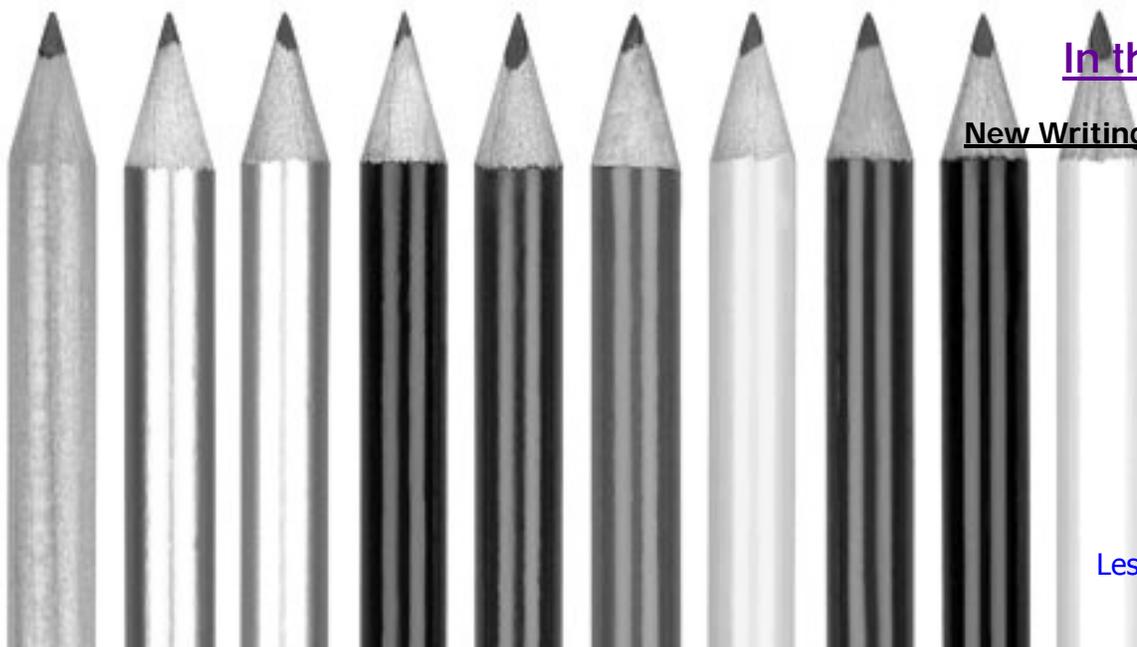




# WRITE ON!

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Marilyn Munroe

## **Pow Wows**

**Marilyn Munroe**

≥ I like going to pow-wows. There are a lot of friendly people of all races including black, white, brown, and mixed.

Family and friends meet up with each other, make new friends and see old friends.

Pow-wow's happen all over the world; in Canada, on reserves, in a field, and sometimes in schools and stadiums. There are Pow-wow trials during the summer and friends gather their belongings like make-up, jingle dresses, sweet-grass, food and clothes. People go to Pow-wows to win money, gifts, and prizes. There is a lot of competition in Pow-wows, but it could be for fun, too.

Pow-wows also offer healing, praying, sweat lodges and souvenirs like earrings, dream catchers, necklaces, mukluks and drums. The dancing is very spiritual and physical. By the end of each Pow-wow, you take something back with you. You make new friends, see old friends, give thanks and find out where the next Pow-wow will be.

It's all about the gathering together and being traditional. The last day of the Pow-wow is when they have the free food. The people gather for moose

meat, rabbit, fish, beaver, bannock and treats for all.

I picked the topic of pow-wows because I have family and friends who dance and travel to pow-wows all over the world. They make their own outfits and the guys sing and have their own drum. My family and friends sometimes take tobacco and sweet grass as an offering.

*(Marilyn is a student at STEP Literacy Program. She also recently graduated from the Learner Speakers Bureau training.)*

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Edwardine Stevens

## You Can and You Will Get There

EDWARDINE STEVENS

≥ In my younger years it was very hard for me because I did not fit in with the popular people.

When I would get to school and leave the school they would make fun of my clothes, hair and my accent, which made me give up and quit school. I was out of school for almost two years, that was when I realized that words can't hurt me anymore.

I went back to school at Yellowquill College and my first day was cool. People talked to me right away and for the first time I actually felt like I fit in somewhere.

Here at Yellowquill the teachers and fellow students are very helpful and all they want is for their students to succeed.

This past year I've passed all my classes. I like them because the teachers are understanding. I hope to see many more students come and make their dreams come true. I know that ever since I've been here mine have.

*(Edwardine is a student at Yellowquill College.)*

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## Starting Over

Viola Skye

≥ I started Yellowquill in January 2009.

I did a lot of thinking of going back to school, so I encouraged myself to give it a try. I thought it was too late for me, so I learned it's never too late for anything when you put your mind to it.



Viola Skye

I wanted to do something with my life and to reach my goals in life instead of wasting it on something else and regretting it afterwards.

There are a lot of things out there that I've missed all these years. One thing I didn't think of was "education". I always thought education wasn't important until now. But I have a lot of support from others at Yellowquill.

I really appreciate their help and their support, so I'm taking it one step at a time. Hopefully, I'll find my success in the future as a somebody that I wasn't before. Thanks to Yellowquill for accepting me as their student. Megwiche.

*(Viola is a student at Yellowquill College She also recently graduated from the Learner Speakers' Bureau training.)*

# Academic Refreshment for Early-Childhood Educators

Bev Johnson

≥ When Red River College announced that it was offering an Early Childhood Education Course to start in March 2009, at St. Laurent, Manitoba...

some of the prospective candidates were identified as needing academic refreshment in order to be able to successfully pass the entry test to take the course.

This is when the Fieldstone Ventures Literacy program came into play.



Above (left to right): Annette Mains, Claudette Allard, Ashley Appleyard, Jason Rudy (front row). Cindy Ducharm is in the back row.

I prepared a refresher course for the students to review a variety of academic areas. The main goal of this course was to help them to increase their vocabulary and to practice reading comprehension strategies.

The course consisted largely of a review of a variety of literary techniques used in poetry and prose and responding to questions based on fact and fiction readings. They also reviewed the construction of the newspaper and analyzed some articles.

Students were also given practice in reading and interpreting charts and graphs. Dictionaries, a thesaurus, and The Master Student were used extensively.

Students practiced using synonyms, antonyms, and affixes. They also became aware of many word origins, specifically through the readings of Greek myths.

Students were also instructed on the best procedures to answer multiple choice questions as well as other test taking tips. They became more aware of their weaknesses in this area and how to approach the questions more effectively.

Six students successfully passed the entrance test to take the Early Childhood Education course with the assistance of this upgrading.

*(Beverley Johnson is a Literacy Instructor at Fieldstone Ventures Ltd*

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# To Be or not To Be (a Parent)

Jen Boychuck

≥As a parent, I have often questioned whether I made the right choice.

It seems as though some people are truly not meant to be parents and have their well thought out reasons and arguments for not becoming parents. The longer I am a parent, the more I can understand some of their reasons.

I feel that one of the major reasons why some people choose not to become parents would be the ongoing expenses – from food to clothes to education – and it only gets worse as your child ages and becomes subjected to society’s need for brand names. It seems to me as though the school fees and fundraisers never stop.

Another reason that causes people to choose not to become

parents is selfishness. Lots of people look at what the average life style of a parent is and decide that they do not want that for themselves. To some people, having to deal with kids is too much for them.

Why would any sane person choose this life style over a



Why is it that some people decide not to become parents?

single person, one where they are able to go vacationing and not worry about what to make for another picky eater at home? Having to spend saved up money on over priced extra curricular activities is too much for some people. All of this factors into some people’s versions of having kids and it amounts to a very, very unpleasant picture for them.

In today’s world, with all the talk about ADHD, Autism, developmental disorders and hazards to women who are pregnant, who would choose to risk it? There is just too much risk associated with bearing healthy, functioning children.

So for those of you who cannot have children, I feel for you. To those of you who choose not to, or who just don’t want children, I’m sure it was a well thought through decision, if a difficult one. And to those of you who are still deciding, it’s a tough choice, but go with your gut feelings. As for me, as much as my son drives me crazy, I could not imagine my life without him and I love him dearly – but I know that I’m done at one.

*(Jen is a student at Stevenson-Britannia Adult Literacy Program, INC.)*

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# Teaching the Whole Person

An interview with Dorota Blumczynska

By Lindsey Walsh



Dorota with students

For this edition of *WRITE ON!* I interviewed Dorota Blumczynska at the Immigrant Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) Inc. Dorota is the Program Coordinator and one of the teachers in the Newcomer Literacy Initiative (NLI).

## ≥ On Teaching the *Whole Person*

“We look at the person as a whole, so we’re not ... limited to Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. We address the human side of the student. The human side of the student is mother, father, or grandparent; a refugee coming from a war torn country; a person with goals, passions.” When students are treated like “Whole People” the classroom becomes a secure place to “share their feelings” and students begin to “cross gender lines and culture lines in order to take risks”.

## ≥ On Partnerships

Partnerships are a cornerstone of NLI’s success.

For NLI students this has meant classes at Mary Jane’s cooking school and an “Alternative Spring Break” with the University of Manitoba, among many other experiences. This isn’t easy though! Dorota was quick to say that “three days of great programming” with, say, the U of M, can require “massive amounts of time and energy”.

## ≥ On Flexibility

“What’s required is an incredible amount of flexibility. In practical terms this means that, for every teaching destination, the teacher needs at least five roads that will lead there”.

≥ **IRCOM** is only one of many innovative programs in Manitoba. If you are a teacher or administrator with new approaches to teaching literacy, we’d love to share them in our next edition of *WRITE ON!*

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### **NEWCOMER LITERACY INITIATIVE**

provides community-based adult EAL literacy classes to newcomer immigrants and refugees in Winnipeg who cannot access mainstream programs due to childcare commitments or mobility issues. With on-site childcare and language supports, the NLI program currently runs 3 classrooms, 2 of the classrooms run five days per week and 1 runs three days a week. The NLI serves over 40 literacy learners and their children. It is a partnership between the Immigrant and Refugee Manitoba, Victoria Albert School, Hugh John Macdonald School and the Community Education Development Association. The program has received support from Neighborhoods Alive, Literacy Partners of Manitoba and the Winnipeg Foundation, with current funding through Manitoba Labour and Immigration ALT Branch. For more information, please visit [www.ircom.ca](http://www.ircom.ca).



Is your life in chaos?

## Always in Chaos

By Wendy Farmer

≥ I wonder why I am always in chaos: In my legal issues, with men, down to trying to deal with it, almost everyday something chaotic happens to me. I now realize that I was inadvertently asking for it.

Now I'm learning to take all the chaos in my life one day at a time. As it comes, I stop, look at it for what it is, and don't let it consume me, as I have let it do to me for a long time. I had let it take over my whole life, now I see by doing that I had been asking for chaos the whole time. I had been taking part in it by letting all of these people get to me, and also by letting it consume my life. I was asking for Chaos and now, finally, I can see that.

Now I know how I was always in chaos and have learned from it. Do not take part in the lives of the people that are the major part of it, at least the ones you can avoid. Walk away from any chaos that always ends the same way. In doing that, you are no longer making Chaos inevitable.

It is in your hands.

*(Wendy is a student at Stevenson-Britannia Adult Literacy Program, Inc.)*

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## My Story

Danilo Alday

≥ I got married at the age of thirty-eight. I met someone that my heart fell in love with.

She's very understanding, lovable and everyday she's looking beautiful in my head and my heart too.

After one year she got pregnant, but, unfortunately, the baby died unborn. My wife was crying, crying, and crying. I felt lonely at that time.



Danilo and son.

Several years later we decided to move to Canada. After one year my application here in Canada was approved and we migrated here. We soon had our first child. If he happened to be born in the Philippines, maybe he would have died also. Because he was a premature baby. Now he is healthy and kicking. March 26th was his first birthday!

Thanks be to the Lord above. I still don't believe that I'm already here in Canada. We are hear all together: my mother, sister, and my father's spirit, too. A happy family.

*(Danilo is a student at Employment Projects of Winnipeg Inc.'s: Bridges to Communication program)*

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Lester J. Stevens

## The Native Artist

Lester Jonathan Stevens

≥ As a child I loved drawing all sorts of pictures, but as I got older my drawings got more realistic and better looking.

Then I stopped drawing and started making native crafts, like tipi lamps, staffs, hanging tepees, necklaces, and all sorts of other things that came to mind. I then got more into my native art and started painting pictures on canvas board, canvas, leather, and other material.

I taught myself how to mix my colors and how to perfect my own technique. Some of the different kinds of paintings that I paint are animals, native dancers, tepees, backgrounds, trees, and other forms of nature.

I also paint on animal skulls like buffalo, moose, jumper, horse, cow, bear, and even the smaller animal skulls. I even love making things out of leather and working with different kinds of fur and all sorts of feathers, beads, sticks, and more. I got my inspiration from the outdoors and from people close to me.

When I'm on one of my nature walks, I see and hear many things. It's very peaceful, and it really helps

me get ideas on what to paint next or to even make something.

For me, painting is another way of telling a story to people by telling them what the picture means to me and what my pictures represent, because everything in the picture has its own little purpose. For myself, paintings make me feel good about life and my surroundings.

Paintings make other people feel good as well. Just to hear someone give you a compliment on what you just made or painted is one of the best feelings you could ever feel as a native artist and craftsman.

*(Lester is currently studying at Swan River Adult Education, Inc. We will try to get some of his art in print in the next edition of WRITE ON!)*

≡



Kayla Balko

I'd Really Like to  
**Travel the World**

By Kayla Balko

≥ The one thing that I really want to do in my lifetime would be to travel the world.

I've only been out of the province once in my life, and that was to go to Sudbury, Ontario. I think it would be neat to see all the beautiful places in the world that you see in books, on television, and the internet. Learning a bunch of different languages and cultures would be fun. I would have a lot of studying to do beforehand. Trying the new foods would also be awesome; I can't wait.

I've always wanted to learn various languages; for example, French and German. However, it's not that easy to learn new languages, but you have to if you want to visit different countries.

You could go without learning the language, but it'll be very hard to order food, go shopping, and other things if you don't know how to speak the language. In all the different countries, I would want to learn their cultures because I would like to see how much my culture is different than theirs. It would be interesting to see if I could fit in with these other cultures; nevertheless, I wouldn't change my culture for anything.

If I could do one thing in my lifetime, that's what I would choose to do: travel the world.

*(Kayla studies at Swan River Adult Education Inc.)*



Lydia Parenteau

Laverne Morrisseau  
Adult Education Centre's  
**Community Kitchen**

Lydia Parenteau

≥ The Adult Education Centre class made Chinese food for the class and our families.

We made sweet and sour sauce, chicken and pork balls, the egg rolls, Chinese fried rice and a veggie stir fry. Our class enjoyed doing all the prep work and cooking.

There were thirteen students who took part in this. The kitchen was full of students, good food and lots of laughter.

What I enjoyed most about cooking was taking food home to my family.

*(Lydia studies at Dauphin Friendship Centre Inc.)*





Blanche Ironstand

## Adam Beach Blanche Ironstand

"He attended a drama class where he thought he would `goof off' with his friends. But he found out he was a good actor."

≥ Adam Beach was born in Ashern, Manitoba. He is the youngest child in a family of three boys.

His mother and dad both died when Adam was very young. Adam Beach was raised by his aunt and uncle, in Winnipeg, along with his two brothers.

Adam started school when he was six years old and went until he was 18. He went to Gordon Bell High School. That is when he started to think about acting. He attended a drama class where he thought he would goof off with his friends. But he found out he was a good actor. From just having fun and goofing off, he went on to perform in many movies and TV shows.

He had roles in *Dance Me Outside* and *Smoke Signals*. Movie Producers came to get him to go to Hollywood and he took a small role in a Disney Mystery. Beach spent six months learning the Navajo language for a movie. He made small appearances on

television on such shows as *JAG* and *Third Watch*.

In 2006, Beach portrayed Ira Hays in Clint Eastwood's feature film, *Flags of Our Fathers*.

In 2007 Beach starred in an HBO film adaptation of Dee Brother's history: *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. He also starred in the Canada television series *Moose TV*. Beach was an executive producer and starred in the movie *Older Than America*, filmed in Minnesota, mostly on the Fond du lac Ojibwe Reservation.

Adam has been married and divorced twice. He has two children and still lives in Winnipeg.

Adam is a role model for all native people, not just youth. He lets us dream and see the reality of those dreams coming true. Adam has fulfilled his dream!!!!

(Blanche is currently studying at Dauphin Friendship Centre Inc.)

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# How School is Cool

Jeremiah Duck

≥ When I first started at Yellowquill College, I thought that I'd give up like I always do and I would blame it on alcohol. But I put my mind to it and tried and I lasted longer than I thought.

Most of the time I thought of quitting, but I just kept pushing myself.

I knew I might meet some new people. Some became good friends and some of us dropped out and, I got to meet a girl. She doesn't go to Yellowquill. I am going to finish by telling you: going to school isn't that bad because you could meet someone very special.

*(Jeremiah is a student at Yellowquill College.)*



Jeremiah Duck

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# MOVING TO CANADA

RAUL FLORES

≥ This is my story about when I came to Canada.

I have been living in Winnipeg for twenty-three years. I want to share a little about my experience.

I came to Canada from Costa Rica on March 19, 1985 with my wife and two children.

My first questions were: "How can these people live in -20 degrees???" and, "Why do the people smoke outside when they are speaking?"

Another question: "Does the snow come from the sky or from the ground?" I couldn't believe that the snow came from the sky.

I started to come to this community [Elmwood GOAL] on September 30, 2008. I wanted to learn and improve my English skills to get a better job in the future. GOAL program is a great opportunity for people who want to learn English, how to read, write, listen, speak, and more.

*Raul is a student of Elmwood Goal Literacy Program.)*

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## **Editor's Note:**

Hi, I'm Lindsey, the Communications Coordinator at Literacy Partners of Manitoba. I do lots of stuff at Literacy Partners, but my favorite is making this magazine.

What I love about designing, editing, and publishing ***WRITE ON!*** is getting to know some of the many literacy learners and teachers in Manitoba.

The second best part is putting your writing in print.

If you are a literacy learner or practitioner and you are passionate about learning and/or helping people learn: send your articles, stories, poems, and/or artwork to me.

The best way to contact me is by e-mail:

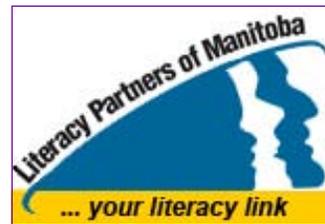
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Sincerely Yours,  
Lindsey Walsh

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## **Hope and Possibility Quote:**

***"For every teaching destination,  
the teacher needs at least five  
roads that will lead there."***

***— Dorota Blumczynska —***