

Say ~~W~~^EEN!

Newsletter of the Writers & Editors Network

Encouraging and Promoting the Art and Skill of Writing and Editing

March 2014



Dates

March Breakfast 3/15/14

Speaker: Sholom Glouberman

Say WEN Deadline 3/20/14

April Breakfast 4/19/14

Speaker: Gina Valle

May Breakfast 5/17/14

Speaker: Dorothea Helms

June Breakfast 6/21/14

Speaker: Theo Heras

July Breakfast 7/19/14

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Join us on Facebook!

March Breakfast Meeting

Speaker: Sholom Glouberman, Philosopher, Health Care Policy Consultant

Date: March 15, 2014

Time: *Check-in 9 a.m. Meeting 9:30 a.m.*

Location: Canadiana Restaurant Lower Level, Six Points Plaza,
5230 Dundas Street West, Toronto

Sholom is an internationally known expert on health care systems. He has advised senior management, policy makers, and clinicians for Canadian and British health systems, working at all levels from strategic regional health authorities to individual primary care practices. Currently, he is president of Patients Canada (formerly Patients' Association of Canada). He also holds the positions of Philosopher in Residence at the Kunin Lunenfeld Applied Research Unit of Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care, and Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto.

Sholom's interest in the healthcare field began when he was caring for his dying father. He went on to work in hospital management and as a teacher and researcher in England and Canada. For more than 25 years, Sholom has applied philosophical methods and conceptual analysis to organizations and systems. He has focused on the area of health as the single most challenging and little-charted frontier. His research, consulting, and more than 500 speaking engagements have taken him worldwide.

In 2005, Sholom finally became a patient when he underwent a major surgical procedure. This experience was a graphic example of the disparity between the patient experience and institutional concerns, and led him to found The Patients' Association of Canada in 2007, now called Patients Canada. It also resulted in his latest book *My Operation: A Health Care Insider Becomes a Patient* (2011).

Check <http://healthandeverythingblog.wordpress.com> for more information.

Breakfast Registration Details

The breakfast meeting costs \$15 for WEN members and \$25 for non-WEN members. It features a generous and yummy breakfast buffet.

To register, please contact Anna Stitski-Gemza at 905-272-1478 or by email to breakfasts@wenetwork.ca or ibanana@hotmail.com or by completing the registration information on the website at <http://wenetwork.ca/site/calendar/breakfast-meeting/>. The Canadiana Restaurant is in the Six Points Plaza, conveniently located within walking distance of the Kipling Subway station.

President's Message

Dear WEN Members:

I wanted to inform you that one of our members, John Maar, passed away. His presence and writing will be sorely missed. One of his stories is included in *Canadian Imprints Volume I*, so I encourage all of you to read his work.

Our February meeting was an exciting one indeed. Our random sitting arrangement was well received and I hope you met some interesting people and engaged in meaningful networking. The ten-minute-mentoring session on how to overcome writer's block led to a lively interaction among our members that produced many ideas. We will implement these sessions in future breakfast meetings.

I am pleased to announce that we are having our first Summer Sizzle Poetry Contest. Submission guidelines are in this month's newsletter. We eagerly look forward to your submissions. There

are cash rewards and no submission fee, so there is nothing to lose.

Beginning this month, the board recruits candidates for next year's board of directors, in preparation for elections in June of this year. If you feel you have the time and talent to contribute to our organization, please speak to Julie Tellier, our Nominations Committee Chair.

I am also delighted to announce that Jasmine Jackman is our newly appointed Members Reading Coordinator.

On a sad note, another WEN member, Jay Mendham, passed away this week. Our condolences to the family.

Looking forward to seeing all of you at the March 15th meeting where our guest speaker, Sholom Glouberman, president of Patients Canada, will address the audience.

Warmest Regards,
Maria Pia Marchelletta
March, 2014

In Memoriam

John Željko Maar

April 27, 1938-February 24, 2014

John will be fondly remembered as a heartfelt storyteller, published author, adventurous world traveller and crocodile hunter. He will be sorely missed, but never forgotten through cherished memories and a legacy of personal writings. Interment will be in Croatia at a later date. In Toronto, a tree planting in his memory will be held in April, his birth month.

Jay Mendham

Jay was an intelligent, courageous man with an unconventional sense of humour. He was a former movie stuntman specializing in falls and fire.

After being seriously injured in a stunt that went wrong, he returned to Toronto to rebuild his life, eventually establishing a company providing computer services to small business.

Jay passed away quietly Wednesday, March 5. Private interment.

Say WeN!

Say WEN is published by

The Writers & Editors Network

as a service to members and friends. WEN publishes news about our members and events in which they participate. We welcome any other news that may benefit our members.

WEN does not verify the accuracy of submissions and their inclusion does not constitute an endorsement of these services and organizations.

WEN reserves the right to edit or reject submissions at our discretion.

Say WEN is distributed the first of each month, excluding August, to more than 100 WEN members and is posted online at wenetwork.ca. Send submissions to the Newsletter Editor by the 20th of the month at newsletter@wenetwork.ca.

Say WEN subscriptions

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Join Us on Facebook!

Are you on Facebook? Then join the WEN Facebook group and get in on the conversation!

For those of you who are new to social media networking, here is a chance to try it out. First of all, you must have a Facebook account. To join Facebook, go to

www.facebook.com and follow directions to open an account and log on.

Once logged in, enter Writers and Editors Network in the search box at the very top of the page, which reads "Search for people, places and things." Select the Writers and Editors Network listing, which should be the first entry in the list of options. It will take you to the WEN group page.

You can also find the group by going to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/540688265980292/>.

The WEN Facebook group is classified as "closed" which means anyone can read the newsfeed posts, but only group members can post something or see other areas. To join, click the "Join Group" button near the upper right. It will change to "Cancel Request." Maurus, the group administrator, will approve your request to join, after which you can post on the WEN page and see other areas. Anyone may ask to join the group, whether or not they are members of WEN.

On the page, WEN members can share information about writing, publishing and editing, and related subjects such as book launches, interesting writing or editing websites, events around town such as conferences or readings, contests

and good news about our own writing endeavors. It can become a forum for us to exchange views about writing-related subjects, and to solicit answers to writing and editing questions that arise from our work. The Board will also use the page to post news about WEN and coming WEN events.

Welcome New Members

At our next breakfast, please say hello to new members Diana Hordo and Dorothy North and welcome them to WEN. They are both members of The Wallace House Writing Group, which is based in Woodbridge.

Assistant Editor Still Needed!

Say WEN is looking for an assistant editor to help put out the newsletter each month. In particular, help is needed with the listings for contests, markets, literary events and the collection of interesting items from internet blogs and writers' sites. If you would like to see yourself in print, please contact the *Say WEN* editor, Corinne Cast McCorkle, at newsletter@wenetwork.org.

Another New Feature in Newsletter

This month, look for our new section *Peer Book Review Exchange* which will feature reviews of members' books, written by other members. We hope that giving attention to members' books will help boost sales. If you would like to review someone's book, please send a note to Corinne at newsletter@wenetwork.ca. Please keep reviews short, no more than 300 words. At the beginning of the

article, please include the book's title and author, publisher's name and copyright date, and the purchase price. Please send the review as a Word document attachment, rather than pasting it in your email.

You can also find reviews of books by WEN members on the WEN website at <http://wenetwork.ca/site/category/book-reviews/>.

Send Us Your News

The submission deadline for the April issue is March 20. Please consider contributing to the newsletter. Remember, we want:

- your writing news
- tips on writing, editing and self-publishing
- industry news
- announcements of literary events, conferences and contests;
- leads on agents, markets and publishers
- reviews of books, software and other tools useful to writers and editors
- short essays (250 words or less), poems or jokes on writing for *The Writing Life* section
- Photos of member activities

Please write a short paragraph or two and send your item as an attachment, preferably a Word doc, to newsletter@wenetwork.org.

Anything other than completed articles (e.g., forwarded emails, advertising flyers or other fragments that still need to be written up) will be returned with a request to resend the information as a completed article.

WEN Members Speak

How do you get “unstuck” when you have writer’s block, or just can’t start writing?

We have all had that moment when the creative tap runs dry. The key is not to let this momentary setback stop you from writing. So before you get too overwhelmed or before you throw in the towel try some of the following tips to get you back on track, as suggested by WEN members during our mentoring session in February

1. Keep a notebook next to your bed and/or on your person, so

when inspiration strikes, you can write down your ideas before they disappear. Your notes will come in handy when your mind runs blank.

2. Pick a consistent time of day to write everyday. Try to set a minimum limit of at least 100 words a day. Don’t worry about editing your work, just write. Let the ideas flow automatically.
3. Reread and rewrite what you have done and/or do some writing exercises.
4. Collect clippings from newspapers and magazines on interest-

ing topics to stimulate your creative juices.

5. Go for a walk, clean the house, meditate, take a nap, read, or speak to someone. Record what you see and hear. Don’t be afraid to ask friends and family for suggestions or help.
6. Clear the clutter from your mind and get things done on your “to do” list.

Implement some of these ideas and that dry spell will turn into a deluge of inspirational writing.

Jasmine Jackman

WEN Events



April Speaker Expert in Multicultural Diversity

Dr. Gina Valle will be our featured speaker at the WEN April breakfast meeting. A leading diversity trainer, speaker and author, Gina is also the recipient of the Diamond Jubilee Medal recognizing her contribution to diversity in

Canada. Her latest book, *Teachers at Their Best – Enseignants Sous Leur Meilleur Jour*, looks at issues of diversity in our society and in our classrooms.

Gina offers workshop and training sessions to organizations, hospitals, school boards and women’s groups. To learn more about these workshops, please visit: <http://www.diversity-matters.ca/workshops.html>.

The Writing Fairy Spreads her Magic at May Meeting

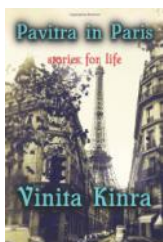
Award-winning Dorothea Helms is an internationally published writer, editor and popular writing instructor. Her work has been published in books, magazines and newspapers in Canada and the U.S. Dorothea also teaches creative writing at the college level. Owner of the highly successful Write Stuff Writing Services, through which she provides topnotch writing for businesses, public relations firms



and ad agencies, she declared herself “The Writing Fairy” in 2004. Under that brand, she offers books, workshops, courses, keynote speeches, writing contests and writing-related items. For more information, visit her websites: <http://www.ws.ws.ca/>, and <http://dorotheahelms.com/resume/>.

Peer Book Review Exchange

Pavitra in Paris: Stories for Life
by Vinita Kinra
(Greengardens Media, 2013)



Vinita Kinra's collection of short stories *Pavitra in Paris* introduces the western reader to the intricacies of the world of arranged marriages in Indian culture. A world she knows too well.

Her prose has a hint of elegance with poetic flare. The character in "The Curse of a Nightingale" compares herself to a "blooming daffodil." The song is brilliantly composed.

The emotions of her characters are vividly portrayed through her effective use of the simile. "By now, Ganesh was trembling like a wilted dry leaf as he replaced the flashlight from near the pillow of the empty bed..." Another example is "Vinayakji's eyes bulged like saucers..."

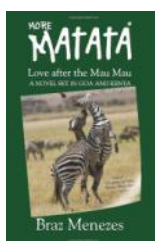
Vinita effectively portrays the turmoil experienced by her characters as she delves into their thoughts. "I smiled through my slit eye from behind my burqa on contemplating the title. Masked. I despised the merciless cloak that caged my blooming beauty in its shapeless prison." The usage of the character's name Nargis as a masked nightingale clearly displays her angst with these conformities. The author's cleverness with employing this symbolism strengthens her message to the reader.

In summary, Vinita is a talented fiction writer. This fine collection of short stories is a must read.

Maria Pia Marchelletta
Poet, writer, artist and president of the Writers and Editors Network

More Matata: Love After the Mau Mau

by Braz Menezes
(Create Space Independent Publishing, 2012)



If you are looking for a book to take you places, Braz Menezes does not disappoint. In *More Matata – Love After the Mau Mau*, he documents and fictionalizes experiences during the 1950's and early '60's in Kenya. And, for a change, Kenyan Indians including Goans are not just peripheral to the story, they are at the centre of it.

Like Peter Nazareth who speaks the truth about Idi Amin's reign of terror in Uganda in *The General is Up*, Braz does not shy away from difficult topics. Right away, in the prologue, the reader is drawn into the 2008 presidential election in the U.S.

Old friends Lando and Saboti, of mixed-race like Obama, connect across the oceans by telephone as they follow the election. Their excitement is palpable. Even as time has gone by, their love, cut short because of racial barriers, still feels raw.

This love story provokes deeper thinking about cultural norms and tradition. Since their relationship

must be kept secret, their rendezvous offers excitement and hope. It also builds compassion for people like them who dare to spread their wings and fly. A feeling of dark clouds gathering adds to the suspense.

The author uses clever humour to shine a light on the murky shadows of Kenya during the Mau Mau period. Lando thinks about how people he knows have disappeared at the hands of the colonial government and wonders, "Do the people in government responsible for these crimes ever confess? I smile at the thought of the whole government lining up for confessions...."

I was surprised to learn of the effect President Kennedy's assassination had in Kenya. Braz explained that people of every faith and race organized religious services, and sports events were cancelled. The Voice of Kenya (VOK) also canceled most programs and for the next two days relayed news from BBC and VOA (Voice of America). Because President Kennedy "inspired hope and held so much promise," the death of the first U.S. Catholic president was devastating to the Catholic Goan community in Kenya.

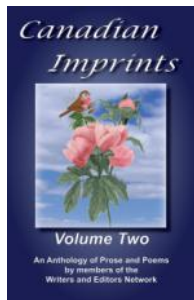
More Matata can stand on its own, but for the full experience, begin the adventure with *Just Matata*, the first book in the trilogy. I'm looking forward to the third book and hope Braz plans to publish even more!

Judy Luis-Watson
jluiswatson55@gmail.com

Judy Luis-Watson is based in Bowie, Maryland. She grew up in East Africa.

(Peer Review continued)

**Canadian Imprints Volume Two:
An Anthology of Prose and Poems
by Members of the Writers and
Editors Network.**



Reviewing anthologies which don't have a theme is quite difficult; each piece is an individual one and so there isn't usually a way to connect them.

Canadian Imprints is one such anthology. It is the product of a group of writers from Toronto who band themselves together as Writers and Editors Network. They self-publish their work and this is their second collection, the production values of which are very good indeed, and the volume is very readable.

Ben Antao's story "Love in Centre Island" is the first one. I've read most of his work, which tends to focus on stories set either in Goa and India (where he is originally from), or in the West, usually Canada (where he is now a citizen).

This story recounts a very emotional encounter between a 70-something Caucasian man who is desperately seeking companionship after the death of his beloved wife, and a woman of Chinese descent, much younger, who is also looking for love. Along with that, she wants to have a child as well.

It is a story which could easily have degenerated into the "bad-sex-in-fiction-award" material; although the story has a very physical feel and smell about it, it nei-

ther goes in this direction nor does it become sentimental. Indeed, it has an ending which I thought was very well handled.

Canadian Imprints calls itself an "anthology of prose and poetry" but I would rather call the first part a miscellany of prose, for it consists of different kinds of prose, not just fiction. The second piece I read, "The Olive Tree" by Maurus Cappa, was more like a piece of journalism about a strange case which I will not spoil for you by narrating it.

Andrzej Derkowski's "Devil's Acorns" is non-fiction prose about "minor incidents whose influences on the more important events (of world history) are not generally recognized." For instance he tells about how the First World War, which started because of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary, might have been averted if his driver Gavrilo Princip had not taken a wrong turn. There is another piece by Derkowski called "My Toronto: Looking Back" which is a memoir of how the city has changed since WWII. Such pieces, when they have a personal touch as does this one, never go out of fashion.

At first, I could not make out whether the next piece by Sally Dillon, "The Soap Box Opera," was biography or fiction. In fact the difference does not matter as Dillon, the omniscient narrator, describes the most important day in the life of Victor Von – the day when he won the Lions Club Soap Box Derby. It is only in the ending when imperceptibly the point of view turns first person, that we realize that it is a story. Maybe this story was saying that fact and fiction are siblings of the same

mother.

There is no doubt that we are dealing with the imaginary when we read "A Conversation with my Shadow" by Mostafa Dini. It begins:

"My car stalls on the highway, right in the middle lane. I panic and get out. But I can't walk. My feet are stuck to the pavement."

"I want my inheritance," says my shadow, sucking my feet down."

Augusto Pinto

English Literature teacher at
Dhempe College, in Goa, India

Writing Craft

An Exercise for Writing Description

Write a page of description based on each of the following sentences. Do NOT use the underlined words in your descriptive passage.

1. We drove into a picturesque village.

Show what makes the village picturesque. Don't use the word.

2. Her husband was in a rage.

Some short, sharp dialogue might help here.

3. It was a rundown area of the town.

You can make good use of the senses here, including sound and smell.

Jack Livesley

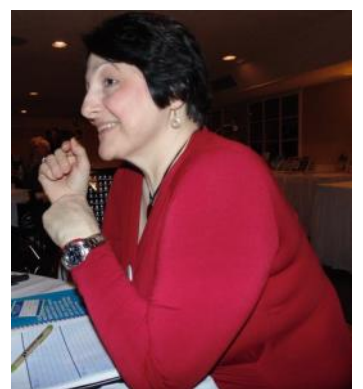
Jack's latest book is *Of Faces and Places*, a collection of poems, stories and monologues. He has taught creative writing for many years.

www.jacklivesley.wordpress.com

February Breakfast Meeting



Photos by Jasmine Jackman



Contests & Markets

Glimmertrain Family Matters Contest

Deadline: March 31, **Fee** \$15.

They are looking for stories about families of all configurations. Okay to draw heavily on real life experiences, but the work must read like fiction and all stories accepted for publication will be presented as fiction. Maximum length 12,000 words, shorter pieces welcome.

Worth the effort with this prize structure: 1st Prize: \$1,500, publication + 20 copies of the issue; 2nd and 3rd Prizes: \$500, \$300 (increases to \$700 if published) + 10 copies. Learn more at <http://glimmertrain.stores.yahoo.net/familymatters.html>

Prime Number Magazine Awards

Deadline March 31, **Fee** \$13.

Several categories open for submissions: Poetry, Flash Fiction, Short Story, Flash Nonfiction, Creative Nonfiction.

Prizes: 1st Prize: \$251, publication in the magazine and in Editors Selection annual; 2nd and 3rd: \$101, \$53 plus consideration for publication in both editions.

Check this one at: http://www.primenumbermagazine.com/Awards_2014.html

CBC Poetry Prize

Deadline: May 1, **Fee:** \$25.

Submit your original, unpublished, poem or poetry collection; must be between 400 and 600 words.

Prizes: 1st Prize: \$6,000, publication in Air Canada's *enRoute* magazine and on the *Canada*

Writes website, a two-week residency at The Banff Centre's Leighton Artists' Colony, and an interview on CBC Radio. Four runners-up: \$1,000, and publication on *Canada Writes* website.

More information at <http://www.cbc.ca/books/canadawrites/literaryprizes/poetry/>

CANSCAIP and Writers Union of Canada

17th Annual Writing for Children Competition 2014

Deadline: April 24, **Fee:** \$25

Non-fiction and fiction from picture book to young adult (YA); up to 1,500 words, English language. Not previously published in any format.

Prizes: \$1,500 for the winning entry, and the entries of the winner and finalists will be submitted to three Canadian children's publishers.

More information at <http://www.canscaip.org/competitions>

Grain Magazine's 26th Annual Short Grain Writing Contest

Deadline: April 1, **Fee:** \$36.75 (\$35+GST)

Accepting entries in two categories: Poetry (any style including prose poetry, up to 100 lines) and Fiction (short fiction in any form including postcard fiction, maximum 2,500 words).

Prizes: 3 prizes awarded in each category: 1st: \$1,000; 2nd: \$750; 3rd: \$500

All entrants will receive a one-year subscription to the magazine.

For complete information <http://www.grainmagazine.ca/contest.html>



The **Writers & Editors Network** is an organization dedicated to encouraging and promoting the art and skill of writing and editing. WEN aims to foster literacy and to assist, empower, and provide moral support to writers and editors from all disciplines. WEN will network, mentor, and educate members independently and in cooperation with other organizations.

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Writers & Editors Network
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www.wenetwork.ca

Summer Sizzle Poetry Contest

Topic : Summer

1st Place : \$100

2nd Place: \$50

3rd Place : \$25



Eligibility : WEN members only
Cost : No Fee
Members may submit ONE original poem
with a summer theme.
Winners will be announced at
June breakfast meeting.

Deadline for submissions : May 17

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

ENTRIES TO BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE MIDNIGHT, MAY 17, 2014

- ♦ Poems must have “summer” as a theme.
- ♦ Poems must be unpublished. Self-published poems and poems that have been published online are considered published and thus cannot be submitted.
- ♦ Poems cannot exceed 72 lines; the stanza breaks count as lines. The poem title does not count, nor does the space between the title and the first line of the poem
- ♦ Author’s name **must not** appear anywhere on the same page as the poem, back or front.
- ♦ Include a cover page with author’s name, poem title and author’s complete contact information.
- ♦ If your poem is longer than one page, please include the title of the poem and page number on any additional pages.
- ♦ Submissions may be emailed as a Word document attachment to communications@wenetwork.ca or mailed to WEN Poetry Contest, 251 McKee Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M2N 4E2.
- ♦ Please **do not** paste the entry in the body of your email, as your formatting may be lost when the poem is transferred to a Word document.

CONTEST JUDGE: Stevens Han, Professor of Literature, Han Yang University, Seoul, Korea