

# 5th Anniversary Issue

## *Extra*

# *Innings*

A literary (and otherwise) online magazine for writers and their enablers  
Number 60 Madison, WI October, 2014

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### 60'6" FROM HOME

MARSHALL J. COOK

EDITOR-IN-COACH

Your newsletter is ready for kindergarten

## The first five years are the hardest?

Issue Number One of *Extra Innings* rolled hot off the presses (cool pixels in cyberspace actually) November 17, 2009, following 20 years of a print newsletter called *Creativity Connection*. It was six whole pages (I must have thought I was still paying for paper and ink) and included my picks for good new books to read, "great publishing news from our friends" (**Jeanne Harvey**, **Barbara Burris**, and **Debbie Wingate**), a column on writing from **Jim Herod** (who by issue four had named his column "From the Nethermost"), a reprint from Garrison Keillor on blogs, and the very first "Meandering With Madonna," in which **Madonna Dries Christiensen** promised to "meander around the world-wide-web for appropriate subjects. I might wander into a unique bookstore, visit a book festival, a reading group, stumble on an interesting blog about writing and publishing, interview a well-known or little-known author, or write a bio on an eccentric author (is there any other kind?)." She has fulfilled that promise every month since.

Here's my first book review from that issue.

### New candidate for my list of Holy Books

*The Collected Works of T.S. Spivet*, by Reif Larsen, Penguin Press, 2009

Don't let the format throw you; information from the footnotes will *not* be on the test. (But you'll want to read them all anyway.)

This is the most unlikely saga of a 12-year-old

scientific prodigy named Tecumseh Sparrow Spivet, growing up on a ranch outside tiny Divide, Montana. His attempt to map the entire world results in an odyssey, the first leg by freight train, to Mecca, The Smithsonian Institute, "America's Attic," in Washington, D.C. It's a book about truth and illusion, about discovering who you are and aren't, a hymn to science, and one of the most delightful reads I've ever loved.

When I finished, I faced a difficult choice: hide the book where no one will ever find it and cherish it forever or give it to my scientist daughter-in-law for her birthday.

Happy birthday, Kim. Hope you love this book.

The second issue swelled to nine pages, as **Lisa Krenz**, **Carrie T. Gruman-Trinkner**, and **Andrea Lozinsky Schoenthal** joined the ranks of contributors. Carrie's "Not required reading" appeared often in that first year. I profiled **Christine DeSmet**, great writer and teacher who runs the writing program for the UW-Madison Division of Continuing Studies, your go-to resource for workshops, critiques, and conferences for writers.

Frequent contributors **Randi Lynn Mrvos** and **Janice Kaat** debuted in issue four, a stately 12 pager, and The Missouri Muse, **Perry Stone**, hopped on the team bus in #5. We also welcomed **Monette Bebow-Reinhard**, **Becky Meyer Pourchot**, and **Carol Hornung**, plus lots and lots

of your letters. (You were getting the idea-- this is YOUR newsletter!)



**Contrary to what you might believe, Lily was *not* the first granddaughter to appear in *E.I. Madonna's* grandgal, Grace, made her first appearance in issue 3.**

Another writer who would become familiar to regular readers, **Sandy Mickelson**, filed her first report for us in #6 with a scholarly dissertation entitled "Pigs stink!" "I hate pigs," she concluded. "[M]aybe ]you could take the farm out of the girl if she had to be around pigs too often."

We also welcomed **Rex Owens**, who's been a regular ever since. His first piece for us was on "writer's lethargy." Another regular, **Norma Sundberg**, also made her first visit with a piece on her first memory of recognition as a writer, which came when her sixth grade teacher posted her Thanksgiving poem.

**Dave Fox** fired his first salvo in #7, tips for creating vivid travel diaries.



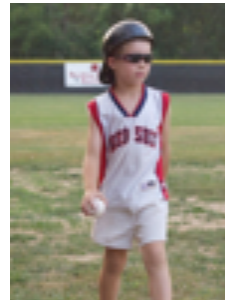
**Travel writer/humorist Dave Fox (far right) and friends.**

Our Fourth of July fireworks in #9 included **Mary Chace**, who launched our "The Writing Life" feature with "Does this manuscript make me look fat?" **Leah Carson** graced us with her first of many humor pieces.

"In Wichita, back in 1968, it took about two minutes to teach a Chinese cook how to make Biscuits and Gravy," our Missouri Muse revealed in #10. "Sharing the story has brought smiles for over four decades. ...Good times never really end, if they aren't forgotten. In fact, they can get better the more times you enjoy the moment."

I unveiled the first of several "Keep the Day Job" columns, which also ran in **Ned Burke's** *Perspiring Writing* newsletter.

We also ran our first "In Memory," this one for legendary Yankee Stadium public address announcer Bob Sheppard. Future "In Memories" would include Edwin Newman, Joseph Conrad (both in 12), Jim Packard (33), Dale Cook (39), Charles Barsotti (57), James Garner (58), and Robin Williams and Jeremiah Healy (59).



**Righthander Tim Larson looks in for his sign in issue 11.**

Sandy Mickelson was back in #11 with the first of our many "Why We Write" pieces, perhaps our longest and certainly one of our best pieces ever, "You gotta have heart."

Film critique **Jacob McLaughlin** first took us "in the screening room" in #12, and Lisa Krenz added a chapter to our "First Person Singular" features with "My not-so-secret love affair" (with children's literature)," and Mary Chace contributed our first "Flash Fiction" feature.

In issues 12 and 13, Randi, Norma, and Rex began a debate on "to blog or not to blog," and #13 also saw the first book review from **Pat Fitzgerald** and our first poem from **John Manesis**, who bade farewell to the baseball season.

In our first 16-page issue, #14, we shared lists of favorite movies. #15, another 16-pager, saw the first column by **Ron Hevey**, who soon became a regular. Two issues later, another regular debuted, as **Den Adler** offered his first "Essay from Images," and I shared my "Dozen Essential Books."

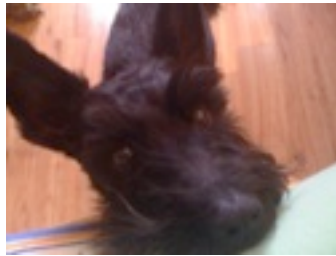
#18 (by now we're up to April, 2011) saw **Pat Goetz'** first contribution, a front page paean to baseball. Monette returned to delineate the benefits of blogging.

Before blogging, folks actually wrote letters (it's true!), and **Sharon Young's** first contribution, which ran in #19, told of what treasures old letters can be.

Poet **Tom Crawford** made his *E.I.* prose debut in #21 (“The old man and the carburetor”), as did **Vic Johnson** (“The great newspaper wars of Kankakee County”) and **Sue Roupp** (“Why poetry matters”).

**Larry Tobin**, a consistent net-watcher who sends us much of the humor sprinkled through the newsletter, actually wrote something himself for #22, a “First Person Humorous” we called “The secret of life: just hair.” That issue also marked the debut of our Word Whisperer, **Jan Kent**.

Nobody has matched our friend **Steve Born** in supplying humor poached from the Internet. Steve is also world’s greatest fly fisherperson. (Or maybe it’s Harry Peterson. I’ll let them decide.)



**In #24 I offered a eulogy for “a stormy soul,” my beloved Schnauzer, Sprecher.**

By now we were offering more and more poetry. In this issue Norma Sundberg profiled poet **Esther M. Leiper-Estabrook**, and we printed her poem, “Tucking in.” Esther would soon become our regular “For the Love of Words” columnist.

Time to mention another frequent contributor, **Suzanne Beecher**, who graciously allows me to republish some of her wonderful columns that comprise an important part of her daily book club emails. She appeared in #26 with “We don’t need another Shakespeare. We need *you*.”

We reviewed *Book of Laws*, a new mystery by **John Swift**, in #28 (February, 2012). John would become a frequent (and sometimes caustic) book reviewer for us.

The following month we ran our first “Kaat’s Cosmic Cryptogram,” for writers only. Jan crafted several more puzzles for us.

We had by this time developed a regular stable of letter-writers, prime among them **Barbara Burris**, who has enlivened many issues.

Our first “special poetry supplement” ran in #30, in which we featured poems by **Bonny Conway**, Pat Goetz, and **Craig W. Steele**, who would become our regular “Writer’s Poet.”



**The most popular feature we’ve ever run made its debut in #31 (May, 2012), just days after Lily Cook (here held by her Gramellen), made her debut on earth.**

We’ve been running pictures of her every month since, and you’ve been most patient with her extremely smitten Granpa Coach.

**Robert Hale**, our fine “Rank and File” columnist, wrote “A date with Edward R. Murrow, Miss Glacier Park, and destiny” for #33 (July, 2012). In that issue Lily’s dad, **Jeremiah Cook**, aka **Scud Farcus, Jr.**, filed his first “Sleep-Deprived Film Critic” report, this one “a bad review of a bad film, *Snow White and the Huntsman*. Also, **Ed Pahnke** published his first of many punny stories for us, now seen monthly under the title “Hahnke Pahnke.”

The front page of #34 unveiled Lisa Krenz standing next to Garrison Keillor and **George Cutlip** shaking hands with Bill Clinton. Reportedly, Keillor and Clinton are still talking about these encounters with greatness.

Another front page photo graced #35, this one the wedding picture of **Elizabeth Ann Klousia** and *E.I.* film critic Jacob Dean McLaughlin, August 11, 2012.

In our “Writing: Craft and Art” feature for October, 2012 (#36), Carol Hornung offered “The five most important elements of your world.”

Following up on a three-part article he had written for *Creativity Connection* about how he had found his beloved dog, Walt Whitman, and brought him home from Korea, Tom Crawford wrote a front page piece on Walt’s passing for #37.



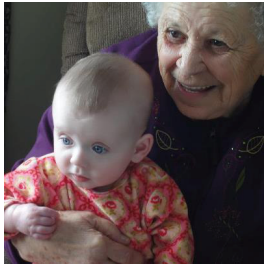
**Wherever Tom went, Walt went with him.**

Tom's related poem, "Room to Room," ran in the same issue.

In this our largest issue to date at 19 pages, Sharon Young celebrated turning 75 and we ran an excerpt from **Gadi Bossin's** novel, *Geddy Mason in Love*. We also served up a Thanksgiving triple helping of Lily.

The December, 2012 issue (#38) saw *E.I.* bust the 20-page mark, dropping a 22-page lump of coal into readers' Christmas stockings. In it, we answered the question once and for all of whether or not there is a Santa Claus, concluding that "believing is seeing." **Marion Young** gave us the recipe for "Bubbling up your passion" in your writing, Den Adler served a word meal on "Christmas china," Norma Sundberg gave us "A Christmas letter," and we had a triple serving of Lily for dessert.

Ned Burke was back in #39 to describe "One freezing cold New Year's Eve," and we provided a review of new words and phrases that had surfaced in the year just past. We also shared Lily's unofficial six-month portrait.



**Lily with great grandmother Gigi (issue 40)**

**Bill Spevacek** joined the ranks of our regular poets in #40 with "If it ain't controversy, it ain't news," and **Sue Mroz** bade farewell to "a creative genius," photographer and teacher Vern Arendt.

**David Krival** asserted that "Writing is my work now" in his first *E.I.* appearance (#42) in April, 2013.

Jake McLaughlin paid tribute to critic Roger Ebert in #43, and **Sandy Rafter** made her *E.I.* debut with a poem entitled "Links."

Next issue (June, 2013, #44), two marvelous two-part pieces finished up, Gadi Bossin's profile of Rabbi Katzberg and Pat Goetz' "First Person Singular" about her grandson, Matt. **Jan Bosman** premiered her first "Short Take" that issue, revealing "the difference between 18 and 73." We also ran our first "Letter from Australia," from **Maureen Egan Mitchell**.

Lily's official one-year-old portrait ran three-months late, in the July, 2013 issue.

We ran our first "Photo Quiz" the next month (#46), Willard Scott as the original Ronald McDonald. Sandy Rafter was our first winner, as revealed the following month, in #47, just one year ago. Several of **Gary Busha's** fine poems graced that issue.

The October, 2013 extravaganza saw Sandy Rafter capture the front page with "A poem struggles to be born" ("I wonder why I put myself through such torment"), **Keith Bowman** profiled a master-teacher, Ron Hevey took us on a very fast ride with Mario Andretti, and Rex Owens praised a superb editor. (No, not this one!)

Next issue (#49) **Tom Hicks** shared a part of his well-spent youth, hitchhiking out west and working on a ranch in Oregon. It was one of our most popular articles, judging from reader response. Norma Sundberg recalled her days as a "non-traditional student" with her poem "My mom's going to college but she'll get over it," and **Dick Mallard** made his *E.I.* debut with a poem called "The Sloth."

Hicks' youthful odyssey prompted a reply from Barbara Burris in the next issue, in which she described her first taste of freedom-- in a rowboat. Rex Owens described his process of "re-inventing and re-imagining a life." A lot of poetry and a lot of Christmas in that issue.

We celebrated New Year's 2014 with Jake McLaughlin's countdown of the top 10 movies of the previous year, and we ended with Lily sharing a bit of her Christmas with us.

In February, I railed against the cold (It was a horrible winter!), as did Jan Bosman with her two poetic winter rants. In keeping with the darkest month of the year, Sandy Rafter raised an important question: why do so many writers suffer from depression? Esther Leiper-Estabrooks pulled us out of the doldrums with a column of light verse by her friend Mark "Rockin Red" Burds.

The March issue (#53) featured lots of great poetry, starting with "The Courage to Write," by one of my students from the Odyssey Project, **Lucia Chikowero**. **Janet Taliaferro** shared a poem entitled "The Ghost of Johnson Street," originally written when she was a student in the UW's Write by the Lake program. Tom Crawford gave us "Harbinger Bird."

In "I learned I was not alone," Sandy Rafter gave us the second of her two-part investigation of writers and depression, a personal essay that moved many readers.

Madonna Dries Christensen profiled “The Orator and the Sage,” from her book of the same name. Vic Johnson one-upped Joyce Kilmer with “To Kill a Tree.” **Brenda Roper** debuted with “The art of Bob Dylan,” and Larry Tobin took a poetic look at “An Artist.” Readers listed Mark Twain, Harper Lee, Flannery O’Connor, and William Faulkner among the writers they’d most like to have dinner with.

In #55 Rex Owens revealed why “writers really are different-- in a wonderful way” (We knew it all along, right?), and Sandy Rafter took us back to those thrilling days of yesteryear when radio ruled the airwaves.



**Lily turns 2 and tries on her daddy’s boots.**

David Krival was back in June with his personal essay, “The Old Professor’s Last Pitch,” and Sandy Rafter followed up on her radio column with a piece on the folks who wrote the words for all those soap operas, kids’ adventures, and comedy shows.

Perry Stone was back in July to try to explain how a broken leg could constitute a “lucky break,” and Den Adler insisted that “diaries aren’t just for girls.” Sandy Mickelson demonstrated that “clean, crisp copy is good copy.”

With the countdown to #60 drawing near, Sandy Rafter rocked us with a tribute to Doo-wop music and an original Doo-wop poem, “But I remember you.” Stuntman supreme Yakima Canutt starred both in my poem and as subject of our Photo Quiz for the month, and Perry warned us of the dangers of going to the doctor.

Den Adler and Jake McLaughlin were in a mood for reminiscing, Den with “Folk songs I remember” and Jake with “Fifty years later, *A Hard Day’s Night* still rocks.” We also unleashed

a new feature, “Your RMA of Irony,” and promptly forgot to include it in the next issue.

Just last month (#59), we put the spotlight on an American icon who turned 70-- Smokey the Bear! (Some readers felt tricked by the article, but no subterfuge was intended.) Bill Spevacek stressed the importance of meter and rhyme in poetry with “It don’t mean a thing if it ain’t got that swing.” Clive Rosengren caught a foul ball, Jan Kaat trained a horse named Tina, and Lily smiled for the camera as an elderly editor and a teddy bear named Gutenberg looked on.

*Extra Innings* had reached the five year mark.

I’m hoping I’ll get to stick around for five more, and I hope you’ll come along for the ride. After all, from the first issue to the one on your screen right now, this was, is, and always will be *your* newsletter.

## Coach

### YOUR RMA OF IRONY



# Glorious insults

from an era before the English language became reduced to 4-letter words

*Thanks to Steve Born*

A member of Parliament to Benjamin Disraeli: "Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease."

Disraeli in reply: "That depends, Sir, whether I embrace your policies or your mistress."

"He had delusions of adequacy." Walter Kerr

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire." Winston Churchill

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure."  
Clarence Darrow

"He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary." William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway)

"Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I'll waste no time reading it."  
Moses Hadas

"I didn't attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it."  
Mark Twain

"He has no enemies but is intensely disliked by his friends." Oscar Wilde

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend, if you have one."  
George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill

"Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second ... if there is one."  
Winston Churchill, in reply.

**MEANDERING WITH MADONNA  
MADONNA DRIES CHRISTENSEN**

## **Sarah's gift**

October is Down Syndrome awareness month. With an economy of words and two photos, here's one view of enlightenment.

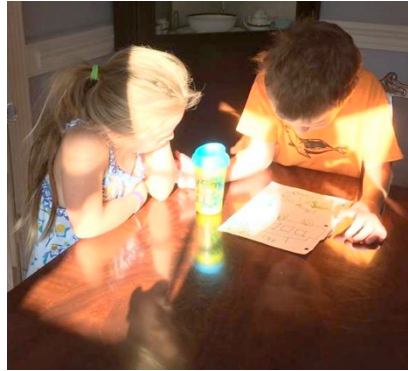
My 10-year-old granddaughter, Sarah, has Down Syndrome. She's a social butterfly; at school nearly everyone knows her by name. She's loving, thoughtful, sympathetic, compassionate, and given to serious tears when she believes she has hurt someone's feelings. It's also apparent that Sarah is aware of other people's specific needs.

Sarah's seven-year-old brother, William, has autism. He sometimes socializes with his two sisters, but he's easily distracted into doing something else. William is nonverbal and uses pictures to communicate. Although he loves school and riding the bus, a new classroom and other changes in routine cause stress. Carrying pictures of things he likes is comforting.

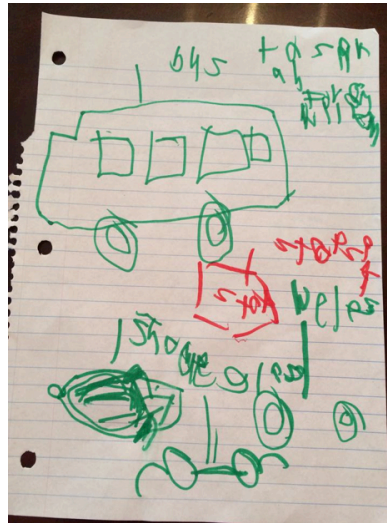
Sarah understands the comfort of familiar things. Her doll, Inga, accompanies her most everywhere except to school. One morning while William waited for the bus, Sarah drew a picture of some of his favorite things: A school bus, a stop sign, wheels, a shoe, and eyeglasses.

This drawing brought not only a moment of socialization between siblings, but William communicated recognition of the gift by touching Sarah's arm.

For information about Down syndrome, see [www.ndss.org](http://www.ndss.org). To learn about autism, see [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)



**William receives his gift  
from his sister Sarah**



**Sarah's gift**

**FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH**  
**REX OWENS**

## **The Prairie Garden Every Second Monday Book Club**

Our local library sponsors three adult book clubs and has a summer reading program for children; all have grown by leaps and bounds over the years. Our library director wondered if it would be possible for the entire community to read and share one book together. She selected a young adult book, *Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman. She chose this book because it was at a reading level that many people could read, it was short – less than 100 pages, and the story is compelling.

The library director received a grant to purchase 1,500 copies of the book so that it could be shared across the community. She then set about how to organize reading and sharing the book throughout our community of 30,000 residents.

When I learned of this pilot program I knew I wanted to be involved. I agreed to lead a book discussion in three assisted living facilities in the community. Activity Director's in assisted living facilities are always open to new and challenging activities for residents. I delivered books to each facility about a month before the discussion was scheduled.

At Prairie Gardens Assisted Living the residents were especially enthusiastic. We had an hour long discussion about the book with many insightful comments. At the close of our discussion one member asked if we could continue reading and form a book club. I was elated that reading *Seedfolks* ignited interest in creating a book club.

The person suggesting a book club had called the library and had them agree to supply books. She was prepared. Another participant was a member of another local book club and commented that the books they read were over 300 pages – too long. The group wanted to read books that were 200 pages or less and asked me for suggestions. My own Tuesday Morning Booktalk group had recently read *The Uncommon Reader*, by Alan Bennett. The group thought it was worth a try.

**They asked me to be their discussion leader. I never anticipated this. I was catapulted from a onetime book discussion to a monthly book club leader.**

I worried that the Activities Director would want that role rather than having an outsider. I asked her in the open meeting if she preferred leading the group. She responded that the discussion had gone so well that if I were willing she would like me to be the discussion leader. Her only request was that she be a member of the group, too. We agreed we would meet the second Monday every month at 2:00 p.m.

The staff at the library was thrilled that reading *Seedfolks* had fostered a new book club in our community, a development with the spirit of *Seedfolks* at the core. We've met for three months, the club continues to grow, our discussions are enlightening, and I'm always surprised at what people are willing to share about their lives.

I hope that all *Extra Innings* readers are members of a book club. If not, start one; it will enrich your life in ways you could never imagine.



**“The Devil in Disguise”  
Painting by Tom Hicks  
*Be on your guard for him  
this Halloween!***



## More glorious insults

"I feel so miserable without you; it's almost like having you here." Stephen Bishop

"He is a self-made man and worships his creator." John Bright

"I've just learned about his illness. Let's hope it's nothing trivial." Irvin S. Cobb

"He is not only dull himself; he is the cause of dullness in others." Samuel Johnson

"He is simply a shiver looking for a spine to run up." Paul Keating

"In order to avoid being called a flirt, she always yielded easily."  
Charles, Count Talleyrand

"He loves nature in spite of what it did to him." Forrest Tucker

"Why do you sit there looking like an envelope without any address on it?"  
Mark Twain

"His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork." Mae West

"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go." Oscar Wilde

"He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lamp-posts... for support rather than illumination." Andrew Lang

"He has Van Gogh's ear for music." Billy Wilder

"I've had a perfectly wonderful evening. But this wasn't it." Groucho Marx

SPECIAL HALLOWEEN FEATURE  
SIX MILES ABOVE EARTH  
SANDY RAFTER

## Poe wasn't the only haunting poet

For all you Edgar Allan Poe fans, perhaps, it is time to take the beak from out your heart (see "The Raven"), stir the dying embers, buy a canary, and read some other poets' lines from ghost, horror, and downright spooky poems.

You may be surprised to learn that so many known poets have ventured into the depths of haunted houses, graves, and gore. Prepare yourself for Halloween night by reading the excerpts below and then find the whole poems.

Ideally, the reading should be undertaken sitting in a comfortable "arm" chair (make what you will of that) next to the bust of the "Headless Horseman" and with a bowl full of gummy snacks. (FYI you may find gummies in these forms: cobra snakes, eyes, worms, fingers, brains, ears, kidneys, hearts, and intestines -- the latter very informative for those scheduling a colonoscopy in the near future.)

**For those of you who used to study with music blaring full blast, hunt up "Ghost Riders in the Sky," theme from the Addams Family, "Monster Mash," or "Thriller."**

All houses wherein men have lived and died  
Are haunted houses. Through the open doors,  
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide  
With feet that make no sound upon the floors.

We meet them at the door-way, on the stairs,  
Along the passages they come and go,  
Impalpable impressions on the air,  
A sense of something moving to and fro....

"Haunted Houses" -- H.W. Longfellow

\* \*

I dwell in a lonely house I know  
That vanished many a summer ago  
and left no trace but the cellar walls....

It is under the small, dim, summer star,  
I know not who these mute folk are  
Who share the unlit place with me --  
These stones out under the low-limbed tree  
Doubtless bear names that the mosses mar....

"Ghost House" -- Robert Frost

I wonder how a realtor would list the "Haunted House." Possibly: a peaceful, almost spiritual place to live. Three bedrooms but space for 50 sleepers in each. Granite countertops decorated with whimsical names and numbers. Large parlor with ample seating and room for extra folding chairs. Great acoustics for any sound from a sigh and snuffle to a Requiem Mass.

Of course, we all know the mute folk in Frost's poem took a wrong turn onto a less traveled road -- summertime, lots of construction and detours.

\* \*

...In the quiet, dusky chamber,  
By the flickering firelight,  
Rising up between two sleepers.  
Comes a spirit all in white.

A winsome little ghost it is,  
Rosy-cheeked and bright of eye,  
With yellow curls all breaking loose  
From the small cap pushed awry;  
up it climbs among the pillows....

"Our Little Ghost" -- Louisa May Alcott

Alcott really loves this ghost. In other lines of the poem, the ghost is described as "loving" and "merry" with chubby hands and knees. The little spirit dances around and sings a lullaby to herself and makes herself at home in the bed with her live parents. I almost think this spirit could have been a precursor to the Barbie doll, definitely a little woman (there could have been a Ken at the Plumfield Academy in Alcott's *Little Men*).

A small ghost calls to mind a sorrowful early passing; no disrespect intended -- but I can't imagine a "winsome" ghost disturbing her parent's sleep when they have to get up early and go to work to pay for the tombstone. I can't even imagine her in white. Those were the days before water softeners and Tide with Bleach. The poem is slightly creepy.

**--More creepiness follows**

...Then is the ghost's high noon!  
As the sob of the breeze sweep over the trees  
And the mists lie low on the fen,  
From gray tombstones are gathered the bones  
That once were women and men....  
"When the Night Wind Howls" -- W.S. Gilbert

The lines are from the comic opera, *Raddigore*, by Gilbert and Sullivan, and there are many ghostly shenanigans. A baronet who burns witches is cursed by one as she flames; he and all future baronets must commit a crime each day or suffer unimaginable consequences. Ancestors step out of portraits, a baronet thought dead is really a farmer, and, best of all, there are a whole series of Sir Murgatroyds who are ghosts. Have any of us been acquainted with ghosts who are Baronets?

\* \*

...He was there with straddling legs,  
Staring eyes as big as eggs,  
Purring as he lapped my blood,  
His black bulk darkening the day,  
With a voice cruel and flat  
"Cat!...cat!...cat!...cat!" he said, "Cat!...cat!"

"A Child's Nightmare" --Robert Graves

A child dreams the same nightmare from nursery to the trenches of WW I. This is definitely not Garfield, Hemingway's Snowball, the Clinton's Socks, or any of the felines in the Purina ads. The poem may give you pause to take a second look at your fluffy ruler.

\* \*

...He is here in the room, in my arm,  
His limp body hangs on the spin  
Of the waltz we are dancing, a swarm  
of blood drops is hemming us in! ....

"After Hearing a Waltz by Bartok"

-- Amy Lowell

Let's face it. Halloween always has gore. The first lines ask: "But why did I kill him? Why? Why?" The remainder of the poem describes a dance of delirium with the rival who has been choked to death: "his eyes goggle under his hair," "his dead limbs have coiled every part of my body in tentacles," "as I throttled his windpipe, the purr of his breath with the waltz became blurred." This is a good one to read now, but not near the holiday with dark nights.

For "lighter" fare, try "The Ballad of the Ice-Worm Cocktail" and "The Ballad of Sam McGee" by Robert Service.

...When dusk is fallen  
Children join hands  
And circle round me  
Singing ghost songs  
And love to the harvest moon;  
I am a jack-o'-lantern  
With terrible teeth  
And the children know  
I am fooling.

"I Spot the Hills" -- Carl Sandburg



**"The devil sans disguise"  
painting by Tom Hicks**

SPECIAL HALLOWEEN FEATURE  
FOR THE LOVE OF WORDS  
ESTHER M. LEIPER-ESTABROOKS

## Grave matters

Tombstones are hoped to be eternal as the souls they commemorate. Yet freeze and thaw may topple them, wind, rain, and moss erase their messages. For that reason I and others cherish words which, like forms buried beneath, fade in time. Some words are inspirational, some plain, some spiritual, but others frankly awkward, like:

You who pass by this place may think on me,  
For as you are now, once you did me see.

Memorials can be inspiring or cryptic. In Richmond, Virginia's Hollywood Cemetery (named for holly trees, not the California movie scene) reclines a statue of a woman holding a poppy with a snake twining her hand. The anonymous inscription reads:

Now I go on a long journey  
In search of justice  
Over the grave of a dream  
And through the malice of time.

Was she opium-addicted and thus the message either a warning or lament? This tomb poses a conundrum and to me proves more moving than the huge mausoleum for Jefferson Davis, president of the doomed Confederacy, or the sky-pointing pyramid erected to honor 50,000 Civil War dead. Yet death can invoke black humor, whether appropriate or not. Erdmore Patmore collects epitaphs, and the following comes from Burlington, Vermont:

Beneath this stone our baby lays.  
He neither cries nor hollers.  
He lived just one and twenty days  
And cost us forty dollars.

More tenderly, a Sugar Grove, Wisconsin marker laments:

Arrisina -- 1874. Aged one day.  
Asberly -- 1877. One year, seven months  
Cimaline - 2 days (no date given)  
God has them all.

The next dirge comes from the Internet, by whom or intended for whom, I know not:

Falling in sheens of colorless white  
Out on the mountains, silent and light,  
Into the forest and into the night;  
Stony and cold like a frozen face  
Clutched in the arms of death's embrace  
Rigid the limbs that covered the race  
Of the beautiful snow.

There are many euphemisms for death. Brits say the deceased have "gone west," for the Isle of the Blessed was supposed to be out in the Atlantic. Others take comfort in, "She's on the farther shore" or "He's turned a corner." Names indicating burial grounds also vary, including necropolis, graveyard, bone-yard, God's acre underground, or the American West's Boot Hill.

Epigrams, which like epitaphs are brief, satirize life in general or particular persons with mordant wit. Here's one the now-famous poet Richard McCann wrote while we attended VCU in the 1960's. Today my "partner in rhyme" is a famed professor, poet, speaker, and author. Then, age 17, he was simply Rick, the two of us determined to be famous word-smiths, practicing our increasing skills on each other, with both affection and satire.

"Lament at the Grave of Esther Leiper"  
Alas, poor Esther, I knew her well,  
Now counting syllables in the sinews of Hell.  
She put her death in a single quatrain.  
It was more tragic than Sylvia's refrain  
Pity the talents we loved so well;  
But suicide's a sin and we can't pity hell.  
On the gray earth of her funeral pyre  
Rats shuffle their feet in a rattish choir.

Her words live on, although she is dead.  
They're not published, but stay in my head.  
Oh, if she were here, this is what I'd say:  
--"*You were rejected in the mail today.*"

I countered:

"R.I.P. Richard"

Please approach and  
Show no hesitance,  
For here lies a poet,  
A Poet-in-Residence.

Currently Dr. McCann is famous, as I like to consider I am, both striving to set "the best words in the best order," and both of us widely published. Aim high, Shape *your* creations with care. Perhaps nothing is lost to infinity, not messages carved on stone or even poetry set on fragile paper. So at least I wish, trusting hope-- like a holy angel-- bears sustaining wings.

# Pearls of the editor

from the *Arkansas City Weekly Traveler*, April 11 1876

*Thanks to Perry Stone*

Those who think editing a news paper is a flowery job will probably be disappointed after reading the following years experience of an editor:

Been ask to drink	11382
Drank	11382
Requested to retract	416
retracted	413
Didn't retract	3
Invited to parties	4,333
Threatened to be whipped	174
Been whipped	6
Whipped the other fellow	2
Been ask what's the news	300,007
Told	18
Didn't tell	245,193
Lied about it	51,973
Been to church	0
Changed politics	27
Expect to change next year	51
Gave to charity	\$4.35
Gave for a terrier dog	\$21.00
Cash on hand	\$0.10

## GROWING UP IN MADISON

RON HEVEY

# A plea to abandon “Two-thousand & fourteen” and go with “Twenty fourteen”

Many of us have spent most of our lifetime in the nineteens, nineteen-this and nineteen-that, like 1964, a watershed year for me as a fresh college grad, and the same year that made Civil Rights history.

2014: “two thousand & fourteen” is how most say it, yet we call 1964 “nineteen sixty-four.” We added the “hundred” for emphasis once in a while. We never used “one thousand nine hundred and sixty- four” unless writing a check.

So, how did this “two thousand” stuff start? True, many were preoccupied with Y2K, that is, “year 2000” concerns, a time when computers worldwide were predicted to come crashing down and planes along with them. Software had been shortsightedly written for the twentieth, not twenty-first century. Techies were not sure if they had used enough bytes to describe anything back in the day - bytes were a scarce commodity then. Not that techies talked enough with one another either. Machines surely did not. We may have lucked out - thankfully, Y2K turned out to be a nonevent.

So, unscathed, we entered two thousand, that odd sounding year. Did we say “thousand” to give the move from the second to third millennium special emphasis? Years went by: two thousand and one, two thousand and ten. We were stuck.

**Flexibility crept in around 2010, yet less often was ‘twenty ten’ used compared with “two thousand & ten,” although, “twenty ten” did seem about right.**

Not that the issue was new. There were those of us out there who had been muddling the problem of “thousand this” and “thousand that” since the year 2000. We gave it a few years - maybe someone messed up and had not realized their mistake.

How could the whole program of naming years have changed? And who the heck was consulted, anyway? Rather than going from 19 to 20, we had gone from 19 to 2000.

In 2014 we are well into the 21st Century, egads, 1/7th of the way with time flying by, let me tell you. Have we let the issue go too long to change?

Never having been privy to official discussions of the issue, I Googled the subject. Turns out two thousand & fourteen is considered correct, but twenty fourteen is also acceptable, a step in the right direction.

[twentynot2000.com](http://twentynot2000.com) says it is easier, faster and shorter to say years as we did in 1999 instead of the long way. Newspeople especially are taking the shortcut, saving time and leaving more of it for commercials by saying ‘twenty-this and ‘twenty-that.’ [twentynot2000.com](http://twentynot2000.com) states that the bad habit of the last decade needs to be fixed now or we will be stuck saying years the long way for at least the next 86 years, and we would not want to let that happen. They say spread the word on Twitter, Facebook and other social sites to aid in righting the problem.

*New Yorker* commentary may set us straight. In an article on the subject, they said that, historically, folks may have called the peaceful turn of the first millennium “one thousand & one,” but by the time of the “big one” at Hastings the year was “ten sixty-six.”

JAN KENT IS

THE WORD WHISPER

**You’re good, you say?**

**Well, maybe**

“I’m good.”

Yes, you are, and the Word Whisperer would be the first to acknowledge your goodness

However, why is that a reasonable response to “Would you like a cup of tea?” or “Is the music too loud for you?” or “Is that dog bothering you?”

## The real David Foster Wallace

By Brenda Roper

If writer Dave Wallace (as he was commonly known) were alive today he'd be 52 years old, an age close to my own. I suspect we all do that, align ourselves with those we can most imagine from high school, cheering them on as if we had something at stake.

David Foster Wallace took his own life in 2008 at the age of 46, but not before leaving behind three novels, three short story collections, and three essay collections—and I'm not convinced that gives the full picture.

David's writing style was dense, his thoughts and impressions often having no choice but to spill over into equally dense footnotes. But for someone as steeped in philosophy and language as he was (not to mention his unfathomable intellect), there was simply no other way to do it—to express the depths of his hard-tilled understanding. And for us that was a good thing.

Take for example his 1996 magnum opus, *Infinite Jest* (title taken from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*), weighing in at 1,079 pages and 388 endnotes. That could easily count as three or four novels for another writer. Or how about "Host"—the 2005 essay dissecting conservative talk radio using a thick matrix of flowcharts? If you haven't seen it, I urge you to take a peek. Better yet, read it. (Just don't be afraid to follow along with your finger).

**For those unfamiliar with David's work, you may be wondering—who'd care to tackle such monsters? That's easy: anyone interested in the craft of spectacular writing. Although to be honest, absent an adequate introduction to the author and his work, I probably would've been one of those who treated his books like hot potatoes—quickly setting them down before they had a chance to scorch my psyche.**

But lucky for me, not long after David's death, I happened to turn to *The Washington Post* just in time to catch the featured poet's dedication to her colleague, David Foster Wallace—her words so heartfelt and intriguing, I had no choice but to run to my nearest library. I'm so glad I did.

As my initial foray into all-things Wallace, I'm still glad I chose "Consider the Lobster"—the 2004 essay chronicling Maine's annual lobster festival on behalf of *Gourmet Magazine*. First, since the piece is a little more user-friendly, I was able to ease into the mental "muscle-building" required of all Wallace readers. But mostly, it was for the sheer delight of watching him pole-vault the obvious. Rather than hovering over the culinary aspects of the lobster, as one would expect, David chose to report on the event taken as a whole—examining the space under every rock with unusual focus. From the sights (hordes of people), to the smells (fresh lobster cranked out in massive steamers), to the sounds (masticating jaws) and finally to the experience of the lobster itself: Did it feel pain? Was it fair? Did we have an obligation to care? If not, why not?

Take my advice—*do not skip the footnotes!* Or you'll miss little nuggets like this: "To be a mass tourist, for me, is to become a pure late-date American: alien, ignorant, greedy for something you cannot ever have, disappointed in a way you can never admit. It is to spoil, by way of sheer ontology, the very unspoiledness you are there to experience. It is to impose yourself on places that in all non-economic ways would be better, realer, without you. It is, in lines and gridlock and transaction after transaction, to confront a dimension of yourself that is as inescapable as it is painful: As a tourist, you become economically significant but existentially loathsome, an insect on a dead thing."

**That's not to say David didn't have a sense of humor. If you're looking for a good chuckle, check out his 1997 essay, "A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again"—his first (and last) account of what it was like to spend a week aboard a cruise ship. If you're like me, you'll never see "fun" the same again.**

David was a master of the literary trifecta: *Smart/Funny/Sad*. By careful design he inspired readers to share in those erudite qualities—without feeling overwhelmed. It's easy to sense him turning around at just the right moments to make sure you're still behind him.

**-- Essay continues next page**

As writer Dave Eggers put it in his 2006 *Forward* to the anniversary edition of *Infinite Jest*: “A Wallace reader gets the impression of being in a room with a very talkative and brilliant uncle or cousin who just when he’s about to push it too far, to try our patience with too much detail, has the good sense to throw in a good lowbrow joke.”

In subsequent interviews, David shared that it wasn’t his nonfiction that gave his readers cause for alarm, but rather his fiction. The tormented characters of his fiction, they believed, were more “real” than the beloved “character” of his essays.

As our generation marches on, I know there’ll be many occasions where I’ll wonder: What would David Foster Wallace think about that? And while I can make a guess, it’ll never be as much fun (or as illuminating) as hearing him say it himself.

## SWIFT TAKE ON BOOKS

JOHN SWIFT

### Give Nicholas Evans a pass

The writings of Nicholas Evans start out with spectacular premise, then flash back through 300 pages of heartfelt emotional angst up and down and among the entire family tree, most of which has very little to do with the initial premise, and finally wind up leaving one sad, bereft even, and wishing they’d never started reading the book in the first place. But what skills --to make you feel the hurt the characters feel.

But most of us do not read a book so we can feel the hurt and be left with the horrible reality that for many people life’s not easy, not joyful and at the end, not fun. If you are the exception, read some Nicholas Evans.

## THE WRITER’S LIFE

### Artistic credo, re-thought

By David Krival

At the age of 65, possibly too late, I have come to the realization that I do not have what it takes to be a serious writer: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Donne, Austen, Eliot, Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Greene. I’m leaving dozens unlisted, but you get the point. I’m just not that deep. Too self-centered, probably. Smart, perceptive, yes, but just not good enough to be called serious. I tried and failed, so I know. So what remains?

Certainly not humor. I’m not very funny, especially when I try to be.

Maybe stories. I like to tell stories, make up things the way I think they ought to be made up. Change history? A little. But, essentially, I’ve got to stick to what I know, which is what my father told me 60 years ago.

**What do I know? A version, incomplete, of my family history. A much more complete account of World War Two. Baseball. Diving and spearfishing. Women? I doubt it. Friendship? Possibly.**

Despite all the shitty things I’ve done to or around them, my friends remain my friends for life. Maybe I’m not as great a villain as I think I am. Maybe I am rather human.

So, I am going back to storytelling, and we shall see where it takes me. Hopefully someplace honest, possibly a little enlightening. But probably not too much so. I haven’t lived the right kind of life for it. I’ve always been primarily concerned with what was going inside my head or about my body, rarely with the thoughts or feelings of others. We shall see what we shall see.



## EXTRA INNINGS POETRY PAGES

*Poet's note: Checking the internet I find many Vic Johnsons. Many of them are writers. So I made up a pen name, James Victor Macaslan. Sounds pretentious, but having passed the eighty-fifth mile post a few weeks back, it probably doesn't matter. --Vic Johnson*

### From a Previous Life James Victor Macaslan

Long before this aged shell  
encapsulated youth, wracked  
bone and sinew, put muscle  
to the test, paled hide and  
pate, drove reason to  
the wall — thought I a handsome  
lad as ever danced on deck  
'neath clipper sail, or  
wooed maidens fair where  
tropic tides held sway.

'Til one I found in  
Boston town, as fine as  
one could want. With silken  
hair like raven's wing,  
her form a willow's grace.  
Sweet tempered lass, with  
loving soul, an angel it  
appeared, who loved me,  
this sailor man, this man  
who loved the sea.

Loved her truly, too, did I,  
or so thought me. And so, to  
wed we're bound. Yet came a  
day, a cursed day, the sea  
rose green, and salt was in  
the air, the horizon blue and  
far. Oh sailor man, sailor  
man, what mystery lies beyond?  
Pray thee, oh sailor man —  
live life forever free!

Take leave must I —  
once more to sky and sea.  
to distant shores, to old  
Cathay and Singapore, to  
kingdoms far beyond.  
Oh lady how you weep! My love  
of raven hair and figure fair,  
my pledge to you I give. When  
autumn's gold turns round, my  
journeys done — then to wed shall we.

Fair winds blow, the sea  
plays well our travels to progress,  
and soon full sail our course  
did speed. And we, as eagles fly  
before the wind, made way.  
Goodbye old Boston town,  
goodbye my love. For a sailor man  
sleeps best at sea, and best dreams  
ride the waves.

The midnight watch 'neath  
the southern cross,  
the yellow moon rides high.  
There's the smell of land off  
the starboard bow, and sea birds  
swarm where the tide runs in.  
We tack the wind and cross the bar.  
We'll feast tonight on pork,  
and dance to native drums.  
No sweeter paradise than this.

When my bones five fathoms down  
lie locked in folds of coral,  
my ivory skull the fishes prowl . . .  
my ribs, a haunt of eels embrace.  
Then will I dream of silken hair  
like raven's wing, of willow's grace?  
Sweet tempered lass, with loving soul,  
an angel it appeared, who loved me  
this sailor man, this man,  
who loved the sea?

## **Joyce Carol Oates**

### **John Swift**

She

And I

Were born:

–in the same state

–in the same year

–½ elliptical turn apart

Held in place by the same schools:

–the one room country school

–the much maligned school upstate

–the school not known for its many famous writers

Then like the falcon of Yeats:

Thrown like two pennies off the Victrola

One forward, one back

She flying forward in space,

Her faithless bloodhound sniffing along behind

Reporting what might have been sightings and scents and baying at the moon.

### **THE WRITER'S POET**

## **Beneath a wreath**

### **Craig W. Steele**

What if

the greatest novel ever written

lies buried in a

damp, moldering cardboard box

in the basement of

a great-grandchild of the author,

its pages curled and yellowed

beneath a wreath

of rejection slips?

## **Casting Off**

### **Pat Goetz**

I feel like I'm being cut loose

in a flimsy bark on a

stormy sea

When actually I'll be chugging

out of the harbor

in a sturdy vessel

heading for another

unknown adventure.

## **Drinking October**

### **Bonny Conway**

Autumn unlocks the happy hours

serves the season with apples and grapes

trees lit with color stagger down hills

shots of natural ingredients flow

order a round of pumpkins for pies

sip the full moon with an acquired taste

swallow October from crimson crocks

drink it neat, don't wait for November ice

# The lost art of doing nothing

**Bill Spevacek**

From Paleolithic ancestors, we inherited hard wiring  
For a way of life I find inspiring:  
Hunting the mammoths and deer that they ate,  
Then settling down to procreate.

Migrating from Africa to colder climates  
Added need to clothe those hairless primates.  
Yet from what we know, they had time for ease,  
To just hang out and shoot the breeze.

When we started sowing crops and herding cattle  
In ancient Sumer, we lost the battle.  
Merchants and factories, the invention of accounting,  
Pressure on our time was steadily mounting.

Leisure today is disappearing--  
Parenting, jobs and volunteering.  
Self-help gurus constantly chide,  
We're much less effective when respite-deprived.

Some enlightened employers recognize  
The need to recharge our batteries.  
Telling employees, take time for relaxation,  
Some even insist they take their vacations.

What happens when it's time to retire?  
Those skills we spent lifetimes to acquire  
Are obsolete, no longer in demand.  
Do we sit by a campfire like Paleolithic man?

Some do. Some golf or fish or travel.  
For others, however, life would unravel  
Without compassion for their fellow man,  
Helping others 'til they no longer can.

Then there are those who are always busy  
In activities of dubious efficacy.  
Political activists are in that category,  
But topping the list are those who write poetry.

## Archive

### Sandy Rafter

A red net stretches over my blueberries  
in their pint container,  
reminding me of Grandma's old hairnet.  
Hers was gray, matched in the Five and Dime  
to her pewter hair to hold in wisps  
when she worked in the diner.  
She showed me how to peel boiled eggs,  
sitting in a circle with Fred and Mac and Mary  
who gently scrunched the whole shell  
in the palms of their hands as though  
they were holding each other's dreams.  
My eyes widened in wonder  
at the ease of eggs, the small butter pats  
in a dish, and heavy silverware  
engraved with the company letters.  
Fridays were my day. I hurried from school  
at noon to stand in line with my tray,  
and Grandma paid for my dinner --  
always fish, potatoes and peas --  
and tangy tartar sauce and slices of lemon.  
We ate plain at home and never had either of those.  
Her friends always asked each week,  
"Is that your granddaughter?  
She's taller this week than last."  
Each time, Mac brandished before me  
a ruler from under the counter  
and pretended he was going to check.  
I passed down the line looking shyly back  
from under my fluttering lashes as Grandma laughed  
and pushed at Mac and slapped his arm.  
When the blueberry carton is empty,  
I will remove the net and save it  
at the back of my silverware drawer.

## Refuge

### Norma J. Sundberg

Since zoning won't allow me  
to build a tree house,  
I search, frantically,  
and find a place to run to  
to hide from the chaos that grips my life.  
I can lock the door,  
there is even a throne to sit on,  
I meditate and enjoy  
a measure of peacefulness  
It is restful and quiet.  
For nourishment I can read  
Family Circle, Redbook, Ms.,  
the Sears catalog.  
I can watch the cardinal  
and squirrels  
In the pine tree  
just beyond the window.  
If I try, perhaps I can conjure up  
memories of hollyhocks  
stretching up below  
a moon-shaped opening.  
In Winter the puffs of snow  
will dress the evergreen branches;  
Summer nights I can watch  
fireflies brighten the boughs  
like a Christmas tree,  
I enjoy my throne,  
So what if the crown rests  
on the opposite end  
of my being....

## COACH'S MAIL BAG / ISSUE 60

### Yowzah!

Hello Marsh,

Issue 59 is a real yowzah of an issue. I could really relate to Sandy Rafter's column and was very much taken aback by her description of the dangers faced by Afghan women poets. Esther's column is, as usual, brilliant. I very much enjoyed all the wonder poems in this issue, including those by you. I loved your new perspective on the "lowly" sheep and thought you said so much, so poignantly in three short lines in your second poem.

And, of course, the photo of Lily was endearing – what a sweetheart.

All the best,

**Craig [Steele]**

Hi Norma [Sundberg]

Just finished reading September's *Extra Innings*—enjoyed your poem and letter to the editor. And the other articles/poems, too.

I saw the photo of Smokey the Bear at the end and we have one of those stuffed Smokey Bears at our house—it was Richard's when he was a boy and has kept it all these years.

Love,

**Suzanne [Meik]**

I got into the picture BEFORE you began *Extra Innings*! You'd sent me earlier versions of the newsletter you did when at the university (*Creative Connection*) and I'd connected because of a guest column in Suzanne Beecher's on-line BookClub but didn't get published in *E.I.* until a few issues into it....

**Norma Sundberg**

### Happy 5th to *E.I.*

### Happy 70th to Coach!

As far as I can tell from my files, I had seven articles published in *CREATIVITY CONNECTION* from October 2001 until April 2009. Was even referred to as a "frequent contributor" and received a lifetime subscription.

Then I had 6 articles, not counting letters to the editor, published in *EXTRA INNINGS* from December 2009 to June 2013.

I remember sending you an article that was way too long for *CREATIVITY CONNECTION*. Probably the first article I sent. Instead of a form rejection letter, I received a personal one with information on article length preferred. I believe I did a revision which was published.

When I sent an article to *CREATIVITY CONNECTION*, I received a galley form of the article to check for errors before publication. Could also see if there were any major revisions I might object to. I think those forms were considerate and helpful.

Thank you.

I look forward to submitting more work to *EXTRA INNINGS* in the future to maintain my status of a "frequent contributor."

Sincerely,

**Andrea Lozinsky Schoenthal**

On this 5th anniversary of *EI*, I express my appreciation to all the writers who have shared their work. I look forward to the uniqueness of each issue. As a contributor, most of all, I thank Marsh for his guidance and encouragement; I've been with *EI* only a year, but our editor's wisdom and support extend far beyond any set time.

**Sandy [Rafter]**

## COACH'S BULLPEN BRIEFS

### The artist speaks of art

Tom Hicks' paintings [see pages eight and 11] are large, bright, and all attitude. His abstracts evolve from his quirky view of the objects and people around him, often with childlike innocence, more often with adult naughtiness. They are at once overly simplified, graphically sophisticated, and always fun.

I have never been one who colors within the lines. I haven't won any art contests, but I was released from the insane asylum after I finished painting their day room. I keep my paintings big so that people can't just hang them on their refrigerators. I paint in my basement, next to the furnace, under a bare 100 watt bulb, while drinking beer and listening to loud heavy metal music. My art answers the question: "What if?"

You can view all of my paintings on my web site at [extraterrestrialvisitor.com](http://extraterrestrialvisitor.com).

**Tom Hicks**

### The poet speaks of poetry

MY NEWS: my humorous horror poem "Spider Designs" will open the forthcoming *BUGS* anthology from GREAT OLD ONES PUBLISHING. In September I attended a 4-day writing retreat held in a North Country mansion beside a torrential waterfall.

**Esther M. Leiper-Estabrooks**

### The novelist speaks of royalties

I'm pleased to announce publication of my novel, *Patricide*. All royalties go to Down Syndrome Association of Northern Virginia.

E-book purchases generate the highest royalty. For print copies, the publisher, [www.iuniverse.com](http://www.iuniverse.com) pays the highest royalty; Barnes and Noble is second, and Amazon contributes the least amount. Many thanks for your support.

**Madonna Dries Christensen**

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

## HAHNKE PAHNKE

ED PAHNKE

### Butter wouldn't melt in his mouth

Old Doc Wharff smiled benevolently while Peggy Pringle recited her woes.

"It's Rollo." She sniffed, looking at her three-year-old son sitting placidly on the dark blue sofa next to her. "I try to teach him how to behave, but this happens all of the time.

"For instance, Rollo and I are together in a room. He's playing some game, neat and clean and happy. He gurgles and smiles while occupied with his games. He doesn't seem to pay any attention to what's in the area, but he must be planning his mischief. I smile at him and say, 'I'll be right back.' He'll smile back and wave and return to his diversion.

"I walk into another room or peek outside. A few moments later, when I see Rollo again..." She glanced down at her son, who hummed an indistinguishable melody. "He's dirty and grimy, and his fingers are dipped into a flower pot, for example. So I reprimand him and wash him up. Without much hope, I go back to the child rearing books for words of wisdom."

She sighed and shook her head. "What do I do now?"

Old Doc Wharff patted the little tot on his blond head and said, "How often does your son get dirty, Peggy?"

"Whenever I leave him alone for more than an instant." She moaned. "Oh, what is to become of him when I send him off to school? I can't be with him every moment. Oh, what am I to do now?"

"There, there, Peggy. It's trying, no doubt, but it's actually not uncommon. When the tot gets into social situations in school, he'll mend his ways to fit in. Until then, here are some words to live by."

Peggy's eyes widened. "Yes?"

Smiling, Old Doc Wharff leaned back in his chair. "A watched tot never soils."

*Extra*

# *Innings #60*

**Madison, Wisconsin**

**October 2014**

This month's All-Star Anniversary Lineup:

**Rex Owens, Madonna Dries Christensen, Sandra Rafter, Ed Pahnke, Esther M. Estabrooks, Ron Hevey, and John Swift, with special guest stars Brenda Roper and David Krival, with Jan Kent as The Word Whisperer**  
**Guest Artist: Tom Hicks**

**Poetry from Bonny Conway, Vic Johnson, Sandy Rafter, Norma Sundberg, Bill Spevacek, Pat Goetz, John Swift, and The Writer's Poet, Craig W. Steele**  
**Neptis: Lily Cook**

**Staff attorney: Justin Case**

**Time efficiency expert: Justin Time**

**Definition of love: 1 Corinthians 12:31**

**Web Weaver: Kerrie Louis**

**Internetters: Steve Born and Perry Stone**

**The Masked Man: Brace Beemer**

**Coach-in-Chief: Marshall J. Cook**

**Stunt double for Mr. Cook: Yakima Canutt**

I publish *Extra Innings* monthly and distribute it free to an open enrollment mailing list. To get on the list, email the Coach at:

[mcook@dcs.wisc.edu](mailto:mcook@dcs.wisc.edu)

*Extra Innings* comes to you through the good graces of the writing program at the Division of Continuing Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, led by Christine DeSmet. Find out about workshops, courses, conferences, and critiques services at:

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*Extra*

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**Next Deadline:**

**Wednesday, Oct 22, 2014**

And now, at last

## The Further Adventures of Lily~



**Lily discovers the joys  
of the Atlantic Ocean,  
Rockport, Cape Ann,  
MA, September, 2014**  
*photo by Bryan Cook*