



# WRITING CURRENTS

*Peace River Center for Writers* **10 years!**

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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.

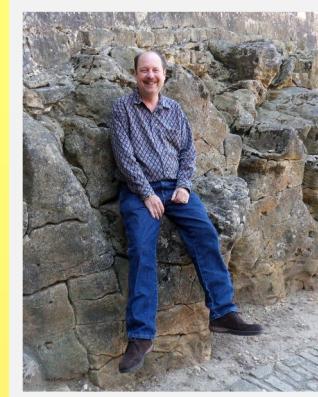
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Peace River Center for Writers founder, Carol Mahler in an impromptu interview with Board of Directors member and sun correspondent, Shirley George. October 3, 2012. Edison State College auditorium, Punta Gorda.

**Although summer was quiet, Fall at Edison State College began with over one-hundred students, faculty, staff, and PRCW members celebrating the birth of the Peace River Press. Carol Mahler's first full length book of poems, "How Do I Follow" was published in September 2012 with a great review by Steve O'Reilly, blurbs from the poets Lola Haskins and Peter Meinke, and a phenomenal reading by our first featured poet.**

**Our choice was easy since Carol had so many fine poems collected. Even though a house fire claimed many of her manuscripts, she worked throughout the summer revising and reviewing her own work, the book's layout, and networking with our press Editor, Doug Houck, and the publisher in New York. She even took the photograph for the cover. Besides, without Carol, there wouldn't be a press or a writer's center— at least not like the one we have now — and I wouldn't be writing our members to say thanks for staying with us.**



**We continue to showcase quality readers, write grants, hold workshops, support the community and students across South Florida. Through the pages ahead you may find some evidence of this. You may find Carol's vision continuing to manifest itself with our shared art throughout the following pages.**

**Thanks for your support,**

**John Pelot**

**To reserve your copy of "How Do I Follow" by Carol Mahler write [PRCW@Edison.edu](mailto:PRCW@Edison.edu) or call 837-5662. Books cost \$12 each.**

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**Something new: join Martha from January to May for gentle Yoga at the Charlotte campus of ESC**

**Martha is a certified Yoga instructor with a flexible teaching style and comfortable working with people of all ages. Write: [PRCW@Edison.edu](mailto:PRCW@Edison.edu) for details**

# **Author's Market**

## **Fishermen's Village**

**November 25, 2012**

**12 PM to 6: PM**

**Soon it will be that time  
of year again. We hope you will join us  
for our seasonal Author's Market at  
beautiful Fishermen's Village. As part  
of the Festival Of Lights celebration,  
authors from around Florida will visit  
the village just in time for Christmas.**

**The village shops and restaurants will tempt you with holiday gifts and fare. There will be music  
at Center Stage, and as the sun sets enjoy a nice dinner and watch all transformed by light.**

**Write: PRCW@Edison.edu for details. Come to sell or come to shop. This is your market.**



# **Poetry & Fiction**

**Lola Haskins** is the 2012 Van K. Brock winner for Anhinga Press and their prestigious Florida Poetry Series for her full-length book, "The Grace To Leave". Lola read at Edison, Charlotte four years ago as a recipient of our grant with the Florida Humanities Council. She has published eleven books of poetry and three works of prose. We hope to have her back in April!

**Rosalynde Vas Dias** read on November 1 at Edison, Charlotte as a representative of the Florida Writer's Circuit from the Florida Literary Arts Coalition. Rosalynde's book, "Only Blue Body" was the winner of the Robert Dana Award from the Anhinga Press. This was her first published book.

**Michael Martone**, prose writer, professor, and selected Florida Circuit author from the Florida Literary Arts Coalition, read at Edison State College in Ft. Myers in September. His reading was intimate and informative. If you missed seeing Michael, make sure to follow information on our Facebook page, PRCW@Facebook.com, or check dates on upcoming newsletters for our FLAC reader in February and next September.



**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. Next fellowship is Dec. 1 No charge except the cost of your breakfast. Join Doug for a view of writing in the AM.



**What A Wonderful Place To Live!**

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**Happy Halloween!**



**Florida Humanities Council Grant 2013**

Dr. Douglas Houck, PRCW vice president, PRP Editor, and chief grant writer, came up with yet another fine program. We had a great lineup of historians and poets but for the first time in six years, our grant was not approved. We will be looking for funding from another source and will apply again for the FHC mini-grant. They have been extremely generous with us and we thank them for their support.

# Open Mic. Center Stage

On the second Monday of each month, Open *Michael* is happening at Fishermen's Village at 6:30. Meet at the center stage by the Oyster Bar. PRCW monthly event. Join MC [Michael Haymans](#) as we attract more readers, musicians, and great crowds.

Currently there isn't an Open Mic at Hava Java Grill. Please call the grill and inquire when it will be back. I know Shirley George is ready!

## 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 Writing Workshops with Doug Houck

The Prose Writer's Workshop will be held at Edison State College in Room E-120 on Saturday mornings for the coming semester.

**10:00 am in Room E120 at Edison State College on Saturday Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>, Saturday Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>. Charge: \$20 a session for those who did not sign up for all five sessions.**

As the workshops will focus on in-depth participation, analysis, and revision of manuscripts, participation will be limited to five.

To register: Please contact Doug Houck, [millerhouck@comcast.net](mailto:millerhouck@comcast.net).

**The 2012 Winner of the Florida Writer's Association's Golden Palm award for memoir, PRCW Member, Robert J. Taylor**

(Bob Taylor) was a student of Doug's prose writing Workshops. His memoir is about a hospital official in Pakistan and reads like a novel.



**The Visual Arts Center of Punta Gorda** created the fantastic Monet Festival where visual art and the written word share a space that is dear. Four out of ten readers selected are members of PRCW. This month-long journey as a 21 century parallel to Monet's genius, his love, and his vision, was a tremendous success.

**Amina Gutier** to read at Edison in Punta Gorda in February !

# **People to know at Edison State College**

**By Chris Kalambalikis**

## **Dr. Thomas Rath: Interim Dean of Arts and Sciences**

Dr. Rath has been in higher education for about twenty -five years. He has had different jobs outside the field of education, such as a manager for a flea market and a director of a shelter for runaway youths. He started as an adjunct teaching Student Success Skills for about 9 years and eventually earned his doctorate. Once he received his doctorate, there was a need for an interim Campus Dean at Charlotte for a year. After serving until another Dean could be hired, Dr. Rath applied for Associate Dean in Fort Myers, in charge of business and technologies, among other programs. He was then asked to serve as the full-time academic Campus Dean at Charlotte. In this capacity, Dr. Rath served four and a half years.

Dr. Rath described his experience as Dean on the Charlotte campus as a “roller coaster ride, but overall very good. It’s a very high intensity, high energy job as well as time intensive.” He says that one definitely has to surround oneself with very good people. There are pros and cons to having this job. There is an opportunity to positively influence outcomes, change student’s lives in a significant way , and a level of independence in decision making. The cons are that it is a contract job and there is no guarantee of the position after the year is over. You’re “alone” you’re “The man without a country” as Dr. Rath says. Because it’s highly time intensive, there’s no escape from it.

When asked about his accomplishments he answers that it’s always good to find excellent faculty. He, with help from others, has found three new lines of highly qualified faculty members. Another accomplishment is that the college is able to introduce new programs while saving money. For example, he’s proud that they have the collegiate high school: For two years high school students have attended classes with college students.

Dr. Rath enjoys being Dean. There are far more positive aspects than negative. There’s always a challenge, and the job is always a creative process. College is an amazing place if one takes advantage of it and his job is to give students those advantages. There’s a great need for people to take on leadership roles. “Those who never expected to be in a leadership position are usually the best,” says Dr. Rath.

(This interview was conducted in early October with minor changes to Dr. Rath’s current position with the college.) Jp



# **Mary Ann Walton: Charlotte Campus Librarian**

**By Mark H. Hoskins**

## **A Dedicated Professional**

Edison State-Charlotte's Learning Resources Director, Mary Ann Walton, isn't highly visible, but she is always a professional, and always available to help students. Mrs. Walton has served the Charlotte campus library since January 2005, when she began working under her mentor, Jamie Reynolds, whom she credits as "an outstanding director." In January 2010, Mary Ann stepped in as Interim Library Director, and officially became the Learning Resources Director in June, 2010.

Mary Ann earned her BA from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, and her Masters in Library and Information Science from USF. She attends, and sometimes teaches, webinars and seminars to stay current. Mary Ann and her husband Ford, a biologist with the State of Florida, are long-time residents of Charlotte County. They have two sons and three grandchildren, all of whom live out of the area.

When asked what she enjoys most about her job, Mary Ann unequivocally states "the students." Her staff of three full-time, and two part-time assistants, plus four student assistants, are constantly busy checking out books, helping students with citations, finding resource materials, and coordinating other aspects of library science. Mary Ann's goal is to help Edison State's students become "self-sufficient learners." She "loves to interact with students," and to identify "which resources they really need," for papers and projects. Mary Ann contends that mere student orientation is insufficient, so she welcomes anything that advertises the advantages the library provides to students.

The Charlotte campus library has seen considerable changes since 2005. Computers have increased from approximately 50 to 75. Beginning in 2008, the library was completely remodeled and made more student-friendly. There is now a quiet study area, a classroom "social" area, and updated colors and carpeting. Mary Ann foresees multiple changes in electronic communication. She predicts that within five years the entire publishing system will be affected, because mainstream publishers are late entrants to electronic publishing; this may cause adverse financial repercussions to college libraries. But whatever the future brings to collegiate libraries, Mary Ann Walton and her staff will be at the forefront, and dedicated to Edison State's students.



**Composition II Class on Wednesday night. Mary Ann arranged for our evening librarian, Jeanette Burke, to provide instruction on using specialized data bases for literature courses.**

**Mary Ann Walton  
Charlotte Campus Librarian**



**People to Know at Edison State College**

# **Upon the Appearance of Hostile Fiends in an Elderly Woman's Neighborhood**

**By Britney Ingram**

Agnes was in her kitchen when the first group of sadistic thieves arrived. She was shaking as she set down her fork and grabbed the container beside her. Despite her nearly overwhelming anxiety, the first group was generally the least threatening.

She stood, her tired knees wobbling slightly under her own weight, and began walking towards the front door, where the pounding against the dark wood was becoming heavier. As she placed her hand upon the doorknob, she stopped, took a deep breath, and then let it out lightly, working to regain her composure. Agnes had everything planned out; everything was under control, and none of them could hurt her tonight.

The sound of the door creaking open slowly immediately merged together with the outside sounds of frantic demonic squeals and Agnes felt a shiver rush down her old bones. One of the thieves locked eyes with her, and she felt the powerful hunger behind their chilling blue color drilling into her psyche. She quickly looked away.

Her hands, trembling despite her attempts to relax, held out her belongings for the monsters to devour. Inside the container she offered to the visitors were items of sustenance, and a stagnant atmosphere of anxiety. She watched in openmouthed silence as the creatures tore into the container, their gnarled, blistered, and blood-coated hands thrashing about within it, their eerie cries wailing out for more of her belongings, until they reached a point of appeasement and retreated from the area outside her home.

She closed the door quickly, and shut her eyes tightly, drawing a deep gathering of oxygen into her dusty lungs. Then, Agnes opened her eyes and peeked out through a small crack in her torn maroon curtains. The beasts were everywhere. She would need to move quickly to prepare for their next attack.

Wobbling back to the kitchen, Agnes began gathering up her ingredients. She, of course, had little knowledge of what substances could kill monsters and demonic creatures, so she had purchased a collection from different locations. Herbicides, Rodenticides, Insecticides, Biocides, and even Spermicides lined her kitchen counter, the latter intended to hopefully at least kill off reproduction if the others could not kill off the beasts themselves.

She began mixing together the toxins, inserting them carefully into the items of sustenance that she was being forced to offer to the brutes, and placing them delicately into the now almost empty container.

The pounding upon her front door suddenly began again, startling Agnes. She hurriedly threw the last few items into the container, and ambled to the door. Agnes would open the door, give the monsters what they demanded, and then rush back to the kitchen before the next group arrived.

She continued this process throughout the night, with each visit becoming more and more daunting as larger, deeper voiced creatures began appearing, some even forcing open her front door to take her offerings.

Finally, though, after several hours of hastening and nervousness for poor Agnes, the streets began to clear as complete darkness fell and a light misty rain started to descend upon the neighborhood.

Agnes pulled back her timeworn curtains one last time to peek outside, and concluded that there would be no more visitors. Exhausted, she returned to her kitchen a final time to gather up all of her materials, piling all of the remaining items she had and all of the poisons that were left into an already half-full trash bag.

Tugging on a dark blue raincoat, she carried the trash bag out her back door, and tossed it into her garbage bin. She then slowly tugged the garbage bin out to the front of her home. As she returned to her living room, she hung up her raincoat on a rusted old stand nearby the door and turned her attention to her favorite armchair.

Nestled in the folds of the old armchair's trusted embrace, with the tranquil pitter-pattering of the raindrops meeting her roof and windows filling her ears, Agnes let her lips wrinkle into a smile. Thanks to the good Lord, she had made it through yet another night of the monsters demanding homage and destroying her peace and sanity, and she was comforted in knowing that thanks to her, there would be far fewer monsters appearing on her threshold in the year to come.

Outside her doorstep stood a small orange sign with a pumpkin underneath it, which sat quietly for all to read, saying: Happy Halloween.

## The Rose of Yesterday

We were young,  
Idealists in our own right.

Love was small yet abound,  
To be young was to be king.

Our town was an oppressed state,  
While the world was our utopia.

Eager to age,  
They say life is short,  
so live it up,  
be that what it means.

But for us,  
it is forever,  
and we have forever,  
to be simple, alive, young.



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## The Lonely Lookout: A Postcard Poem

The coming of orange tells of the day's end,  
Water's edge changes by lunar command.  
The Lonely Lookout begins the night watch,  
Standing aside from his Fall-changing kin.

Summer is on its way out of the door,  
The orange and red and yellow Fall-Changing  
Kin are chemical symbols to this fact.  
Not the Lonely, for even in changing,  
There must be a Lookout for the Lonely.

Day is night, night is day for the Lonely,  
In eternal wait on that high cliff-side.  
Perhaps he is waiting on a lost ship,  
Or maybe It guards against season change.

We may never know who Lonely awaits,  
for it is a mystery still to me,  
as Lonely is nothing but a dead tree.



# **When Things Go Bump in the Night**

**By Heather Hernandez**

When things go bump in the night it can be frightening experience, and many people in that situation wouldn't know who to call, not the *Ghostbusters* folks, but a local non-profit organization called Peace River Ghost Trackers. Led by husband and wife team Scott and Sprout, the Peace River Ghost Trackers have been established since 2000 and have been active in the Charlotte County community. Their intentions are noble; "Experience, Learn, Teach," is their motto for every investigation. With their small team they do a complete investigation to try and provide answers with scientific evidence.

A typical investigation can take around 50-60 hours to review the evidence; they search for truth with patience and determination. Armed with technologies such as EMF detectors, video cameras, and thermal imaging cameras, they can rule out on-site abnormalities. They provide logical explanations to rule out anything ghostly, ranging from eye problems to high electrical fields where people may experience false "paranormal" feelings.

Sprout will be on an episode of *My Ghost Story* on the Biography Channel sometime in November of this year. Although they don't live a glamorous life in Hollywood they are happy enough providing truth and helping people; it is a dedicated hobby for the pair. They do not charge for their services but they accept donations of any kind for the Peace River Ghost Trackers. To learn more of their investigations and information about the team visit [www.peaceriverghosttracker.com](http://www.peaceriverghosttracker.com).

"The squeaky wheel gets the worm," was an unconventional quote from Scott that after a late night investigating.

(Left to right: Scott and Sprout. Photo taken by Heather)



**Sothern Florida has its share of scary**

**Stories, myths from Indians, modern day**

**Urban myths, and the sand too shallow to**

**Bury a body deep enough.**

### The Unusual Dawn Haiku

Must you go so soon,  
My dear sweet moon? The day is  
Young, for this new sun.

By Matt Keibler

### Shark Fishing with no Moon

Water laps the sea wall in nights  
passed under spoked fingers of Australian pines,  
where we camped amid the stars, fishing for sharks  
with stainless hooks, barbed and baited.  
Streaming mullet heads were held with hemp,  
braided to amber rope.

Wind disturbs trees  
sending seed to ground.  
We are boys waiting for the shock  
on the line that means we got one.  
The moon is stuck on another horizon;  
our Coleman lantern poses as savior.  
Outside its light a sea and sky  
Stick together like molasses.

My friend Ben, his hair burning blond,  
Ties a smaller line to his ankle.  
“Tells me when there’s a strike,”  
He says after the last beer.  
The pines are ominous against  
The Skyway bridge; car lights  
Strobe along the cement guardrail.  
Then fall deeper  
Into that pine needle bed, my youth,  
Feel again the embrace of the last sea  
Spawning dreams; salmon returning.  
I was sixteen and free  
To fish for sharks  
Sleep under the stars  
And live for that moment -  
Never knowing how many people I loved  
I would lose  
Waiting for the shark.

By John Pelot



# Student Essays: The Narrative

## **Staying Afloat Through Tragedy**

Throughout life, journeys are inevitable, and for me personally no destination in my life could be more significant than the day I became an orphan. Each person experiences something great in the divine spectrum of life, and through trial and error these memories are most prominent in someone's existence. If I were to describe my journey through life, it could be best compared to a cruise ship with many destinations. Each destination would symbolize a milestone I have achieved, voluntarily on my own and with the help of many people along the way. At this moment in time, I would be the one sailing the ship, and not one of the passengers onboard. Becoming an orphan all started when I lost my mother and, more recently, my father. From that point forward, the child within me had to grow up a lot more than I ever expected.

Losing my father greatly impacted my values on small things most take for granted. When my father was alive, from my earliest memories, he used to say, "Take nothing and make it into something". This was one of many of my father's unforgettable quotes that to this day still leaves an impact on me. He would always fix peoples' lawn mowers, boats, and even cars. My father knew that little things, even in machinery, played a big role in keeping the machine functioning. By making due with little things, whether it was a small amount of money, a beat up car, or even a missing parent, he always strived to show me the essential quality in things, which from first glance could appear unimportant. I learned the importance of "the little things" and their close relationship to "the big things". For example, because my father taught at a university in Guyana, he valued education. This meant to me that I was supposed to go to bed on time, wake up early, be prepared for school, and bring home good grades. Growing up under his wing, I learned how to expand my wings as far as I could and to fly as high as I wanted to (without hitting the sun, of course). In turn, the adventures I had with him were some of the most sad, yet inspiring and memorable. At the age of 12, my mom passed away from brain cancer, and my father was my only source of strength I could find at the time. When my mother became ill, my father had to assume multiple responsibilities of single parent and caregiver to his dying wife. From his success at balancing these roles, I learned adaptability and the strength required to confront a new ugly reality. Growing up with him during the "Great Recession" became a constant struggle at times, but he gave me the lift off the ground when I needed it. With the little we had, we made the most of it. However, I always found myself asking, "What can I possibly expect next?" He prepared me for life's inexplicable changes. One of those big changes was when my father passed away. He left me with all the tools I needed. After all, I know my father would never leave me high and dry. He never did.

Shortly after he died, everything felt as if the world was at a stand-still. I remember that my cousin Jason had set up our first destination, the beach. I was confused, and depressed. Leaving my house feeling empty inside, I was in need of some air. Stepping out of his shiny Acura, we looked up at the horizon over the waves. It was sunset. As I stepped onto the silky sand on the beach, I was drawn closer to the ocean, as if it was calling me. Jason was silent. He looked up and the clouds, and as if out of a movie, rain started to pour down on us. My eyes grew heavy with tears, but this was just the beginning to a long journey of what Jason tried to show me here, and that was life.

At that point, he said these words, "Shaam, Life sucks. You just gotta live and never give in. I know you can make him proud." I started crying. I knew this feeling, with my mother when she died. But this destination represented the start of a new chapter in my life. As we left that beach, "It Will Rain" by Bruno Mars played on the radio. I thought to myself, it may rain, but after every storm, the sun always prevails. The next stop to this journey was after that day, which included my father's memorial service, at which he was cremated. In my culture, the son is responsible for the ceremony rituals and is indeed required to push

the button in the crematorium. We then took his ashes to the river, and blissfully spread them in the water, where he and my mother were finally reunited again.

Wisdom is gained when one experiences things based on trial and error, or just by plain old coincidence. After the turmoil I was put through being only 16, I set my ship on sail to one final destination that I knew I wanted to reach. And that was to pursue everything my father wanted me to, my education. I made it an oath to better myself in every way possible so I could be the person I always wanted to be. My destination isn't just to finish school, but to give back to the people who helped me along the way. My oldest sister Julie had to inherit me into her family now, so having a sister as a mom isn't easy. With my father gone, meeting these goals will involve a lot of stops or destinations along the way.

Sailing a boat takes a lot of responsibility, especially if the boat I am sailing so happens to be called the S.S. LIFE IS UNPREDICTABLE. On this ship, you can expect many stops and occasional collisions with some rocks that have exposed themselves on course. What matters the most is making the trip to everywhere you intend to go as happy as you can. Use the little you think you have, and make it into something. It's crazy how little gizmos in our boats or bodies do keep us from going overboard, and if one is missing, how sometimes things be under- looked and can go wrong as a result. I shall always remember through any journey to always "Take nothing, and make it into something." A piece of my father shall always ride aboard the ship I sail, all the way from sunrise, to sunset.

[By Shaam Prashad](#)



## An Unexpected Tragedy

Over the years of the Haitian history, the nation has suffered through devastating events, from natural disasters such as hurricanes to devastating earthquakes. Those disasters caused a terrible amount of major roads ripped apart and concrete buildings turned to dust. Citizens are exposed to uncivilized ways of living, even though a natural disaster has never put the country to its breaking point. As Haitians were looking forward to a new year and hoping for recovery, on January 12, 2010, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake destroyed Haiti. The unstable and shaking ground terrified the citizens. They ran out of their homes to the streets. Many were killed and others were alive but trapped under rubble. This crisis left many people homeless; it was worse than it has ever been. The journey was only the beginning for this country, and also for me, who even though I survived, am still a victim.

It was a typical day. Everyone was doing what they do on a daily basis. No one knew what was going to happen. Vendors went to sell products on the market; and students such as myself, went to school that day. My friends and I were studying and we were having fun without knowing that we were going to be separated for a while. At the sound of the bell, everyone was excited to leave, saying "à demain" which means "see you tomorrow."

It was around 4 pm when I arrived home from school. I only had a chance to take off my uniform. As I was getting ready to prepare dinner and start with my studying, I heard a loud noise coming from the ground. It was a sunny day; therefore, I was thinking that it couldn't be the thunder, yet the sound came from the ground. Without even having time to think through the possibilities of what the noise could have been, the ground started to shake tremendously. My house had two floors, and at that time, I was alone on the first floor. It felt like everything around me in the house was collapsing and walls were coming toward me. Picture frames were falling off the walls. I thought that everything was going to fall on me. For the first few seconds, I could not exactly tell what was going on. I was yelling out for my parents: "MOMMY, DADDY." There was a cacophony of noise in the air. All I could hear in my neighborhood was screams from my neighbors! Some people were crying out to God "Jezu, edem" (Jesus, help me), others were just yelling "Mayday!" When it stopped after about 35 seconds, most people found their way out, on the streets so they could feel safe. As my family told me afterward, during the last seconds of the quake, I had a panic attack; they found me almost unconscious and they had to grab me and pull me away from the house. I was shaking as if it was the ground shaking and I lost control of my body. I recovered a few minutes later.

Everyone in my neighborhood was in shock but at the same time, thanking the Lord for saving their lives. The most terrible part was the aftershocks. Every now and then, the ground would shake. The gates of the houses in my neighborhood were made of wrought iron, so when that happened, the noise was so loud that it sounded like a thunderstorm. Today, there still are aftershocks. That night, it wasn't a matter of social rank, prestige, or title; everyone spent the night on the streets. It was cold; some people had to sit on the dusty ground and others had chairs or benches. It was difficult to get a signal on cell-phones. People were worried about their family that they couldn't reach. Every minute or so, you could hear someone screaming after finding out about the loss of a friend or family member. My family and I survived the first night.

The following day, I went in my house and almost everything was on the floor. I took a couple of bed sheets so I could sleep. I brought enough so that I could share with my neighbors. Most people didn't get a chance to eat dinner that night, so in the morning, people gathered what they had in their houses so they could make breakfast. We found coal and a big container so we made hot tea and ate bread. That day, January 13<sup>th</sup>, the aftershocks were intense. The citizens were told to find the closest field to either set tents, or set their sheets so they could spend their nights. There was a football field by my house, therefore my whole neighborhood set their belongings there, and when the sun rose, everyone had to get up and go back to their houses and spend the day. They showered in their houses when they could,

ate there, and did everything else that was required. It was an everyday routine. It looked as if it was going to rain every night, but then one night it poured. I was sleeping until my parents woke me up: "Get up! It's raining." I got up as quickly as I could, but unfortunately I got wet, and during the day, I was sick. I was coughing with a high body temperature.

Two weeks later, my mom, my siblings and I came to the U.S. Leaving my father behind was one of the hardest things I had to do; he is a teacher in Haiti, he had to stay and teach. It was a new life experience for me, even though I had visited America before. I used to come for summer vacation, but now I came to live there. It was a struggle for me especially with the language. As time passed, I was able to go to school. I quickly got used to the educational system since it was different than the one I was used to for my whole life. My first day at school was awkward. Every time I walked in a class, I heard students whispering, "Who is she?" The curious ones came to me: "What's your name? Where are you from?" I told them where I was from and some of them sympathized with me, and others didn't even care. I felt welcome in some other classes. Teachers cheered me up, even though I had a hard time understanding some of what they were saying. I was able to understand almost everything, and counselors helped me through testing, and requirements I needed to fulfill in order to graduate and walk out with a diploma. I worked very hard and now I am very proud of myself for where I am right now, in college. Who would have thought?

This was the greatest experience of my life. I survived one of the most catastrophic natural disasters in history and I am very grateful. It had a big impact in my life and I had to face one of the hardest things in life. It made me realize that life is important and short, and you can lose it at any moment.

By Rose Jolivain



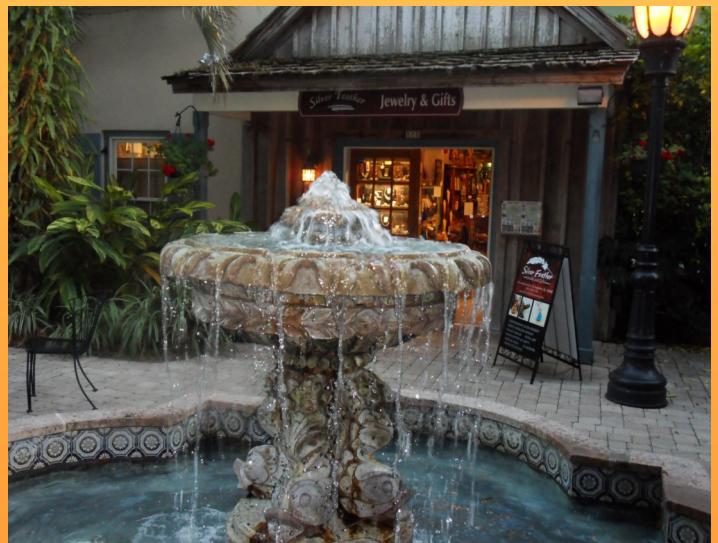
# The Writer's Tea: a PRCW tradition

**The next Writers Tea is held at the Port Charlotte Library near the Cultural Center from 1-3 pm on Tuesdays once a month. Writers and poets are welcome to come and share their creative endeavors with us. Tea will be provided. Please bring a snack of some kind to share. The Tea is held the third Tuesday of each month. Contact: Arlene Kincaid, 625-7312 or Mary Grace Patterson, 575-0739 for further information.**



**The Writers Tea at Workshop**

The Florida Writers Association held its annual conference in October. Doug Houck and I provide support as writing consultants in fiction, poetry, and non-fiction. There were over 600 writers and would-be writers in attendance this year.



Florida Literary Arts Coalition conference in St. Augustine. Great time and learned from the presenters and readers the second week in November.

## **Words Like White Elephants**

*The hills across the valley of the Ebro' were long and white. On this side there was no shade and no trees and the station was between two lines of rails in the sun.*

Ernest Hemingway: *Hills Like White Elephants*

A chasm, or perhaps a gulf, seems to exist between the writing process and the reading process. This becomes evident when reading manuscripts submitted by fledgling writers. There are extra words: prepositional phrases used in place of adjectives, conjunctions without function, and adverbs, lots of adverbs: adverb after adverb, most proudly sporting the “ly” inflection. Too bad that darn thing survived.

Extra words are the “white elephants” of composition. White elephants are, of course, burdensome possessions: in this case, extra words cluttering the manuscript—words which the writer cannot or will not dispose. They seem to come about during the writing process: when the writer is groping for a perfect description, trying to make an emphatic point, or when the writer is temporarily blocked, searching, grasping for a sentence, a next scenario—before sending their Huck down the river on a raft. Writers need to remove these extra words, get rid of them, chop them out, rip them out, tear them out, but somehow, they seem to survive the revision process.

Rather than write something like: Megan walked very slowly across the thick Brussels carpeting strewn about on an old oak floor toward a distant window at the far corner of the extremely large room and cautiously glanced out of the window. You could simply write: Megan walked across the room and looked out the window. It would move the story along.

I've used Hemingway's *Hills Like White Elephants* as an example of how to go about cleaning up writing by identifying and removing “White Elephants,” those extra words that confound and confuse the reader. Hemingway's description is concise and meaningful. Dialogue carries the action. Most readers seem to grasp what the story is all about.

Some have said writing is a lonely process. It can also be a sloppy process. Play with *elephants* while writing your initial draft, experiment with phrases and clauses--maybe the first four or five drafts; then clean it up.

*Submitted by: Douglas Houck*





The Peace River Center wishes everyone a happy and thankful Thanksgiving Day Holiday.

\*\*\*\*\*

Scenes from ESC Charlotte for Carol's reading and the beginning of the Peace River Press. Good friends and YRI stewards Debra and Murray Fewel.



## War

**The flags rise over the horizon  
Men search for the courage that lies within.  
As the day for battle draws near  
Men's hearts are full of fear.  
Tragedy as the first one falls  
Last thing they hear is their mother's calls.  
The blood that will water the meadows of France  
Looks as if it's humanity's last chance.  
Nothing changes nothing ever will  
I watch as time stands still.  
With no end in sight the screams echo through the night  
Children are dying yet they continue to fight  
Where can we go from here instead of living in fear.**

**By Andrew O'Brian**

We are interested in your feedback. Please let us know if you are enjoying the newsletter, attending events, interested in more information. Or you may want to become involved and volunteer. We will need some help for the Author's Market on November 25, on a Sunday afternoon after Thanksgiving. Meanwhile, enjoy Fall in Florida. JP.

### **The Fall Newsletter Staff:**

**Micah Daniel, Jennifer Reed,  
Jacqueline Goshay-Reed, Ridd  
Ally, Britney Ingram, Jeremy  
Scott, Chris Kalambakikis,  
Heather Hernandeze, Danielle  
Fordyce, Mark H. Hoskins,  
Matt Keibler, Andrew O'Brian,  
Chelsea Winkle and Amelia  
Knippenberg**

### **Special thanks to:**

**Micah Daniel for final layout edit  
Mark H. Hoskins for text editing and Martha Pelot.**



## Final Quest

**Night is falling,  
its mortal shroud loosened  
at last.**

**Stars become pointless,  
filling with shadow of time's past.  
Red giants, brightest in death  
recline like clipped angels  
in the current of a dark sea  
known as the milky way.**

**Yesterday we flicked off lights  
in unused rooms, set thermostats at 68,  
and drove to the ends of the world  
in faith of conservation.  
Now Sol begins its nova,  
and we humans, still wet from our shaping,  
grip survival within a man made shell.**

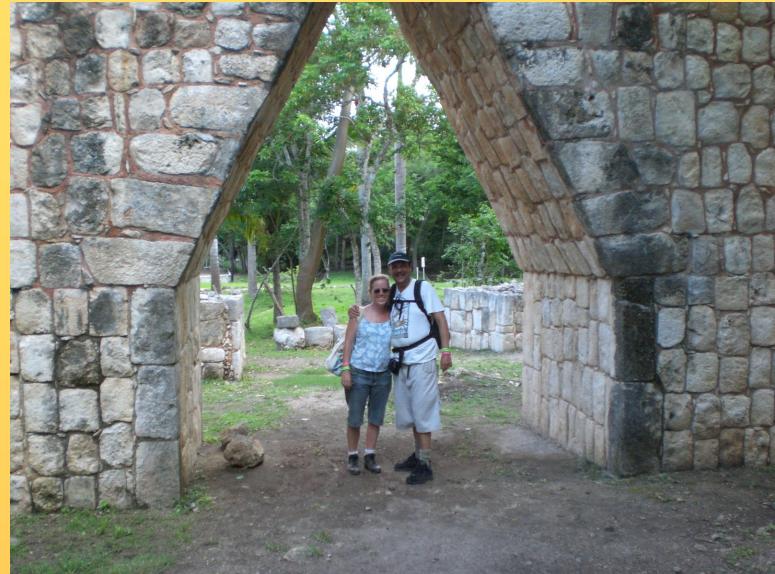
**Outside, lies a cold  
thinner than bone  
empty as a loser's pocket,  
waiting to fill with millions  
stuck in moving amber lives.**

**We are on the run  
as the world-ship leaves on cue  
and time stands by -  
a planet sized stop watch,  
star-born hustler at the trigger.**

**Mars and Venus crumble  
as the Earth banks  
out of orbit  
sending the moon spinning  
like a crated eight-ball  
into the flaming pocket of the sun.**

By John Pelot

First published in The Guilford College Review



## Fall's Wonder

Piles of leaves beckon me,  
"Fling your physique, sense fall's wonder!"  
Colors blend, maroon, amber, saffron.

Crushing leaves welcome.  
The mound embraces my body,  
Damp cool leaves tingle skin.

Scents mingle about me.  
Mulled cider, pumpkin, moist leaves,  
pine.  
To each its own memory.

The scene eases the mind.  
Taking in what surrounds me,  
I know tis fall's wonder!

By Danielle Fordyce

*Fishermen's Village  
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Visit their web site at <http://www.fishville.com>*

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Poet Rosalynde Vas Dias reading on November 1, 2012  
at Edison State College, Charlotte.

**I want to stand as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge  
you see all the kinds of things you can't see from the center.  
Kurt Vonnegut**

[http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/k/kurt\\_vonnegut.html#kYtKtvVY1GH5TJlx.99](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/k/kurt_vonnegut.html#kYtKtvVY1GH5TJlx.99)



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