



### Canadian Authors National Capital Region Website

For CAA-NCR Branch programs and activities, or to see what your fellow writers are up to, check our [website](http://canadianauthors.org/nationalcapitalregion) (canadianauthors.org/nationalcapitalregion). Current and back issues of **Byline** are available on the site.

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The first CAA-NCR meeting of the year, on January 12th, started with an in-depth look at Taxes and the Writer in preparation for that dreaded time of the year, TAX TIME ... [More ...](#)

##### *What You Missed — Scribing Sex - Romancing the Page with Jasmine Aziz*

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## *Encourage Creativity by Turning Work Into Play* *by Barbara Florio Graham*

This is the second in a series of four articles about how you can increase your creativity to achieve your goals. The aim of this series is to help you sharpen descriptions, refine settings and characters, expand a basic plot or focus on the primary elements of a plot that has become unwieldy, develop better imagery and word choices, and develop clever promotional ideas to help your book stand out from the others.



It would be best to read **the previous articles** in order, beginning with the introduction which appeared in the Fall, 2015, Byline. I will deal with a different concept in each article.

These articles are not structured the same as the online course I teach. Do consider taking that tutorial, which is customized for you, with specific comments on assignments. I offer it on a flexible schedule, to suit your busy life. Go to my website to see the full description and testimonials:  
<http://SimonTeakettle.com/tapping.htm>.

Writers sometimes think they have to spend all their time researching and writing. But most best-sellers were written by authors who had other full or part-time jobs. John Grisham was a lawyer who got up early in the morning to write for just an hour each day before heading off to the office. J.K Rowling was working as a researcher and bilingual secretary for Amnesty International when she conceived the idea for the Harry Potter.

Creative ideas can come at any time. But there are specific ways to spark creative thinking. I encourage those who take my online course to use all their senses, and to gather specific items to help the creative process.

Here are a few things you ought to have in your office:

1. a fish tank or fountain, or, if neither of these is possible, a large photo or poster of a waterfall, lake, or ocean scene;
2. visual images, including photos, posters, calendar pictures (especially of nature scenes or animals), in your line of sight, so you see them when you look up from the keyboard;
3. colored pencils or markers and unlined paper,
4. a selection of toys.

Instead of thinking of your current writing project as work, consider it as play. Allow yourself to experiment with new ideas, jotting them at random on unlined paper, using different colored markers. Pick up a toy and manipulate it. Don't

select a Rubik's cube or anything else that requires orderly thinking. You want something childish that you'd be embarrassed being seen with at a coffee shop!

Are you working on a novel and having problems with your characters? Try dressing a Barbie or using scraps of fabric and scarves on a teddy bear. Creating apparel using safety pins works better than using ready-made outfits. Use things from the kitchen as hats, things for your *characters* to hold or sit on.

A really useful tool for creative thinking is PlayDoh. But you can use any other substance that will allow you to construct something fanciful. Don't have a practical or realistic goal as you do this. Just let your fingers and palms dictate what feels interesting.

When Einstein was a boy, he spent hours constructing tall towers out of playing cards. No one knows if that influenced his later brilliance, but it got him in the habit of imagining the impossible.

You can achieve similar results in terms of connecting your hands to your brain by *playing* in the kitchen. Try foraging in the fridge or cupboards for ingredients for soup. The more you have to cut, mix, or touch carrots, celery, onions, etc. the better. Use your bare hands as much as possible, because the tactile sensations will help connect to your right brain.

Don't measure or use a recipe, as that defeats the purpose.

While you're doing any of these things, have instrumental music playing in the background. Music with words, or having the TV on will engage your left brain, and encourage logical, orderly, thinking. That defeats the purpose of the exercise!

Be careful not to allow your *grown-up* left brain insist that you *settle down* and *be serious*. You have to let the wild child in your right brain explore without limits, until you come up with the ideas, images, character traits, descriptions and plot points you need.

There's time later to find the jewels hidden among the frivolous suggestions. You're panning for gold, so don't be afraid to sift through a lot of dirt!

**BIO:** *Barbara Florio Graham is an award-winning author, publishing consultant and marketing strategist. Her popular workshop on creativity has won accolades from participants all over the world, and is now taught as an online tutorial. See the wealth of free information on her website: <http://SimonTeakettle.com>.*

***Canadian Authors Association National Capital Region  
is on Facebook!!***

***Join our [Facebook](#) group page to receive updates on meetings, workshops, author activities and other news of interest to writers, add your suggestions or comments about our programs, or share your news.***

# ***An Invitation to the 29th Annual National Capital Writing Contest Awards Night***

*by Sherrill Wark, NCWC Coordinator*

The National Capital Writing Contest Poetry and Short Story entries are in the judges' competent and delighted hands and now it's all a matter of time.

We will be doing The Big Reveal around mid-April and I am looking forward to learning who ended up on the lists of finalists almost as much as I'm sure the entrants and their families and friends are.

As soon as the information is in our hands, we'll publish the lists on our CAA-NCR website, on Facebook and on Twitter.

The contest was open to all of Ontario and Quebec this year. We will contact finalists' local community newspapers as they were eager to interview our finalists last year and gave the contest and entrants much-deserved and much-appreciated publicity.

## ***Awards Night***

Awards Night is **Monday, May 9 in the auditorium** (downstairs) of the **Main Branch of the Ottawa Public Library** — 120 Metcalfe at Laurier. There is on-street parking at that time of night on surrounding streets. Parking is available underground in the library's parking lot for \$15.

**The event starts at 7:00 PM.** Be forewarned, we always ask everyone to move up to the front so we might as well sit there on arrival.

We encourage everyone and anyone to attend. There will be refreshments as well as welcoming, friendly, compassionate, understanding writers of all genres and styles to spend a fun two hours with.

**The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd placers in the Poetry and Short Story categories** will be asked to read their entries. This is always my favourite part of the evening. These winning entries will have been selected from

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*Sherrill Wark and Catina Noble at 2015 Awards Night*

among some of the finest writers in Ontario and Quebec. Even if you didn't enter, or did and didn't place, or don't know a single soul in Ottawa, I hope you'll try to attend.

The **National Capital Writing Contest, in its 29th year**, is one of the most prestigious poetry and short story contests in Canada. Hope to see you there.

## CAA-NCR WRITING CIRCLES

The writing circles (WCs) started up again in September.

We currently have three circles: a recent start-up on the **third Saturday of each month, 9:00 a.m.** at McNabb Community Center on Percy St., and two in the CentrepoinTE area.

Writing Circles are an exciting way to get valuable feedback from other writers on your own work and improve your own writing through critiquing that of others.

Join a CAA Writing Circle - a great opportunity for a writer!

**Participation is FREE to CAA members.**

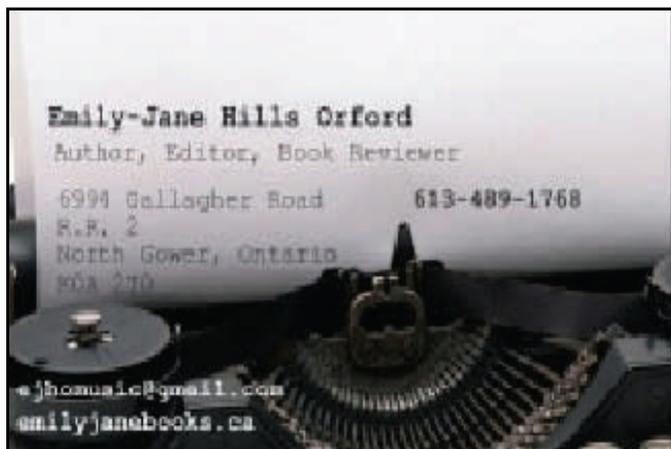
Non-CAA-members may join for \$75 for the year.

**For more information or to join a writing circle, please contact**  
[the Coordinator.](#)

## Called to Egypt on the *Back of the Wind* (borealispress.com) by Anne Kathleen McLaughlin

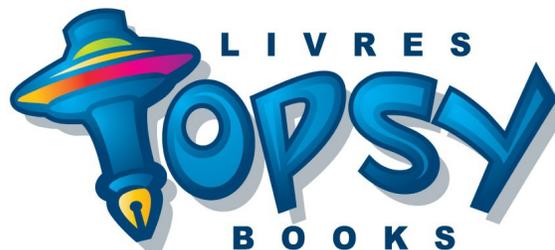
Jean Houston leads students through the temples, tombs and pyramids of Egypt in a quest for a new planetary spirituality. The myth of Isis and Osiris becomes a catalyst for the healing of old wounds related to love.

Copies available from [Borealis Press](#), at *Singing Pebbles* bookstore on Main Street across from Saint Paul University in Ottawa, or from [Anne Kathleen](#).



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## Spread the Word

If you enjoy reading **Byline** magazine, share **your copy** with other writers or readers, or have them contact the Byline [editor](#), to receive their own copies directly.

### Sivarulrasa Studio & Gallery

Sivarulrasa Studio & Gallery (Thoburn Mill, 83 Little Bridge Street, Unit 102, Almonte) is owned and operated by CAA-NCR member, Sanjeev Sivarulrasa.

Space is available to the public for book readings and launches. Sanjeev describes Almonte as a hip town with energized people who are very artist/writer-friendly.

Contact [Sanjeev](#) for details.

*Special rates to CAA-NCR members.*

### Quarterly **BYLINE** magazine

**Byline** is now *quarterly*. This means September – November (fall issue), December to February (winter issue), March-May (spring issue) and June-August (summer issue).

**We are looking for well-written articles**, up to 1000 words in length, about the craft or business of writing, and specifics about either creative or non-fiction writing for different markets. Byline pays \$.025/word to a maximum of \$25 per article.

Submit proposals to [Byline Editor](#) at any time. Material must be received no later than six weeks prior to the first month of coverage, eg. late July for the Fall issue.

**Advertisements** about your products and services should be submitted within the same time frame. Submit your material to Byline editor in either .doc or .pdf format.

**NOTE: We do not create or redraft advertisements other than to meet space requirements.**

### Books by R.A. Abell Non-Fiction



We are currently facing the greatest transfer of wealth out of the hands of

the middle class to ever occur in history. We can't assume that government and big business will fix it of their own accord. They, acting together, got us into this mess.

It happened "slowly", over about 40 years, but the negative effects have accelerated since 2000 ....

### Dystopian Novel

**The Corporation** is set in a dramatically altered world of 2039.



Hundreds of millions have died from a mysterious illness. In the ensuing

chaos, democracy as we know it has collapsed.

Most countries in the world are controlled by just one corporation – headed by a psychopath – and owned by a handful of families known as The Entitled".

[www.rovell.com](http://www.rovell.com)

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# Canadian Authors

## A good way to start a writing career

by Gill Foss

When I came to Canada in 1970 I started to look for writing opportunities and began by taking over the community column for the local weekly newspaper (The Nepean Clarion – long gone).

I did get paid – a lordly \$5 a column, but it was a paid assignment and began my resume. During this time I found out about the Ottawa branch of CAA (now CAA-NCR). There I found encouragement as a new writer and had my first three poems included in a branch poetry book titled *A Flock of Bards*, so I guess I owe CAA for helping me get my feet wet in the writing business. That, of course, was a long time ago and I have been involved as a member ever since.

I have always enjoyed the camaraderie of the association, at both the branch and National levels with the many friends I have made all across the country by attending the annual conferences.

If you are serious about becoming a writer these conferences provide a great opportunity to network during the social times and learn during the sessions. The programming always covers a wide variety of writing topics and genres so no matter whether you write fiction, non-fiction, poetry, drama, journalistic articles or for the corporate sector you can come away with new knowledge. Often there are practical sessions during which you can have some of your work critiqued by a visiting editor, or evening socials when you can read from your own work to an audience.

Most branches have genre-specific groups that meet separately from the monthly get-togethers. These encourage members to read their work and be receptive to constructive criticism from their fellow writers. It is always helpful to have others provide feedback on what you have written – they can pick up on inconsistencies, make helpful suggestions or even lead you in new directions. I have found these writing groups a great way to try out new ideas and make improvements that I may have overlooked.

Most branches run writing contests for in-house members or regionally and I suggest entering at least one a year. They are a great way to hone your work and keep to a deadline. If you win - great. If you don't, keep on trying. After all, it's practice that will help you to achieve your potential in the long run. When you read the **Byline** and the contests listed by Carol Stephen try those too, as well as those mentioned in the **CAA Communique** from National Office that is sent to members.

Apart from the writing aspect of membership I am convinced that becoming involved with the activities and/or the administrative side of the Association is well worth while. I learned to run meetings, organize contests and work with outside

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agencies, all of which have given me confidence and enlarged my appreciation of the arts scene in general. Even if none of these additional benefits appeal to you, just try to attend all the regular meetings and you will have used your membership fee to good advantage.

**BIO:** *In the past Gill Foss has been Branch President, Program Chair and Secretary for the Ottawa branch of CAA. She has taken the Minutes at National Board meetings, organized the National Literary Awards program and spent four years as CAA's National President. She currently serves as CAA-NCR Branch Historian.*

## Canadian Authors 2016 National Literary Awards - Part 2

Entries are now being accepted for two additional 2016 award categories:

*The CAA Emerging Writer Award* is for a body of work by a Canadian author under 30 deemed to show exceptional promise. Nominees need not be published. The postmark deadline for this award is **April 30, 2016**.

*The Canadian Authors Fred Kerner Book Award* is a brand new award given exclusively to members. Any genre is eligible. The postmark deadline for this award is **April 15, 2016**.

For details and submission forms, go to our website at <http://canadianauthors.org/national/awards/submit>

Now in its 41st year, the CAA Literary Awards program honours writing that achieves excellence without sacrificing popular appeal.

For more information about past winners, shortlisted authors, awards events, and sponsorship opportunities, visit our awards pages at <http://canadianauthors.org/national/awards/>

## CAA-NCR Byline *Submission Guidelines*

Writing-related articles that include information about the process, profession or business of writing, or insights into the writer's world.

**Byline pays** 2-1/2 cents per word to a maximum of \$25 on publication (minimum, \$10); poetry \$10 each; photos \$5 each. Contact the [Editor](#) prior to submitting.

### **Deadlines for Quarterly issues:**

For non-solicited material, at least **six weeks** prior to publication. Issues published September (fall issue), December (winter issue) March (spring issue) June (Summer issue).

### **Submission guidelines:**

English with Canadian spelling. In MS Word or OpenOffice as an attachment. Photos in jpeg, largest available resolution.

**Font:** Times New Roman 12 point, single space. **No formatting, no indents; one extra return between paragraphs.**

**Length:** *Preferably between 600 - 1200 words.*

## Prose in the Park

The **2016 Prose in the Park Literary Festival and Book Fair**, will take place on June 4, 2016, from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm in the Parkdale Park, Ottawa.

The festival is devoted to bringing together both established and emerging authors from across Canada. We are pleased to have some of the best authors of Montreal joining the upcoming festival, particularly Heather O'Neill, whose *Daydreams of Angels* should be required reading for every lover of Canadian literature. From Kingston, we will be joined by Steven Heighton, a brilliant novelist and poet, whose *Every Lost Country* takes readers a fantastic adventure to far-off Tibet.

From Toronto, we have Andrew Pyper, the Stephen King of Canada, and Ian Hamilton, whose *Ava Lee* crime series are a wonderful bridge between Canada and contemporary Asia. From Vancouver, Dietrich Kalteis is coming. His fast-paced *noir* crime set in the West Coast is some of the most enjoyable crime fiction on the market today. To celebrate Canadian writers of Caribbean heritage, we will be offering you a remarkable panel, including 2015 Giller prize judge Cecil Foster.

There is also no shortage of wonderful Ottawa authors, including 2015 Governor General Award winner for YA fiction, Caroline Pignat, Canada's premier fantasy writer Charles de Lint and celebrated literary fiction writers, Alan Cumyn and Mark Frutkin. And we are still organizing our Francophone panels, which offer a wide selection of brilliant prose *en français*.

**We are delighted to launch our new website for *Prose in the Park 2016* at [www.proseinthepark.com](http://www.proseinthepark.com). Watch this space as new authors join our preliminary line-up of great panelists.**

Cheers, Ian Shaw

Chair, **Prose in the Park** Organizing Committee

Visit our 2016 programme page [here](#) for the panels confirmed to date.

Like our Facebook page [here](#).





We will no longer be providing editing services. Instead, **we are venturing into print & digital design** of book interiors, simple covers & helping you get these up and running.

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## NOTICE TO READERS

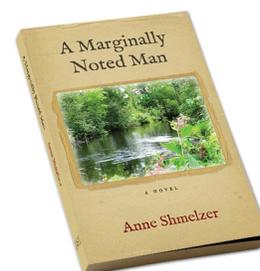
**Byline** is looking for people who regularly attend **CAA-NCR meetings and workshops**, and would be interested in writing reviews of them for publication.

If you plan to attend one of our upcoming workshops or meetings, and would like to see your name in print, contact the **Byline editor**.

**Also, contact us if you're excited about a particular book you've just read, and would like to review it for publication in Byline.**

## **A Marginally Noted Man** by Anne Shmelzer

This timeless and poignant story portrays Will Nicol’s internal struggle to regain his sanity after five years in the WW1 trenches of Flanders Fields and explores the central themes of lasting love and friendship. Will’s journey plunges readers into the moral ambiguity of war, his recuperative convalescence with Trappist monks and his courage in confronting his memories and demons, as he searches for redemption.



Shmelzer’s debut novel has received the endorsement of Col Rakesh Jetly, Chief Psychiatrist for the Canadian Armed Forces, who said: “Anne Shmelzer displays an acute understanding of the warfare experience. She shines a light on the early emergence of PTSD and creates a vivid image of Will Nicol’s internal struggle to regain his mental health. From the battlefields of the Western Front to his reintegration into society, *A Marginally Noted Man* takes us on an emotional journey that is difficult to put down. This is a great read!”

Anne’s passion for writing was first nurtured during her childhood, which was spent between Toronto and Madoc Township, and further enhanced through her experiences as a psychiatric nurse, musician and poet.

*A Marginally Noted Man* is available through the publisher’s website [railwaycreekbooks.ca](http://railwaycreekbooks.ca) Amazon (link), Kobo (link), and iBook stores (link). Print editions are also available at **Perfect Books** and **Books on Beechwood** in Ottawa, **The Book Nook** in Perth and **Novel Idea** in Kingston.

## Early Spring Landscape – by Carol Stephen

Remnants of snow leach back into  
 the ground, brown with flattened grass,  
 green still sleeping off the winter weight.  
 Early flowers poke above the soil, tentative  
 and shy, face to leaf with soggy mash  
 of old news, expired flyers. Nothing beautiful  
 yet, no faint tinge of spring on trees,  
 no budding bushes, air still damp and chill.  
 But the front lawn boasts its first robins,  
 and the population around feeders suddenly  
 triples with common redpolls stopping by  
 on their way even further north than here.

**BIO:** Carol A. Stephen is a Carleton Place poet, poetry selector for *Bywords Journal* and member of *The Field Stone Poets*. She serves as Ottawa Manager for *The Ontario Poetry Society*. Carol has served on boards of CAA-NCR, Arts Carleton Place and Tree Reading Series. Carol coordinated CAA's poetry circle 2008-2013. Her poetry has appeared in journals, chapbooks and online. In 2012 Carol was featured in *Tree Reading Series' Hot Ottawa Voices*. Her poem, *Walking in Thomson's Red Sumac* took 3rd Prize in CAA 2012 National Capital Writing Contest. Chapbooks: *Above the Hum of Yellow Jackets*, Bondi Studios, 2011 and *Architectural Variations*, Quillfyre Publishing, 2012. *Ink Dogs in my Shoes*, Nose In Book Publishing, Castlegar B.C. 2014, and a collaborative chapbook with J.C. Sulzenko, *Breathing Mutable Air*, May 2015, also *Nose in Book Publishing*. A second collaboration, *Slant of Light*, is due in *Spring*, 2016.



© Dr. Bob Abell

## Byline

### **Note Byline's current advertising rates:**

*Members are entitled to a 1/8 page advertisement in each issue of **Byline** at no cost!*

*News bits for the "Kudos" column, or member Book Reviews are still free for Branch Members. Otherwise, member rates are as follows:*

### **Member Rates**

**Single issue:** 1/8 Byline page: N/C  
1/4 Byline page: \$15  
1/2 Byline page: \$30

**One year - Quarterly** (4 issues- **price of three**)  
1/8 Byline page: N/C  
1/4 Byline page: \$45  
1/2 Byline page: \$90

### **Non-Member Rates**

**Single issue:** 1/8 Byline page: \$15  
1/4 Byline page: \$30  
1/2 Byline page: \$50

**One year: Quarterly** (4 issues, no changes):  
1/8 Byline page: \$45  
1/4 Byline page: \$90  
1/2 Byline page: \$150

**Note:** *Yearly prices reflect the cost of three issues; the fourth publication is free*

For more information, contact [Byline Editor](#)

**Byline** is distributed by e-mail to those on our extensive CAA-NCR Mailing List.

To have your name added to our mailing lists, contact the [Editor](#)



## 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Canadian Authors Association National Capital Writing Contest - 2015 Honourable Mention – Short Story Category

**Tara Marie Andronek** *by Stephanie Loiza Read*

It seemed to Tara Marie Andronek that there was no more quintessentially lazy experience in this world than to take a nap on a Saturday afternoon with all the lights on. Tara rolled over listlessly in her bed, the too-heavy comforter clinging to her damp pyjamas. She had been sweating, no doubt because she had forgotten to at least turn on the fan before dozing off, her head resting on an outstretched hand whose pale fingertips brushed lightly against the wall.

She wasn't sure why she had chosen to wear a fleece pyjama suit of all things, but it was the only matching set of pyjamas she had and, she thought blearily, there is nothing like a pyjama suit to convey a sense of organized coziness, as if she were a model in one of those Christmas catalogues lounging idly in bed with a hot mug of something in her hand, staring inanely at someone just out of frame, totally unapologetic in her practiced, easy recline, as if to say, *I'm not getting out of bed if the devil himself materialized between the sheets!*

It seemed important to Tara that she try to reflect a sort of picture-perfect ideal of weekend indolence, as if she could convince herself that lying in bed all evening wasn't a total waste of her time. Her body didn't need rest; it needed to be up and moving! it needed to *chase the day!* Instead, Tara had forced herself into bed with her steaming mug of tea, her laptop perched on her knees ready to recount the melancholy tale of Enid Coleslaw and Rebecca Doppelmeyer.

Before Tara drifted off to sleep, the laptop pushed perilously to the edge of the bed, the whole wilting exercise had ended with Tara calling her boyfriend for some kind of validation. The conversation went as follows:

*Tchhk. "Hey Babe."*

*"Hi honey! How's it going?"*

*(A small silence) "Good."*

*"Did I wake you up?"*

*"I was just resting my head babe. What's up?"*

*"Nothing, I was just calling to say hi and chat, but if you are resting, I'll call back later. Is everything okay?"*

*"Yes babe."*

*"Okay, then I'll say bye for now. Have a good rest and text me when you are up. I love you."*

*"I love you, too."*

*"Oh, and babe?"*

*"...yeah?"*

*"Is everything okay?"*

*Click.*

Tara stared at the phone, puzzled. Then she laid the phone down beside the bed, face down, as if putting it in time-out. Exasperation and embarrassment sent a hot flush of heat through her cheeks. Why did she ask if everything was okay? She was always doing *that thing*, pushing the question, looking for affirmation from him when she knew the answer. Everything was *not* okay. Since when was *everything* okay?

At that moment, however, things had been okay and Tara had made it all a little un-okay simply by asking. Frustrated, she threw herself back down onto the pillow. A wave of lethargic hopelessness washed over her. She *was* tired, she thought. Borderline exhausted! So how come she felt so utterly guilty lying here in bed? Wasn't her boyfriend also in bed at this very moment? It was just that kind of a day, the sort they call a "total write-off", a frigid January day so cold that even getting near the door in the lobby of her apartment building to get Friday's mail sent shivers across Tara's shoulders.

She would go to bed soon and get up bright and early on Sunday and get to work on all the projects that were cluttered on and around her table: The Personal Statement for her application to a competitive Master program of the University of Toronto; a scrapbook of her trip to Jamaica with her boyfriend and his family last fall; a design for the silk-screened t-shirt Tara wanted to make for her friend's birthday back in June; some half-completed paintings crammed half-heartedly in a corner.

Tara lived in a bachelor apartment and therefore, no matter where she was in her tiny room, these projects would peer out at her from the cluttered black work table, like the bright eyes of some small but unpredictable little woodland animals, watching her every move. They watched her now with a judgemental air as she lolled in bed, one flat palm idly passing over her stomach, circling the navel. Was this rock bottom? she thought, as a small pin-prick of pain settled simultaneously in her right temple, as if brought on by the thought itself.

She suddenly became aware of how thin and lumpy her mattress was, how slight the pillows were and how starchy the heavy comforter seemed, and she felt thoroughly wretched. No doubt she could have swung her legs out of bed, taken a quick and invigorating shower, packed her bag and headed to the cafe around the corner for some well-needed fuel and an almost guaranteed hour of productivity, but the newly-developed ache in her temple and a slight feeling of nausea that had begun to develop ever since she had finished her tea kept her lying in bed. Her feelings of guilt and frustration grew steadily with every passing second until Tara flung herself angrily onto her side and drifted off into queasy yet surprisingly instant sleep.

An hour and a half later, Tara awoke. The lights were on above her as well as in the kitchen and the bathroom. The laptop was open and had not gone into sleep mode. The hot orange and reds of the default background, some overexposed photograph of the Australian outback, assaulted her eyes. Little blue and green lights bleeped from her phone and alarm clock and, outside, the glare from the streetlights penetrated through the sheer brown curtains.

Slowly, like an old bear rousing from her winter den, Tara shoved herself out of bed and immediately felt a sickening wave of little shivers pass through her body, the kind one feels when sweating out the flu. In the bathroom, Tara ripped off her fleece pyjamas and threw them from her in a heap on the floor and jumped into the shower. She stayed in there for quite a while, shampooing her hair vigorously to remove an itch that had settled there. Tara even considered lying down on the floor of the old teal tub and letting the hot water pour over her like rain, but she knew she'd probably doze off again.

The thought of rain made Tara feel a stab of melancholy. She loved the rain and missed it dearly. That was one of the things about living in Ontario; sometimes months could go by without rain, which was a real tragedy for Tara as nothing in her mind was so rejuvenating for the spirit as the soft patter of drops on the windows on some gray weekday afternoon, or being woken up by the sound of thunder in the middle of the night as rain smote the sidewalks furiously with hard and unrelenting *thack-thack-thack* noises. Tara welcomed the late-night disruption and would lie in bed savouring the sound of the rain as one might savour fresh gelato.

In the winter-time, the snow would drift to settle on the ground noiselessly, merely taking up space. It could snow five feet in the night and Tara wouldn't even hear a thing. Who loved anything that could creep so noiselessly? People put bells on cats' collars so they could not creep up on you, but you can't put a bell on a snowflake. In the winter, Tara would be woken in the middle of the night by some lumbering, painfully loud snow plow that would beep and rumble for hours before finally trundling off, leaving Tara staring up at the ceiling criss-crossed with the reflection of the orange streetlights outside with blood-shot eyes.

With these thoughts in her mind Tara stepped gingerly out of the shower. She peered sidelong into the mirror and caught a glimpse of a pale, tired-eyed woman with splotchy red cheeks from the heat of the shower. Tara looked away with clenched teeth and chose a new and less-smothering pair of pyjamas from the closet. It was late now and Tara knew she wouldn't be staying up much longer. She checked her phone and saw that she had had no texts from her boyfriend, but a picture-text from her dad of a pack of cards she had bought for him in Jamaica depicting a tall black silhouette of a man in dreads lounging in a hammock with the words "no problem!" scrawled jauntily underneath. Tara smiled weakly and replied with an emoticon of a face with its tongue sticking out.

Standing in front of the mirror beside her bed, Tara braided her long wet hair in an over-the-shoulder cable and then drew her hands slowly over her face, dragging at the skin over her cheekbones as if to break up some of the tension there. She massaged her jaws where her back teeth were. They ached a little because of an untreated cavity. Tara wanted desperately to have them looked at but the procedure was expensive and she didn't have insurance. She knew that soon it wouldn't matter and she would have to get the thing done anyways.

Her guinea pig had died suddenly back in August, and the bills she had racked up trying to save him at the 24/7 animal emergency hospital on the night he had died, the medication he had been on earlier that week for a non-lethal skin condition (*sometimes the cure is worse than the disease*, Tara thought derisively) and the subsequent fee for his cremation and the return of his remains in a simple yet elegant cherry wood box had been staggering. Tara did not regret it, however. Her guinea pig had been her first *real* pet, that is to say the first pet that had died in her charge, and she had wanted to respect his role in her life as much as she could.

The bills always find a way to get paid, she thought. If only creative projects could be the same, too. If only Tara could rely on the thought that she would, that she *could* catch up on everything she had let build up in her life with even a tenth of that same certainty, then perhaps she wouldn't shy away from the task like Punxsutawney Phil before his own shadow.

Getting into bed, Tara grabbed her phone from the side table and called her boyfriend. Her call met his voice mailbox, twice. Tara sent him a text: *Hey Hon I hope you are having a good night, I don't feel well so I'm going to bed now, lots of love, xx*. The time was 9:05. She hadn't even made it until ten o'clock! She was kicking out under her stack of blankets to get comfortable, plumping the pillows with one fist, when her boyfriend called. They had a one-minute, protracted conversation. *How are you? Did you have a good night? I did, you? Yes, thanks. I love you. Goodnight*. Tara hung up and placed the phone slowly back onto the side table face-down, and with dark clouds forming behind her eyes she turned over and fell asleep.

The clock on Tara's cell-phone read 1:05 am. She sat up groggily and looked around her room. The voices of a woman and man rung loudly from the hallway, and Tara thought vaguely that the woman's voice sounded very much like her own whenever she heard it played back in the sound recordings her and her boyfriend sometimes made for fun. Tara tried in vain to get back to bed, but her body refused to relax. Her limbs were tense and her fingers ached strangely. Tara reached up and closed

the curtains firmly against the orange glow of the city and straightened the sheets that she had drawn back, crumpled, from her bed frame as she had tossed and turned fitfully in sleep. Pleased, Tara got back into bed and shut her eyes, waiting for sleep to come once again.

The clock on the phone now read 2:46 am. Tara was still awake, her palms pressed together in front of her as she lay on her side, as if praying to the sandman. A million thoughts whirred in her head at a cruel pace. She was watching someone receive an award at a juried art show. Tara stood in a long black dress by the buffet with a glass of white wine in her hand and her boyfriend at her side with one arm around her waist. Tara had not won an award, or even an honourable mention, but her painting had been long listed and for that she was positively beaming with delight.

Now she was painting on a massive canvas, dragging a bold hot-pink line across the surface, sweat pricking her brow, confident that she was steps from completing the canvas. Or she was wearing a bikini on the beach, showing off her hard-earned bikini-body, having finally ditched the fuchsia one-piece that her boyfriend's mother owned a carbon copy of in a more flattering Santorin-blue.

Now Tara was interviewing a passionate young volunteer of the newly-redeveloped Ottawa Art Gallery for her mildly-successful blog. She was looking in the mirror and seeing a vivacious, blue-eyed woman sporting an unapologetic, mischievous yet good-natured grin. She saw herself approach her work table with a casual air, settling down to her work, all of her projects new and fresh and bold and no longer the t-shirt that took 7 months to complete, or the statement that took a season to write, or the canvases she had hoarded since she was in high school with the hope that they might one day find their place on the walls of some trendy coffee shop.

No, she was free, *free*; she was her art and her art was *her* and coursed from her unbidden, as sensual and flowing and natural as her long, sweet-smelling locks of bright brown hair that tumbled over her strong, fair shoulders as she bent over her latest piece in deep concentration, and her name was *Tara Marie Andronek* and that *meant* something to her, and she was *someone*. She was riding the world on a palette and bringing joyous life to the world around her with the tools of her craft, delighting in the knowledge that so long as she created, she was powerful, because in the creation there was always the chance of *more*, of building things up, up, up endlessly upward towards the sky in impenitent radiance like the five-foot snow drifts on the roof-tops, so light and yet so utterly *tangible*, like her own beating heart... but no.

She was just Tara, lying in bed at 3:15 in the morning with matted wet hair and stiff limbs because she had surrendered her day to sleep at a quarter to seven when she knew there was work to be done. The bills would be paid, and she was *just Tara*. These facts alone she would always be certain of.

**BIO: Stephanie Loiza Read is a Museum Studies graduate student and writer of short fiction, currently working on a series of children's books in Toronto.**

## *What you Missed!!*

The first CAA-NCR meeting of the year, on January 12<sup>th</sup>, started with an in-depth look at **Taxes and the Writer** in preparation for that dreaded time of the year, **TAX TIME**.

Paul Downey and Angela Doyle of BDO Canada in Manotick, who together combine over 30 years in the accounting world, thoroughly walked us through the complexities of income tax reporting for self-employed taxpayers like writers.

The first issue they clarified was the difference between being an *employee* or being *self-employed*.

Essentially, *if the person **for whom the services are performed** controls the amount, nature and management of the work, the person **performing the services** is an employee.* This would be considered a Contract **of** Service.

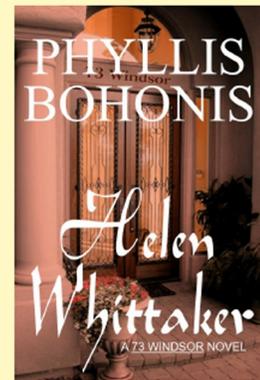
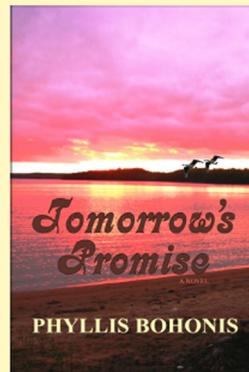
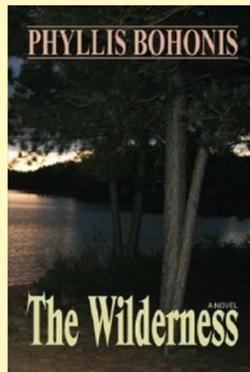
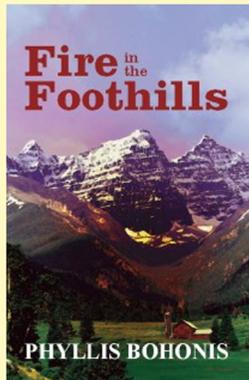
*When a person is engaged to achieve a defined objective and is **given ALL the freedom required to attain the desired result**, that person is considered self-employed.* This would involve a Contract **for** Service which, presumably, the writer would have with the client.

Determining whether your writing would be considered a hobby, or a business, by the tax department (extremely relevant for filing expenses or losses) seems simple: *is there a reasonable expectation of profit from your work.* The speakers gave an in-depth review of what comprised those *expectations*, then added that, in the case of writers, there is recognition that a longer period of time may be required to establish that *reasonable expectation of profit*.

This is but the tip of a very deep iceberg called Canadian Income reporting. During the course of the evening, the speakers did a credible job of exposing the hard ice below the surface of the water.

The quality of the questions posed and the complexity of the answers given following the presentation indicate that many concerns were satisfied in what was a stellar presentation.

**BDO Canada LLP, 5494 Manotick Main, Manotick, ON 613-692-3501:** Paul Downey, CPA, CGA, Senior Manager; Angela Doyle, Supervisor.



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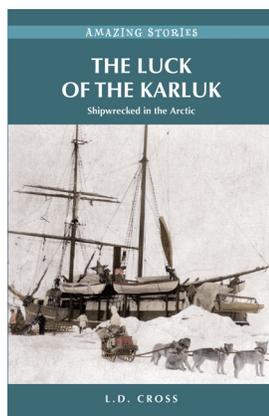
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[Contact](#) Kelly or see her [Blog](#).

**Canadian Authors Association  
National Capital Branch**

**2015-16 Executive & Coordinators**

*Please feel free to contact any of the following with suggestions or concerns*

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## ***What you Missed!!***

As explained by Jasmine Aziz at the February 9<sup>th</sup> CAA-NCR meeting, **Scribing Sex – Romancing the Page**, the continuum of genres relative to putting a little sex into the material you're writing runs the gamut from love stories and romance novels at one end of the spectrum, all the way to fetish stories and pornography at the other.

So how do you know how far to go when the narrative arc of your story requires some manner of physical contact between the characters?



In many cases, it's the terminology used to describe the various parts of the body and/or the actions themselves that determine whether a piece of material is fish or foul. As example, the love scenes in a romance novel would be descriptive, flowery, perhaps somewhat clinical using *nice* words you'd be comfortable using in public. At the pornography end of the continuum you would find slang, bawdy descriptions and four-letter words that would give our grandmothers palpitations.

In determining the difference between erotic and erotica, Jasmine's simple explanation was that, with the former you would use the feather; with the latter you'd use the whole chicken.

And regardless of the genre you're writing in, it's important to use all five senses in your descriptions.

One warning Jasmine gave was, if you have established yourself as a writer in the far end of the continuum, you'd better deliver. If a reader is looking for erotica, and you've not delivered the right wording, your book will end up in the trash.

Jasmine's presentation was engaging, humorous and informative. Her openness about the topic allowed those in attendance to feel they could ask any question of her and expect a cohesive, succinct answer. It was an extremely interesting evening.

***Jasmine Aziz worked as a consultant for four years doing in-home party presentations selling adult novelty toys. Her first novel, the comedic Sex & Samosas, straddles the genres of women's fiction, self-help and erotica while taking a humorous look at cultural and social issues. It has recently been optioned for a movie.***

## CAA-NCR Program Information – 2016

**Regular Meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, at 7:00 p.m., in McNabb Recreation Centre, 180 Percy Street east of Bronson Ave.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**TOPIC: Expose Yourself! - Ways to get attention for your book while remaining fully clothed. (No fifty shades of grey here)**

**PRESENTER: Sheryl Bennett-Wilson**

**DATE: Tuesday, April 12, 2016**

**TIME: 7:00 – 9:00 pm**

**LOCATION: McNabb Recreation Centre, 180 Percy St. east of Bronson Ave.**

In many ways there are far more opportunities today for authors to get exposure and coverage for their book than there ever were. That being said, there is also a huge amount of competition for readers' eyeballs. So what is an author to do?

Having worked in broadcasting (both radio and television) for over 25 years, and witnessed the explosion in social media in the last ten years, Sheryl can tell you that sometimes the simplest and most straightforward of methods work best. And more often than not, it is the 'put-yourself-out-there' author who gets the reviews, gets the interviews and gets people talking about their book.

But where does one start? How do you find out whom to approach? When should you start talking about your book? Sheryl hopes to help you get started on the journey and provide useful advice so you can create your own marketing plan, discover the best way to write a release and understand the best way to approach radio/television.

**BIO:** *Sheryl Bennett-Wilson worked in broadcasting in Ottawa – both radio and television – for over 25 years. For the last number of years she has written numerous articles for local and national publications, provided press and marketing material for companies, professionals, authors, musicians and a number of charities. She has also written, directed and produced corporate videos, provided editing for non-fiction books, written and continues to write content for websites and for over twelve years was the Event Manager of an annual trade show.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## CAA-NCR National Capital Writing Contest AWARDS NIGHT

CAA-NCR will present awards to the winning entries in the  
**2016 National Capital Writing Contest**  
**Monday, May 9, 2016**

**The event starts at 7:00 PM** in the auditorium (downstairs) of the **Main Branch of the Ottawa Public Library – 120 Metcalfe at Laurier.**

The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in the **Poetry** and **Short Story** categories will read their winning entries, selected from among some of the finest writers in Ontario and Quebec.

We encourage everyone to attend, meet and mix with welcoming, friendly, compassionate, understanding writers of all genres and styles, and enjoy the refreshments. ***Come and spend a fun two hours with us.***

***The National Capital Writing Contest is in its 29th year and is one of the most prestigious poetry and short story contests in Canada.***

### *What you Missed!!*

Is "Real Change" coming to Canadian copyright? Dr. Michael Geist addressed this question at our March 8 branch meeting.

With Justin Trudeau coming to power under a "Real Change" slogan, writers want to know if copyright is one of the things that will really change. According to Geist the answer is probably not. He feels it's too soon after the changes of 2012.

Dr. Geist, a law professor at the University of Ottawa, is a self-described copyright geek. He lights up when he talks about it. He spends his days studying, teaching, working on and writing about the copyright dance between protection and access. "Overprotection of work is just as problematic as underprotection," he says.

The *Copyright Act* strives to respect the rights of writers, so they have incentive to create, and the rights of the public to access knowledge and to share interpretations of that knowledge.

As writers we see both sides. We refer to the work of others to shape and grow our own writing, so we know access is important. We also want our own finished creations to be protected.

No stranger to controversy, Geist sometimes expresses opinions that rankle with writers' organizations like ours. Copyright is a significant concern of the Canadian Authors Association (CAA). We were founded in 1921 to lobby for it, and the CAA was instrumental in bringing about the *Copyright Act* of 1924. CAA at the national level is one of several groups advocating against the "educational purposes" fair dealing exception to copyright infringement that was among revisions made to the *Copyright Act* in 2012. CAA argues that publisher incomes have declined since the 2012 revisions.

In the opinion of Dr. Geist, those concerns are misplaced because most instances of fair dealing for "educational purposes" could be described as "research," which was already part of the *Act* before 2012. He argues the addition of "educational purposes" did not mean "real change."

Is he right? Or are writers' organizations right to be concerned?

These days, with so many electronic devices sharing information at the click of a button, we are right to be vigilant. We are tasked with ensuring the pace of legislation change—real or otherwise—keeps up with the pace of technological change.

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