, but also represent “the people,” and to do both without detracting from the majesty of the State (which is in a democracy also “the people”).

So, my duties — as Poet Laureate of Toronto (2012-15) and as the 7th Parliamentary [National] Poet Laureate (2016-17) — are basic, but also of exponential consequence (arguably): To promote poets, poetry and literacy, and to write poetry for august ceremonial occasions. At the national level, I’m expected to advise the librarian of parliament on the scope and

expansiveness of the collection. However, the symbolic vitality of a laureateship is perhaps its greatest strength. To choose to address matters of concern to the citizenry, the people, that may be tricky matters for the State, accords the poet legitimacy and/or notoriety. One has to walk the fine line between being tribune or sloganeer, balladeer or poetaster, lyricist or propagandist....

During my tenure at the city of Toronto, I encountered many scandal-mongering stories regarding the mayor Rob Ford, and I was often asked to compose a poem about his troubles. But I refused. The mayor was the mayor, the elected representative of the citizens, and it would be their duty to pass judgment on any alleged misdeeds, not the poet laureate. Moreover, I felt I had a responsibility to future poets laureate to be non-partisan.

When journalists would press me for a poem, I’d quip, “Read *Humpty Dumpty*.” Yet I did respond to the controversies that swirled about the mayor by writing, “Principles of Good Governance,” a generic poem about the subject. The poem was read to Toronto City Council and received a standing ovation; it was reprinted in the *Toronto Star* and adopted by the city of Cobourg, Ontario, and it even travelled Canada as part of the Magna Carta exhibit last year. And it was framed and hung in Toronto City Hall. For me, it’s an example of the balancing act that one is called to do, and the potential public impact that one can have as a poet laureate.

Then there are the commissions. I was asked by the *Toronto Star* to do a poem on “trees in winter,” and I was asked by Toronto Parks to write a lyric to aid their fundraising soiree. Etc. All such requests called on me to try to write to “occasion” and to find the requisite inspiration. But I also sought out such responsibilities. For instance, I asked to be part of the Toronto Remembrance Day ceremonies in 2014, and the city refused me the right to participate. I then asked the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, who said yes.

I ended up addressing an audience of 10,000 because of the unfortunate martyrdoms of Canadian soldiers that had occurred a few weeks previously. I read the war-responsive poetry of Douglas LePan on that occasion, which answered to our collective patriotism, but also showed requisite respect for the fallen.

I’m deeply sorry for the deaths that increased the poignancy of the remembrance, but I do think that such public memorializing is one of the duties of a poet laureate.

Poet Laureate of Toronto (2012-15) and Parliamentary Poet Laureate (2016-17), George Elliott Clarke has penned 14 celebrated poetry “projects,” including the revered verse-novel, *Whylah Falls* (1990, 2000, 2010), the GG-winning *Execution Poems* (2000, 2009), and the triply nominated verse-novel, *I & I* (2009).

## Halifax’s poetic ambassador

Spoken word artist and Halifax Slam Master Rebecca Thomas has become the Halifax Regional Municipality’s sixth Poet Laureate.

As poet laureate, Thomas will serve as an ambassador and advocate for literacy, literature and the arts, and reflect the vitality of the community through appearances and readings of poetry at a number of civic events and other activities. Her two-year term, which will notably coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion and Canada’s 150th birthday, started April 1st, in time to celebrate National Poetry Month.

Thomas, who is the Coordinator of Aboriginal Student Services at the Nova Scotia Community College, comes from an Indigenous background whose family has been greatly impacted by residential schools. She recognizes the lack of prominence given to First Nations’ perspectives within the history of Halifax. As a Mi’kmaw woman, Thomas embraces the opportunity to bring her cultural voice to the broader public discussion through the poet laureate position, and believes that the arts and poetry can help people heal in ways beyond traditional therapies. “Poetry can give a voice to the voiceless,” she says. “Poetry can make a powerless person feel powerful. This is why I speak.”



Photo: Matthew Madden

# Three years, nine winners, and an island of inspired young writers

*Literary awards, as C.S. MacCath discovers, are much more than well-deserved accolades*

By C.S. MacCath



## Puffin Awards 101

In the beginning, the Puffin Awards for Literary Excellence were only open to Victoria County high school students, but this year the competition has been expanded to include all high school students in Cape Breton.

Young writers are invited to submit a story of 900 to 1500 words, which are blind-judged by a panel of five published authors. The first place winner receives a \$150 certificate, a title from the Breton Books catalogue, a full pass to the Cabot Trail Writers Festival, and an opportunity to read their winning story at the annual fall festival.

Note: The 2016 fundraising event for the Puffin Awards was held at the St. Michael's Parish Hall in Baddeck, but it's not too late to support the high school writing competition. Donations can be sent to Bill Conall (cheques payable to Bill Conall or Kate Oland) at Puffin Awards for Literary Excellence, 47927 Cabot Trail Road, R. R. 4, Baddeck, Nova Scotia, B0E 1B0.

## One important measure of

**success** for any literary award for youth is the way it inspires the young writers who win. Samantha Morrison, a past winner of the Puffin Awards for Literary Excellence, has experienced such inspiration first hand.

In a recent email interview, she said being part of the short story competition held each year for high school students in Cape Breton was a very positive experience for her. "I've been writing since I was pretty young, but during my last year of high school I started to actually write regularly and became more invested in what I was creating, so winning made me feel really great and affirmed that I am actually talented at writing. As well, it's made me feel much more comfortable openly sharing my work with people."

Knowing that it is making an impact like this is inspiration enough for the Raisin Debtors Society, a writing group in Cape Breton, and the Cabot Trail Writers Festival, which have cooperatively sponsored the Puffin Awards for the past three years. Bill Conall, a winner of the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour, established the Puffin Awards because he wanted to provide a place where students could enter their stories in competition with their peers, receive helpful feedback from judges, and win stuff.

Fellow Raisin Debtor and Baddeck Public Library librarian Kate Oland feels there is plenty of emphasis in Cape Breton on sport and athletics, but little support for developing writers. "We've done our best to make the

awards a learning opportunity, not just a contest," she says. "I know that when I was a teen writer every drop of encouragement nurtured me. I hope that we're communicating the message that writing is a noble, useful, and worthwhile pursuit."

Each year, the Puffin Awards holds a fundraiser in Baddeck, where the Raisin Debtors and others read from their published fiction and hold panel discussions in order to hit their \$400 annual goal. It's money well spent.

Three years and nine winners later an island of young writers have been encouraged to engage with their craft. Such encouragement is a gift for Cape Breton high school students now and in the years to come as they look back upon the awards. Samantha Morrison is building on that foundation. Currently in university, she says her studies have prevented her from writing as much – and thanks to the Puffin Awards that is okay. "Having won the award has really helped me be able to say 'You still have talent; you still have stories to tell. Now just isn't the right time.'"

That right time will come, says Morrison. "[I] know I can return to writing when I'm inspired."



Heather Crosby-Gionet

C.S. MacCath's poetry and fiction have been nominated twice for the Rhyssling Award, twice for the Pushcart Prize, and shortlisted for the Washington Science Fiction Association Small Press Award.



# Q *How do you take your writing to the next level?*

"I...seed (tell the story)...weed (remove what doesn't contribute)...feed (fix what I just damaged)...and heed (get feedback)." - Pat d'Entremont > "Write about what's at the tip of your brain. When you write, don't edit and when you edit, don't write!" - Lila Hope-Simpson > "To write poetry, which I do frequently, I have had no problem in finding inspiration. I find it almost every day. I hope to begin writing prose very soon, and I'm sure the inspiration will come the same way. To be alert to your surroundings and sensitive and be able to perceive the subtle difference in many things will be helpful in carrying out this task." - Ranjith V. Embuldeniya > "Read it out loud. Take a big breath, exhale, and read it to someone else. I think lots of stories get stuck in the space between personal musings and willing to share. It's about accepting the fact that "we're all in this together" and stories are meant to be told." - Heather Mackenzie-Carey > "I took my fiction writing to the next level by completing an Alistair MacLeod Mentorship from the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia! In general, I push myself to try new things, and learn how to do them as I go." - Lindsey Carmichael > "I take my writing to the next level by re-reading (again and again) my favorite books and trying to figure out what the authors have done to make their books my favorites." - Jan Coates > "I have two strategies, and both work depending on the situation. One is to take a day off and do something entirely different and physical – hike, kayak, ski, road trip, cook, paint – that gives me time with my thoughts but no guilt about being away from my desk. I usually come back with a new perspective, but I have to be careful that I don't give myself too many "days off!" The other is the opposite. I force myself to sit at my desk and discipline my mind to seriously address whatever page problem is making me avoid going further – like a bit of tedious research that needs doing, or the characters are stuck. Then I reward myself for solving the issue. - Monica Graham > Picture this: there's a path in front of you. In some ways, it's a familiar path – you're the one who's chosen to stand in this place, ready to begin. But you also have questions about the path: where does it lead and how and why? When I begin to create my characters and their stories, I start down the path as though I know what I'm doing and just let the momentum move me along. Very soon and very often I go back to the beginning, then carefully move along the path again, making sure to notice even the smallest details, going deeper into my characters' lives and more completely understanding their stories. I make changes as I go – adding, deleting, and reorganizing. Taking my writing to the next level. - Sylvia Gunnery

# BOOKS START HERE

*A rallying cry for government to support our publishers*

by Sheree Fitch

***Local publishers are pushing the government to support an industry whose net worth is immeasurable. Writers are offering their support. Here author Sheree Fitch thanks publishers for putting her words in the hands of those who matter most — readers.***

***“How do you make a book?”*** It’s a question I’ve been asked a lot over the years, often by a bright-eyed second or third grader. They’re usually disappointed to learn that I don’t make the physical books myself. I’m not a publisher.

“So what’s a publisher?” they ask. The story I give them goes a little like this: Well, first there’s a writer who has an idea, and they write, write, write. Sometimes, I tell them how my ideas and my words were rejected for 10 years, but one day, in 1985, Doubleday Canada said “Yes,” and I was happy happy, and *Toes in My Nose* found its way onto bookshelves across Canada.

Now, 30 years later, I have several publishers, many of them home grown. I tell everyone that thanks to Nimbus, a smaller regional publisher, I still have picture books out that have been around almost three decades. Thanks to Pottersfield Press, I have chapter books. Thanks to Goose Lane Editions, I have an adult poetry book.

As clichéd as it sounds, it does take a village to make a book, to birth a book, for a book to do what every writer wants a book to do: reach a reader. I’d like to tell my version of bookmaking to those who think we writers are spacey artists who don’t care about the commercial end of things. Of course we do. We have bills to pay and families to raise. We need money, too.

This industry we call a regional book industry is a good example of the web of being and interconnectedness – of community. It is an industry that is both ecology and economy. At times, it seems to be an industry full of contradiction, of push and pull, one where the world of commerce intersects with ethics. Then again when doesn’t it?

Cultural industries are as much social enterprise as commercial enterprise, but profit and benefit are hard to measure because imagination, truth and beauty are not commodities. “Art saves lives” says a sign in my kitchen. I know books contribute to the well-being and health of society, but this line of thinking is far from bottom-line thinking, hard if not impossible to factor into any spreadsheet.

A vibrant, healthy, sustainable book publishing industry in Nova Scotia, as in any region, needs commitment and understanding, an attitude shift maybe, that there is a village involved here and that the market economy and what Lewis Hyde describes as the “gift economy” can co-exist.

Some would argue books do not shape and define our culture, and I have to agree. Stories do transmit and preserve our history, however. Books are one way we contain and tell those stories and, one might argue, a way we can track the evolution of culture. Books are testimonials that say who we are, who we have been, what we can be. Books chronicle, document, educate, celebrate. (Then again, as a writer of books, I am biased. I live in a house of books. I’m smitten enough to be in the early planning stages of opening up a seasonal book shop in rural Nova Scotia. It will specialize in children’s and, yes, regional books.)



At the Books Start Here rally, I applauded groundbreaking books from our province and their publishers here in Nova Scotia, book-loving souls like Lesley Choyce, Kay Tudor, Heather Bryant, Andrew Steeves; people who have published vital, gorgeous books. There are many titles that we would, as a province and a people, be poorer for if they did not exist.

On that Books Start Here night I asked one question I hoped would serve as a rallying cry. Without our Nova Scotia publishers, how many stories will we not get to hear? As the bigger publishers opt more and more for only those manuscripts that will reap huge profits and be mass market successes, our local storytellers need publishers that will give the world books that start here simply because they are great books.

A few weeks ago, I received this note from a parent whose daughter had died of cancer:

She and I had many a good laugh as I created different voices for your storybook friends and sometimes scared the bejeepers out of her. She loved them, pages worn never torn over and over again. Thanks for the memories.

When my own brother was dying, one of the best conversations I had with him was about Monica Graham's book on Peachie Carroll, a real-life Maritime detective. My brother, who was himself a real-life Maritime detective, thought it would make a great movie. I still do.

These are the immeasurable moments that define our lives, and we need to remind each other and ourselves that this is thanks to the power of books. This is part of the net worth of the book publishing industry in our province.

Our current federal government's attitude towards the arts reflected in the recent budget is encouraging. I'm hopeful some of that bigger-picture mindset finds its way into provincial decision-making and translates into financial support of publishers here in Nova Scotia.

No one has ever said that life in any of its manifestations should be easy. To paraphrase Alistair MacLeod (with apologies), no one ever said regional book publishing would be easy. Or ever make huge pots of money. Only that it is necessary and that it needs support. It needs our support.

A book's many gifts – creativity, innovation, imagination, social and commercial Entrepreneurship – blend together in our regional publishers who know, as we do, that for many reasons, Books must Start Here.

Sheree Fitch writes for adults and children. She is published by both regional and national publishers and lives in a house of books.

## From a publisher's perspective

*By Beverley Rach*

Publishers are just one part of the ecosystem that revolves around books. Writers, illustrators, designers, editors, booksellers, readers ... we all play an important role. We want stories from around the world. But we also want stories that start here.

In order to maintain and grow our ecosystem in Nova Scotia, we need improved government support. We've all seen investment in industries that come and go in this province, but book publishing is money well spent – and we won't pack up and move to Wichita to chase another business incentive in five years.

Now for the skill-testing question: Provincial government grants to Nova Scotia book publishers presently total: a) \$1.3 million b) \$170,000 c) \$750,000 d) \$56 million?

The answer is "b." Currently \$170,000 is divided among eligible publishers. (In all, there are 13 book publishers in the province.) In Ontario, publishers receive \$1.3 million in support while book publishers in Manitoba receive \$750,000 in tax credits alone, in addition to funding through their arts council. On the other hand, since 2010, the Nova Scotia government has given \$56 million in support to the now defunct DSME Trenton Ltd., steel manufacturing facility.

As part of its 2015-2016 provincial budget, the Nova Scotia government announced that \$6 million would be invested in a creative economy fund for the film, animation, music/sound recording, and publishing industries here. Book publishers, however, are now in the last year of support under the previous funding system, and we still have no answers as to the shape and size of the new funding model.

The 13 book publishers in Nova Scotia believe our industry has the ability to grow with additional support. It has proven itself to be a stable industry providing good jobs, important economic spin-offs, and contributing to a strong local culture.

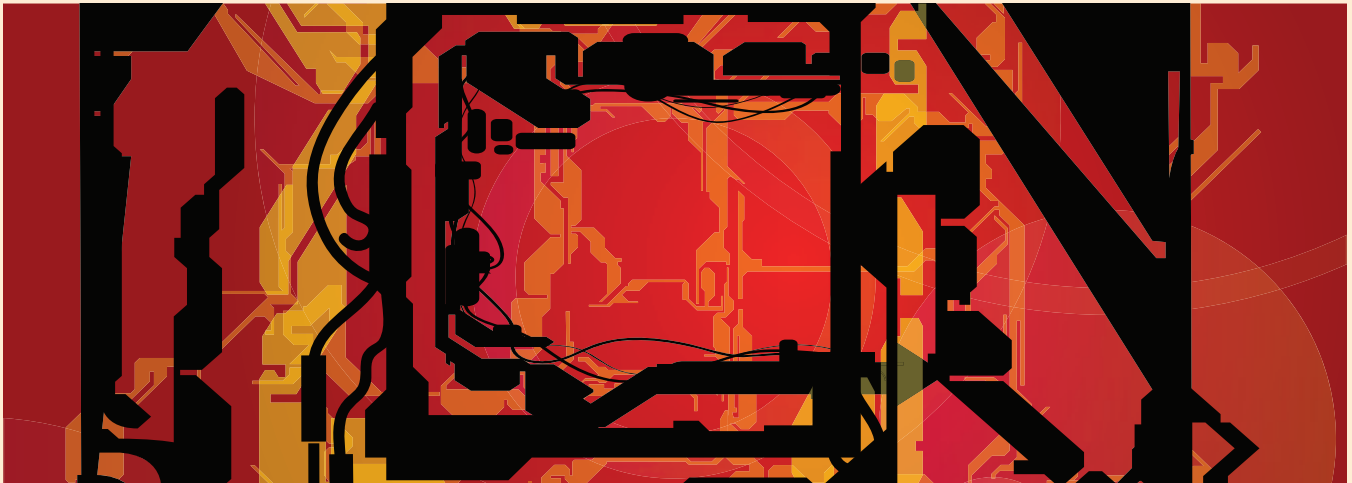
We are eager to work with the government to develop a solid economic plan for the industry. We know what is working in other parts of Canada. We know what it would take to grow the book publishing industry in Nova Scotia. Now we need the support of writers, illustrators, designers, editors, booksellers, readers – all of those with a role to play in this essential sector – to make it clear to government that books start here.

*Beverley Rach has worked in book publishing for 25 years. She is currently the publisher, managing editor and acquisitions head at Roseway Publishing. We hear she also plays a mean game of poker.*

# Past and Present

WFNS celebrates 40 years of service to Nova Scotia's writing community.

*We turned to the Eastword annals to discover how much has changed over the last four decades. And how much has stayed the same.*



*Take two steps. Now come back one step. The wonderful world of technology has revolutionized our lives — and caused an inordinate amount of frustration in the process. We share Dave Perkins's panic more than 20 years later.*

## Adventures of a Hard-Drive Crash Dummy

By Dave Perkins

*Eastword* September/October 1993

"I knew it could happen, could even visualize how. But never, never could I see it happening to me. How could I do such a stupid thing?

I crashed my computer. It was awful — dead kilobytes all over the place. I tried to reboot. There was a flicker of hope when the familiar opening screens flipped by. But the dim flicker soon died. The sequence ended prematurely on a "Drive error" message and stopped dead. With plummeting spirits, I realized I'd done something wrong.

Frantically I flipped through the manual for the program I'd been messing with. It told me exactly where I'd gone wrong, ending with a real doomsday message: "and all data on the hard drive will be lost."

....

All was not lost, however. There were a few things going for me. As a common sense precaution I had made a complete system backup sometime ago and kept it updated. At least I could rebuild. My emergency floppy disk was guaranteed to

get things going again. I'd just pop it into the slot and carry on from there. But the carefully prepared boot disk wouldn't work. The same message stared back at me, icy blue on a black background.

....

The next day I described my disaster to a co-worker who had suffered a similar experience and to our company system engineer. They, as I'd suspected, had all the answers. After getting the same instructions from both, I realized I had come very close to doing the right thing the night before, and I could probably restore the system myself. Both reckoned I could kiss any new data goodbye, but with my backup files there was hope of putting everything else to rights.

...

So, fellow PC-using scribes, it can happen to you. The better prepared you are the more likely it is you'll be able to recover quickly and cheaply. Whichever system you are using, be it DOS or whatever, get to know how it works. And don't be too embarrassed to share your problems with your friends. There's no substitute for experience and a helping hand. I'd be back to pencils and foolscap if it wasn't for my friends, and a rare bit of common sense."

*Copyright remains a hot topic for writers. Many writers are still underpaid for their efforts, and the struggle to make a livable income by the written word is as real in 2016 as it was in 1995.*

## **\$\$ Isn't the Issue, © Protection Is**

**By Allan Lynch**

*Eastword September/October 1995*

"Last year I wrote an article for Canadian Geographic about Nova Scotia's wild blueberry industry. It was the cover feature for the January-February edition. In July, an editor asked for permission to reprint it.

Naturally, I was flattered by their interest. And as an old newspaper man, I knew the pay wouldn't be great. Normally, such a reprint would earn \$750; The Herald offered \$125. However, money wasn't the issue. The stumbling block was copyright protection.

Like many newspapers, The Herald repackages its contents: placing it on the Internet, selling CD-ROMs, Heraldline, etc. Unfortunately, newspapers either haven't found a way to share these additional sales or simply don't wish to. This breaks the traditional relationship between freelancer and publisher.

I found it interesting that when I raised the copyright problems, this editor told me she had never considered these issues. She was stunned by the implications I mentioned. After discussion with the managing editor, I was informed the newspaper couldn't change its policy. "Everything is put on CD-ROM, "she said. "And you sell those." "Yes."

We parted amicably. In this case, I could afford to refuse the editor, which hasn't always been an option. Unfortunately, until more of us are able to become sticklers in protecting our copyright, we will continue to be underpaid and facing precarious futures."

*Is what Tony Foster had to say 13 years ago still true today? Or has the world of self-publishing and the growth of subgenres allowed writers to find niche markets that enable them to be commercial successes?*

## **Are We Writing For Ourselves or For the Market?**

**By Tony Foster**

*Eastword January/February 1993*

"Are we writing for ourselves or for the market? If we write for ourselves, then we should not complain if our audience is a select and limited one.

...

Both [names omitted] are highly talented writers of fiction. Their books and stories are a joy to read — but only for a limited market. Both have made a decision — consciously or unconsciously — to write for their own amusement and in their own distinctive styles, which, unfortunately, are unable to achieve a national or global audience.

...

[If writers] wish to earn a living as a writer, then each must readjust his or her thinking to market demands, without compromising individual integrity. If writers are not prepared to face this reality, then they should not complain that there is no market for their products. Lack of commercial success has nothing to do with the agent, the publisher, the distributor, the bookseller, or the government. It has everything to do with the writer and the product.

...

Don't complain if your books don't sell. Accept the limitations of your commercial talents, but revel in the fact that you have the ability to give joy and satisfaction to at least a few of us who will buy and admire your work."



# All the world's a stage

*Being a great writer is one thing. Being a great presenter is another. Authors need to hone their skills to engage audiences. Here's how.*

By Linda Marie Coakley

## One day a speech teacher

answered a nervous journalist's query about her "aversion" to public speaking. The journalist was told that writers and dancers were particularly hard to teach to speak in public for both professions did not require speaking. The journalist was Gloria Steinem.

## To the podium, please

If you're nervous speaking before an audience, that's okay. Almost everyone is. In fact, that rush of adrenalin can give you an edge and actually improve your performance. But fear of public speaking can also prevent you from speaking eloquently and reading beautifully. Toastmasters can help.

Creatively Speaking Toastmasters meets twice a month at the WFNS office. Our program helps members to gradually build speaking skills and become confident in front of an audience, whether they're speaking, reading, accepting an award, or giving an introduction. We explore vocal variety, body language, humour, use of visual aids, impromptu speaking, and other skills. We pay attention to grammar and learn to leave out those annoying filler words, the ahs, ums and ers.

If you think Toastmasters might help you, come to any meeting as a guest. We won't make you speak, but if speaking is something you want to become adept at, we'll invite you to join us and get to work on that goal. We can come to you as well: if you're organizing an event and you need people to introduce speakers, please just ask. We'd be delighted to help.

Note: You can contact Creatively Speaking Toastmasters at [creativelyspeakinghfx@gmail.com](mailto:creativelyspeakinghfx@gmail.com) or by calling Collette Saunders at 902-405-1701.

Steinem might well have thrown in the towel at that point: she was both a dancer and a writer. However, I'm glad she faced the dragon, overcoming her aversion and launching a compelling speaking career infused with her profound concern for women's rights.

Maybe you, too, are leery of facing an audience? Fortunately, there are pointers to help as you step into the role of presenter and performer.

Start by keeping the beefy old business school adage in mind. It's still relevant. "First you sell the smell and then the hamburger." This reminds us all that how the "package" is wrapped may immediately attract an audience's attention before one word is spoken. For example, colour is its own silent language. It can vibrate with energy for instant impact or fade into the background. Crimson and periwinkle, reds and royal blues radiate a lively confidence. Know what colours flatter and what ones turn you into a wallflower.

Women can break up any solid block of colour with a boldly patterned scarf, not hung like a dishrag, but effortlessly floating. An arresting necklace can quickly focus attention as can a pair of merrily dangling earrings (a trick elementary school teachers have used for years). Add a rosy blush to soften and brighten pale skin. For men, a snazzy bowtie or elegant ascot can capture instant attention. Practice till you get the look you want.

Remember, the aim is to stand out, not blend in. Your audience is as interested in you as they are in your work. I know a YA author who comes into a classroom and immediately spreads a giant paisley scarf on the table in front of her. It creates intrigue, further enhanced by her solid black attire and eye-catching jewelry.

Her tales are Eastern European and somewhat dark in tone, so she sets the stage almost as a character from her book captivating audiences from the start!

Here are five other technical tips to transform your presentation from pedantic to powerful.

**Volume.** Vary it judiciously between loud and soft to keep people awake and give emphasis (like commercials on TV).

**Pace.** Speed up and slow down as your story unfolds. Too fast drains the audience. Too slow is a snore.

**Pausing.** Take time to let a little time lapse. A pause must always be filled — with suspense, with expectation. Racing through material suggests nervousness and lessens the importance and impact of what you have to say.

**Eye contact.** Look up often to keep folks engaged. The eyes are a performer's most important tool; sweep the group with yours, pausing at a particularly involved listener — but not for long.

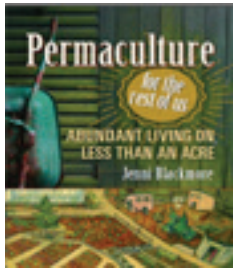
**Gestures and movement.** These can only enhance a reading, so be bold enough and relaxed enough to move naturally and to add a little oomph to your reading.

These few pointers practiced with a friend as caring critic will be a well invested afternoon. Ultimately, remind yourself that folks have come out because they love your work and are excited to meet you.



Photo: Sandra Phinney

Linda Marie Coakley designs and implements theatre education projects for ArtSmarts, part of AGNS Outreach. She lives in a former golf club on a hillside outside Yarmouth where she happily welcomes her many Airbnb guests.



**Permaculture for the Rest of Us – Abundant Living on Less Than an Acre**

**Jenni Blackmore**

New Society Publishers, \$19.95  
ISBN: 9780865718104

A highly entertaining, personal account of how permaculture can be practiced in adverse conditions, enabling a more sustainable lifestyle in a less-than-perfect world. With a rallying cry of “If we can do it, you can too,” she distils the wisdom of 20 years of trial and error into a valuable teaching tool.

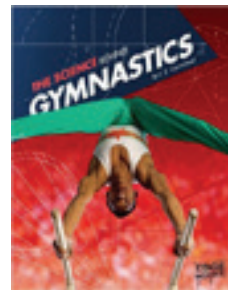


**How Can We Reduce Agricultural Pollution?**

**L. E. Carmichael**

Lerner, \$15.00  
ISBN: 9781467796972

Everyone needs to eat, yet farming is a major cause of pollution around the world. But did you know that certain types of farming create less pollution than others? Or that some types of waste can be made into energy? Investigate what we can do to reduce agricultural pollution.



**The Science Behind Gymnastics**

**L. E. Carmichael**

Capstone, \$10.00  
ISBN: 9781491481639

Behind every jump, spin, and flip of olympic gymnastics, science is at work. Centrifugal force is at work in a midair spin, and center of gravity is involved in balance beam routines. Newton's Third Law of Motion springs into action as a gymnast flies into the air in the vaulting event. Find out how science is involved in all your favorite gymnastics events and how gymnasts take science into account as they chase the gold medal



**5 Keys to Building a Clear & Usable Website**

**Gwen Davies**

Bright Crow Publishing, \$9.99 (Kindle)  
ISBN: 9781522916475

This handbook helps you decide what a website could do for you, and simplifies the job of creating a site that people understand. The truth is, writing is NOT clear until the reader understands it. Gwen Davies has worked in the field of clear language for 30 years.



**What Kills Good Men**

**David Hood**

Nimbus Publishing, \$21.95  
ISBN: 9781771083508

A city councilman is found floating in the harbour. Chief Inspector Baxter follows the case from the waterfront, through the city's streets, and into the surrounding countryside. With pointed observations on behaviour and the changing character of Halifax, Baxter conducts a sardonic inquiry into morality, justice, and the space in between.

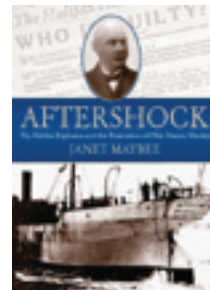


**Epic Game**

**William Kowalski**

Orca Books, \$9.95  
ISBN: 9781459810495

It's the story of Kat, a tough, independent woman who is also a professional poker player. When her best friend dies, Kat must take charge of her ten-year-old son until he can be reunited with his father. The bond that forms between them takes her by surprise, making her rethink the old poker playing adage she learned from her own father: “Bet with your head, not your heart.”



**Aftershock: the Halifax Explosion and the Persecution of Pilot Francis Mackey**

**Janet Maybee**

Nimbus Publishing, \$19.95  
ISBN: 9781771083447

Francis Mackey was the Halifax Harbour pilot assigned to the munitions ship Mont-Blanc on December 6, 1917. He was unfairly blamed for collision and fire that led to the devastating explosion. Charged with manslaughter, he was imprisoned, vilified in the press and denied his license despite being cleared of any negligence.



**A Hero**

**Charlotte R. Mendel**

Inanna Publications, \$22.95  
ISBN: 9781771331937  
ISBN ebook: 9781771331944

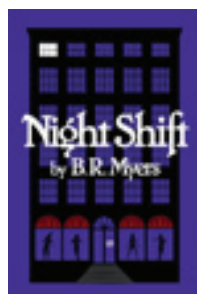
The state war raging outside the home of the Al-Fakhoury extended family, living in a border town buffeted by the turmoil of the Arab Spring, entwines with the familial conflict raging within. *A Hero* explores the dynamics of a Middle Eastern family, and their challenging, heartfelt path during revolutionary times.



**The Salmon People**  
*Hugh Mckervill*

Whitecap Books Ltd, \$5.00  
ISBN: 9781770502086

The Salmon People tells the story of First Nations, Japanese Canadians, Chinese cannery workers, and the polyglot of people whose lives were shaped by the once abundant Pacific salmon. It is also an account of human greed, prejudice and continuing ecological folly.



**Night Shift**  
*B.R. Myers*

\$15.93  
ISBN: 0995044708

At Willard's department store none of the night security guards survive for long and eighteen-year-old Daniel Gale is about to discover why. From author B.R. Myers comes a stylish phantasmagorical mystery series set in the heart of Manhattan.



**100 Things You Don't Know About Nova Scotia**  
*Sarah Sawler*

Nimbus Publishing, \$17.95  
e-book: \$10.99  
ISBN: 9781771083775  
e-ISBN: 9781771083782

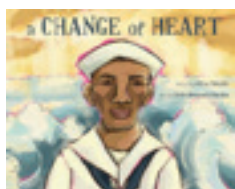
Did you know the Halifax-Dartmouth ferry was operated by a team of nine horses? Or that Babe Ruth visited Yarmouth regularly for hunting and fishing vacations? Enter journalist Sarah Sawler: your guide to discovering 100 fascinating things you don't know about Nova Scotia — from murders to famous landmarks.



**The Sarah Diaries**  
*Anna Wade*

\$20.00  
ISBN: 9780994823106

Artist, Anna Horsnell Wade, boards the oil tanker, Sarah Desgagnés, to experience life at sea; first as the ship battles ice on the Gulf of St. Lawrence and later to travel the St. Lawrence Seaway. The Sarah Diaries is a personal account — a heartfelt look into the world of the merchant seafarer.



**A Change of Heart**  
*Alice Walsh*  
*Illustrations Erin Bennett Banks*

Nimbus Publishing, \$19.95  
ISBN: 9781171083713

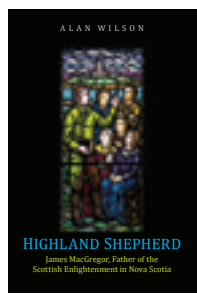
For most of his young life, Lanier Phillips' relationships with white people have been marked by hatred and violence. After he is shipwrecked off the coast of Newfoundland in 1941, he is nursed back to health by a white woman. This simple act of kindness changes Lanier's life forever.



**An Irregular Marriage**  
*Margaret A. Westlie*

Selkirk Stories, \$17.54  
ISBN: 9781926494012

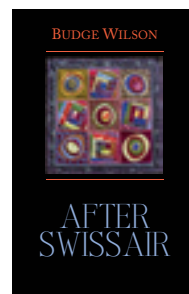
Description: Isle of Skye, 1803: Annie's parents are leaving Scotland for Prince Edward Island, but Annie refuses to come. She prefers to stay behind for her betrothed, Alistair. But where is Alistair? And is his mother a witch? Read this young adult novel by PEI author Margaret A. Westlie.



**Highland Shepherd: James MacGregor, Father of the Scottish Enlightenment in Nova Scotia**  
*Alan Wilson*

University of Toronto Press, \$55  
ISBN: 9781442644519

This biography explores MacGregor's role in advancing frontier life, easing denominational rivalries, fostering Gaelic culture, founding Pictou Academy, and promoting Glasgow's and the Scottish Enlightenment's impact on 'Improver' agriculture, science, industry, and education in the late 18th and early 19th centuries maritimes.




**After Swissair**  
*Budge Wilson*

Pottersfield Press, \$19.99  
ISBN: 9781897426814

These 36 poems were written in gratitude and in celebration of the sheer courage and generosity of the human spirit, shared and needed by both the victims' families and by thousands of Nova Scotians who helped in the recovery after the 1998 crash of Swissair 111.





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or contact [hubbardswritersfestival@hotmail.com](mailto:hubbardswritersfestival@hotmail.com)  
Online registration begins April 14, 2016

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**Place:** Birchdale, close to Kemptville Yarmouth Co.  
([birchdalelake.com](http://birchdalelake.com))

**Cost:** \$390 inc. accommodation, meals, and seven workshops.

For more information contact Heather White,  
[heatherwhite09@gmail.com](mailto:heatherwhite09@gmail.com), or 902-229-2366

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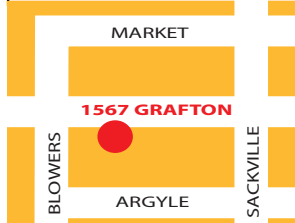


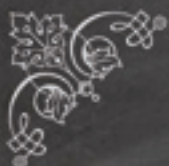
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Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia



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