



Canadian Authors National Capital Region has a new web address:

<http://canadianauthors.org/nationalcapitalregion>

Log on for information about the Branch, its programs, or to check up on what your fellow writers are doing. Back issues of **Byline** are available on the site.

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Editorial - Arlene Smith, CAA-NCR Treasurer

Even more than spring, September for me is a time of renewal. The cooler temperatures bring new surges of energy that reinvigorate me to tackle new projects and contemplate new ideas.

The new season of meetings of our CAA-NCR branch is underway too, and our meetings are an excellent way to rekindle passion for writing.

That's the value of an organization like ours. Writing, for the most part is a solitary pursuit, but it's a solitary pursuit that must be fed through contact with others. Our writing becomes richer, and our sketched ideas evolve into stories when we listen and learn from others.

One way of doing that is at those monthly meetings. Our program coordinator, Debbie Rose, did a fantastic job of pulling together an interesting and varied selection of presenters, and each one of those presenters is your source for better writing.

Another way of feeding your writing is through participation in writing circles. There are spaces available in the Downtown circle, that meets immediately before our branch meetings, and in the evening Centrepointe circles. Critiquing and receiving constructive critiques is one of the best ways to develop as a writer.

Finally, I encourage you to consider attending CanWrite, our annual national conference. A weekend spending brainstorming, creating and celebrating with writers from across Canada is guaranteed to get ideas flowing.

Next year's conference will be held in Toronto in conjunction with other writing-related organizations. That conference will have a slightly different feel from the smaller event held in Orillia, but it will also offer a greater variety of workshops. You will meet people working in different aspects of the industry.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our meetings. Our location at the McNabb Recreation Centre is central and accessible to everyone. The parking at the facility ebbs and flows with the use of the attached arena, so sometimes you need to be patient to find a spot, but one usually becomes available. We have changed the structure of our meetings to allow for flexible arrival times. Our meetings will begin with a time of conversation and refreshment before we get down to sharing and learning.

Arlene Smith - CAA-NCR Treasurer

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.

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

CAA-NCR member, Sanjeev Sivarulrasa, has launched an art gallery and studio, Sivarulrasa Studio & Gallery (Thoburn Mill, 83 Little Bridge Street, Unit 102, Almonte).

Sanjeev describes Almonte as a hip town with energized people who are very artist/writer-friendly.

Space is available to the public for book readings and launches etc.. **Contact [Sanjeev](#) for details.**

Special rates to CAA-NCR members.

Announcement

BYLINE magazine goes quarterly

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

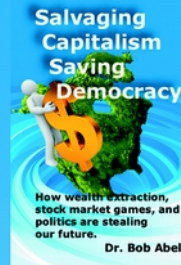
We are looking for well-written articles, up to 1000 words in length, about the craft or business of writing, and specifics about either creative or non-fiction writing for different markets. Byline pays \$.025/word to a maximum of \$25 per article.

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

Tapping Your Innate Creativity

by Barbara Florio Graham

There was a movement, a few decades ago, to introduce creative writing into the classroom. This was, for the most part, a spectacular flop, producing either unintelligible gibberish or regurgitated TV plots. We mustn't blame the teachers for this; nobody showed them how to encourage and develop the creative process.

We're a left-brain, right-handed society, which rewards, throughout our school system as well as later in the work world, logical, linear, orderly, sequential thinking.

Many teachers felt threatened by the unorthodox thinking of creative students. Teaching is a very left-brain activity, requiring patience, organizational ability, high verbal skills, and logical thinking. School systems in the western world have traditionally encouraged both left-brain students and faculty, realizing that there was no way to measure some of the abilities of the right-brain minority.

Even math is often taught as "story problems." When one of the 10% of right-brained kids is asked to figure out how many pieces Jane can cut from six apples in order to share equally with her ten friends, the right-brain student might discuss the fact that no two apples are exactly the same size and weight. Will his teacher recognize superior ability, or scold him?

Before more extensive study of the brain, it was thought that people were dominated either by the left brain, which made them better at thinking logically, using words to express themselves, and following step-by-step instructions, or right-brained, which meant they were good at art, music, and math.

But we now know it isn't as simple as that.

Think of it as a continuum. At the very far left are those who are so rigidly logical that they have difficulty relating to other people, lack imagination or the ability to enjoy anything they can't explain, and often have astounding abilities in hard sciences. We have a great example of that today in Sheldon from ***The Big Bang Theory***. He is a prime example of how we misunderstand the wide autism spectrum. Some people with autism fall on the far left side of the continuum, although many are on the far right side, having difficulty expressing themselves in words, but hugely talented in music or the visual arts.

Most of us have left-dominant brains, but recent research has revealed that children can be nudged to the right.

My own experience has been interesting. My father was a practical man with excellent business sense, but he was also an inventive thinker who figured things out not by logic or following directions, but by experimenting, not afraid to try something to find out if it might work.

My mother was very verbal, but also had many right-brain characteristics. She was an accomplished self-taught musician, wrote verse, including song parodies, and was a talented artist and seamstress.

She encouraged me both to do well in school but also to enjoy music, art and using my imagination to make up stories. One of those brief stories won a contest at ***Humpty Dumpty*** magazine, which awarded me \$5 and a free subscription. So I was a published writer at age nine!

Even after I became a journalist, devoted to capturing the truth, I wrote poetry and the occasional short story in my spare time. There's room for both in any writer's career.

It's a myth that creativity is inborn. In fact, it can be nurtured by parents and schools, and most adults can stretch their ability to develop more creative solutions to problems, or their ability to write more original and creative material.

Creativity helps you look at ordinary things more closely. For example, it was just a little more than a century ago that cobblers began to make right and left shoes. Is there a similar product for which there is an obvious need, that no one has yet thought of, even though it's been right under our noses?

In fact, recent research indicates that high activity in the right side of the brain contributes to optimism and overall happiness. Perhaps this is due to the realization that everything is possible, in a world in which all options are open.

Throughout history, left-handed geniuses both astounded and confounded their peers. Among them were individuals as diverse as Charlie Chaplin, Leonardo da Vinci, Cole Porter, Albert Schweitzer, Walt Disney, Thomas Edison, and Albert Einstein.

When I was hired to teach English to grades seven and eight at the prestigious Latin School of Chicago, the headmaster told me, "I want you to teach these kids how to write easily and well, so that by the time they finish grade eight we no longer have to spend time correcting grammar, sentence structure, organization, and clarity."

That was a challenge I welcomed. But then he added another. The eighth-graders had been divided unequally into two sections, with only twelve, including his older son, in the higher group.

"These kids have I.Q. scores more than 10 points higher than yours. You aren't going to be able to teach them anything. They're reading sophisticated adult non-fiction, and will rebel if you assign them boring spelling and grammar homework. Find some way to keep them busy and engaged, no matter what it takes."

Wow.

That led me to examine my own writing process. I realized I had no actual plan. I just focused on an idea (or the notes I'd taken) and started writing.

Already a student of psychology, I read about the brain and began to develop unique exercises to surprise the class. Once a week, on a randomly-selected day, I would tell them we were going to do some creative exploration.

One day I announced that everyone was going to receive the same mark for that class period, and that I was not going to participate except to check to ensure that everyone in the class contributed. They would have to organize themselves and write a complete poem on the board in 40 minutes.

They immediately selected the girl with the best penmanship to write on the board, agreed on a theme, the city of Chicago, and began by throwing out ideas and quickly forming them into phrases, which got moved around from one section of the board to the other.

The result was a really good poem which then appeared in the school newspaper.

There's a Rad Bradbury quote that describes this process: "Go to the edge of the cliff and jump off. Build your wings on the way down."

Many writers tend to focus only on plot, on character, setting, or background history. These are all left-brain activities.

Researchers have pointed out that the left hemisphere is "the resident storyteller," while the right jumps to conclusions, filling in visual elements, adding music, emotion, and sensory impressions. In fact, most of our thinking happens unconsciously.

So to write more creatively, you have to engage the right brain. Listen to running water by taking a shower or installing a fountain in your office. Post engaging visual images where you can see them as you write. Include images from nature as well as abstracts, and avoid photos unless you're writing about these people. Keep things nearby that you can touch, feel, smell.

Imagine the outrageous. Change the context, the premise, the frame, the vocabulary. What would happen if you switched the logical order, stretched the limits beyond logical bounds? How about connecting things that appear to have nothing in common, or eliminating what appears to be essential?

Stop. Change direction. Find a sense you haven't used yet. It costs nothing to invest in your imagination.

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>.*

CAA-NCR 2015 Winter Social

It's that wonderful time of year – good cheer, good friends, good food.
Join us for a special *celebration of the season*
Bring your seasonal stories or poetry to read.

DATE: Sunday, December 6th, 2015

TIME: 3:00 – whenever

LOCATION: The home *Sharyn Heagle* ([*contact Sharyn*](#) for Directions)

Bring a favourite culinary delight to share, your appetite, and good cheer.

HO! HO! HO!



Bloggers have it Best

by Kelly Buell

Want a career in the writing industry but not sure where to start? Of all the types of writers in the world, bloggers have it best.

There, I said it. Bloggers are far more likely to enjoy the writing process than journalists, novelists or screenwriters. They are less likely to ever have the pleasure and sometimes the hassle of working with publishers and agents. They are far more likely to write what they want instead of what public interest demands. They do not worry about having their work thrown in the slush pile or used as cat litter or lining in a bird cage.

Bloggers do not receive form rejection letters or deal with writing queries to story editors, agents or publishers. Bloggers have fewer conflicts with word count than authors, who sometimes cut upwards of five-thousand words from their word count. Bloggers' deadlines can be more flexible depending on how often they want to update the content in their blog. Authors and journalists are often plagued with consistent deadlines and writing under pressure.

What makes a blogger successful? A large social network that is supportive of your writing and share your work is helpful. Having a writing platform is an effective way to attract followers. Great writing skills are helpful but not required.

Does marketing matter? Research suggests that it does. It's important to know your market and do your best to write on topics that appeal to it. Does the length of one's blog matter? I've noticed that a lot of bloggers keep their posts to I'll say, 500 words or so but there are a few that will write essay length pieces and they are still usually worth the read.

Quality over quantity seems key but it is not the secret to getting 5,000 hits instead of 50. It is helpful to write the blog in the first person. Add many images. Create links to articles relevant to your topic. Make your blog personal. People want to know about the blogger's history, who their influences are, what molded them into the person they are today and sometimes that includes explaining why they made the choices they did along the way. All this to pave the road to fame, or so I've been told.

Adopt a pseudonym. I am not endorsing this but apparently it is easier to become hugely successful if you can keep your day job too. For some bloggers, having a pseudonym is like wearing a second skin.

I'm of the opinion that being able to present my material as myself has its advantages. In real life though, you may not want your friends to know if you've become an expert on how to have affairs, or if you're running a business in the sex industry or if you have a secret passion for writing about your pet dog. Perhaps your secret is that you like to knit instead of going to the hockey game with your friends. Maybe you are a dessert queen and know fifty ways to decorate a mean cupcake. Whatever your secret writing passion, a pseudonym offers the best of

both worlds. Many bloggers and writers alike when they are starting out find adopting another identity helpful, at least for themselves, in the long run.

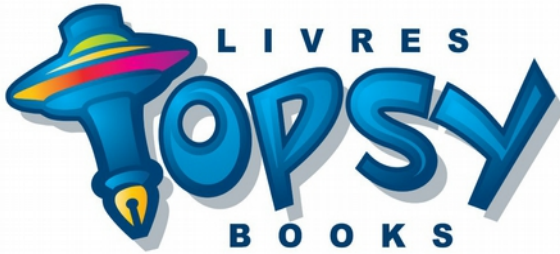

Does fame matter to you? Are you willing to create a tell-all blog for the possibility of financial gain? Some have. There is another type of writer that does this and they are called memoirists. Whether or not they've become rich in the process is a mystery, at least to me. If you want to blog and you aren't keeping track of how many hits you're getting in the process, do pets like cats and iguanas make the best beta readers and sometimes final readers of the blogs you produce?

Whatever your reason for wanting to write, blogging is a fun and effective way to build your writing portfolio. There are a few rules of etiquette to follow though if you want to join the club.

'Like' other bloggers work. Re-blogging is a courtesy in the blogging world, it's a do unto others... type of thing. Feedback on other bloggers work is welcome but criticisms are best kept to yourself unless you can be constructive in what you are saying. Bees like honey for a reason.

And finally, Happy Blogging!

BIO: Kelly Buell resides in Ottawa, Ont. She is the married mother of two children, who fills her days with joy, love and laughter. From 1999-2001, Kelly studied Journalism-Print at Algonquin College and graduated with a diploma. Her work has appeared in publications such as *Byline Magazine*, *Ottawa Star*, *The Ottawa Xpress*, *The Ottawa Citizen*, and *Capital Xtra*. Kelly received a post graduate certificate in Creative Writing through Humber College in 2015. She is in the middle stages of self-publishing her first children's book, *Loved Like Me*, and she moonlights as a blogger at notmystraitjacket.wordpress.com

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**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.

Beyond the Ordinary - Part 4 - Let's Write a Novel!

By Emily-Jane Hills Orford

George Orwell once confessed: "Writing a book is a horrible, exhausting struggle, like a long bout with some painful illness. One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven on by some demon whom one can neither resist nor understand."

He's right! Writing a book is a major undertaking and we must be *nuts*, to put it mildly, to want to undertake such a venture. And yet so many of us do.

"Let's Write a Novel" is by far my most popular course for young writers. All aspiring authors have their eyes set on the big project, that best-selling novel. Some of my young authors have even started writing at least one novel on their own – and these authors are as young as eight or nine years old!

It's not unusual, or unheard of, for a young person to complete such a huge task as writing a complete novel. Just this spring, Anaya Lee Willabus, an eight-year-old girl from Brooklyn, published her first chapter book, *The Day Mohan Found His Confidence*, and made international headlines as being the youngest author to ever publish a chapter book.

It can be done. When I start my "Let's Write a Novel" class, I always provide examples of novels written and published by young authors, including one of my former young writing students, Jeffrey Ben, who, at the age of twelve, wrote and published his first novel, *Hurricane Karegon*.

Bolstered with the assurance that even young as they are, these aspiring writers can write and publish their first novel, I start my classes (which, depending on the organization I teach with, can run from six to twelve weeks, one session per week), with a summary of how we will write our novels. The first class begins by each student introducing themselves and sharing their writing experiences. After this introduction, I encourage everyone to bring along one or more of their stories or two to share with the class. I stress the importance of reading their written work out loud to others as it helps solidify their writing by picking up errors or inconsistencies that they might have otherwise missed.

We then review the essentials of a good story (which is the same in a novel as it is in a short story): narrator, (person telling the story, either first or third person or multiple narrators), plot, setting, and characters. Of course, a good story always needs an opening *hook*, that powerful first line that reels the reader in so that they keep on reading, and description: character descriptions/sketches, scene descriptions, emotion/mood descriptions, etc.

Theme – a good story, either short or long and in chapters, needs a theme. We discuss possible themes and then I break the class up into groups. There is a limited time to complete the novel and, with only once a week sessions, group

writing, I find, works best. I like the groups to consist of three or four students each. Each young author is a character in their group's story and each young author will write their part of the story from their character's point of view. In other words, the story will be written from multiple points of view all in first person. Much like the novels of Jodi Picoult, Joseph Boyden and many others. This is a popular format for novels.

Once the class is settled into their groups, I assign them with a general story idea. One class was assigned the topic of an unplanned flight to Mars (based on the much noted 2025 Mars One expedition to settle on Mars). This resulted in several interesting plots, including the discovery of the true source of Mars Bars. Another story idea that was quite popular included a work by a Canadian artist. The idea was that a class was on a school trip to an art gallery and while viewing a specific work of art, something happened and the students were drawn into the painting. The plot must have the students adjusting to whatever is happening in the painting, saving the artist, making sure that the artist finishes the painting and finding a way back to the art gallery.

The group that pursued the Canadian art story was interviewed and written up in *The Manotick News*: <http://www.ottawacommunitynews.com/news-story/5640477-students-tap-into-their-imaginations-for-first-novels/> This was an exciting experience for these young writers.

The first class is mostly brainstorming and outlining the plot map. Each student is required to write a chapter each week from their character's point of view. Therefore, by the end of each session, each student must know what the other members of his/her group are doing in order to avoid repetition. (I had one group that insisted on writing each part of their novel from each character's point of view. Consequently, as you can imagine, the story didn't have much plot development.) At the beginning of each class, the students will read to the class the chapters that were written during the previous week. The class will help each group brainstorm, by discussing what works and what doesn't work with their chapters.

By the end of six or eight weeks, the novel is complete. A special event is planned to present the novels to the parents. Each group is allowed twenty minutes to present their novel. This isn't enough time to read the entire novel, so the students learn how to summarize and pick powerful chapters that they will read. The presentations are always awe-inspiring.

What did the young writers learn? Perhaps not as much as I did, as I always find these classes inspirational. The young authors, however, have learned how to develop a plot with a believable storyline based on a given theme, create loveable and despicable characters, describe a suitable setting for the story, drive the plot to an exciting climax and resolution, and, finally, edit the completed manuscript in preparation of presenting it to a publisher for consideration.

By working in groups of three or four students per group, the young writers were able to complete a novel in the given weeks and they learned how to share and improve their creative ideas. After all, the key to success in writing is to keep writing, to keep reading, and to open the mind to multiple learning possibilities.

BIO: *Emily-Jane Hills Orford is the author of seventeen books, including the award-winning books **To Be a Duke** (Christine F. Anderson Publishing), **The Whistling Bishop** (Baico) and **F-Stop: A Life in Pictures** (Baico). She teaches creative writing to young people through the Ottawa Carleton District School Board's Extra-Curricular Creative Arts Program and the Association of Bright Children Saturday Take-Off Program. She also runs workshops for young writers through the Ottawa Public Library rural branches. For more information, check out her website at: <http://emilyjanebooks.ca>*

Submit Suggestions for Upcoming Articles

This is the final chapter in the series, **Beyond the Ordinary**, written by Emily-Jane Hills Orford specifically for young creative writers. We thank Emily for her contributions to the writing experience, and to *Byline* magazine.

If you have an idea for an article, or a series of articles, contact the [Byline editor](#) with a proposal.

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.*

CAA-NCR WRITING CIRCLES

The writing circles (WCs) start up again in September.
Join a **CAA** Writing Circle!

We currently have three circles, one prior to each general meeting at McNabb Community Center, and two in the CentrepoinTE area. Plans are to open a second circle at McNabb, on a different day of the week, ... possibly Saturday morning.

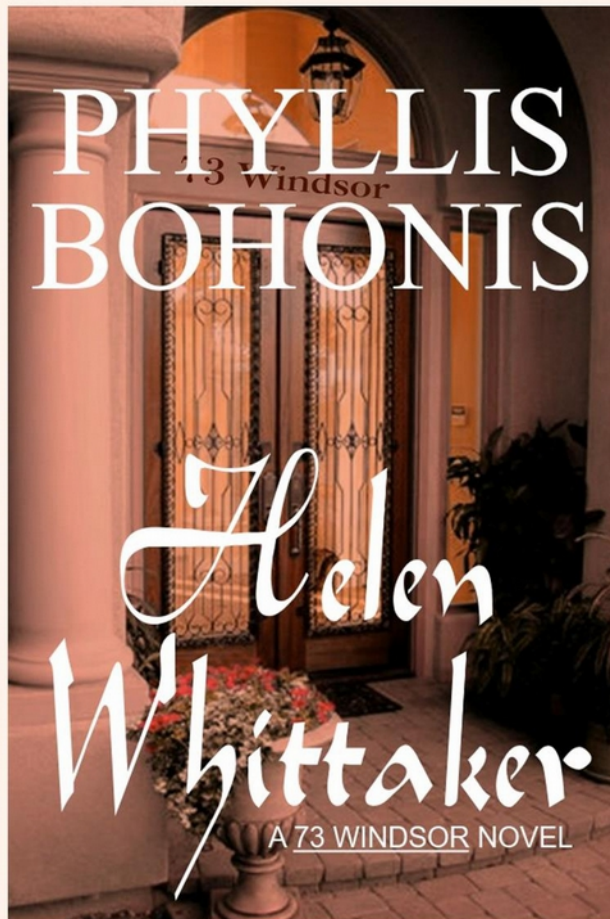
Many writers who've participated in a WC have gone on to publish the very material critiqued in their circle. If you're interested in working on specific pieces of writing, and getting valuable feedback from other writers...

This is 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](#).



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A quick death in a car accident robbed
his widow
of the satisfaction of killing him slowly.*

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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.

- All print books individually designed from “scratch”, ready to submit. No templates.
- Digital publications designed for Smashwords or Amazon Kindle, etc. (using MS Word).
- Manuscripts set up in either Canadian or American style, ready to submit.
- Just provide a well-edited MS. We'll do the rest.
 - 20 years' experience as a typesetter.
 - Reasonable fees.

Contact Sherrill Wark at info@crowe creations.ca for estimate.

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.



© Dr. Bob Abell

The Way – by Arlene Smith

The tree waits in a mid-summer field,
oak arms sheltering wide.

Refuge

A speck blooms on the golden horizon,
takes the silhouette of a man.

Wretch

He stumbles to the gnarled grey trunk,
breathes deeply of sanctuary.

Surrender

Knees drawn up, head cradled and rocking,
soul carved hollow by pain.

Hope

A figure long of robe materializes,
neither male nor female.

Inspiration

This figure waits. Watches.

For we must ask, that is.

The way

The wretch looks into infinity eyes,
stretches out his trembling hand.

Open

Palm to palm, light radiates through,
the sire heaven and birthing earth.

Grace

The man unfurls with peace and power,
breathes in the healing, That is.

The way

Light fades, hands release,
the long-robed figure recedes.

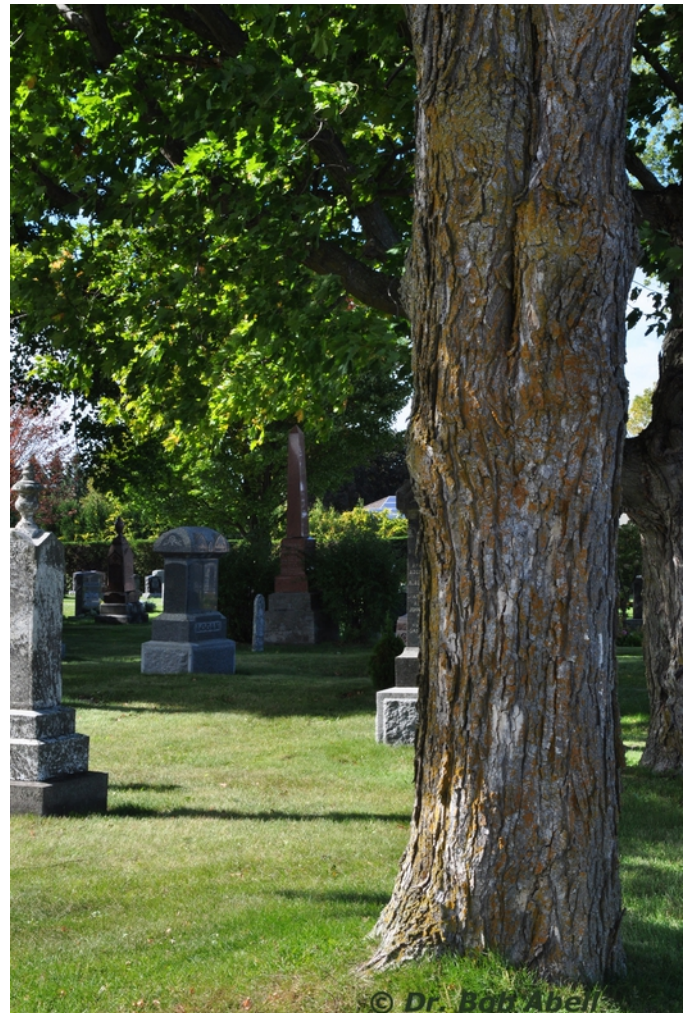
Vapour

The man trembles, rises, re-arms,
resumes his journey on his path.

Questions

Along his road he meets a woman. Searching,
and curious she asks, "Who was that?"

Friend



He turns back and sees no tree or long-robed figure.
Shrugging, he says, "Oh, that? That was . . ."
Nothing

Uneasy, they continue their journeys,
questioning, analyzing, forgetting.
Closed

A tree and a figure wait in a mid-summer field.
When open you see. What is. That is.
The way

BIO: Arlene Smith is a freelance writer who creates original video scripts for corporations and agencies. On her **Somerton Smith** blog, she writes about her efforts to live a life of inspiration, balance and outreach. She is the mother of two teenagers, so her blog is good therapy as well as good writing practice.

28th Annual Canadian Authors Association National Capital Writing Contest - 2015 Third Place – Short Story Category

Birthday by *James Plamer*

I was there when it happened, and now I have the need to tell. I said “need” not “want”. This will not be an easy story.

We – that is my wife, Georgette and I - would never have met the Cunninghams if they had not moved in across the street. We socialized in different circles: they went to church, we did not. We had lived in our downtown neighbourhood for years before it became upscale; and they moved in when it started to get that way. And, they were much more politically attuned, better dressed, and drove European cars.

But, we are both of the same age - early thirties - and each of us had had our first child: a boy for us named John, of four; and their girl, Daphne, who was slightly older and precocious.

As parents learn, children bring adults together, and that is how we came to know the Cunninghams. We might have had nothing but a nodding acquaintanceship - a wave to each other after picking up our morning newspapers, had we both not had children of about four, and if, on Daphne’s fifth, John had not been invited to the birthday party.

Lisa Cunningham favoured navy blue suits tailored smartly to follow the outline of her body without ever hugging it, and now given the chance to recollect, we never would have had the chance to wave to her, at least, in the morning. She would have been at the gym before returning to get Daphne for school in the hand-off from her husband, Paul, after breakfast. If she received a newspaper, it would have been folded on the tray at her desk with black coffee and a muffin.

If she picked it up and read it, she would do so before the telephones began to ring. She was counsel at a well-known legal firm where she supervised and negotiated real estate sales and leases for national companies and governments. In the glass and concrete tower where she worked, her firm’s floor was designed and decorated, as they are, like a movie set, and she had a corner office. This I heard from a gossip. We did not know Lisa professionally; the only property we owned was the house on our tree-lined street.

I could call Lisa by her first name. As could everyone but Daphne and the neighbourhood children. To them she was “Mother” and “Mrs. Cunningham” respectively. And to us, at first, it carried a certain aura of gentility or charm that respect for her was so implicit. Children don’t seem to be so respectful these days. The lives they live are so much more comfortable, or careless.

Paul appeared to live a life of extravagant leisure, but it may have been that he worked very hard to make his life seem so relaxed. He was a professor of economics and even at his age had adopted the manner of a genteel sage who indulged us all with the good humour of his intellect. He had studied at prestigious schools; I could guess that there was family money. We could not hold it against him; he had made the most of it, but he seemed to take his good fortune for granted, or as nothing less than what he deserved.

When I walked John across the street that day, leaves skittered on the pavement in the autumn wind. My little boy held Daphne’s present, boxed and gift-wrapped with a bow tied by his mother, in two fists against his chest. Paul greeted us at the Cunninghams’ door. I stepped into the warm foyer. I could see

children gathered in the living room in cliques, girls like bouquets of artificial flowers in frilly party dresses, no boys apparently.

I wore a toque and a lumberman's jacket. The party would give me time to rake the yard. I gave John that double push to the bum that children know is the signal to go have fun, and then I paused to say a few words to Paul, but he did not have a few words to spare. "I'll pick him up at 4:30." I said "After I rake the lawn."

I turned with my head down, and an older woman I had not heard behind me, was there with a small boy blocking my way out. She was perfectly coiffed with hair so white it seemed illuminated. We shared a "shall we dance?" moment, we smiled, and then I recognized her. She saw that I did, but she did not confirm my knowing her with a greeting of any sort. She said just "Dropping off my grandson." and something about the weather. She turned - her head down, too, to avoid discussion, or to feign humility. Anybody would have known her. Her family's business was generational, and she was featured often in the city paper for the time and money she spent philanthropically.

I walked across the street and started raking my yard and piling up leaves as I watched strange cars arrive to drop off children delivered brusquely, or efficiently, if you wish, to the Cunningham's door. Paul greeted the children and their parents enthusiastically by name, and ushered the children inside. The parents rushed back to their waiting cars hugging their coat collars. Every one of them possessed clothes sense; they had taken the time to put themselves together well before dropping their kids off.

I finished raking the leaves and bagging them, and was inside watching football with a mug of tea when 4:30 rolled around. Georgette had taken the time to go Christmas shopping. It's a big holiday for her and she likes to get it done early. I was in no hurry to bump into the other parents at the Cunninghams' so I didn't rush over there to pick up John. I went to the window and watched until the coast was clear.

3.

I don't know now if "loot bags" are still a big thing, but they were then. The idea that children would get presents from the birthday child still seems odd to me, and a bad deal for the parents; but the Cunninghams went with the trend. When I went to retrieve John, he was by the door with a multi-coloured paper bag hanging off the end of his arm. Paul was there with him but Lisa was not. Daphne sat on a chair in the living room in her party dress glaring at John, but when she saw me stood up and greeted me with a smile as though she had been instructed to. We knew better than to open the loot bag there. Paul said, "Lisa's not feeling well. She's had to go upstairs and lie down."

"We'll let you attend to her." I said. "We'd like to thank you for the party." John understood, and said, "Thank you for the party Mr. Cunningham," and walked out the door with me and across the street holding my hand. I asked John if he had had fun. He said "yeah."

When we got home I draped his jacket on the newel post, and sat down on the stairs. Then I rubbed my hands together fast, and said "So what did you get?"

John was not as excited as I was trying to be. "Hand it over, big guy!" I said to him. The bag was decorated in rainbow colours and shapes, and seemed packed full. "Any candy? Any chocolate?"

Inside the bag I found a Rubik's Cube, a Transformer, a pair of playfully coloured socks, and what I thought at first was a Polaroid picture. On the back of it was printed "And the best present of all. My friends, very best friends, should be the first to know. I'm getting a baby brother. Signed, Daphne" On the front of the card was a sonogram of a foetus. You can bet that Georgette and I discussed that when she got home and John was in bed.

The next day, Paul's car was gone from the Cunninghams' driveway, and the gossip told us that she had seen him packing suitcases into it around midnight before he drove off.

It's months since this occurred. Daphne and Lisa come and go without talking to us, and no one has seen Paul. My wife has imagined that:

1. He had had a vasectomy, and Lisa an affair;
2. Paul was impotent, and without his knowledge, Lisa had been artificially inseminated;
3. The baby picture was from the surrogate mother living in the Philippines;
4. The photo was from Paul's secret lover;
5. Lisa had found out.
6. There's more: It was part of a plot by Daphne.

The female mind seeks relevance in drama.

I do not have the answer. But, like you, I know that a line had been crossed, and that that was the end of the Cunninghams. I was there when it happened, but I lived across the street.

BIO: *James Palmer is a commercial real estate broker in Ottawa specializing in the leasing and sales of commercial and industrial buildings. As well, he does freelance journalism, and has won numerous literary awards. This is the first time that he has ever finished third.*

The Luck of the Karluk: Shipwrecked in the Arctic by L.D. Cross

The tale of the first Canadian Arctic Expedition (CAE) is one of optimism, naiveté, incompetence and heroism played out in one of the most inhospitable environments on earth. Just a few months into the journey, renovated wooden whaling ship became lodged in pack ice, eventually sinking near the East Siberian Sea.

Stranded on shifting ice floes, Captain Bob Bartlett lead the exhausted castaways to desolate Wrangel Island, then with his Inuit guide set out to trek 1,100 km down the coast hoping to find a rescue ship. The 15-month saga of the misadventures of the Karluk is a revealing study of the strengths and weaknesses of human nature under treacherous conditions.

ISBN: 9781772030211. Print and e-book from Chapters, Amazon and McNally Rand bookstores.
<http://www.heritagehouse.ca/>

Kelly Buell - Editor

Kelly is a professional journalist, writer, proofreader, editor, and blogger.

She can edit works of any length and genre, and enjoys critiquing, reviewing, proofing content as well as line editing.

As a seasoned freelance journalist, Kelly can provide a fresh perspective on writing for publication, approaching editors and publishers, and insights on the writing life.

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

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See additional pricing in this issue, or contact the [Byline editor](#) for details.

A Message of Thanksgiving

by Sharyn Heagle

For most North Americans, Thanksgiving is a special time involving friends, family and as my kids call it, *dead bird*.

Our family tradition includes both a gathering of children and grandchildren, with respective partners, and a mandate not to mess with the traditional turkey, sage/onion stuffing, mashed potatoes with lots of butter, squash, broccoli with cheese sauce, and cranberry sauce.

It's a meal I imagine the pilgrims serving, or being served, on that very first Thanksgiving when, according to Darrell Dennis in his fascinating book *Peace Pipe Dreams – The Truth about Lies about Indians*, all the pilgrims brought to the feast was their appetites.

For many years, another family tradition involved encouraging everyone around the groaning table, regardless of age, to state one particular thing from the past year, for which they are particularly thankful. Contributions have sometimes been trite, as in *thanks for getting the drumstick*. Many have been heartfelt, some surprising or screamingly hilarious. Others provoked contemplation.

"I'm thankful grandma and grampa are still with us," caught me completely by surprise. I hadn't considered how our grandkids perceived us. Obviously, about ready to pass into that *other realm* at any moment.

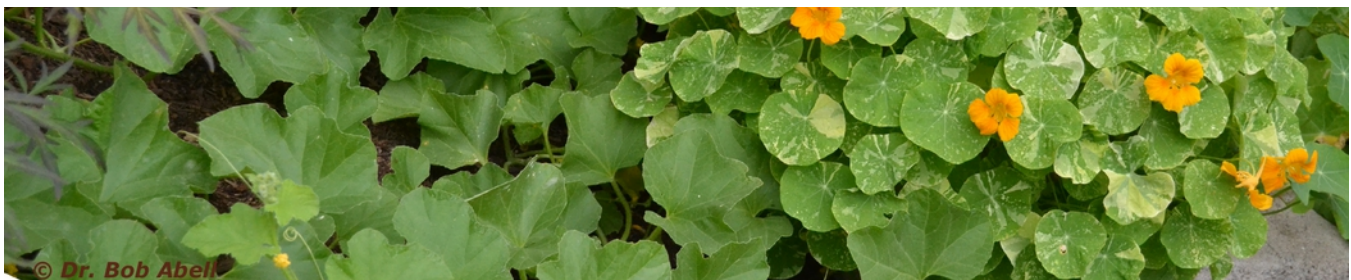
"I'm thankful for my caregiver," from another grandchild, spoke of the importance of the wonderful people who assume responsibility for the children we love.

But there was a period in our family's recent life that was awash in grief, with the death, within a short period of time, of both of a loving husband/father/grampa, and a loving daughter/sister/mother. Although we had so much left to be thankful for, we seemed completely unable to grasp it, or to express gratitude for it.

After two years of unexpressed thanksgivings, a young granddaughter quietly asked, "Gramma, can we do our thanks around the table again?"

As parents and grandparents we see our roles as teaching our children a variety of tenets to live by. We urge them to say *thanks* for the smallest courtesy. But it is often, as some religions teach us, that "... the children shall lead us."

And I'm thankful for that.



© Dr. Bob Abell

A message from CAA National Office

Why you should consider applying for professional designation

The National membership committee recently made changes which might make it easier for you to qualify if you are a **self-published author**. Your work would qualify if it meets **4 of the 6** following criteria. The work:

1. Must be edited by an editor qualified by professional qualifications or experience (provide the name, contact, and qualifications of editor).
2. Must have a minimum level of net income of \$500 within the past two years (net income after the deduction of costs for printing, distribution, editing, design, publicity, and promotion; provide income and royalty statements).
3. Minimum number of 250 units sold within the past two years (provide statement of units sold).
4. Must be registered (ISBN, ASIN, or other).
5. Cover must be designed by a designer qualified by professional qualifications or experience (provide the name, contact, and qualifications of the designer).
6. Interior of the work must be designed by a designer qualified by professional qualifications or experience (provide name, contact, and qualifications of the designer).

The self-published work may be combined with work from other categories: Contact [Canadian Authors National Office](#) for details

Byline

Note Byline's new 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](#)

*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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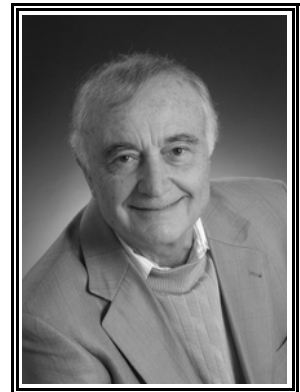
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What you Missed!!

At the CAA-NCR meeting on Tuesday, September 22, Dr. Francois Mai spoke about the life of Beethoven, an angry, passionate man, from a medical, psychological and musical perspective. In spite of gradually going deaf from an early age, and suffering an apparent bipolar condition, Beethoven continued to produce extraordinary music throughout his life.

Dr. Mai explained how he saw Beethoven's personality and medical condition reflected in his music by playing several pieces of Beethoven's work, an delicious departure from our normal meeting presentations, then extracting the relevant information from his book, **Diagnosing Genius – The life & Death of Beethoven**.



Using Beethoven's 4th Movement, Opus #18, as an example of what he felt reflected sadness and excitement, Dr. Mai demonstrated how the manic and depressive aspects of a bipolar condition could appear in even a single piece of Beethoven's music.

Dr. Mai drew comparisons between the rhythm, beat and flow of music to create emotions, to the many ways a writer might reflect similar emotions in the pace of their narrative material, as example, using choppy dialogue to reflect anger or excitement.

We all enjoyed a relaxing evening basking in the brilliance of Beethoven's genius.

BIO: *Dr Francois Mai is a medical graduate of the University of Cape Town, South Africa. He obtained specialty qualifications in General Medicine and Psychiatry in Great Britain and spent most of his working life as an academic psychiatrist. Music has also been his passion, in particular the music of Beethoven. He was a competent amateur pianist and in the 1990's produced two CD recordings that were used to raise funds for the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario. (His late brother David suffered from schizophrenia.) In 2007 McGill-Queen's University Press published his book "Diagnosing Genius: The Life and Death of Beethoven" which describes the many medical and psychiatric problems Beethoven experienced, and the effects they had on his creativity. Dr. Mai's website link is: www.francoismai.com.*

CAA-NCR Program Information – 2015-16

MEETINGS Note — Beginning Oct. 13, we will return to our original dates and times – the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m., McNabb Recreation Centre, 180 Percy Street.

TOPIC: Marketing in the Digital/Social Media World - Differentiating yourself in the online marketplace

PRESENTER: Laurel Anderson

DATE: Tuesday, October 13, 2015

TIME: 7:00 – 9:00 pm (continued on next page)

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

With the Internet and proliferation of blogs and online publications, everyone's a writer these days. How do you set yourself apart when it comes to your brand and your audience? What should you be doing on social media to engage your audience and market your work?

BIO: *Laurel is a freelance writer and Social Media and Communications Strategist. When not working on her collection of Shorts (really short stories) she provides digital marketing and communications consulting services to individuals, companies, brands and other organizations that need help telling their story.*

As a writer, Laurel has covered everything from daily news stories, people profiles, entertainment, lifestyle, gossip, fashion, trends, movie reviews and more for both print and online publications. She has been known to tackle both serious issues and lighthearted topics during her column run with a local newspaper. Her years of entertainment work allowed her to experience both sides of the industry while working on and writing about shows like Canadian Idol, So You Think You Can Dance and Canada's Walk of Fame.

TOPIC: **Tapping Your Innate Creativity**

PRESENTER: **Bobbi Florio Graham**

DATE: **Tuesday, November 10, 2015**

TIME: **7:00 – 9:00 pm**

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

One of Barbara Florio Graham's most popular workshops has been Tapping Your Innate Creativity, which she has taught to national organizations and corporations across Canada, in the U.S. and abroad. It is now offered as an online tutorial. Barbara will give a small sample in her presentation to CAA, and explain how to use many of these principles to improve our creative writing.

BIO: *Barbara Florio Graham has won awards for fiction, non-fiction, humour and poetry, and has written for magazines and newspapers across North America. The author of three books, **Five Fast Steps to Better Writing**, **Five Fast Steps to Low-Cost Publicity**, and **Mewsings/Musings**, she served as Managing Editor for *Prose to Go: Tales from a Private List*. A popular mentor and publishing consultant, Bobbi's website contains a wealth of free information. Go to: <http://SimonTeakettle.com>.*

TOPIC: **Taxes and the Writer**

PRESENTER: **Angela Doyle, BDO Canada LLP**

DATE: **Tuesday, January 12, 2016**

TIME: **7:00 – 9:00 pm**

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

What to claim and what's ineligible as a tax deduction can be complicated for a writer, and following the rules is essential if we want to avoid being audited. Most important, we all want to minimize our tax burden.

This presentation will look at the various deductions a writer can legitimately make, help you implement smart tax strategies to meet your compliance obligations, and maybe offer some clues about how to keep the tax man happy.

BIOS: Paul Downey CPA, CGA and Angela Doyle are with BDO Canada LLP in their Manotick office. Paul, a senior manager, has 26 years of personal tax experience and Angela, a supervisor, has 17 years of personal tax and bookkeeping experience. "We are looking forward to meeting you."

TOPIC: Scribing Sex - Romancing The Page

PRESENTER: Jasmine Aziz

DATE: Tuesday, February 9, 2016

TIME: 7:00 – 9:00 pm

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

Jasmine will outline differences between erotica and romance - from definitions to delivery. She will give examples of how to craft stories according to the audience you are targeting, giving examples on the difference between mainstream sensual writing versus more explicit content. There will be discussion about the art of writing erotic content to elicit arousal and when this is beneficial to a story and when it is not.



This talk is based on the majority of questions Jasmine receives from authors asking how to write in various styles, eg. erotica vs. mainstream romance, and how they can tell the difference.

NOTE: This presentation contains explicit content and language due to the nature of the topic.

BIO: Jasmine Aziz is a retired vibrator seller. She worked as a consultant for four years doing in-home party presentations selling adult novelty toys. In that time she met many amazing and diverse women who inspired her to write a novel that would help both men and women navigate the subtle complexities of the modern woman's life. 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. Jasmine is currently putting the finishing touches to her next novel, a memoir, based on the wild and unconventional four years she sold adult toys entitled **Bring Your Own Batteries**.

TOPIC: Copyright, the Internet and the Writer

PRESENTER: Dr. Michael Geist

DATE: Tuesday, March 9, 2016

TIME: 7:00 – 9:00 pm

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

DETAILS TO FOLLOW