These ain’t in the dictionary, but they oughta be.

**IDIODYSSSEY**: n: the journey of a directionally-challenged traveler.

**HASBIAN**: n: a former lesbian

**MOCkUMENTARY**: n: a non-fiction film that makes fun of its subject.

**HATERIOT**: n: 1) extremist member of a militia group 2) (var) a liberal 3) football fans who loath the team from New England.

**DIXIE-CHICK**: vt: to turn upon a favorite performer because of their political views.

**ANTICIPOMENT**: n: the disappointment experienced when a purchase doesn’t live up to its advertising.

**NAGIVATOR**: n: auto passenger who constantly critiques the driver’s performance.
See: “back seat driver.”

**APPROXIMEET**: vi: to agree to get together without setting a specific time and/or place, as in “We must do lunch sometime.”

**DORMCEST**: n: the act of dating only people who live in your residence hall.

**WISEJACK**: vt: to blurt out the punch line to someone else’s joke before they can finish.

**GARBOFILAGE**: vt: to hide a piece of your child’s artwork under other trash in the wastebasket so the little heir to the estate won’t catch you throwing it away.

**UPTITUDE**: n: the intense desire to be the one to press the button on the elevator.

**MONOPOLOOZE**: vt: to intentionally lose a board game to your unsportsmanlike child.

‘Phantom’ words can be misleading

**Phantonyms** are words that looks as if it ought to mean something but mean something else entirely.

For example,

**Disinterested** looks as if it ought to mean “uninterested” or “uncaring.” Nope. You could care about something passionately and remain **unbiased** or **impartial**, the actual meaning of the word.

**Noisome** must mean “noisy,” right? Not even close. **Smelly** would be a lot closer.

**Enormity** has to do with evil, not size—describing something that is hugely **wicked**.

**Enervated** looks an awful lot like “energized” but actually means the opposite—**weakened**.

**Presently** really ought to mean “right now,” but you actually have to wait for it to occur in a little while.

Extra

Innings

is a proud booster of

**Write by the Lake**

The Writers Institute

The Rhinelander School of the Arts

Weekend with your Novel and the Odyssey Project

No added sugar, honey. No carbs, no trans fats, no salt—pretty tasteless all in all.

This newsletter contains your recommended daily dose of nouns, verbs (transigent and intransigent), gourds, adjectives, adverbs and other artificial sweeteners, pronouns, antonyms, prepositions, propositions, conjunctions, contradictions, contractions, eruditions, bloviation, chiasmus, charisma, metanoia, paranoia, trace metaphors and the occasional half-witticism.
By Madonna Dries Christensen

On a tree-lined knoll along a country road near the village of Deerfield, Wisconsin, a cemetery once marked the site where St. Anne’s Catholic Church had stood. Founded in 1855 to serve Irish immigrants, the parish lasted only twenty years. By then most of the settlers had migrated as a group to Iowa, lured by the Homestead Act’s free 160 acres of rich farm land.

Abandoned, the church deteriorated. It was razed in 1881. With no caretaker for the cemetery, the ornate monuments that stood as proud sentries over family plots became scarred through time’s vandalism. Partially collapsed into hallowed ground, the moldering tombstones crumbled. Strewn across the field lay angels’ wings, lost lambs, and broken crosses, seasonally concealed by wild flowers and prairie grass or buried under mounds of leaves or banks of crusted snow. The inscriptions on the intact stones became embedded with soil and moss, making them mostly illegible.

A century later, an article and photo in The State Journal (Madison, Wisconsin) verified that only a handful of markers remained. My brother found one of family interest.

JOHN,  
Son of  
PATRICK & MARY  
McLAUGHLIN  
DIED  
Jan 14 1869  
Aged 19 yrs 9 mo

Patrick and Mary McLaughlin were my great-great-grandparents. The words across the bottom of the marker had been scoured off, leaving what looked like ancient runic characters. Perhaps it was that old Irish favorite: “Green be the turf above thee, friend of my better days, none knew thee but to love thee, nor named thee but in praise.”

Or did the chiseled inscription reveal the cause of the young man’s death? Did it name his birthplace, County Armagh, where the family lived before fleeing An Gorta Mor (The Great Hunger) in 1850? We’ll never know.

A few years back, my niece visited the cemetery and found John’s marker barely standing. A corner, with part of a cross visible, lay on the ground. She took the piece home. Later, when she moved out of the country, she sent the slab to me.

One day while rummaging in a closet, I came across the relic. “How about putting this in the garden,” I suggested to my husband, not really expecting it to fall into his landscape plan.

But he liked the idea and found a place for the stone. Settled in among plants, the artifact makes an interesting conversation piece for anyone approaching our door. More importantly, the simple stone grounds me in my Gaelic roots.

Today, this shard might be all that’s left of the many Celtic markers that once graced St. Anne’s Cemetery in the village of Deerfield.

This piece appeared online in February 2010 at Elder Storytelling Place, and several years ago in an online publication called Runes.
A restaurant for the ages
Thanks to alert reader Hilde Adler
A group of 15-year-old girlfriends discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, they agreed to meet at the Dairy Queen next to the Ocean View restaurant because they had only $6.00 among them and Jimmy Johnson, the cute boy in Social Studies, lived on that street.

10 years later, the group, now 25-years-old each, discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, they agreed to meet at the Ocean View restaurant because the beer was cheap, the restaurant offered free snacks, the band was good, there was no cover and there were lots of cute guys.

10 years later, the group of 35-year-old girlfriends discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, they agreed to meet at the Ocean View restaurant because the cosmos were good, it was right near the gym and, if they went late enough, there wouldn't be too many whiny little kids.

10 years later, the group of 45-year-old girlfriends discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, they agreed to meet at the Ocean View restaurant because the martinis were big and the waiters had tight pants and nice buns.

10 years later, the group of 55-year-old girlfriends discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, they agreed to meet at the Ocean View restaurant because the prices were reasonable, the wine list was good, the restaurant had windows that opened (in case of a hot flashes), and fish is good for cholesterol.

10 years later, the group of 65-year-old girlfriends discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, they agreed to meet at the Ocean View restaurant because the lighting was good and the restaurant had an early bird special.

10 years later, the group of 75-year-old girlfriends discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, they agreed to meet at the Ocean View restaurant because the food was not too spicy and the restaurant was handicapped-accessible.

10 years later, the group of 85-year-old girlfriends discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, they agreed to meet at the Ocean View restaurant because they had never been there before.
Another E.I. Expose

WHY A MAN NEEDS A WOMAN

Part One of Three Parts
Thanks to lascivious reader Steve Born

An E.I. Public Service Announcement

Stress relief for dogs
Cat? What cat?
We need to tear ourselves away from our comfort zone and fan the spark of our creativity, according to Alabama writer Mary Ward Brown.

After a few years of coming together every other month for writing critiques, the Grove Hill Writers’ Group first acknowledged this truth in September, 2009. It didn’t take much thinking to figure out how to do this. We composed a list of story-starters that we would use in the stories we would write as we prepared for our November, 2009 meeting.

There was no requirement that we all had to use the same story-starter. Pick one among a dozen or so, we said. Then write.

Consider this story-starter: “There was more than one turkey in the room this year at Thanksgiving.” In our annual family gatherings just above the nethermost, I can write a story with that first line every year.

At the most recent November meeting of the writers’ group, we agreed to create a story-starter again. This time we changed the operating procedure. We will all use the same line.

Members made several suggestions, and we took a vote. After two rounds of voting, we came to a decision. The story-starter for the January meeting: “A single drop fell.”

The reaction of group members is that we should not have a story-starter for every meeting. Yet, when I talk with our writers at various social occasions in Grove Hill, they laugh and tell me how much fun writing for the January meeting has turned out to be.

I have my story. Of course, I will polish and polish between now and January 23. I interpret the term “story-starter” not to mean that the sentence is necessarily the first line of a story, but rather it is the start of an idea for a story. In my story, the line does not occur until deep into the tale. Some in the group thought that sentence should be the first line and have chided me for re-defining the intent of our decision. Usually, this admonishment is followed by a statement such as, “You never follow the rules anyway.”

Yeah. Right.
Texting Acronyms for Seniors

ATD: At The Doctor's
BFF: Best Friend Farted
BTW: Bring The Wheelchair
BYOT: Bring Your Own Teeth
CBM: Covered By Medicare
CUATSC: See You At The Senior Center
DWI: Driving While Incontinent
FWB: Friend With Beta Blockers
FWIW: Forgot Where I Was
FYI: Found Your Insulin
GGPBL: Gotta Go, Pacemaker Battery Low!
GHA: Got Heartburn Again
HGBM: Had Good Bowel Movement
IMHO: Is My Hearing-Aid On?
LMDO: Laughing My Dentures Out
LOL: Living On Lipitor
LWO: Lawrence Welk's On
OMMR: On My Massage Recliner
OMSG: Oh My! Sorry, Gas.
ROFL... CGU: Rolling On The Floor Laughing...
And Can't Get Up
SGGP: Sorry, Gotta Go Poop
TTYL: Talk To You Louder
WAITT: Who Am I Talking To?
WTF: Where's The Furniture Again
WTP: Where's The Prunes?
WWNO: Walker Wheels Need Oil
GLKI (Gotta Go, Laxative Kicking In)
Musings from Missouri

On the deviousness of digits

By Perry Stone

For me, the weird part of writing comes down to this: much of the time fingers and mind fail to work in a unified effort. (Neither comprehends the essence of “grammatically correct.”) Instead, cunning fingers conspire with keyboard against mind.

I’ve spent many a long sleepless night tossing and turning, contemplating perfect character behavior, actions and words. These are refined, choreographed and recorded countless times in my mind until, finally, I rush to the keyboard. (I don’t actually rush that fast any more.) The on button is pushed. Mouse clicks my documents, stories, and whichever culprit has kept me awake. Then two to eight fingers consciously collaborate singly with keys. Eyes read something that hasn’t come to mind before. And mind thinks, “What the heck?”

During all those hours expending restless energy, fingers have lain in wait so they could ignore all else and conspire with keyboard to create. Then mind tries to take the credit.

“In your dreams!” my subconscious snorts while a paragraph or a page of typos appears on the screen. It’s a barely readable effort incorporating much misuse use of English words and phrases.

“Now what?” mind wonders, though the implication is clear-- decode the effort that has been drudged forth to completely overlook clarity, purpose or humor found while fighting with sleep.

Telepathy sends a message, followed with a sigh: “That’s what a team does.” So mind edits before fingers and keys continue with a new paragraph or a new page.

If fingers could smile, mine would, probably thinking of cake icing they had swiped or a bra they had unfastened.

Clever manipulators they are. And how gullible mind is, having been there and still unable to recognize the deviousness of digits.

At other times there is conspiracy against ever writing a word on the chosen subject for an article or story. Fate shoots a tangent in a completely different direction. Once while I tried to write a story to send off about the seriousness of diabetes, the final draft told of a ten year old boy who was chased into a pond by a bull. Somehow a neighbor’s duck decoys got shot to pieces, too.

A true story. A good memory. Too bad it couldn’t have been a diabetic crazed animal chasing the sweet child into that pond fifty years ago.

Sometimes long lines of true stories run across my pages. Yet people who read them often commit on what a great imagination I have. Then there are the times fiction sparks belief. Once I was telling of protagonist Polly Poltergeist accidently artificially inseminating her twin sister. The nurse I was talking to replied with sincerity, “Wow! I didn’t know that was even possible.”

My weird and wonderful world of writing lets me enlist idiosynceries while incessantly writing, experimenting and editing. Granted, the topic may be uncertain and the slant seldom known. But when all is typed and done, after fingers and keys combine to type ‘The End,’ mind gives a sigh of satisfaction remembering someone’s words: “It’s better to write for yourself and not have an audience than to write for an audience and not have a self.”

Bless you and yours, Coach Perry
An E.I. Expose

THE SHOCKING DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMAN REVEALED
Part Two of Two Parts

Mission: Go to Gap, Buy a Pair of Pants

Extra Innings #15

I publish Extra Innings monthly and distribute it free to an open-enrollment mailing list. To get yourself on the list, email the Coach at mcook@dcs.wisc.edu

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

www.dcs.wisc.edu/lsa/writing
First Person, Past Tense
Madison, Wisconsin, 1947

How I learned my one and only dance step

by Ron Hevey

Mother bundled me up for the trip downtown. We walked to the University Avenue bus, passing Spring Harbor with its snow-covered boats piled in abstract arrangements. Swing sets in the playground sat empty like abandoned teepees. In winter we preferred to slide sleds down hills.

All busses went to the Capitol Square. Streets there fanned down steep inclines to the lakes. Although shoveled, sidewalks remained slushy and grimy late into Madison winters that grabbed you to the end.

We reached the dance studio off the Square, banged our boots together and trudged upstairs into the converted residence where we found the door marked ‘Dance Studio.’ When we entered the room with its hardwood floors and once-white walls, I wondered if it was big enough.

Why did I have to take dance?

The elderly dance instructor hadn’t combed his hair; Mother would not like that. Thick glasses made his eyes bulge. I did not care for him either, although he was pleasant enough, and he must have known dance; after all, this was a dance studio, and he was a dance instructor.

We got to it. Having donned dance shoes with taps on the front and back, I was instructed to do the basic step, one so simple when the instructor demonstrated. He had a few dance steps left in him. All I had to do was push my foot forward, click the floor, drag back with a clack, push forward again and clomp down with a bang. The step had a name I cannot remember, but I do remember we did that step endlessly.

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Something terrible happened as I struggled to learn the step: my shoe dragged more each thrust. A nail holding a metal tap had worked its way out and was scraping the floor. Not knowing what to do, I was scared to mention my the scraping.

Then the instructor noticed fresh gouges in shiny varnish now marred with deep grooves revealing raw wood. The lesson ended with the instructor telling Mother, “Not all youngsters are cut out for dance. There must be a more suitable activity for this boy.”

Dance for me was done.

I was glad. Dance was not this six-year-old’s idea. Boys dream of baseball so they can play with big boys, even though some have mothers who would rather unleash the budding artist in their offspring.

When I see tap on the screen I am reminded of my only lesson. I feel a connection and watch closely for that one step I knew until the nail came loose.

Rim Shots

Wisdom on marriage from the vaudeville circuit

* I just got back from a pleasure trip.. I took my mother-in-law to the airport.
* I've been in love with the same woman for 49 years! If my wife ever finds out, she'll kill me!
* What are three words a woman never wants to hear when she's making love? "Honey, I'm home!"
* Someone stole all my credit cards but I won't be reporting it. The thief spends less than my wife did.
* We always hold hands. If I let go, she shops.
Another E.I. Expose

WHY A MAN NEEDS A WOMAN
Part Two of Three Parts

Messy office- creative mind?
Thanks to writer/publisher Norbert Blei for this candid view of his working environment in the chicken coup, Door County, Wisconsin.
Inception-

is easily the year's best film.

Imagine that you could go into people's dreams and share those dreams with them. How incredible would that be? To be in your own world. To create it and control it!

I walked out of the theater wanting to watch this film again immediately. It's sheer genius.

Christopher Nolan is one of the best directors out there. His craft is so amazing.

The acting is superb. The entire cast delivers. Leonardo DiCaprio gives the best performance of his career as Dom Cobb, the most skilled extractor with a dark past. Marion Cotillard is phenomenal as Cobb's late wife, Mal. Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Tom Hardy, Ellen Page, Ken Watanabe, Cillian Murphy all make up a great supporting cast.

The cinematography is some of the best I've ever seen. The dream levels all have their own unique beauty. The zero gravity hallway fight scene will take your breath away.

The score is hauntingly beautiful and captivating and heightens the breathtaking suspense.

All of the elements of this film are put together so brilliantly to make this perfect film, a very rare thing to see these days.

Inception makes you forget that you are watching a film, you get into it so deeply. It's one of those films you fall in love with that will become a classic. It is a mind-blowing, superb masterpiece. And in this time of sequels, reboots or superhero films, it's a pleasure to see something original again.

Birdemic: Shock and Terror-

Folks, we finally have a new Manos. Yes, this film is just as bad as the Worst Movie Of All Time. Its title gives you an idea of how bad it is.

Here's the plot- Rod meets up with Nathalie whom he had ONE class with in school, and they date. Rod works for a solar energy company. Nathalie is a model. They spend the next half hour getting environmental messages, and birds attack for no reason. That is the plot. I am dead serious.

What we are given in this day of fantastic visual effects are birds that look like old Nintendo graphics. They barely move. They fly down, explode on contact and vomit acid. Do we ever get an explanation for this? Nope. Just a bunch of pointless and senseless environmental messages.

The acting is atrocious. You hate every character so much that you want them all to die. I actually laughed every time one of them did. Believe me these are the funniest death scenes you'll ever see.

As bad as this movie is, I will say this, this is one of the most fun movie experiences you'll ever have. You will be laughing nonstop. Midnight shows have been spreading across the country. I would love to see this film with a crowd. It's so awful, yet you just have to see it. Also, Birdemic 2: the Resurrection, opens in 2011.

And don't miss 127 Hours-

Powerful. Gorgeous. Heart pounding. James Franco gives one of the best performances I've seen all year., right up there with Jesse Eisenberg in the Social Network. The cinematography is gorgeous. The wide canyon shots are stunning. But the closer, more claustrophobic shots make you feel you're right in that canyon with him.

The arm cutting scene is very bloody. If you aren't used to such graphic scenes, you'll probably have to look away. But the scenes that follow are some of the most uplifting you'll ever see in a film. You leave the film so happy to be alive and so inspired. Danny Boyle delivers another masterpiece.

Next issue:

Jacob McLaughlin presents his top 10 TV shows and top 10 movies of 2010. Don’t miss it.
More Rim Shots

Wisdom on marriage
from the vaudeville circuit

* My wife and I went back to the hotel where we spent our wedding night; only this time I stayed in the bathroom and cried.
* My wife and I went to a hotel where we got a waterbed. My wife called it the Dead Sea.
* She was at the beauty shop for two hours. That was only for the estimate. She got a mudpack and looked great for two days. Then the mud fell off.
* A boy comes home from school and tells his mother he has a part in the play. She asks, "What part is it?" The boy says, "I play the part of the husband. "The mother scowls and says, "Go back and tell the teacher you want a speaking part."
E.I. First Person Singular

Displaced worker recreates himself as freelancer and novelist

By Rex A. Owens
Director, E.I.E.I.O.

On December 4, 2009, my employer reorganized my job right out the door. Merry Christmas.

They asked for my keys to the building and told me to leave immediately. I handed them my key ring and told them to find the right key. I wasn’t allowed to return to my office to get my hat and coat – the Vice President of Operations got them for me – the highest paid gofer I’ve ever known.

A human resources staff member would box up my personal items, and I could return the following week to retrieve my stuff. I got a letter to any future employer explaining that I was a fine employee that should be hired.

Right –at 58 that was likely. I also got a letter that said if I didn’t sue the company for age discrimination, they would give me a wad of cash within 30 days. I took the cash.

The first weekend of unemployment was grueling. My wife is a saint. She left work to be with me. She reviewed our budget and helped make a plan that first weekend of unexpected freedom.

From the depth of my anger I told her I would never let myself be in this position again. I resolved to never be someone else’s employee – never ever.

I had spent nine long years working on a novel and attending more writing conferences, classes and critique groups than mentally healthy for anyone. I dragged my novel out of its virtual closet to polish and begin the journey to find a literary agent or publisher.

By March of 2010 I was on the road to sell my novel, my soul, or both. I attended a writer’s conference offered by the UW Division of Continuing Studies in April to make a pitch to two literary agents. I beamed when they both asked me to send them 50 pages of my manuscript.

One agent lost my submission even though I submitted it electronically. I re-submitted and waited 6 months for the reply “this isn’t for me.” The second agent got back to be within two weeks of my submission: “I don’t understand your timeline – I’m not interested.”

I decided to try freelancing to bring some cash in. I wrote a profile of a friends’ sustainable cattle ranch. The first paper published the story but didn’t pay a dime – but I had my first clip.

The second paper asked if the rancher wanted to buy advertising – he didn’t. Then they asked me to buy advertising. I didn’t.

I never heard from them again.

The local newspaper printed my story without informing me they had accepted it for publication. I contacted the editor and asked for money. He said he thought it was a public service piece. I referred him to my original e-mail explaining I was a freelance writer. I finally got paid – a meager $0.03 per word. I then sold the story to a national publication – no great financial gain - $0.04 per word. But having a clip in a national magazine is prestigious – isn’t it?

The anniversary of my elimination from the work force just passed. I’ve learned a lot this year. I am happy with my new life, and I’m in charge. I report to myself (and occasionally my spouse). My dream to publish my novel and lead the literary lifestyle is still out there, and I’m chasing it as fast as these old legs will allow.

The prolific Mr. Owens has just launched yet another new website, Madison-Authors-Examiner. He’ll profile writers in the Madison area and was kind enough to begin with the old Coach. To find out things even I didn’t know about myself, go to: www.examiner.com/authors-32-in-madison/rex-owens
Unresolved resolutions: an editorial from the mismanagement
Tia Llosa and the Nobel Prize Winners

_Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter_, by Mario Vargas Llosa
Editorial Seiz Barral, South America (1977)
Translation 1982, Farrar Straus and Giroux

Each year when the Nobel Committee announces the winning novelist, I learn of yet another great writer I’ve never read.

**First I mutter about having been passed over yet again, but once I get over that, I’m humbled by my lack of literacy. Each year I swear I’ll seek out something written by the new wearer of the Literary Laurel and by god read it.**

This goes back at least 20 years, to 1990 and Octavio Paz, and then Nadine Gordimer the next year. Haven’t read either one of them yet.

I’ve actually read two novels by Toni Morrison (1993) and a poem or two by Seamus Heaney (1995), so I gave myself a pass those years. But my vows to read Gunter Grass (1999), V.S. Naipaul (2001), and J.M. Coetzee (2003) have gone thus far unfulfilled. (I didn’t even kid myself about Harold Pinter in 2005.)

Now you understand why I don’t make New Year’s resolutions.

It happened again this year. The Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa (Conversación en la catedral (1969; _Conversation in the Cathedral_, 1975), _La guerra del fin del mundo_ (1981; _The War of the End of the World_, 1984) and _La fiesta del chivo_ (2000; _The Feast of the Goat_, 2001) copped the award, and I determined to make his acquaintance. When I spotted one of his novels I’d actually even heard of, the fetchingly titled _Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter_, in the used book bin at the University Bookstore in Madison, I grabbed it. And... wait for it...

**I actually read it!**

And loved it!

**Maybe these Nobel fellas know what they’re doing.**

In _Aunt Julia_, a young coming-of-age writer-in-waiting living in Miraflores relates his story. He’s studying the law at the University of San Marcos and holding down the lofty title of News Director of Radio Panamericana, a low-pay slave job consisting of cribbing news items from the daily papers and rewriting them just enough to have them read on air on the hour.

It’s a living, but he ain’t, not yet, not until he meets the two people who will change his young life and set him on his life’s path. He pursues a seemingly doomed love affair with his Aunt Julia, recently divorced and 13 years his senior, and becomes the friend of sorts of the manic scriptwriter Pedro Camacho, whose incredible soap operas attract a huge and passionate following.

The affair blows his family apart, and Camacho and his soaps fall into chaos, but the novel doesn’t; it’s a wonderful ride.

It’s so good, in fact, that the next time I find a novel by J.M. Coetzee in the half-price barrel, I’m going to buy it, take it home, and devour that sucker. Really. I mean it. You just see if I don’t.

"It's not possible to advise a young writer because every young writer is so different. You might say, 'Read,' but a writer can read too much and be paralyzed. Or, 'Don't read, don't think, just write,' and the result could be a mountain of drivel. If you're going to be a writer you'll probably take a lot of wrong turns and then one day just end up writing something you have to write, then getting it better and better just because you want it to be better, and even when you get old and think 'There must be something else people do,' you won't quite be able to quit."

-- essayist and children's writer _E.B. White_.
E.I. creates covetous cigarette cravings

Coach:
Madonna’s apples brought back memories. Christmas was always the best time of year. Dad worked as watchman at the city market. The people there gave him all kinds of fruit and nuts, a dozen different kinds of Christmas candy. Of course the smell of cedar and apple cider came rushing back.

Jim Herod made me shudder thinking of those file cards in the library. Honestly I never figured out that Dewey system, which made finding anything a real pain. (I’ve never confessed to being bright.)

I envied Pat and her two lists because doing anything without thinking usually gets me in trouble. Much of the time thinking first didn’t help.

Finally, those old cigarette ads, I’ve never wanted a Pall Mall so bad in 18 years. Thank you for not showing any of their ads.

Have a great day
Paw Joe
[Perry Stone, The Missouri Muse]

Hi Marshall,
Just finished my first quick read of the new Extra Innings, and I know I’ll want to go back and take more time to read and enjoy later. I’m really glad I signed up!

I meant to ask for a copy of Perry Stone’s free e-book last month but somehow didn’t do it, so I was glad to see it again in the new issue. I would be delighted to receive a copy, with thanks to you and to Perry. By the way, as a new reader (and Missourian), I need you to please explain “Missouri Musings?”

Thanks and warm wishes this holiday season,
Judy Burnham
[The Missouri Muse replies: wrote Judy from Missouri a note and explained how you just kind of tackled Missouri Muse on the first article I wrote that you published in Creativity Connection. And since then you have titled my thoughts Missouri Muse, Musings from Missouri, or Missouri Muser. Like my given name, some call me Perry, some call me Joe. One of my granddaughters called me Paw Paw. I mentioned that to you in one of our visits and you began calling me Paw Joe. I didn’t think I needed to get into all the other names I’ve been called<G> and just left it at that.

Dear Coach,
I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I also hope you remember me: Angela M. Rosati
Re: Extra Innings #14...Just recently a British ambassador (or something) meeting with Chinese somethings, was asked by the Chinese, to remove the poppy from his buttonhole. The Chinese said it reminded them of the Opium War with the British. I believe the Brit refused to remove it because it had a different meaning for them; the Poppy Fields of Flanders. And when I read the first selection in Innings, it made so much sense to me and brought tears to my eyes. The War to end all Wars didn’t work.
Best Regards,
Angela [Rosati]

Readers offer still more flik pics to click
Jennifer Bell, writer, recent subscriber, and graduate of the UW-Madison Odyssey Project Class of 2010, sends along her list of 15 movies. She has included several of my favorites on here.
1.) The Sound of Music
2.) Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
3.) Cat on a Hot Tin Roof
4.) Days of Wine and Roses
5.) Rear Window
6.) Breakfast at Tiffany’s
7.) Night of the Living Dead (black and white version)
8.) Sandlot
9.) The Color Purple
10.) Raisin in the Sun (original)
11.) Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels
12.) The Good The Bad and The Ugly
13.) Schindlers List
14.) Rainman
15.) Awakenings
Marsh
Ok, here is my list of top 15 movies - not in any order - that's more than my feeble mind can handle, but these are favorites:
1. Out of Africa
2. Citizen Kane
3. Of Mice and Men
4. Lawrence of Arabia
5. Twelve Angry Men
6. African Queen
7. 2001 A Space Odyssey
8. Sophie's Choice
9. A Lion in Winter
10. Silence of the Lambs
11. Lord of the Flies
12. The Treasure of Sierra Madre
13. Driving Miss Daisy
14. A Beautiful Mind
15. Hotel Rwanda

After composing my list I noticed not a single comedy made the list. That may say something about me and has certainly lead to some self-reflection. Be that as it may, I'm a drama junky. As a writer I am keenly aware that my list is completely subjective - and that's ok.

Rex A. Owens

Chicken Soup is a go!
I got the email today from the Chicken Soup folks, and my “Mending Hearts” is definitely included in their book, My Dog's Life, due out in April. I can't wait to go to a real bookstore and see it there. What an ego trip this is. It kind of balances out the rejection I got yesterday - although that one was very kind. Actually, I've been super lucky. I've never had a scathing rejection from anyone, though I have friends who have. I guess my day will come eventually. Meanwhile, I'll just enjoy this moment. Thanks again for everything you did to help me get to this place.

Barbara Burris

DON’T blow smoke in her face!
Hey Coach,
The Extra Innings ads were timely as I celebrate 2 months as a non-smoker. "More doctors smoke Camels." "Blow in her face and she'll follow you anywhere." What a culture shift! Smoking was once out of fashion for 80 years (circa 1800 to the Marlboro Man). Hopefully I won't have to contend with it the next time it comes into fashion.

Candace Fish

Another great word to save
Last issue alert reader Betsy Lawson hipped us to the “Save the Words” website (http://savethewords.org/), where we could go to preserve a poor, deserving orphan word suffering neglect and disuse. I immediately adopted “mulkomedic.”
A while back I got this short dispatch from Betsy: sesquipedality
Happy holidays,

Betsy
Don’t bother trying to look it up. Even the dictionary abandoned it years ago, but brave Betsy is keeping it alive.

T-Shirt Wisdom
I get CATALOGS - boy, do I ever! A recent one featured fun t-shirts. Here are some "smile lines" to give you smile lines:
Be Yourself - Everybody Else Is Taken
National Sarcasm Society - Like We Need Your Support
I'm Smiling Because I'm Your Sister - I'm Laughing Because There's Nothing You Can Do About It
Never Be Afraid To Try Something New.
Remember, Amateurs Built The Ark; Professionals Built The Titannic.
My Mind Works Like Lightning. One Brilliant Flash And It's Gone.
To Err Is Human; To Arrrr Is Pirate.
WWNDD? (What Would Nancy Drew Do?)
I Am The Grammarian About Whom Your Mother Always Warned You.

Sara Barnes

And one thing more...

Madonna Dries Christensen’s great new anthology, Toys Remembered, didn’t get published in time for Christmas giving, but it should be ready on Amazon and other sites any day now. Do check it out!