

# INKSPOTTER NEWS

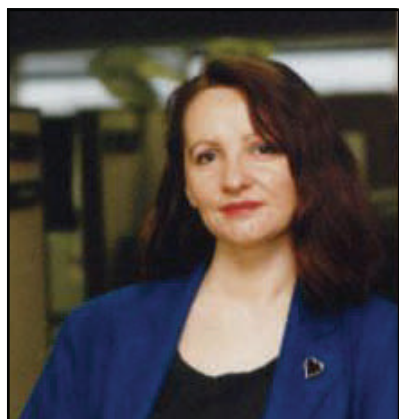
Information and Support for Creative Writers

Issue 4.01  
January 2006

ISSN 1715-1015

## EDITORIAL

BY BETTY DOBSON



me or for my work.

Voting deadline is January 15th, so don't delay.

Happy New Year, everyone, and thanks for being part of *InkSpotter News*.

### Magazine/e-zine Editors

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/zineeditor.shtml>

### Book/e-book Editors

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/bookeditor.shtml>

### Writers' Resource/Information/News Source

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/writerinfo.shtml>

### Nonfiction Magazine/e-zines

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/nonfictionzine.shtml>

### Fiction Magazine/e-zines

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/fictionzine.shtml>

### Poetry Magazine/e-zines

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/poetryzine.shtml>

### Authors

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/author.shtml>

### Poets

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/poet.shtml>

### Poems

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/poem.shtml>

### Poll Results

<http://www.critters.org/predpoll/tally.html>

### ...Just to Be Nominated

The annual Preditors & Editors poll is underway and, for the first time, I'm nominated in a few categories (see the list at right). Now it's time for readers to let their mouse fingers do the walking and the talking.

So, consider this one of my rare moments of soliciting reader support. Please take a few minutes to check out the links that follow. If you're so inclined, cast your vote for

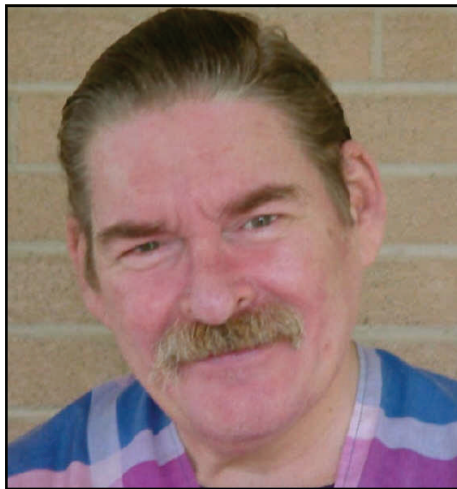
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## THE MIGHTY PEN

BY WILLIAM ALAN RIESER



### The Two Percenters

**I**n 1957, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in Washington determined, after an extensive survey, that 98% of all creative efforts are accomplished by less than 2% of the people. They were talking about successful efforts, of course, by which they meant creativity resulting in some sort of profit, essentially financial. In the 60s, during President Johnson's Great Society years, the definition was revised somewhat to include recognition, but the same 2% statistic prevailed. What they are literally saying is that the bulk of all art, literature, and scientific discovery is achieved by a very small percentage of the people available on this planet. That relegates the remaining 98% to the status of consumers, the ones who buy the paintings, read the books, and sample the inventions.

How does apply to us who are primarily concerned with literature? The last time I looked, most graduates of our educational system could write in one language or another. I don't feel any different from anyone else simply because I can create an article, short

story, or novel. Is there something implied in the study that has more meaning than the base statistic? Am I a two percenter?

The flaw in the survey was revealed by a much later one in the 90s, this one handled by the Consumer Bureau. It appears that wealthy people belong almost exclusively to the ninety-eight percenters, that they contribute virtually nothing to the creative process and spend their lives consuming, some say plundering, our natural and private resources. Think about the implications. Is it reasonable to assume that all the truly talented folk are necessarily located amongst the poor? Does an artiste have to be starving to create a masterpiece? The more I delve this mystery, the more the truth of it reaches the surface.

Well known authors, the ones who become rich from their works, seem to produce less and less as their stockpiles accumulate. In fact, the quality of their books suffer a tremendous dilution in comparison to the days when they were hungry writers, look for any sort of break to get their name recognition. You have only to peruse the latest offerings from Stephen King and John Grisham to recognize the veracity of this statement. In fact, most of the writers we consider great made their greatest contributions in their youth, though there are some exceptions. Some, once they've made their kill, are practically never heard from again.

I also noticed that the majority of the wannabe herd, that which include a vast array of unknown, unappreciated literary talent, is undoubtedly entrenched in the land of pauperism. They are the ones currently producing the most

potent stories, plays, films, and novels, the most original and thought provoking poems and lyrics. In hindsight, I can see that it has always been this way and will probably remain a fact so long as the reality of money continues to be the medium of exchange. There is a vicious catch-22 that regulates literary fame. If you are a POD [Print On Demand] author like me and would like to ensnare an agent, you have to sell several thousand books first. In other words, you need enough money to go around and market them personally in order to prove that people will buy them. Most of us do not have the resources to do that. It takes \$250,000 to successfully market a book today. Only the very rich or the big publishing houses can afford to invest in such a scheme.

I'm not sure why it takes a starving novelist to reach out and grip the emotions so much better than a well fed one, but it is undeniably true. Perhaps trauma breeds greatness or great ideas, just as travesty often inspire heroics. Maybe this formula is inbred to such a degree that nature will not permit a variation. It could be that G-d equates pain and suffering with rain and sunlight in order to make seeds grow and generate. Notwithstanding the fact that there are a few lionized authors who managed to trickle out some memorable lines toward the end of their careers, the majority do not. The reigning alphas require the immature to stand on their feet and fight for supremacy. That is the way of things.

Of course, it is quite possible for a former two percenter to become a ninety-eight percenter given a glimmer of success. That is one of

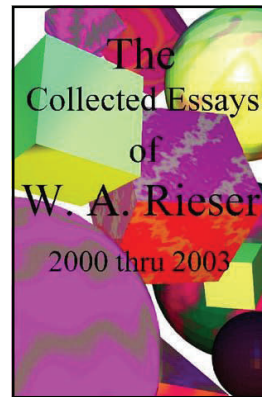
its greatest dangers. This is why all the great entertainment award institutions refuse to recognize superior talent unless it plays their politically correct game, why Peter Jackson will not be lionized as a great director, or his LOTR [*Lord of the Rings*] films given the kudos they deserve. Thus far, the two instalments I have seen pretty much trivialize everything else I have seen, and the public agrees. He is a two percenter who refuses their private agenda where they make speeches for and honour themselves. Awarding others is sort of like giving Yassir Arafat the Nobel Peace Prize after he has proven he is little more than Al Capone in a burnoose.

So, knowing this, we could perhaps effect a change in the system by eliminating the ninety-eight

percenters outright. After all, we are the most imaginative ones and best able to conceive a method of getting rid of the apathetic consumers. That way, everything we do will be appreciated by all. Now wouldn't that defy the odds? In fact, it would defy the percentages. Come to think of it, however, if we remove the unimaginative, the stupid, and the boring from our lives, would there be enough left to talk about? If we all were equally vibrant entities, could we recognize flaws at all? Does genius demand a moron to make the comparison real? It is a consideration and it explains the psychological trust that impels the election of various

people to positions of authority. As for the CEOs in the recent market scandal...the Bush Administration...the current legal, medical, and educational professions...not a two percenter among them.

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The late William Alan Rieser, B.A., M.A., had careers in teaching, conducting, composing, performing music, umpiring, electronics, supervising, and finally writing in his retirement. He was a professional editor and published sixteen novels and hundreds of

shorts and articles.

## WELCOME TO THE BRAG TIME

FROM OUR SUBSCRIBERS



- New Mexico author **Connie Gotsch** has agreed to review books once a month for *Apollo's Lyre*, and award-winning E-zine. Gotsch will discuss books by authors writing about the south western United States.
- **Mary McIntosh's** short writer-oriented story, with photo, is featured for the week of April 2 in *Bylines 2006 Writers Desk*

*Calendar*. Also, her story "Mondays With My Mother" placed third in the *Writer-on-Line* Memoir Contest. The incentive is there, she says. "At the age of 85, I shall continue writing."

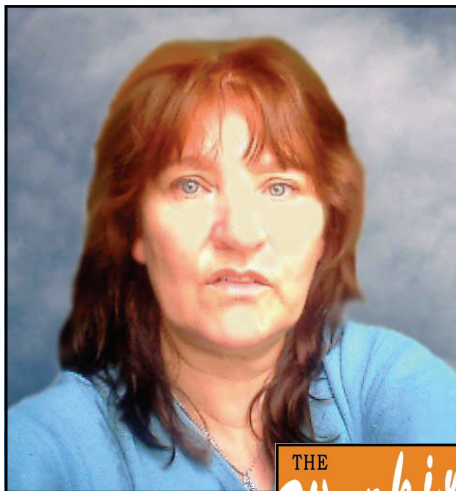
- **John Young's** flash story "Be Careful What You Wish For" appears in the December issue of *Lunarosity*. Another flash story, "Backward Planning," earned runner-up status in *Future Fire's* Mirrormask Competition/Flashes of Darkness.
- **Christine Cristiano's** short true love story "The First Date" will be published at *Romantic Short Love Stories* in the near future.
- St. John's York Mills Church in Toronto, Ontario, performed two of **Allison Lynn's** songs in their Christmas Eve service. "Joseph's Carol" was written several years

ago to celebrate the dedication of a new crèche in the church. "The Stable Bare" tells the story of the animals caring for the baby Jesus on that first Christmas night. In 2003, it won the Amadeus Choir's "Christmas Carol and Channukah Song Writing Competition."

- **Jacqueline Seewald** has work appearing in the following print publications: *Surreal* (non-fiction article), *Outercast* (literary short story), and *Ethereal Gazette* (horror short story).
- **Ilona Hegedus** is the founder and editor of *European Reader*, ([europeanreader.blogspot.com](http://europeanreader.blogspot.com)) a new website "for readers and writers in Europe and beyond." The site is entirely in English and includes news and reviews, as well as a forum and a related mailing list for writers.

## PAYING MARKETS

BY GAIL KAVANAGH



### New Year's Read

**A** new year! It's the perfect time to look for new markets for your work. There

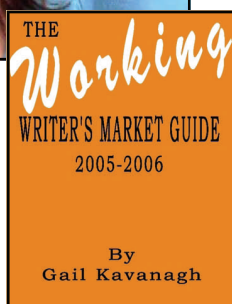
are many new markets on the Internet now, and some of them come and go as quickly as wild mushrooms, and some have actually already gone, although the website keeps running. Don't waste your time querying dead markets—check the website thoroughly. How long since the last update? Have they been inundated and closed the site to submissions?

It's also wise to check the guidelines thoroughly—not, as you might think, to find out what they are looking for in a manuscript, but to check out their payment policy. It might be listed as a paying market, but there are some creative ways of paying these days. Some only "pay" by editors' or readers' whims or a percentage of issues sold—make sure you know what you are agreeing to.

And, is it just me, or are guidelines becoming positively

rude these days? Once you could rely on editors' guidelines to be professional and to the point. Now you often have to wade through pages of diatribe to get to anything remotely resembling guidelines. While I understand the frustration of some editors when unsuitable manuscripts are submitted, I can't support the outright slugging of writers who are professional enough to read the guidelines in the first place. One of the markets I was checking for this column deserves a warning label for some of the language used.

Courtesy and professionalism work both ways, so be sure to check the guidelines thoroughly—they are a good barometer of the people you might be working with.



### Pulp Magazine

<http://www.pulp.net/about/submission-forms/send-story.html>

Address: Online submission or [editor@pulp.net](mailto:editor@pulp.net)

Seeking short stories 1,000 to 4,000 words, to be submitted through the submissions form at the site. You may also submit an attachment by e-mail to the editor. Payment is UK £100 per story.

### Lunch Hour Stories

<http://www.lunchhourstories.com/submissions.htm>

Address:

Submissions, Lunch Hour Stories  
22833 Bothell-Everett Hwy  
STE 102 - PMB 1117  
Bothell, WA 98021  
[editor@lunchhourbooks.com](mailto:editor@lunchhourbooks.com)

A new publication debuting in 2007. Looking for literary short stories from 4,000 to 8,000 words. No genre pieces. Requires synopsis and publishing history in mailed submission with SASE (for

editorial reply only, manuscript will not be returned). Payment is \$50, 10 printed copies, and a one-year subscription to *Lunch Hour Stories*.

### Romantic Short Love Stories

<http://www.romantic-short-love-stories.com/make-romance-happen.html>

Address:

Romantic Short Love Stories  
c/o Tameka Norris  
P.O. Box 397  
Brice OH 43109-0397

*Romantic Short Love Stories* is looking for poetry, fiction, and non-fiction (true love stories). The website includes several venues: an online magazine, e-zine, and the website itself. Accepts reprints (with the exception of true love stories). Payment is \$3 per poem, \$15 per true love story, \$25 to \$50 per short story, plus a one-year subscription to the magazine. Accepts queries for short stories, with half fee paid on query acceptance, half on submission of completed work. Non-US writers must have Paypal. Submissions are made through the online submission form at the site or by postal mail.

### Total Quality Reading

<http://www.tqrstories.com>

Address: [tqrstories@gmail.com](mailto:tqrstories@gmail.com)

Seeking fiction 4,000 to 12,000 words. Payment \$50.

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Gail Kavanagh is a freelance writer living in Queensland, Australia. Gail has been published in anthologies and print and online publications. She is the author of several books, including *The Working Writer's Market Guide*.

## PEN & INK

BY THE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION

Pen & Ink began as a collaboration between William Rieger (Penumbra) and Betty Dobson (InkSpotter).

Each month, in Bill's memory and as he would have wanted, we'll continue to feature poetry and prose from The Writers' Association's growing list of anthologies.

This month's featured member is Eve Docherty. "Meridians" and "Regret" are just two of the poems she contributed to *Epiphanies and Other Absurdities*.

[http://s11.invisionfree.com/Writers\\_Association/](http://s11.invisionfree.com/Writers_Association/)

*Journey* (2003)

*The Artist Tree* (2004)

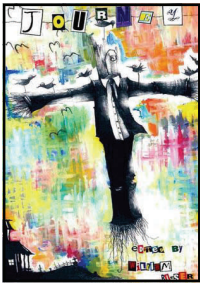
*Soaring* (2004)

*Satire of the Inanities* (2004)

*Epiphanies and Other Absurdities* (2005)

*Sidestreeets* (coming soon)

*The Mithril Lode* (coming soon)

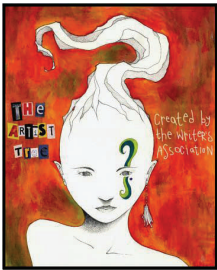
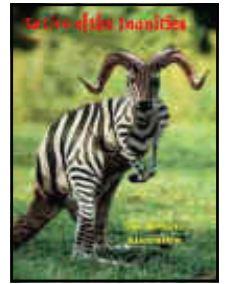


### Meridians

by Eve Docherty

A late day sky  
bursts open in the west  
dripping colour  
over land that's too dry  
and too damn hot to love  
while the dark eastern night  
spills out regret  
like an oozing wound  
warm and thick  
through the black  
that's all hemmed in  
by meridians.

Jackrabbits hunker down  
in bunkers and coyotes  
wet their lips; hungry bodies  
shifting in hopeful scents.  
The hunter and the hunted,  
each anchored to silence.



### Regret

by Eve Docherty

I drift on a fine mist through a tranquil forest.  
Above me a speckled sky winks its million eyes.  
Trees sway as I pass beneath their whispered touch.  
Billowing clouds begin to form on the edges  
of my vision where I sink deeper with the heaviness,  
the weight settling me to the cold ground,  
leaving me in a shiver of moist regret.



## ONLINE RESOURCES

BY TODDIE DOWNS



### The Grammar Police

Nothing brings out people's inner prejudices and secret visions of nerd-geek-writer more than a good frank talk about grammar. Maybe it was a middle school nemesis. Maybe, like me, you got a note from a college professor on a paper with the comment "Eschew the use of the split infinitive." Or maybe it's because good grammar seems to be inextricably linked to intelligence, and bad grammar the reverse. It doesn't matter that some extremely brilliant people exist who speak grammatically poorly—if you talk bad, you look bad.

If it's essential for individuals in their everyday pursuits to speak well and with grammatical accuracy, how much more critical is it for the writer to do so? I once was in a writing group with a man who was a really interesting writer and had important things to say. But he had several bad grammar habits and refused to proof his work before giving it to the group, and it made a difference. As readers, we had to overcome our annoyance at having to mentally fix the errors, and the errors drew

away from the content of this writer's work. Now put yourself in the shoes of an editor. Whose query are you going to give consideration to—the one with a decent idea that needs a tweak but is grammatically perfect and professional looking, or the one with a terrific idea but that contains multiple grammatical errors throughout?

As this new year rolls in, perhaps it might behoove us to brush up on our grammar skills and take a second look at the style templates our editors ask us to use. You might be blessed with near-perfect grammar skills, but there's always something to forget and always something to improve. I've found some good online grammar websites that not only offer the nuts-and-bolts rules about when to use "which" and when to use "that" but also offer quizzes and other interactive ways to test your grammatical mettle:



### Purdue's Online Writing Lab

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/>

Includes interactive exercises such as "Eliminating Wordiness" and "Sentence Fragments."

### Guide to Grammar and Writing

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>

Has a Frequently Asked Questions section that provides a handy index of "notorious confusables" such as "affect" vs. "effect" or "i.e." vs. "e.g."

As for style guides, yes, you absolutely should have a copy of the style guide your editors most frequently use (generally APA style). But sometimes, you just want a cheat sheet, something with the most common tips and rules you're going to need. It's quick and dirty, but it gets the job done:

### Guide to AP Style

<http://www.usu.edu/journalism/faculty/sweeney/resources/ap.htm>

Dr. Michael S. Sweeney at Utah State University has a succinct cheat sheet for the prime AP Style rules that journalists need to know on a first-hand basis.

### MLA Style

<http://www.docstyles.com/archive/mlacrib.pdf>

(Acrobat Reader required)

Dr. Abel Scribe has a guide to MLA style that is indispensable for journalists whose editors use MLA Style.

So bring on 2006 and with it, new confidence in your skills as a writer and new jobs in which to let those skills shine!

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Toddie Downs is a writer in Washington state who really doesn't understand the big brouhaha over split infinitives, but tries not to use them when possible.

## LITERARY LAPSE

### MONTHLY CONTEST

[http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/group/Literary\\_Lapse/](http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/group/Literary_Lapse/)



Members of the Literary Lapse mailing list receive weekly writing prompts. Once a month, I select my favourite story, essay, or poem for publication and pay the winner \$10 (Canadian funds) via Paypal.

#### This Month

Due to an insufficient number of entries, there is no winner this month. December's entries will be carried over through January.

#### December Prompts

**Dec 2:** It's never too early to start planning your New Year's resolutions.

What are your resolutions going to be? How many do you think you'll break? Which ones? How soon? Do you even believe in resolutions? Or New Year's, for that matter?

And, of course, you may choose to answer any or all of these questions from the point of view of a fictional character.

**Dec 8:** This week's prompt is a quote I just received on another list:

"Writing, I explained, was mainly an attempt to out-argue one's past; to present events in such a light that battles lost in life were either won on paper or held to a draw."

~ Jules Feifer

**Dec 15:** Random word list time again. Use all the following words (or reasonable variations) in one piece of writing.

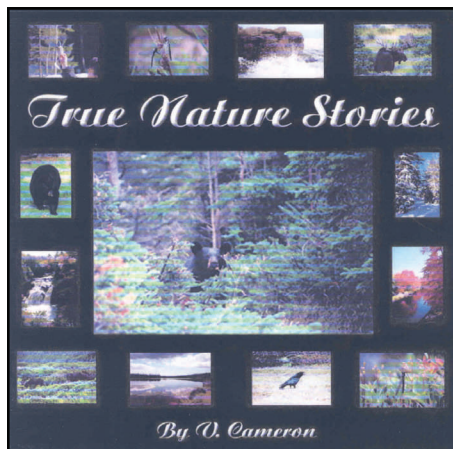
- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. brig      | 2. declare |
| 3. hayfield  | 4. melody  |
| 5. pompadour | 6. shirt   |

**Dec 22:** I know it's almost Christmas, but where the heck is everyone? Out building snowmen?

You can do better than that. For your conspicuous absence, I sentence you all to dream up novel alternatives to the clichéd man of snow. Hey, Calvin & Hobbs turned it into an art form (see <http://beerwuerstundbretzel.blogspot.com/2005/12/uber-twisted-humor-of-calvin-hobbs.html> if you don't believe me).

For those who have trouble seeing the cartoons, picture three snowmen gathered around a fourth who's (that's?) dismembered body lies sprawled across the front end of a car, and one snowman bowling with the other's missing head.

But those are just pictures. You get to do it with words. Aren't you lucky?



*True Nature Stories* by V. Cameron  
(Edited by Betty Dobson)  
COMING SOON from AuthorHouse

#### Worldwide Freelance Writer

<http://hop.clickbank.net/?bjdobson/wwfwr>

Market listings, newsletter and books for writers in all corners of the globe.

#### The Muse Book Reviews

<http://themusebookreviews.tripod.com>

The Muse Book Reviews has added a new section: CONTESTS. Each month, the Muse Book Reviews, in affiliation with its reviewed authors, will be offering free books, print and e-books, to win by simply answering three questions, all answers to be found on the author's or publisher's sites to be given. This month to start it off, the Muse Book Reviews is offering a free one year subscription to the Muse Marquee, <http://themusemarquee.tripod.com>

## CONTEST CORNER

BY CHRISTINE CRISTIANO



### Positively Poetic

**B**y the time you read this column, I will have completed the task of judging another poetry contest for a small writing e-zine. When I was first asked to judge a poetry contest, I have to admit I was a little apprehensive. Other than my own scribblings and random thoughts, I didn't know much about the makings of a great poem. As an appointed judge, I felt it was my duty to research and educate myself on poetry writing. After all, I wanted to judge the entries to the best of my ability. I learned as much as I could about the mechanics of poetry writing: the words, the timing, the rhyme, and the rhythm.

Despite what I learned and studied, sometimes great poetry defies the rules. I have read winning entries from other poetry contests but, truthfully, been confused and frustrated by the complexity of the words. On the other hand, I've read other poems where the wording is so unique that it is a delight to the reader to behold. In my humble opinion, poems that contain one or more of the following

attributes are given a second glance:

- Unique wording without being pretentious
- Simplistic but powerful phrasing
- Unusual theme or angle that pulls the reader in
- First few stanzas pique my interest to continue reading
- Good rhythm and/or rhyme

Some common poetry writing pitfalls include:

- Special formatting. Refrain from using special formatting for poetry contest entries. Most often, the formatting is lost through the e-mail submission process. Most judges will not consider the formatting but only the words, so if your poem relies on formatting to make it readable then reconsider your entry.
- Inappropriate theme (if theme was requested).
- Indistinguishable theme. Wording is so complex; the theme is not readily apparent.
- Unnecessary and excessive profanity or sexual references (unless permitted) that do not add to the poem itself.
- Extreme shock factor when not needed, warranted, or commissioned.
- Spelling errors.
- Exceeds maximum line restriction.

As the new year unfolds, set some writing goals for yourself. If you have never entered a contest, be courageous and give it a try! If you enter writing contest frequently, look over your past writing entries and determine where you could improve your writing to

catch the judges' attention.

May all your writing wishes come true in 2006!

### Ghost Road Press Writing Competition

<http://www.ghostroadpress.com/contest.htm>

Category: Poetry (other categories also listed)

Theme: Open (no length restrictions)

Prizes: 1st Prize: \$500 and 5 copies *Open Windows 2006*

2nd Prize: 5 copies *Open Windows 2006*

3rd Prize: 2 copies *Open Windows 2006*

Honorable Mention: 1 copy *Open Windows 2006*

Deadline: February 1, 2006

Entry Fee: \$15/up to 3 poems

Submit poems via regular postal mail. Address available on site.

### 7th International Mattia Poetry Competition

<http://www.mattia.ca/contest7/rules/rules7th.html>

Category: Poetry

Theme: Open (under 200 words)

Prizes: 1st Prize: \$100 CDN

2nd Prize: \$50.00 CDN

3rd Prize: \$25 CDN

Deadline: March 26, 2006

Entry Fee: None

Submit poems online.

### Predator Press Chapbook Competition

<http://homepage.mac.com/inkwellliterary/chapbook.html>

Category: Poetry or prose chapbook

Theme: Open (28-32 pages in length)

Prizes: Winning manuscript to be published as "professionally-

(Continued on page 14)

## WORDS WORTH

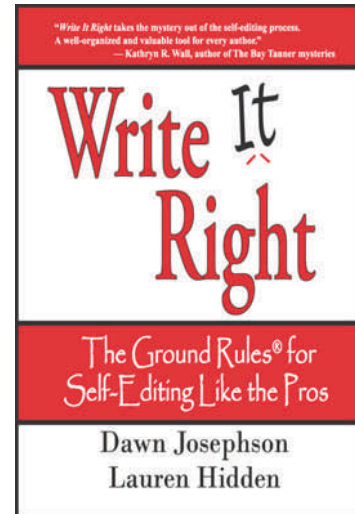
BOOK REVIEWS



*Write It Right: The Ground Rules for Self-Editing Like the Pros*  
by Dawn Josephson and Lauren Hidden

Cameo Publications, 2005  
ISBN 0974496626

Reviewed by Betty Dobson



As the second book in the Ground Rules series, *Write It Right* continues the solid, succinct advice presented in its predecessor, *Putting It On Paper* (see my review in issue 3.10). Dawn Josephson is joined this time around by Lauren Hidden, and, together, they walk you through all the whys and hows of self-editing your writing to make it as good as it can be.

Josephson and Hidden understand that there's more to self-editing than the mechanics. Many writers will have a hard time accepting the idea that self-editing is something they should even be doing. We all make mistakes in our writing. Even editors make mistakes.

If you're still not convinced once you've read the Introduction—which includes "The Case for Self-Editing"—I urge you to keep reading anyway. You won't be sorry.

For such a slim volume—as the Ground Rules series tends to be—this book is jam-packed with useful exercises to help you identify and correct your writing weaknesses.

And don't overlook the many appendices at the back. These pages constitute a big chunk of

pages overall and could be the most valuable part of the whole book. "How To Sabotage Your Self-Editing Efforts" and "The Ground Rules of [Grammar] and Usage" are especially useful.

My one real quibble with the process promoted and taught in *Write It Right* is that it seems more practical when applied to shorter works. I cannot imagine undergoing the same lengthy process for a book-length manuscript. How many times can you reread your manuscript before the words blur and you see what you want or expect to see?

Also, while I don't doubt the lessons could be applied readily to creative writing, the focus here seems to be on non-fiction, specifically business writing. That distinction might deter some writers from giving this book a try.

Finally, I had a hard time resisting the urge to edit the editors while reading this book. After all, when someone is instructing you on grammar, spelling, and punc-

tuation, you don't like to see mistakes creeping into their own work. Then you remind yourself that every piece of writing contains errors—including *Write It Right* and *InkSpotter News*.

In general, I think *Write It Right* deserves a spot on every writer's bookshelf. You don't just read this book. You open yourself up to a learning experience taught as much by you as by the authors.

### Life Story Publishing

<http://inkspotter.com/services/lifestorypublishing/>

Share your life story with family/friends in a beautiful keepsake book. We conduct interviews, transcribe and edit tapes, and lay out the manuscript for publication.

Betty Dobson is your Life Story Representative for Nova Scotia.

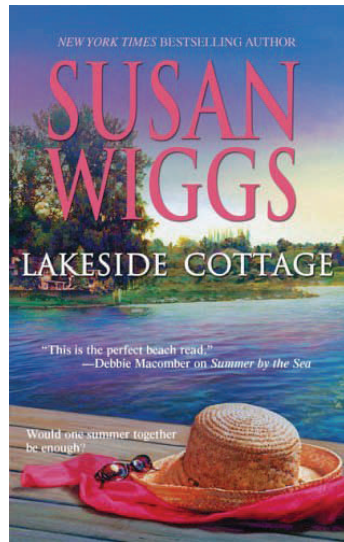
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E-mail: [LSP@inkspotter.com](mailto:LSP@inkspotter.com)

I have never considered myself a fan of the romance genre, but that doesn't mean I have anything against romance novels per se. In fact, I read them almost voraciously during my teen years. Like every other genre, there are good writers and bad writers, good stories and clunkers.

Susan Wiggs and *Lakeside Cottage* stand out as prime examples of quality on both counts. Wiggs' writing is solid, and the story is engaging. Romance is, of course, at the heart of the tale, but there is so much more going on here.

Our heroine in this case is Kate Livingstone, a feature writer recently fired by her newspaper. As luck would have it, she has the chance to escape her troubles and figure out her future at her family's cottage. This is her first summer at the lake without her brother and his family, a fact that



*Lakeside Cottage*  
by Susan Wiggs

MIRA Books, 2005  
ISBN 0778321908

doesn't sit well at first with her troubled young son, Aaron.

Two strangers enter the scene on the first day: runaway teen California "Callie" Evans and the reclusive

JD Harris. Both have secrets. Both will change Kate and Aaron's summer—and ultimately their lives.

Wiggs manages to avoid the overdone I-can't-stand-you-but-I-can't-resist-you form of romance in favour of a more natural approach. Kate and JD are a bit leery of each other at first—and both with good reason, given their romantic histories—but the conflict is underplayed.

I found it refreshing to read a romance so grounded in reality—JD's secret notwithstanding. After

Reviewed by Betty Dobson

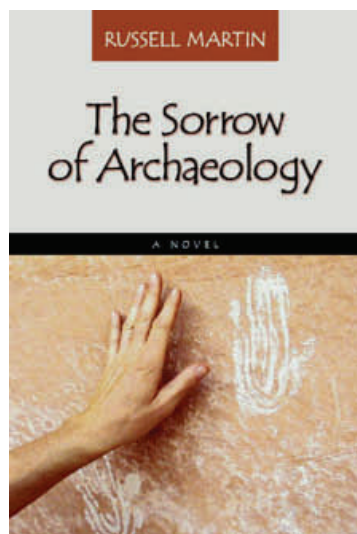
all, it's not every woman who falls in love with a man who saved the life of the US President. (And, no, that's not a spoiler.) JD's subsequent status as a media celebrity drives his actions throughout the book.

The subplot involving Callie is equally engaging. Her back story—including exposure to a twisted commune leader and too many years shuffled through foster care—comes to light slowly. We can feel empathy for all she's gone through. We also come to understand why she would choose to run away.

Overall, *Lakeside Cottage* is a well-formed story with intriguing, believable characters. You won't find too many surprises, but you will find an enjoyable read. Wiggs has written a sweet tale that manages to convey positive messages without lapsing into sugary sentiment.

“In the dry early summer of 1992, I am still nominally a physician, but I dig in dirt these days, instead of taking stock of my patients' bodies, attending only to bones stripped of muscle, blood and brain...”

Sarah MacLeish says this because she can't maintain her medical practice. She is a Mul-



*The Sorrow of Archaeology*  
by Russell Martin

University of New Mexico Press, 2005  
ISBN 0826337252

tiple Sclerosis victim, no longer able to use her hands in diagnosis.

She is also the main character in Russell Martin's novel, *The Sorrow of Archaeology*, recently released by the University of

Reviewed by Constance M. Gotsch

New Mexico Press.

The story is set in Southern Colorado and drawn from several of the author's interests, including archaeology, medicine, and disability, particularly Multiple Sclerosis. For him, these topics become metaphors for our constant struggle to sort out our lives.

Knowing she may eventually use a wheelchair, and terrified of the



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### Special Offer for Readers of *InkSpotter News*

Dotsie Bregel is tickled with the wonderful response of women joining the National Association of Baby Boomer Women at <http://www.nabbw.com>.

She would like to offer all *InkSpotter News* readers the opportunity to join for the reduced rate of \$50 through January 2006. Simply e-mail Dotsie at [dots@nabbw.com](mailto:dots@nabbw.com) and she'll send you the reduced-price link to join this growing association of women who are seeking the best for themselves at midlife.

Networking opportunities abound!

idea, Sarah determines to be normal as long as possible before she must give into her disease. She becomes a member of an archaeology dig team her husband, Harry, is supervising at an ancient pueblo site in a canyon near Cortez, Colorado.

She worries about her relationship with Harry. He jumps from project to project and adventure to adventure, seizing life with both hands and riding it like a wild horse.

She lives carefully, avoiding surprises and searching for security. She and Harry share a deep bond. Still, troubling moments have arisen between them over their differences, and she senses his unhappiness with her. As a physician who has treated patients with illnesses like hers, she knows she will probably face divorce, though Harry denies he will ever leave her.

On the dig, Sarah discovers the remains of a pre-teenage girl with a severely deformed leg that Sarah believes congenital. The girl also has a shattered skull. Immediately, Sarah connects with her, wondering how she lived, how she died, and above all, how she coped with disability.

Harry says Sarah will probably

never know. Bone fragments and grave goods cannot possibly explain the girl's emotional state at death, why she died, or how she lived with her crippled leg.

Sarah insists on trying to find out. One of the dig team members, the flamboyant Alice, agrees to send the remains to a friend in a forensics lab. The gesture both comforts and troubles Sarah, who suspects Alice and Harry have begun an affair.

Driven by her fear, Sarah struggles harder and harder to understand the child's story, and through it, her own. The mosaic of personal and archaeological past and present interweave tightly in her mind.

To give Sarah the full range of emotions she needs as she struggles with her issues, Russell Martin constructs her story in a series of short chapters. The book draws its title from one of these, in which Sarah laments the fact that archaeologists must try to learn about peoples' lives from fragmented evidence. Harry points out that everyone else must do the same from bits and pieces of experiences, during his or her time on earth.

Flashbacks written in the past tense interweave with current de-

tails stated in the present. Martin also lets Sarah narrate the novel in the first person.

Throughout *The Sorrow of Archaeology*, Martin uses simple and direct language that never becomes simplistic. Sentences such as "The only thing worse than being an acne-plagued freshman in high school is being a freshman whose father is principal of the place," give his pages an excitement that nears F. Scott Fitzgerald's intensity.

Like Fitzgerald's Martin's intensity is gentle, and very ordinary. Readers looking for an action-packed Indiana Jones archaeology tale will not find it. Instead, they'll discover a story in a real place about real people. As the action gently unfolds, Martin presents the universal emotions that connect readers to characters.

~ ~ ~

Constance M. Gotsch is the author of two award-winning e-novels, *A Mouth Full of Shell* and *Snap Me a Future*, and has won numerous awards for articles, short fiction, and playwriting. She is also the program director for Public Radio Station KSJE, FM in Farmington, New Mexico.

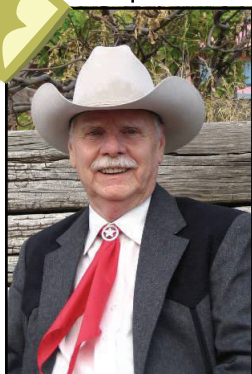
## AUTHOR INTERVIEW

WITH TERRY W. BURNS



### What motivated you to start writing?

I've written most of my life—published first in a poetry journal in high school—during most of my career as a chamber of commerce manager it pretty much ate up all my words in promotional writing. It's just the last ten years or so that I could try my hand at writing fiction. Helping my daughter gather



Terry Burns has a series from *Mysterious Ways* from River Oak Publishing that will give him 18 books in print. The second book in the series, *Brother's Keeper*, will be released January 2006. *Mysterious Ways* was nominated for the American Christian Fiction Writers book of the year and nominated for the 2006 Christy Award to be announced at the International Christian Retailers Show (CBA) in Denver in June. *Trails of the Dime Novel* is out in trade paperback from Echelon Press and in audio from JBS Publishing. His trade paperback, *To Keep a Promise* from The Fiction Works, was a finalist for the 2002 Eppie award (e-book form), and the paperback was nominated for the 2003 Willa Award. A second title, *Don't I Know You?*, is out as a paperback as well. Both titles are scheduled for audiobook release this year. He's published over 200 articles and short stories, is in a short story collection published by the Darkstormy writers, in a collection just out from Coastal Villages Press titled *Straight from the heart - stories of love and friendship*, the second volume titled *More stories of love and friendship*, *Soul Matters for Men* from Thomas Nelson, and one titled *Living by Faith* from Obidiah Press. Terry has published four non-fiction books and has a small book of cowboy poetry titled *Cowboys Don't Read Poetry*. His available works can be found at <http://www.terryburns.net>.

some material on family stories for a class assignment got me started in fiction. My first book went into a drawer, and I started on the next. It was my third that sold first.

### What is the primary source of inspiration for you?

I don't know where the stories come from. They might start with a setting that interests me, a character whose story I want to tell, a plot point I want to build around, but whatever the starting point I have to end up with all the pieces in place and generally follow the classic story structure.

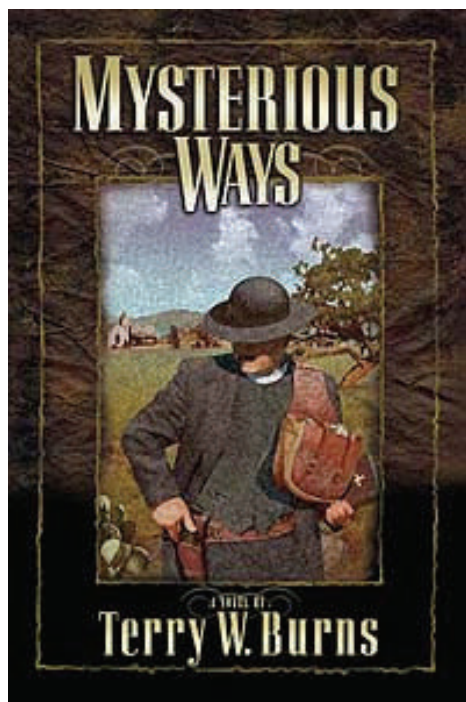
### Do you write when the muse strikes, or do you follow a writing schedule? Please describe your process.

I do writing related activity four to five hours a day, writing, editing, researching, or promoting. If a story idea pops out any time, capturing the nucleus of it takes

precedence over anything else. The process? I write a discovery draft that might be 25-30k of a 90-100k manuscript. I do not stop and edit or tweak until I have the whole through plotline in place. In the second draft, I start fleshing out characters and adding setting and subplots. I usually rewrite the first couple of chapters since they are pretty much placeholders until I know the story well. In the third draft, I switch to the logical left brain and start line editing. I generally don't have to worry about messing up my plotline since I have it intact in the first draft.

### What have you done to promote yourself as a writer? What's left to do?

I had signings or gave programs every week this year until mid-November when family time took over. I have a new book coming out in January and will start over



again. I spoke to librarian conventions, gave programs at writing groups and service clubs. I bought advertising, joined the Christian Authors Network to do co-op promotion, attended the Christian Bookseller conference and book fairs, met with some book clubs and gave testimonies [and] talks, and did special music at a number of churches. I did intensive online promotion to the point that my website returns at the top of the search engines in my key fields and had over 130,000 unique visitors this year. Left to do would be to find a way to get more national visibility.

**When did you discover your unique voice? How long did the process take?**

I'd have to say my voice is natural. I'm not really a writer, I'm a storyteller. Telling stories is natural; learning to write them down in a credible manner is hard.

**What do you consider your greatest achievement as a writer?**

For a secular writer, success is often measured in sales or awards. For a Christian writer, if I only sold one but it affected someone's life, I would consider it a great success. I have had a number of letters that said *Mysterious Ways* had caught someone up into the story and, by the time they figured

out it had a faith message, they were too far in it to put it down. Not that I don't want to sell a bunch of books, but getting my message out is even more important.

**What's the most recent book you read?**

Robin Hatcher's *The Victory Club*.

**Who are the writers you admire most?**

My favourite writer is an old friend by the name of Dan Parkinson. He wrote some delicious little westerns with great tongue-in-cheek humour that I loved and influences my writing. He got me started writing fiction. I'd like to have the ability to inspire like Max Lucado, to speak to the common man like Louis L'Amour, and to cut through to the point like Elmore Leonard. My reading cuts across a lot of genres but lately tends to be the writing of my growing circle of writing friends. Since I can't afford to buy all of them, I recommend a lot of them to my library and get them to acquire it. Fortunately, a lot of them have reciprocated.

**What's your best piece of advice for novice writers?**

If the world were fair, people writing a wonderful story would

have publishers beating a path to our door offering us obscene amounts of money and making bestsellers out of our work. It doesn't work that way. We have to spend a huge amount of time perfecting our craft so we submit an eminently publishable product, researching our markets so we know who to submit to and exactly the pitch to make. Publishing is not a selection process, it's a survival process. It's all about pitching the right person at the right place with the right product and exactly the right time. It's very rare that all the pieces fit at any point in time, and it takes the patience and perseverance to keep knocking on doors until we find that one place where our offering will fit.

**Is there anything else you'd like to add?**

I don't know anybody who has been told by the publishing industry to go home and quit writing. Those I know who have published have been persistent in their efforts, have learned from their mistakes, and did what they had to do to make it happen. Those who didn't publish, it's because they simply gave up. The rest of us are a work in progress.

**Ask the Experts**

<http://www.maureenmcmahon.com/bookmarketing.html>

Authors with books to promote may ask questions of nearly 150 author experts whose specialties run the gamut from romance to foot surgery. Assembled from the thousands of subscribers to *Book Promotion Newsletter*, the experts include authors, editors, book reviewers, book coaches, ghostwriters, publicists and publishers. Responses will be emailed back to the inquirer within three to five working days.

This free service is hosted by Maureen McMahon, author of romantic suspense novels *Return of the Gulls*, *Shadows In the Mists*, and others, and by Francine Silverman, author of *Book Marketing from A-Z*, a compilation of the best marketing strategies of 325 authors.



# BOOKMARKS

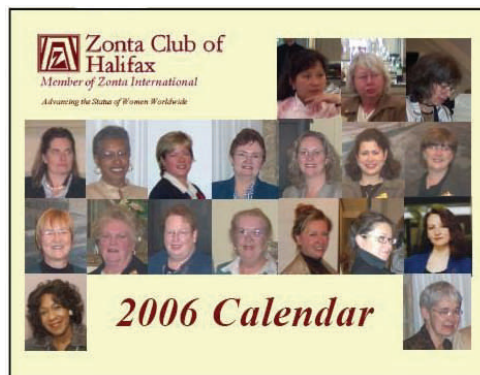
NEWS FROM THE PUBLISHER



- Completed duties as a judge in the final round of a short fiction writing contest for students at Lewis-Palmer High School in Monument, Colorado. The contest is co-sponsored by *Apollo's Lyre* (<http://apollos-lyre.com>). (Winning stories are published in the December issue.)
- Released *Heritage Writer* Vol. 2 No. 6, featuring another great article by Richard Crowhurst, as well as holiday fare from Christine Cristiano, Mary Cook, and Kevin Craig. Archive of back

issues now available.

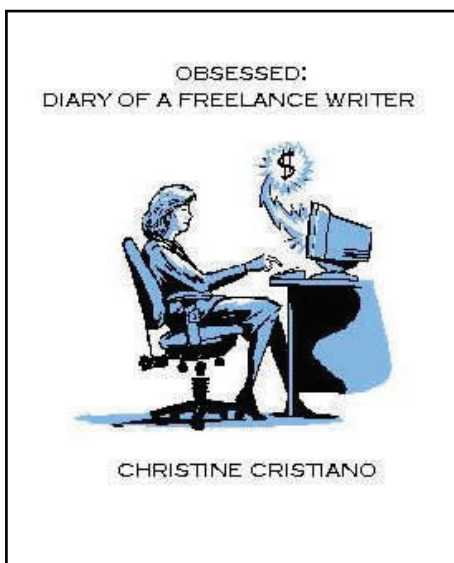
- Produced and published a year-in-review style full-colour calendar for 2006 for the Zonta Club of Halifax.
- Completed a rush proofreading job on a novel for Dick Margulis Creative Services.
- Posted writers' guidelines for e-book authors interested in submitting manuscripts to InkSpotter Publishing.
- Look for my response to the question "How will you honor your desire to write in the midst of the holiday season?" in *Write*



- *What You Know* #36 (<http://www.writewhatyouknow.com/newsletter.php>).
- My poem "Grandfather Waltzes" will be included in *Passing*, an anthology that deals with the emotions surrounding death. The book is scheduled for 2006 release from PoetWorks Press (<http://www.poetworks.com>).
- Renewed working relationship (writing press releases) with Tometa Software.
- Joined 1000 Journals, a fundraising project started by Susan Letham of *Inspired2Write* (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/1000Journals/>).

### Columns

- Canadian Culture:
  - "Book Review/Interview—*Unclutter Your Life* by Katherine Gibson."
- Writing the Bottom Line:
  - "Writing in 3D—Discipline, Dedication & Drive"



(Continued from page 8)

designed chapbook with a four-color, glossy cover" plus \$400 and 25 copies

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Entry Fee: \$10

Submissions via regular postal mail. Address available online.

### The Dan Sullivan Memorial Poetry Contest

<http://www.wcdr.org/>

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Theme: Open (maximum 30 lines)

Prizes: 1st Prize: \$300 CDN

2nd Prize: \$200 CDN

3rd Prize: \$100 CDN

Entry Fee: \$15 CDN

Deadline: February 15, 2006

Email: [dansullivan@wcdr.org](mailto:dansullivan@wcdr.org)

See website for complete details.

~~~

Christine Cristiano hangs her hat in Ontario, Canada. She launched her first e-book, *Obsessed: Diary of a Freelance Writer*, earlier this year, and her work has appeared in numerous print and online venues in the United States and Canada.

[www.obsessedwriters.4t.com](http://www.obsessedwriters.4t.com)

## WRITE ADVICE

TIPS FROM SUCCESSFUL WRITERS



### Clean Up That Cyberdust

by Cheryl Wright

I think I have coined a new word for writers. So please somebody include it in the next edition of the *Collins Dictionary*.

Cyberdust (noun) refers to the virtual dust that collects on a piece of work that sits on the writer's hard drive while he or she sits in the corner shaking with fear that an editor will reject it.

Every writer can testify to being plagued by this irrational fear at some point in their careers. It might have been in the early years or even later. But to those writers, it is a real fear.

Rejection has been the bane of writers throughout the decades. Famous authors attest to the over-

powering fear of rejection while their works, sometimes masterpieces, accumulated dust having never left their desk. In this the new millennium, with computers and the Internet and related paraphernalia, that dust is virtual and called Cyberdust.

I have quite a few articles on my hard drive virtually covered in Cyberdust. Am I cowering in the corner? You bet I am. Even when I'm not in the corner literally, I'm still cowering. As I travel to my nine-to-five job, eat, shop, and yes, even when I write, I am cowering. Pitiful, I admit. Conquerable? Definitely.

Here's how:

- Recognize your fear for what it is—a baseless, irrational fear that accomplishes nothing.
- Every week, identify at least five dusty articles you have written.
- Every day, rewrite one article. (Print it and re-type it.) This exercise will help reawaken the enthusiasm you had for the topic when you first wrote it.
- When you're finished, research at least three markets where it will be suitable. Follow the markets' guidelines religiously. Query or submit the piece immediately and keep a record. Pat yourself on the back; you did well. You're probably a writer after all.

- The following day, repeat the same steps for the second article.

By the end of the week, you'll have queried and/or submitted five articles to fifteen markets. How great is that? That's what I call productivity.

Hey, your work is not done. Spend the weekend filing and reading writing-related stuff. The following week, select another five dusty articles. And the process begins again.

I guarantee that after several weeks of this sustained activity, cowering will be a thing of the past and Cyberdust will begin to dissipate from your hard drive.

Did I mention that acceptances (spotted with a few rejections) along with cheques will be your new reality? Well, that's true, too.

Go writer, go writer, go writer, GO!

~~~

Rheumatoid Arthritis stopped Cheryl Wright's decorating career in its tracks, but her childhood dream to be a writer saved her. She keeps her hands in the design field by writing articles on decorating and design issues. She has also discovered another passion—writing motivational and self-care articles especially for women.

### Be an Inkspotter

We are currently accepting submissions for the Write Advice section of *Inkspotter News*.

Submit your 500-word article or essay in the body of an e-mail to [writeadvice@inkspotter.com](mailto:writeadvice@inkspotter.com).

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## PEOPLE, PLACES & THINGS

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### Calls for Papers

**Cape Breton University Storytelling Symposium:** Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada, June 9-10/06. Stories (four) and academic papers on witches and wizards, sorcerers and their apprentices, disappearing or conjuring acts. Accepting 250-word proposals and completed papers. Submissions due Feb 14/06.

Contact Prof. Afra Kanavagh at [afra\\_kavanagh@capebretonu.ca](mailto:afra_kavanagh@capebretonu.ca).

**Great Writing 2006:** International Creative Writing Conference, University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom, June 9-11/06. 100-word abstracts due Feb 17/06. [pippa.lamberti@port.ac.uk](mailto:pippa.lamberti@port.ac.uk)

**Writing Matters: An Exploration of the Diverse Nature of the Composition Classroom: Study:** Baton Rouge Community College Spring Writing Conference, Apr 22/06. Papers and panel discussions (faculty and graduate students) welcome in all areas relating to the composition classroom. Submissions due Feb 28/06.

Contact Gail Odette Henderson at [writingmatters@mybr.cc](mailto:writingmatters@mybr.cc).

**Issues in Creative Writing:** Rocky Mountain MLA Convention, DoubleTree Resort Hotel, Reid Park, Tucson, Arizona, Oct 12-14/06. Abstracts, CVs & cover letters due Mar 1/06.

<http://rmmla.wsu.edu>

**College English Association of Ohio Spring Conference:** Strategies for teaching, learning and scholarship in literature and composition. Ohio Dominican University, Columbus, Ohio, Apr 28/06. Panels, papers and roundtables. Proposals due Mar 2/06.

<http://homepages.ohiodominican.edu/%7Eschaefej/conf.html>

**Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies:** Special issue: Poetries. Seeking essays that "that position poems as part of the material conditions, technologies, and social histories of their moments." No e-mail submissions without permission. Submissions due Mar 15/06.

Contact [ijcs@uiowa.edu](mailto:ijcs@uiowa.edu)  
<http://www.uiowa.edu/~ijcs/>

### Online Resources

**Book-in-a-Week:** Online writing group that comes together once a month to set goals and write. During BIW, writers write as much as they can and post their daily totals to the list. Also publishes BIC HOK TAM Monthly Newsletter. <http://www.book-in-a-week.com/>

**Life Story Writing:** A mailing list/online workshop. Post memoirs/biographies. Give/receive feed-

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<http://groups.msn.com/LifeStoryWriting>

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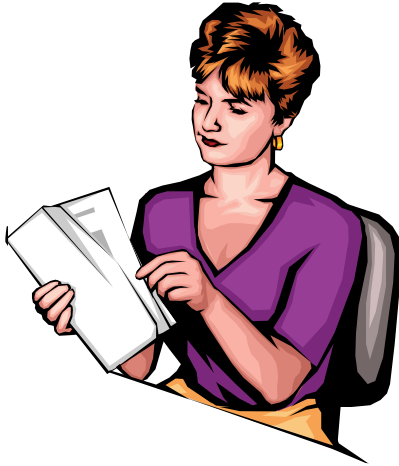
Contact Helga Schier, Ph.D., at 310-828-8421, or by e-mail at [withpenandpaper@verizon.net](mailto:withpenandpaper@verizon.net)

### InkSpotter Publishing's Online Bookstore

<http://inkspotter.com/products/books/>

Fiction Health History Poetry Writing

**VIEWS ON THE NEWS**  
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Hi Betty -  
The December issue looks good.

All the best,  
Toddie Downs

~~~

Dear Betty,  
Just wanted to let you know that I enjoyed reading the December issue of *InkSpotter News*. I'm honoured that you included my poem.

Jacqueline Seewald

~~~

*Editor's Note: We recently change our policy regarding payments to*

*non-Canadian writers and will now by using Paypal only for such purposes. We lost one subscriber (that we know of) as a result, but she had this to say about leaving:*

Betty,  
I will truly miss your publication. You do such a wonderful job. If things ever change (Paypal) please let me know. I'd be so happy to participate if I could.

Renee' Barnes

~~~

*Please e-mail your comments to editor@inkspotter.com or by postal mail to the address on the back page.*


Hi Betty,  
I just saw my piece on Hanukah Harry in the latest addition and wanted to thank you for including it. It's a wonderful memory and was fun to write, so to see it published makes it even better.

I wrote to you awhile ago about book reviews and you stated that you would consider them so I may follow up shortly.

Thanks again for the opportunity.

Regards,  
Janet Caplan

~~~



**Authors' Coalition** is a group of serious writers, both experienced and aspiring. We are dedicated to 1) the mutual support and development of each others' careers through the sharing of resources, networking and cross-promotional efforts, and 2) advancing the interests of writers and the writing community in general.

<http://authorscoalitionandredenginepress.com/>

**You've held it in long enough...  
now you can tell men what you really think and feel!**

I am writing a book for men that tells "the truth about women from women!" Would you like to be one of the one of the women participating? I need your honesty and openness. (Well, as women we are known for that, aren't we?) For example...What would you like to tell men about women that you think they don't know or need to know to make our relationships happier and more fulfilling? It can be on any topic from sex, dating, kissing, living together, holidays, relating and communicating, gift giving and receiving, sports, children (his, yours, ours)...anything that you would like to share.

Additionally, I will want to know a little bit about you age, location, occupation, and relationship status.

If you would like to participate, please write to me at [lsgp@gate.net](mailto:lsgp@gate.net) and include your email address, phone number, best time to call (though I may just rely on e-mail) and release, so I can use your comments and identity in my book. (In the very least, I will need to use your first name, location, age, and relationship status!) Please put "women's book" in the subject line. Thanks a million and let's talk!

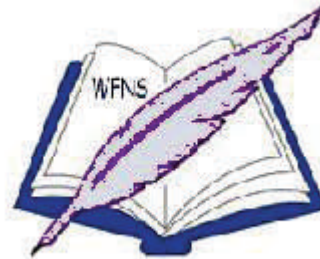
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