



# WRITING CURRENTS

*Peace River Center for Writers*

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## **Our Mission**

To help people develop skill in using the written word in any form. To provide effective and timely support for writers. To provide educational, literary and informational services and events. To encourage dialogue and communication among the public at large. To help promote a strong sense of community in Charlotte County and in Southwest Florida.

*The Peace River Center for Writers at Edison State College* is an independent, non-profit public organization that offers assistance in all kinds of writing, and to writers of all backgrounds.



We have a different format for our January/February issue. The Spring Creative Writing Class have written articles, conducted interviews for profiles, submitted original art and photographs, and produced a newsletter for your enjoyment and, hopefully, enlightenment. On April 6 we have our popular full moon boat cruise and our Spring Poetry Contest has started. We are also promoting our programs occurring in March and April. We have three events linked to our grant from the Florida Humanities Council. This is the fifth year PRCW is honored as recipient; a team effort throughout the years. We are also host to poet John Blair on April 14, a Saturday, and I am requesting the attendance of our members for a pot luck dinner before the reading. I urge members to attend as many events as possible. Keep reading e-mails from Madelon for more information about ongoing activities and look for our next newsletter, March/April/May with a special challenge: Along with some of my students I participated in the *Florida Weekly Writing Challenge*. I want to challenge our members to attend events, find our Facebook Page (you do not have to be a Facebook member), and read a definition of Haiku on the last page of this newsletter and write one. Please send in your Haiku poems for possible publication in the next *Writing Currents*.



Thanks for your support,  
John Pelot

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## New & Renewing Members

The spring creative writing class (17 new members), and Mary Cutler, Jacque Lynne Ross, Eric Taylor, Anna John, and Cheryl Joy Terry. Renewals: John Pelot, Dobie Pasco, Joyce E. Pucs, Don Kennedy, Joan Cooke and Sam King.

# The Peace River Writers Tea

The March Writers Tea will be at the Port Charlotte Library near the Cultural Center on Tues., March 20.

We will continue to meet the third Tuesday of each month from 1 to 3 pm. Poets and story writers are invited to come and share some of their written material with us in a relaxed atmosphere.

Please bring snacks of some type to share. Tea will be provided. We hope to see you there!

Blessings to all!

If you have any questions, you can call Arlene Kincaid, 625-7312 or Mary Grace Patterson, 575-0739.



## **Kid's Stuff Program**

**Second Saturday of each month**

**10:00 A.M.—12ish**

The Peace River Center for Writers has just the thing for both aspiring and established writers of children's books. Kids Stuff! It's a critique group for authors who are writing or wish to write children's books. They are held in Room 116 at Edison State College.

There is no charge for PRCW members. Nonmembers may attend while deciding if they wish to become members.

## **Prose and Poetry Writing Workshops:**

Leonard Pasco will conduct a poetry workshop at ESC Wednesday March 14 at 3:00 PM in D-203. The final poetry workshop will be conducted by guest poet John Blair on April 16 at 4:00 PM. Please see our event list for more information.

Doug Houck is conducting more Prose Writing Workshops. Information on time and dates will be sent by e-mail.

## **Monthly Writer's Breakfast**

### **First Saturday of the Month at Morales Café in Downtown Punta Gorda**

**9:00A.M.**

Members and guests are invited to participate in the Monthly Writer's Breakfast. Come and enjoy a delicious breakfast while reading and discussing your literary endeavors. No charge except the cost of your breakfast.

## **Spring Poetry Contest**

We are having another poetry contest with a submissions deadline of April 10 with winners announced at our last Florida Humanities Council event at Edison State College Auditorium on Thursday, April 19. Winners and finalists will also be invited to read at both of our monthly Open Mics!

Look for the contest rules in a Flyer sent to all members later this week. John Pelot will be a preliminary judge; Leonard Pasco will be the second judge and Carol Mahler will choose the three winners and five finalists. The prizes will be \$100.00 for first place, \$75.00, second place, and \$50.00 for third place. All entries are tax deductible.

Last year's winners:

First Place....Terry Ansbro for "First Light, Jackson Square"

Second Place...Penny Hunt for "My Father in Brown"

Third Place....Teresa Falsani for "Closure"

There were five Honorable Mentions:

Jo Ellen Gantor, *Word Weavers*

Gary Gee Helinski, *Slender Threads of Friendship*

Dobie Pasco, *They Don't Make Great Movies Anymore*

Robert Wm. Ross, *Grow With Me*

Linda Neckel White, *Morning After*



## **Make reservation; now for our annual Boat Cruise from Fishermen's Village on the Good Times Two**

Write PRCW@Edison.edu or call our Tuesdays from 10-12 or Fridays from 10-1:00 PM, for reservations. The past three years we have nearly sold out. Cruising out at sunset and enjoying the full moon, music, food, and Open Mic. April 6.

Our Web Site is still waiting on a talented member to help refurbish our current site. Please check our Facebook web site. It is open to the public.



# Upcoming Events

## Recurring Events:

On the second Monday of each month, Open Mic is happening at Fishermen's Village at 6:30. Meet at the center stage by the Oyster Bar. PRCW monthly event.

On the third Friday of each month, Open Mic Jams at the Hava Java Grill at 6:30. The grill is located off of U.S. 41 in Port Charlotte near Tarpon. PRCW monthly event. Arrive early for culinary delights.



## Special Events:

Monday March 19, 7:00 Edison Auditorium: "Old Florida in Film, Fact, and Fiction", event one. Join us for a trip back in time with a 1920's film of the Florida everglades. Professor John Pelot will introduce Florida Poet Gianna Russo who will be joined by Edison adjunct professor of history, Truman Bass on a discussion of the period and the film. Professor Russo will also read her poetry and answer questions about her Florida heritage, teaching in Florida, and, of course, her poetry. See page 12 for more details. These events are provided by a grant from the Florida Humanities Council. No cost for these programs.

The *Middle Years Program* will be provided on Friday afternoon (4-5 in D-203) and 6:30 (Edison Auditorium) the evening March 30th. The program will feature Rick Wilber (Florida Humanities Professional). Rick is a journalism and mass-media professor at the University of South Florida. He has published two science fiction novels and several award-winning short-story collections. The workshop from 4-5 is free and open to the public but seating is limited. Please e-mail or call the PRCW at ESC for reservations. At 6:30 the film presentations will begin and Rick will read his award-winning short story set in St. Petersburg, Fl. Reservations not needed for the auditorium. Event provided by a grant from FHC. Free to the public



On April 6, Friday night Full Moon Cruise with "Good Times Two" from the docks of Fishermen's Village. The cost is \$25 per person. Light appetizers will be served by PRCW members and there is food and soft drinks available on the boat. This is a PRCW tradition and will include an Open Mic. We leave the dock heading west into the sunset and stop the boat under the full moon for music, poetry, and short fiction. This is a signature event for PRCW.

April 14. This Saturday will include a PRCW member's BBQ and covered dish meal beginning at 4PM, Professor Blair will conduct a poetry/fiction workshop (\$10.00 for members) and a free reading by the first Florida native to win the Tampa Review Poetry Prize. John Blair is also the author of two novels, numerous publications in poetry, and professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Texas. A book signing and refreshments will follow. This is a Florida Literary Arts Coalition Writer's Tour: Edison State College is a host member of a coalition of Florida colleges and universities promoting the humanities.

April 19. There is a Thursday afternoon workshop and panel discussion from 4-5 PM in D-203 and a film and discussion at 6:30 in the Edison Auditorium. The Evening Film Presentation and Reading will be held in the Edison State College Auditorium and begin at 6:30 pm. Ray Eberling (Humanities Professional) and Professor Pelot will discuss, comment on, and answer questions following the screening of *The Adventures of X-14* (14:30 minutes), and *When You Need It Bad, We've Got It Good* (14:30 minutes). Ray Eberling will conclude the evening with readings, discussion, and remarks. Event provided by a grant from the Florida Humanities Council. Free!



The Board of Directors hopes that you will join us in March and April for our special events. Also, remember our Open Mic at Fishermen's Village. We are reaching out to writers and musicians to join us the second Monday of the month at 6:30. This month Leonard Pasco will MC and vice president, Doug Houck's English class will be reading along with the usual crowd and hopefully "you".



Scenes from Open Mic at Center Stage

Fishermen's Village February 13, 2012

Thanks to all readers and our great audience!



# Student Articles

## **Nature Inspires**

Art Work by Jennifer McGuire  
Article By Matt Michala

In the middle of the Florida forest is where my best writing is produced. My favorite place to create is at the Port Charlotte disc golf course. (41/O'Donnell rd.) I use the word create instead of write because there is more than just writing involved in a great story or poem. Before I start writing, I put a large emphasis on my imagination and thought process in regards to what I am going to write about. The course gives me a good opportunity to do just that. One round includes eighteen holes with about a two mile hike through Florida's beautiful landscape.

The freedom and beauty really sparks the light bulb that seems to flicker like a strobe light on full blast. With my notepad handy, my ideas become legitimate blueprints for an interesting story.

After I come across an idea that really catches my fancy, I decide to settle at one of my favorite spots on the course. There are various benches and large stones that are canopied by ancient trees native to Florida. After I get going it's tough for me to stop. It is so easy to get lost when you are writing in your comfort zone, mine just happens to be nature. There is a certain inspiring quality that arises when surrounded by the wilderness. There is something unexplainable about the outdoors. It is an escape from any negativity in this *dog eat dog world*. I am inspired by nature and in this forest is where I can create my own world.



## **My Writing Process By Trevor Scott**

I believe that everyone has their own personal writing process, a way that you can express your own personal writing muse. My process begins with the spark of an idea, a scene or environment that piques my creative interest. Daydreams and reflections on this spark, lead me to weave a story line, usually with me in the starring role...

The next step in this process is an excitement, the realization that my daydreams have evolved into a character with a goal that he is trying to achieve. I will worry at this idea for a little while, working out a conflict that prevents the main character from achieving his or her goal. (continued on page 8)



Once I have a conflict worked out, and the skeleton of the storyline built, then I am ready to begin fleshing out the story. This is my favorite part, weaving my dreams into a solid story that inspires readers to feel that same excitement that I felt as I created the characters and story. I try to have two peaks of climax during the short story; the first is about a third of the way into the story, and the second just after the second third of the story. The second climax is more intense, and involved, building to where the main character faces the probability that he, or she might fail in achieving their goals. Then there is the end of the story where the reader learns whether or not the goal is achieved.



Leonard Pasco as MC at our FV February reading. Shirley George is the MC for Open Mic at Hava Java Grill.

### **Working at the polls, Young and old By Lucas Ruiz**

Mary you showed extraordinary kindness to voters who otherwise may have left that day unhappy. An octogenarian with Alzheimer's was registered NPA and therefore unable to vote in the primary. How intently and with genuine care you listened to him tell you his whole life story, his time in the Navy, being a doctor, getting fed up with the political system and changing his party. He just needed someone to listen to him talk for a while. An hour and a half he spent there talking, and eventually did vote provisionally. It would have been easy for you to rush him out the door, in fact your whole job at the polls would be much easier if you didn't take time and listen. You are likely the perfect person for the job

That is exactly the kind of courtesy and work ethic that is hard to find in people my age. Why would someone slouch or lay her head down at *any* job, let alone one as important as poll working? The other young lady working at the polls, the only other person who was about my age, made me realize a few things about my generation. We don't think. There's no foresight at all. No weighing consequences against rewards. The young lady working the polls wasn't lazy or uncaring about the job, she just did not think about what she was doing at all. I have thought that this might just be a trait present in many young people that will eventually be grown out, and not something specific to my generation.

# Life as a Creative Writing College Student

Article and Art Work by Jennifer McGuire

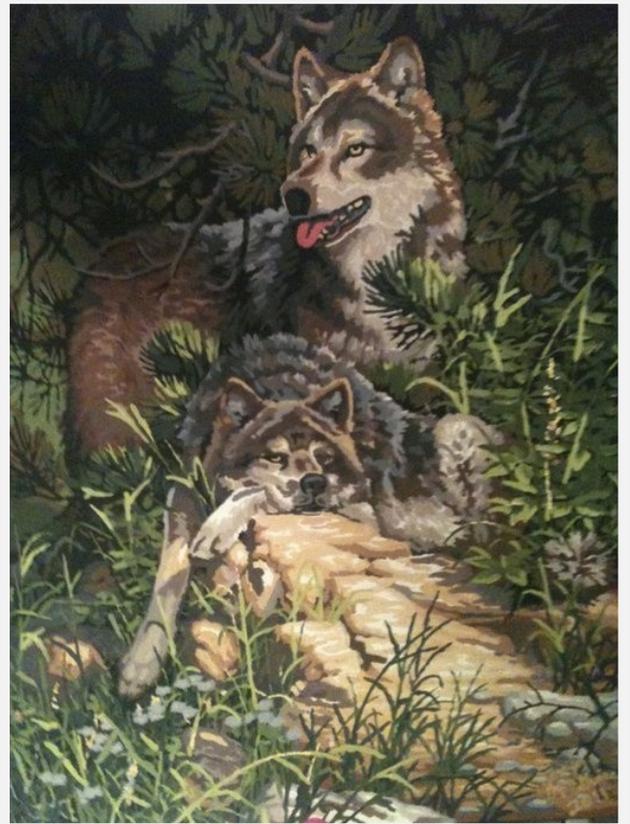
College requires a plethora of dedicated time towards homework, studying, and simply being present in class. According to Andre Jones, an Edison State College advisor, for every single credit a college student takes, at least three hours must be dedicated to homework.

Having six classes, 17 credits worth, the approximate amount of hours that I spend on homework is 51 hours a week. In addition to my classes, I have a part time job at the college as a student assistant. I also sell paintings and perform with my clarinet in the Edison State College Concert Band.

With such a busy life, I do not have much time to write outside of college. However, I occasionally write poetry and short stories, but I have a habit of deleting them over time. I believe that a work of art should be natural. In order for art to be natural, it must be temporary to make room for more art to come.

When I sell my paintings, I give away my hours of precious work, treating it as practice that was meant to be forgotten. I only want to see the most current result of my work; I do not need previous artwork to know that I have improved.

Although I do not sell my poems or stories, I treat them similarly to my paintings. I allow others to experience or critique my writing before I let it go into the abyss of deleted files on my computer. Art, whether it is music, drawing, or writing, may not last forever, but it will still be embraced by its creator and the people that experience it.



# Keep Writing

# Student Profiles



Toyoko Baba Duna is an international student who was born in Fukuka, Japan. She currently attends Edison State College. She is a mother of two children; the oldest child is her daughter of seventeen years and the youngest is her son of sixteen years. Toyoko studied accounting while she was living in Japan, but ended up coming to America because her husband was in the Navy and the family moved from Japan to the United States.

Toyoko mentions that “Japanese schools make their students study rigorously, and the students are pushed to succeed no matter what.” She also stated that schooling in Japan is expensive. The price is similar to if you were buying a house here in the United States. She mentioned that

men have the priority in having access to education after high school. For example, if there were two sisters, only the older of the two can further their education. In Japan, there are specialized high schools. Toyoko went to one of those schools for accounting; she did not have to go to college to continue her education. She stated that the specialized high schools help because it trains students for the specific job they hope to have. The difference in going to a college and a specialized high school is that the students are paid more after graduating from college rather than high school. However, colleges do not have the on-the-job training that specialized high school students have. The college students tend to be a little disoriented as to what to do when they first begin their job. They might have a harder time finding a vocation where they may be successful. Ms. Duna is well on her way.

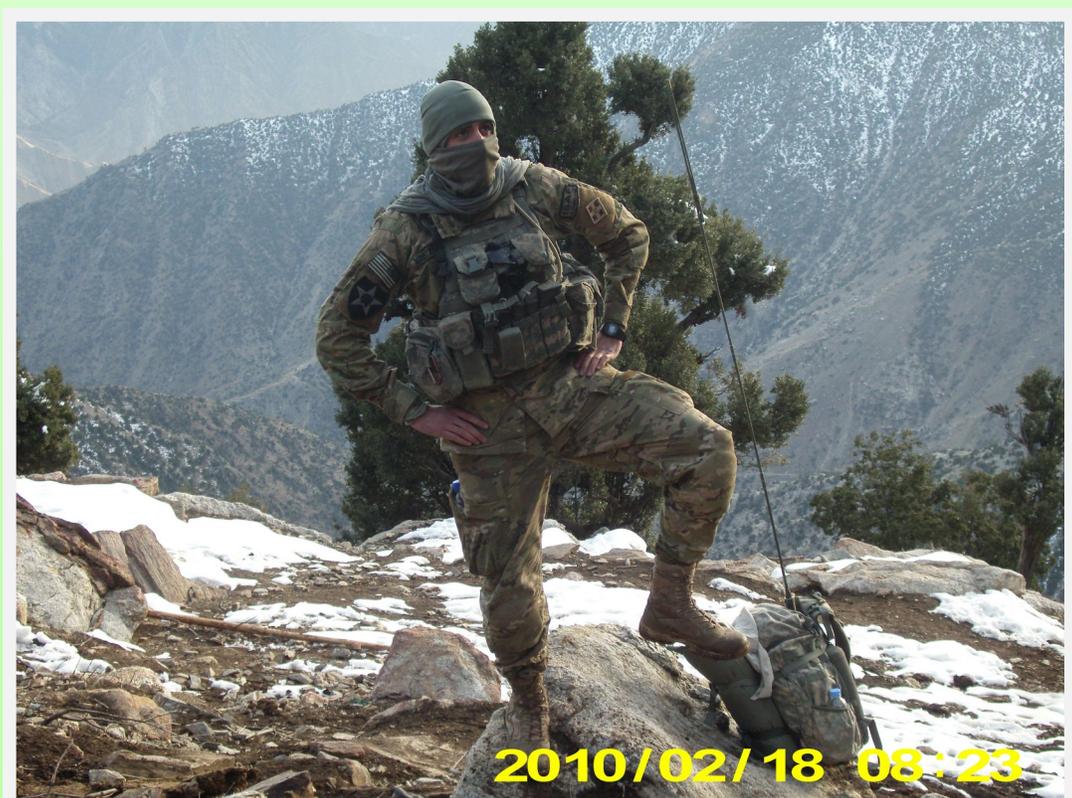
**By Ahidee Villalobos**

Nick Mazzarella is mostly known as a military vet, but he is also a very talented writer. He was active in the army, and served his country as a squad leader in Iraq. It wasn't until after his return to the states that he enrolled into higher education and discovered that he had quite a talent for writing. Mazzarella often finds inspiration for his writing when looking to the past. A husband of four years and a father of two, he is now a student at Edison State College and has a 4.0 GPA. He plans to pursue a career in Criminal Justice, and hopes to find himself working in the Federal Government. He does admit he that he didn't always have the dedication or discipline to do the hard work that those goals entail. He believes that everyone should serve in the military for two years and gain the discipline that helped him succeed. Adjustment into having so much freedom is something Mazzarella is still getting used to. When about adjusting to a family life the first thing he mentioned was that he was helping his second youngest to crawl and is excited to get to watch him grow. He was deployed to Iraq when his daughter was entering the crawling stage and didn't get to help with that step in her life. Although Nick is enjoying his freedom he misses the adrenaline rush that the military offers. He knows that school is important and worthwhile in the long run but hopes to involve himself in something more meaningful short term, and offers more a of a challenge.

"If you wish you were something, then you are, just be it"



**By Jody Glazier**



Korina Chilcoat is an enrolled student at Edison state college and a great writer as well. Korina was one of ten national essay winners in a Creative Communications' Writing competition, has had essays published for Teen Ink Magazine and most recently had a publication in a Chicken Soup for the Soul book. While currently working on her ideas for a novel I asked why her work was so deep and thoughtful. "My work tends to be on the deeper side because I'm a very honest writer. I don't like to hold back because when you start thinking about all the things that you can't or shouldn't write about is when your creativity begins to dwindle." The twenty year old considers herself more of a poet but never limits herself to it. She is a very ambitious writer who takes pride in her work as well. "My first priority when writing is to pen something that I can be happy to put my name on. I take great pride in my work so I'm not going to put my writing for others to view until it's the best it can possibly be. No sensible person would show off a burnt cupcake".



**By Alejandro Garcia**

**Reading March 19 Edison State College Auditorium 7:00 PM**

Gianna Russo is the author of the full-length poetry collection, *Moonflower* (Kitsune Books, 2011; silver medal winner of the Florida Publishers Association Presidents' Award, 2011), and founding editor of YellowJacket Press, currently Florida's only publisher of poetry chapbook manuscripts, for which she won a 2011 Creative Loafing Best of the Bay Award. A Pushcart Prize nominee, she has published poems in *Tampa Review*, *Ekphrasis*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Apalachee Review*, *Florida Review*, *Florida Humanities Council Forum*, *Karamu*, *The Bloomsbury Review*, *The Sun*, *Poet Lore*, *The MacGuffin*, and *Calyx*, among others. Her creative nonfiction has appeared in the *St. Petersburg Times*. She teaches at St. Leo University and lives in Tampa.

**Join us for this reading provided by funds from the Florida Humanities Council. Free!**



# Community Profiles



After living abroad for fifteen years, studying philosophy and languages in London, Greece, Israel and Egypt, Madelon Becker moved to Punta Gorda for some peace and quiet. She started working at and later managed *AllBooks*, where the idea for The *Peace River Center for Writers* began. Being a member of the Center since the beginning, Madelon has worked as Bookkeeper for five years and in the summer of 2011 agreed to work as Office Manager. Alongside her work with PRCW, she also takes care of her mom and runs *Shell Creek Books*, an antiquarian bookstore, selling books in her store and with online bookstores by consignment. Her first interest in creative writing began in her 20's with drama and poetry. She hopes to focus more on writing in the future and write a memoir or a travel log about living in the Sudan. She is excited to participate in more literary events held by the PRCW@ESC.

**By Cheyenne Richardson** (photo of Lynn Harrell and Carol Mahler).



Growing up, teaching was the furthest profession on Dr. Janice Jaen's mind, for she had aspirations of working in the diplomatic field. The thought of one day starting a family drove her down a different route in life. Being a 17<sup>th</sup> generation Priscilla Alden, a family known for having teachers and pastors, she says "...teaching is in my genes." Dr. Jaen had the unique opportunity to study abroad through scholarships won in college. While studying in Madrid, Spain, she was fortunate to partake in a class that was held in the renowned Prado Museum.

When asked on the differences between the American culture and those of countries she studied in, she mentioned the maturity of the young boys overseas surpassed those of the young boys in America. From the interview with Dr. Jaen, I learned the importance of being knowledgeable on different cultures and the benefits of acquiring the ability to speak multiple languages.

**By Kassiana Dorcemus**

Courland Nederveld recently released *Grumbles from the Keyboard or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love my Computer*; A compendium of some of the best *Bits and Bytes* columns Court has penned for the Charlotte Sun. In the column you may see Court explore the importance of time and explain where to automatically set your computer's clock. I asked Court a few questions to better understand the man behind the keyboard.

*You said in your blog last week that numbers are important. I noticed that on your Amazon profile you listed your lifespan as 1953-2057, 104 years. Is that number significant to you?*

104 seems a comfortable number. As to age, I think it would be a good age to be. As a goal setter, and having none of my ancestors live to be centenarians, I decided to set a new target for future relatives to shoot for. Additionally, at a 104 I suspect that I will be able to do anything I want and no one will complain. Can you imagine actions without consequences? 2057 will also be well into the singularity. I really want to see if new artificial life will do a better job of running the planet than we have. No bets that they can.

*Who are some of your favorite writers?*

Heilein, Clarke, Asimov, Ayn Rand, Creighton, Cussler, Sagan, Shakespeare, Hawking, Campbell, Poe, L. Sprague de Camp, Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, H.G. Wells, H. P. Lovecraft and of course Court Nederveld.

*Who or what inspires you?*

At my age, I am greatly inspired by simply waking up each morning. I am inspired by people that make things happen by ignoring or rejecting the "accepted" way of doing things, especially authors. Tell me how I should promote my book and I will do the complete opposite.

*From your articles it is clear you are a skilled writer. Do you ever have to force yourself to write or do you ever get writer's block?*

I really can't come up with an answer for that.

*Do you have any concerns about people stealing your content from the internet?*  
Always.

*Are you excited about the upcoming Olympics? How do you think the Netherlands will fare?*

Can't speak to all the events but the Dutch cycling team will be contenders.

*Do you have any pets? Are you in favor of dogs or cats?*

I have no pets. Having to put down my favorite dog several years ago I find myself unwilling or unable to face that possibility again. I am however fortunate to have a yellow lab that visits a few times a year and that handles my dog requirements. What is a cat?

*My final question: Coke or Pepsi?*

Yuengling

**By LRuiz**



*Fishermen's Village*  
*is a Corporate Member of PRCW@ESC*  
*Visit their web site at <http://www.fishville.com>*

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*“A haiku . . . is a hand beckoning, a door half-opened, a mirror wiped clean. It is a way of returning to nature, to our moon nature, our cherry blossom nature, our falling leaf nature, in short, to our Buddha nature. It is a way in which the cold winter rain, the swallows of evening, even the very day in its hotness, and the length of the night become truly alive, share in our humanity, speak their own silent and expressive language.”*

— R. H. Blyth, *Haiku*, Volume 1, page 243



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