

# Green River Writers

Volume 12, Issue 2

## Special points of interest:

- Essay by Anna Lucas
- Poetry Critique by Mark Brown
- NIPW 2007 Highlights

## From the President's Desk

Hello, All –

**After a winter** during which several of our members have experienced great loss, we are all looking forward to an easing of grief and of the weather, and renewal of hope.

**We welcome** Sheri Wright and Michele Shoemaker to our masthead and look forward to their getting our public readings venue back on track. Their talent and enthusiasm should do us wonders.

**Elsewhere in** this Newsletter, you may read Director Jeff Yocom's positive report about the Novels-In-Progress Workshop held recently at Spalding University in Louisville.

**And looking** ahead, please find data and a registration form for our upcoming Summer Retreat, the last one to be held at the

Catherine Spalding Retreat Center in Nazareth, Kentucky July 19-22. Our Winter Retreat, held there this past January, was restful and rejuvenating for all who attended, though we were sad to learn at that time that the retreat facility is being forced to close because of needed repairs. We will remember fondly our times at the Catherine Spalding Center and wish these good people the best.

**And now the** big news, retreat-wise: we have found a new home in Crestwood, Kentucky at the Kavanaugh Retreat Center on Kavanaugh Road. Already scheduled there are our Fall '07 Poetry Retreat (November 8-11) and our Winter '08 Retreat (date to be announced). We believe participants will be most happy with the quality and accessibility of these accommodations. Please note

that at this new facility, we will need to collect a portion of fees 30 days in advance in order to pass these monies on and hold our reservation.

**With pleasant** weather upon us, we look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming Poetry and Prose critiquing sessions, our public readings and at our July Retreat.

**Meantime,** take inspiration where you can find it, and write!

Your prez,

*Mary "Ernie" O'Dell*

## Inside this issue:

Signs & Wonders, Glory to God	<b>2</b>
Be Drunk	<b>3</b>
Personal & Professional Notes	<b>4</b>
Summer Retreat Registration	<b>5</b>
Calendar	<b>6</b>

# Green River Writers

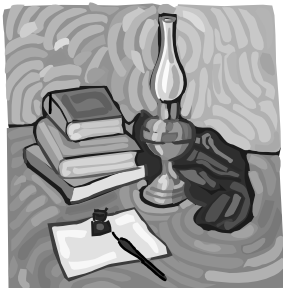
## SIGNS & WONDERS, GLORY TO GOD

by Anna Lucas



*"I wonder now  
what Ernest  
Hemingway's  
dictionary looked  
like, since he got  
along so well with  
dinky words that  
anybody can spell  
and truly  
understand.*

—Kurt Vonnegut



Last Monday, James Thomas Tumes ended up at the clinic with a broken leg. Wednesday, the Smith brothers awarded him \$50.00 cash money for finding the second section (the DEL) from the RON-DEL LIQUORS sign that turned up missing weeks before. A headline in Friday's paper read: James (Toomie) Tumes Gives God All The Credit.

Now, up until the day of his accident Toomie hadn't heard about the missing sign board. Nor had he seen the reward poster, which Ron and Del tacked on a cork board behind the counter in their store. As Toomie tells it, early Monday he found a large piece of plywood in his yard, sky-blue with gold lettering on one side, leaning against the oak tree nearest the highway. He reasoned that maybe God intended it for a special project and figured that the gold DEL stood for Do Everything in Love or something like that. Anyway, Toomie says he's not one to waste time or opportunity- especially when it comes to God's Will. So he printed JESUS SAVS in bright Blood-Of-The-Lamb red paint on the blank side of the board. Then he climbed up onto a limb of the oak and nailed his still-dripping proclamation to the trunk.

When he leaned back to admire his work he fell down out of the tree and banged his leg on the edge of the paint can.\* The can flipped over, splashed

Toomie, the tree, and Bilbob, the neighbor's nosey tabby. It sloshed a red puddle down the slope of the lawn before rolling across the highway and into the brush on the opposite side.

But praise God for cell phones because several passersby dialed 9-1-1 as they passed on by. One caller reported that it appeared as if the cat had gotten the best of the guy lying on the ground. Blood everywhere, he said. In the end, the Smiths agreed it would be best to hand Toomie a cash reward instead of the gift certificate originally promised (good for merchandise sold at RON-DEL LIQUORS) with all due respect to his religious affiliations.

The front page photo in Friday's DAILY REPEATER shows a beaming Toomie, sitting slant-ways on his couch, flanked by Ron and Del Smith, each holding up a corner of a fifty dollar bill. Toomie insisted on a full-length shot of his cast so he could show off the message he scribbled in black marker down his leg. The nurse at the clinic said he grabbed the marker and wrote the first word upside down and backwards before she could correct him, so the words in the photo say poG is good. Amen.

\*Later Toomie quoted Isaiah 25:11 to the reporter: God will bring down their pride despite the cleverness of their hands.

## THANKS

**THANKS** to . . . poetry meeting hosts January – April 2007 -- **Barbara Greer, Sandy Daugherty, Harriet Leach and Rae Cobbs.**

Thanks to **Sheri Wright** and **Michele Shoemaker**, who continue to host our Third Saturday Afternoon meeting. Michele and Sheri have also volunteered to head up our GRW Readings project. This is a formidable job, involving not only finding venues and readers to fill them, but arrangements for publicity for these events.

Thanks also to **Deanna Hopper, Victoria Rose, Virginia Anderson** and **Mary O'Dell** for volunteering to answer phones at the Public Radio Partnership Spring Fund Drive. This is not only an opportunity to serve our community but a chance for the name of Green River Writers to appear before the public.

Green River Writers is especially grateful to **Terri Alekzander**, our contest chair, as well as to category sponsors **Terri Alekzander, Marj Bixler, Earl Stigger, Jean Tucker, Alan MacKellar, Ruth Falk Redel, Mary O'Dell, Barb McMakin, Ellen Kelley, Judy Milford, Sherry Chandler, Barbara Greer, the Barroom Bards, Linda Frisa, and Kate & Delori Hawkins.**

Thanks to **Mark Brown** for columns he has contributed to our Newsletter.

## BE DRUNK

By Mark Brown

By Charles Baudelaire

Translated by Louis Simpson

You have to be always drunk. That's all there is to it--it's the only way. So as not to feel the horrible burden of time that breaks your back and bends you to the earth, you have to be continually drunk.

But on what? Wine, poetry or virtue, as you wish. But be drunk.

And if sometimes, on the steps of a palace or the green grass of a ditch, in the mournful solitude of your room, you wake again, drunkenness already diminishing or gone, ask the wind, the wave, the star, the bird, the clock, everything that is flying, everything that is groaning, everything that is rolling, everything that is singing, everything that is speaking. . .ask what time it is and wind, wave, star, bird, clock will answer you: "It is time to be drunk! So as not to be the martyred slaves of time, be drunk, be continually drunk! On wine, on poetry or on virtue as you wish."

Many elements of poetry are used in this poem, such as repetition, slant rhyme, compression of language, misdirection, and concrete imagery. Yet one important element is not used. This missing element is the first visual clue when approaching a piece of writing that it is poetry. "Be Drunk" does not use the line as a controlling device. With the subject of the poem, it would be cruel to ask it to walk a straight line. This poem is intoxicated with expression, abundance, and freedom.

The prose poem lives in ambiguity. The end of the line is never known nor planned. Poets turn this ambiguity into art by using it with intention. Readers are at first expecting a prosaic walk into the writer's subject. But as the stroll continues, readers start perceiving the repetition of sounds, the concentration of language, and the aptness of the images. Soon they perceive that these elements have been used on purpose. Baudelaire uses this form to play with readers' expectations. Once they reach the end of the stroll, he has delighted them with the unexpected wisdom of hedonism.

"Be Drunk" is crossing the strict divide of poetry and prose to celebrate the intrusion of drunkenness on sober world views that bear "the horrible burden of time." It advises readers to use what they find pleasurable—be it "wine, poetry or virtue"—as a distraction from the approach of the inevitable end. The largess of life must fill the page to the margins even if it can't fill it to the bottom.

## Green River Readings

On December 17, 2006, Green River members read at the Chez Moi Art Gallery. Participating were Sheri Wright, Victoria Rose, Mary O'Dell, Harriet Leach, Rae Cobbs, Gail Chandler, Cate Pearson, Katherine Roppel, Christine Strevinsky, Alexander King and gallery owner Brad Herre.

On March 2, 2007, members also read at A Reader's Corner Booksellers. Reading this evening were Cate Pearson, Gail Chandler, Sheri Wright, Michele Shoemaker, Mary O'Dell, Alan Mackellar and Mark Brown.

On April 7, at Destinations Booksellers in New Albany, Sheri Wright held a signing and a reading from her new collection, *Sharks Never Sleep*. Sheri will also sign at the Spring Festival at the Howard Steamboat Museum in Jeffersonville on May 19 and 20. Details available at 899-3737 or 245-4902.

Green River Writers again hosted California poet Richard Beban at Carmichael's Booksellers on Frankfort Avenue, on April 13. Richard read from his collection *Young Girl Eating a Bird*.

Green River members will hold a reading on May 13 at the Shady Lane Café on Brownsboro Road.

# Green River Writers

## Personal & Professional Notes

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary O'Dell (Lifetime)  
 Sherry Chandler, Chair (07)  
 Gail Chandler (07)  
 Judy Milford (07)  
 Mark Brown (08)  
 Jerry Bratten (08)  
 Georgia Wallace (08)

### OFFICERS

Mary O'Dell  
 President

Terri Alekzander  
 Treasurer

Barbara Greer  
 Secretary

Judy Milford  
 Historian

Georgia Wallace  
 Newsletter Editor

Michele Shoemaker  
 Sheri Wright  
 Readings Coordinators

### ADVISORY BOARD

Dianne Aprile  
 Michael Garrett  
 Shelley Goldbloom  
 Richard Hague  
 James Baker Hall  
 Mary Ann Taylor Hall  
 Teri McLaren  
 Elaine Palencia  
 Joy Pennington  
 Lee Pennington  
 Ruth Redel  
 Dorothy Sutton  
 Steve Womack

Green River Writers Newsletter  
 is published quarterly by  
 Green River Writers, Inc.  
 103 Logsdon Ct.  
 Louisville, KY 40243

**Angela Jenkins's** poem "Breadline" was accepted for publication by The Griffin Groynedd-Mercy College in Pennsylvania.

**Becky Alexander** and husband Dave have published *Cloudshine*, a chapbook of haiku, haiga (related haiku artwork), photography and short poetry. Becky also won first place in the WRAConteur Writing Contest, and has presented a haiku workshop to the Tower Poetry Society in Hamilton, Ontario. Her poem also won a contest concerning Black Canadian History Month.

**Jim Miller's** poem "There's Something Strange in Old LaGrange" was published in *Roundabout*.

**Mary O'Dell** has had poems accepted by *Rock and Sling*, *White Pelican Review* and *The Scioto Voice*.

**Roger Collins's** story "Breakthrough" was published in *The Pegasus Review*.

**Jerry Bratten** recently received the princely sum of \$381.52 for his short story, published in *Easy Rider*.

**Sheri Wright** placed in several categories of the Jesse Poet Contest.

**Anna Lucas** has had work published in *The Heartland Review* and online at *Right Hand Pointing*.

**Jim Tomlinson** has stories in *The Potomac Review*, *Five Points* and *The Shenandoah Review*. He is also teaching a master class in fiction at Montgomery College in Maryland. In May, he will serve on the faculty of the Pima Writers' Workshop. Jim was also the feature reader in the Books and Ideas Series. He will be conducting a craft class at the 2007 Eastern Kentucky University Creative Writing Conference in Richmond, KY June 4-8.

**Sherry Chandler** and **Jim Tomlinson** were featured readers recently at the INKY reading held

at the Rudyard Kipling in Louisville.

**Barb McMakin** won the Kentucky section of the St. Valentine's day Contest sponsored by Red Robin Restaurant with her poem "Oil and Water." Barb's husband Dale will have some of his photographs on display at the Elizabethtown College gallery. One of his photos will also grace the cover of an upcoming issue of *The Heartland Review*.

Congratulations to these Green River members who won or placed in our recent contest: **Janice Wiley-Dorn, Ellen Birkett Morris, Cate Pearson, E. Gail Chandler, Mary Stewart, Prudence Moffett, Anna Lucas, Betsy Packard, Elsie Klute, Sheri Wright, Linda Frisa** and **Christine Strevinsky**.

On a personal note, **Betty & Doc Stuedle** celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on December 29. Congratulations, folks.

### Green River Writers sympathy goes to the following:

**Elaine Jack** and her family in the death of her husband Jeff  
**Sharon Murphy** in the death of her mother  
**Cate Pearson** in the death of her father  
 The family of **Earl Stigger**, long-time GRW member and benefactor  
**Jeff Yocom** in the death of his mother  
**Barbara Greer** in the death of her sister-in-law  
**Georgia Wallace** in the death of her brother  
 The family of **Gary Devon**; long-time GRW advisor and workshop leader

# NIPW 2007 Highlights

By Jeff Yocom, Chair

This year's Novels-in-Progress Workshop provided the usual mix of instruction, collaboration and camaraderie for the more than 40 writers who converged on the campus of Spalding University the week of March 11 to 18. Participants enjoyed a week of breakout sessions and one-on-one mentoring under the distinguished faculty of **Elaine Fowler Palencia, Kit Ehrman, Elizabeth Bevarly, William Cobb and Jeanne M. Dams.** The week's educational sessions concluded on Friday, when literary agent and attorney Paul S. Levine delivered the Featured Speaker presentation on "The Legal and Business Aspects of Writing Fiction."

Closing weekend activities highlighted agent and editor guests from literary agencies and publishing houses across the country. Saturday morning kicked off with a

rousing Agent & Editor panel discussion that provided an insider's perspective of the publishing industry. Later that afternoon, conference participants engaged panelists in one-on-one pitch meetings that lead to many requests for partial and full manuscripts. This year's Agent & Editor panel included Paul S. Levine, of Paul S. Levine Literary Agency, Laurie McLean, from Larsen Pomada Literary Agents, Bob Sanders, representing Mundania Press, Uwe Stender, of TriadaUS Literary Agency, and Karen Syed, from Echelon Press.

Special thanks go out to the Novels-in-Progress Workshop volunteers whose help before and during the conference made it a success. Kudos to **Jerry Bratten, Brenda Ellis, Julie Kagawa, Cate Pearson, and David Snell.**

# Member News

## NEW MEMBERS

**Michele Shoemaker, Russell Vassalo, Steven M. Welch, Jody Clarke, Scott Slusher, Jim Miller, Kay Yount, Bill Jordan**

## NEW PHONE NUMBERS

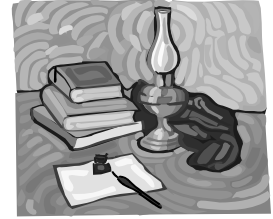
**Pru Moffett** has asked us to list these numbers for The Friday Group: 502-895-6197; 5002-494-9694; 502-454-7218

## NEW EMAIL

**Angela Jenkins** – [earth-woman@windstream.net](mailto:earth-woman@windstream.net)

**Mark Brown** – [jwoc@bellsouth.net](mailto:jwoc@bellsouth.net)

**Georgia Wallace** – [gwsd@insightbb.com](mailto:gwsd@insightbb.com)



Mary O'Dell's poetry mentoring sessions, both group and individual, are being offered as follows:

Thursday morning group, 10 am – 1 pm at Jitters Café in Crestwood -- \$20 per session

Individual sessions as requested – 103 Logsdon Court, Douglass Hills -- \$10 per hour

On-line or regular mail submissions for edit or critique – \$1 per page

**New opportunity: Evening group now forming, to be held on Thursday evenings & running April 26-June 27, 6:30-8:30+, at 103 Logsdon Court, Douglass Hills, Louisville - \$20 per session. PLEASE CALL 502-245-4902 or 502-552-9578, OR e-mail [Mary.Odell@insightbb.com](mailto:Mary.Odell@insightbb.com) TO REGISTER.**

## Summer Retreat Registration

July 19–22, 2007

**Mail to:** SUNMMER RETREAT, Green River Writers, Inc., 103 Logsdon Court, Louisville, KY 40243

_____ Single room, Thu. July 19	\$50	_____ Shared room, Thu. July 19	\$40
_____ Single room, Fri. July 20	\$60	_____ Shared room, Fri. July 20	\$50
_____ Single room, Sat. July 21	<u>\$60</u>	_____ Shared room, Sat., July 21	<u>\$50</u>
Total Single _____		Total Shared _____	

\* Room fee includes meals and linens

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-refundable deposit \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Registration \$10 TOTAL FEES/DEPOSITS ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Call (502) 245-4902 to confirm room availability  
RESERVATIONS & DEPOSIT MUST BE RECEIVED BY July 1, 2007

# Writers Helping Writers

Over the past twenty years, Green River Writers, Inc. a non-profit organization, has steadily encouraged the fellowship of writers of all genres, and developed a variety of programs designed to accommodate the novice and the experienced. Green River Writers' primary goal is to provide an atmosphere of encouragement and support where writers can freely share ideas and opinions. Our policy is to critique without expressing personal value judgment of content, thus enabling members to express themselves on any subject.

## Green River Writers, Inc

103 Logsdon Court  
Louisville, KY 40243

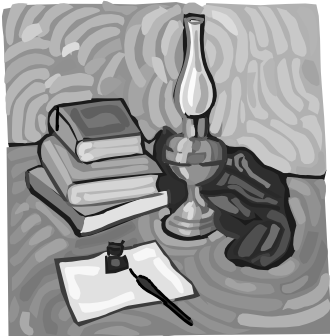
Phone: 502-245-4902

E-mail: mary.odell@insightbb.com

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LOUISVILLE  
PERMIT NO. 1751

*We're on the Web!*

[www.greenriverwriters.org](http://www.greenriverwriters.org)



## Calendar

### *Poetry*

#### **May 5**

Mary "Ernie" O'Dell  
103 Logsdon Ct. 40243  
245-4902/552-9578

#### **June 2**

Patrice Pittman  
3060 Beals Branch Dr 40206  
895-8087

#### **July 7**

Georgia Wallace  
11706 Frank Ave. 40243  
244-5001

#### **August 4**

Cate Pearson  
2327 Payne St. 40205  
753-9255

Poetry meetings begin at 6:30 p.m.

### *Prose*

#### **May 20**

Ernie O'Dell  
103 Logsdon Ct 40243  
245-4902/552-9578

#### **June 10**

Ernie O'Dell  
103 Logsdon Ct 40243  
245-4902/552-9578

#### **July 15**

Ernie O'Dell  
103 Logsdon Ct 40243  
245-4902/552-9578

#### **August 12**

Ernie O'Dell  
103 Logsdon Ct 40243  
245-4902/552-9578

Prose meetings begin at 2:30 p.m.