THE 100 MOST IMPORTANT BOOKS IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD

By the Editor in Coach

Recently my daughter, Kimberly (in-law, actually, but law ain’t got nothing to do with how my wife and I feel about her) “tagged” me on Facebook with a list of “100 Essential Books,” compiled by a bunch of Brits probably still smarting over the Revolution. You’re supposed to note how many you’ve read (no cheating). The Tories were pretty sure nobody would have read more than eight. Ha!

Kim taught me how to post the list to my notes (This is all Facebook-speak) and tag a few of my buds with it. Sister Kathy (again law doesn’t enter into my feelings) topped out, having read over 50 (take that, English cynics!), and other literate friends, like our own Meandering Madonna, also scored well.

I’d read 39, which I thought pretty fine (at least until I got Kathy’s score), but I was embarrassed by some of the ones I hadn’t read.

I was also irate over some of the Redcoats’ selections and omissions. The Great Gatsby makes the cut? (The most overrated novel in the English language!) But no Faulkner!? Please!

My tagged buddies, Mo and Mark, Penny and Jean Marie among them, were also miffed, and we decided to compile our own list of 100.

It was a lot of fun, but I realized that it’s ultimately futile to try to make THE list, because some of the choices are bound to be too personal to apply to everybody else. (I find John Dunning’s Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio essential, but I don’t expect the rest of you to read it.)

So next I was going to propose that all E.I. readers compose the list, 100 books that we can all agree are essential for everyone to read. But that seems about as likely as getting Republicans and Democrats to agree on economic policy.

So I started a list of the 100 books that have been essential for me! I figured I’d ask you to do the same.

Trouble is, if I give myself 100 slots, I can’t seem to narrow it down to fewer than, oh, 450 books. So I made a list of a dozen instead.

If I could only have 12 books to last me the rest of my life, which 12 would I choose? Here’s what I propose: I’ll show you my list if you’ll show me yours. Send in a list of the essential dozen.

What books would you take to that desert island—assuming you couldn’t have a Kindle and web connection?

On the last page of this issue (12), I’ve printed my list of 12 books I feel to be essential to who I am and what I think, feel, and believe.

Now it’s your turn.

I’ll print your lists in a future issue (or issues) and compile a list of the most often-mentioned books on our lists.

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ALREADY LINED UP FOR NEXT ISSUE:

The 3 P’s of Publishing
Payers, Preyers and Pretenders

Is subsidy publishing a wise option?

by Rex A. Owens

This new column is dedicated to sharing one writer’s experience with today’s publishing landscape. I hope the information we share can be your GPS to traverse that landscape. I welcome your comments. You can e-mail me at: rexowens00@gmail.com.

So you don’t want the hassle of self-publishing and you haven’t been successful in landing a traditional publishing contract. Now what? There is an alternative – a hybrid – subsidy publishing.

Subsidy publishing is like driving a hybrid car that uses both electricity and gasoline to get the car and you to your destination. Subsidy publishing uses both your money and the publishers’ money to get you to your publishing destination with a traditional publishing model.

Here are the basics you need to know.

A subsidy publisher does not purchase your manuscript; rather the author is asked to pay the cost of publication. In my experience I was asked for a specific amount, and the publisher promised to expend a specific amount to cover publishing costs. The publisher offered services such as: editing, copy editing, cover design, printing, warehousing, distribution, advertising and marketing.

When printed, the publisher owns the books, and the author receives royalties.

There are several caveats to the subsidy publishing model. The first is money. Say the author is asked for $3,000 and the subsidy publisher agrees to spend $10,000 for services. The publisher is not required to inform the author how the authors’ money is spent. In addition, the publisher is under no obligation to inform the author how the $10,000 is spent. In fact, the author never knows what, if any, of their own money the publisher uses to publish the manuscript. In short, there is no accountability.

Second, the publisher retains the right to determine what format the manuscript is published in. The publisher could decide to publish only in an e-book format. There is no requirement for the publisher to return any money to the author if the cost to publish the manuscript is less than what the author contributes.

Then there are the royalties. Subsidy publishers may offer 50% royalties. How is that possible, when most new authors receive 6-10%? Here’s how it works. A traditional royalty is based on the retail price of the book. If the book sells for $12 in soft cover the royalty would be ($12 x 6%) or $0.72 for each book sold.

The subsidy publisher offers a 50% royalty based on the net sales price of the book, so:

- $12 retail sales price
- $6 book sellers’ discount
- $2 printing, distributing, warehousing, advertising cost
- $4 net sale price

The net sales price ($4 x 50%) or $2 per book appears to earn the author a lot more money.

Friends, it’s an illusion, a very clever illusion but an illusion nonetheless.

Remember, as the author you invested $3,000 (or more) with the subsidy publisher. In order to break even in this example you would need to sell 1,500 books. On the other hand with a traditional publisher the author would net $1,080 selling 1,500 books.

Also, research the subsidy publisher to learn what books they have published and who their authors are. One subsidy publisher I worked with recently advertised 10 books on their website. I searched for all 10 and could not locate them on either Amazon or Barnes & Noble. When I shared my results with the publisher, I was told they were scheduled to be published but they were not yet available. Make sure any subsidy publisher you work with has a valid list of current books.

As writers we have choices. You can decide if a subsidy publisher is a Payer, Preyer, or Pretender.
In 1975, a friend made a difficult shot playing basketball, shrugged and said, “I’ve always said I’d rather be lucky than good.” I wasn’t so sure.

In the spring of 1976, I bought an Amtrak U.S.A. Rail Pass and circled North America by train. Amtrak was approaching its fifth birthday, and most of its trains were pulled by new locomotives called SDP40Fs.

The Sunset Limited, Amtrak’s train No.1 from New Orleans to Los Angeles, has had that name and number since the Southern Pacific Railroad established it as its flag-train over the route in 1894. Along each 2,022-mile journey, the train crews were changed several times at so-called division points. One of them was at the small desert town of Sanderson, Texas.

Sanderson’s large clapboard depot, fronted with a two-story control tower, was built in 1882 for the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railroad. A long front porch runs almost the length of the building. Sanderson also had a roundhouse and other railroad structures, but in 1995 the Southern Pacific, which took over the GH&SA, discontinued the crew-change point and abandoned the depot and other railroad buildings.

Today Sanderson, “the Cactus Capital of Texas,” has only about 800 residents. The deteriorating depot is unmanned and rated by Amtrak as a flag stop, meaning the Sunset Limited will stop only if someone has bought a ticket to board or detrain there. That doesn’t happen often: In Amtrak’s fiscal year 2008, only 153 passengers boarded there, the lowest ridership of any station in the country.

We were scheduled to stop at Sanderson, 126 miles west of Del Rio, Texas, for a 20-minute stopover. I stepped off the train and photographed passenger friends with our coach attendant and then walked up to the engines.

As I shot our train, I noticed a Southern Pacific freight rolling eastward on the next track. Then I saw the new crew walking down the platform from the depot toward our engines. One of them climbed the ladder to the cab, then paused at the door. I realized his colleague on the ground was going to hand the man’s luggage up to him, so I prepared to press my camera’s shutter the moment the man on the ladder grabbed his bag.

At the moment of the handoff I was sure I had caught the shot I wanted, but this was before digital, of course, so I had to wait until I got home and had the slides developed to see it. When I picked up my slides, I saw that I had indeed captured the exchange. But I had caught something else.

Not only had my timing been perfect, so had my luck. On the track next to our train, at the moment I pressed the shutter, the freight train’s caboose was passing with a Southern Pacific trainman looking out the open window. I had concentrated on the handoff of the bag and paid no attention to the freight train. It was a perfect shot.

I thought of my friend and decided I still preferred skill over luck. But I didn’t ignore my good luck: I printed an enlargement of the picture.

Thirty-five years and thousands of photographs later, this image remains a favorite. I remembered it when I photographed the Sunset Limited from the same spot in 1983 while a crew from the Nashville Network filmed a special about the train. And I remembered it again in 2006 as my Sunset approached Sanderson. I was hoping we’d stop so I could photograph the train there once again, this time with the old depot.

But our train didn’t slow, and I had time to grab only one quick shot of the station out the window as we rolled by.

Apparently no one had bought a ticket. And that “lucky” shot? See next page.
By Randi Lynn Mrvos

I write because I love to write. I’m not in it to make a lot of money, though that would be nice.

When I first started writing, I submitted to non-paying markets. As my husband always says, “You got to pay your dues.” I spent many hours researching, writing, and editing my articles. The non-paying markets accepted my work and, though I wasn’t paid, I acquired credits and built a nice resume. Establishing credits boosted my confidence.

In a few years, I started pitching to big time children’s markets: KNOW, Nature Friend, and Highlights for Children to name a few. These publications accepted my work and paid me for it.

Maybe I should have approached them earlier in my writing career, skipping the non-paying route and jumping into the paying market.

But as I look back, it was a good thing that I waited before approaching the paying markets. I simply hadn’t honed my skills or earned the credits early on.

Though I regularly submit to the paying markets now, I don’t shy away from the non-paying ones. If they’re a good fit for my article, I’ll pitch it to them. Non-paying markets continue to build my credits.

Over the years of submitting to non-paying markets, I’ve learned that many are well-respected, award-winning publications.

Think again if you believe it’s a piece of cake getting published in one. Winning an acceptance from a non-paying market can be as difficult as from a paying market. So having them on your resume is a good thing.

I’m willing to bet that some people submit to the paying markets without having any credentials. They lack patience. They’re too eager to see publication, too eager to get paid. Those writers probably have trouble catching an editor’s eye. An editor looks at your track record, especially if you’ve never written for her publication. Many times, an editor will ask for clips before accepting your work or giving you an assignment. Editors like to go with sure bets.

So here’s my advice. Put the paying markets on the back burner. Work on improving your writing. Build your credits. Apply this simple equation: Hard work + Non-paying markets = credentials.

Continue applying the equation until you have five published pieces. Then go for it. You’ve paid your dues. Submit your very best and cash in on the paying markets.

Randi adapted this piece from a longer entry on her blog. Check her out at: www.themaggieproject.blogspot.com. I for one am very glad she still submits to non-paying markets (like this one).
"You know you're a redneck when...

1. You take your dog for a walk and you both use the same tree.

2. You can entertain yourself for more than 15 minutes with a fly swatter.

3. Your boat ain't left the driveway in 5 years.

4. You have to burn your yard, 'cuz your mower can't get through it.

5. The Salvation Army don’t want your furniture.

6. You offer to give someone the shirt off your back but they don't want it.

7. You come back from the dump with more than you took.

8. You keep a can of Raid on the kitchen table.

9. Your wife can climb a tree faster than your cat.

10. Your grandmother has 'ammo' on her Christmas list.

11. You keep flea and tick soap in the shower.

12. You've been involved in a custody fight over a huntin' dog.

13. You have a rag for a gas cap.

14. Your house doesn't have curtains, but your truck does.

15. You wonder how service stations keep their rest-rooms so clean.

16. You can spit without opening your mouth.

17. You consider your license plate personalized, 'cuz your daddy made it.

18. Your lifetime goal is to own a fireworks stand.

19. You've a complete set of salad bowls and they all say 'Cool Whip' on the side.

20. The biggest city you've ever been to is a Wal-Mart.

21. Your working TV sits on top of your non-working TV.

22. A tornado hits your neighborhood and does $100,000 worth of improvements.

23. You've used a toilet brush to scratch your back.

24. You missed your 6th grade graduation, because you were on jury duty.

25. You think fast food is hitting a deer at 65.
Meandering with Madonna

The day the Prince dined at the Palace

By Madonna Dries Christensen

Author’s note: March 22 is the 60th anniversary of this family tale. It’s been published numerous times over the years; most recently online at Elder Storytelling Place (January 2010).

Train Stalled; Roads Plugged As Fourth Storm Strikes NW Iowa During Weekend.

So read the headline on the March 22, 1951 edition of the Sibley Gazette-Tribune, but by the time the weekly paper appeared, everyone in our small town knew there was more to the story than a stalled train. My family had gotten the scoop the night it happened, from my mother, a cook at the Palace Cafe. She plodded into the house later than usual, shucked off her coat, headscarf, and gloves and stood warming her hands over the oil heater in the dining room.

“There's a train stalled at the depot,” she said.

“Oh, yeah?” Poppy asked.

“What I heard was, it was almost out of water. The trainmen had to get permission to use a city hydrant. Then they couldn’t find a hydrant for all the snow. They had to get out maps. Finally they filled the locomotive but water dripped onto the wheels and tracks and froze. Then, the train crew can work only so many hours in one run, and they’d gone over that, so the train will have to sit there until tomorrow.”

All this had been mildly interesting to us kids, but then Ma added, “There were three special cars on the train, carrying someone famous.”

Our collective antenna rose. Someone famous—in Sibley? To my sister Shirley and me, ages 13 and 15 respectively, famous meant movie stars, while my brothers were more inclined to think of sports figures.

“I cooked supper for him.”

Okay, so it was man, but that didn’t narrow the field much.

“Guess who it was,” Ma teased.

We tossed out names; she shook her head. Finally she said, “It’s Henry Fonda.”

While we kids gaped at her and began a chorus of questions, my dad scoffed, “A movie star. No big deal.” Poppy often told Shirley and me, when we spent our babysitting money on movie magazines, that movie stars were not respectable and should not be idolized. Now, leaning toward the radio, he said, “Pipe down, all of you. I can't hear my program.”

Ma motioned us to the parlor, where she explained that the cast of a stage play called Mr. Roberts was on the train, headed for Omaha. The actors ate at the cafe and then went to the Garberson Hotel for the night. “Henry Fonda was the only famous one,” she said, “but you should’ve heard people, saying this one or that one was so-and-so.”

“Did you get his autograph?” Shirley asked.

“Gosh, I didn't even think of that. I did carry out the food for his booth while the waitresses were busy. When I put down his plate, I accidentally touched his hand.”

“Accidentally on purpose,” I said, and we laughed.

Ma held out her hand. “Anyone want to touch the hand that touched Henry Fonda?”

Shirley and I did; the boys thought we were silly.

“He’s handsome as can be,” Ma said, “and he seemed nice.”

Poppy appeared in the doorway. Evidently he’d been listening because he said, “Nice? He’s been divorced several times.”

“Just once, I think,” Ma said.

“More than that.”

Shirley and I exchanged raised eyebrows. Had he been secretly reading the magazines he thought we shouldn’t buy?
“Anyway,” Ma said, “he acted like he was nobody, flashing that big toothy smile and visiting with folks. Lavonne Woodward from the paper came in and interviewed him.”

Poppy yawned. “Kids, time for bed. I'm turning in, too. Movie stars might not have to work tomorrow but I do.”

In school the next day, dozens of kids who I knew weren't downtown on a school night claimed they’d seen Henry Fonda. Or Loretta Young, Dana Andrews, Bette Davis, Gary Cooper, Jimmy Stewart.

To hear them talk, a cast of hundreds had left their footprints on our snowy streets, making us the Midwest's equivalent of Grauman's Chinese Theater. I said nothing, certain that I, through my mother, had come closer to a movie star than any of the kids.

Before long, a story circulated that Fonda was coming to visit school, looking for teenagers to be in one of his upcoming movies. Boys came back after noon recess wearing letter sweaters and ties and with their hair freshly greased. Girls had freshened their makeup and hair and donned their prettiest angora sweater sets. But our English teacher burst all dreams of stardom by reporting that the train had left hours ago. “Mister Fonda, never intended to visit our school,” Mrs. Forbes said. “Now let’s get to work.”

The movie star who’d been in our midst quickly became yesterday's news, except at our house. Ma liked to remind us that she had cooked for one of Hollywood's princes. If we complained about having to eat hamburger, again, she’d say, “My hamburgers and fries were good enough for Henry Fonda, and they're good enough for you.”

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Extra Innings #17

In which we celebrate writers, their enablers, and the boys of summer

Madison, Wisconsin March, 2011

Featured folks this issue: Rex A. Owens, Den Adler, Randi Lynn Mrvos, Madonna Dries Christensen, Jacob McLaughlin, and Tom Crawford

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Extra Innings is a proud booster of Write by the Lake
The Writers Institute
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Weekend with your Novel and the Odyssey Project

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Back issues available at: www.dos.wisc.edu/lsa/writing/ extrainnings
Who will win the Oscars?
Jake tells all
From the Projection Booth
with Jacob McLaughlin

Portman, Firth will share the winner’s circle

**Best Picture:**
The Contenders- The Social Network, The King’s Speech, Inception, True Grit, Toy Story 3, The Fighter, 127 Hours, Black Swan, Winter’s Bone, The Kids Are All Right

Who Will Win- It's going to be a fight between The Social Network and The King's Speech. Both have swept most of the award shows already. Both were praised by critics, so this is a tough choice. The King's Speech is fantastic, but I think The Social Network will win. It's the film that started out as the biggest contender, and I think it can pull off a Best Picture win.

Possible Upsets- If The Social Network doesn't win, it will be the King's Speech. Although, don't be surprised if the amazing True Grit pulls a big upset. The Academy loves the Coens.

**Best Director:**
The Contenders- David Fincher, The Social Network; Tom Hooper, The King’s Speech; Joel and Ethan Coen, True Grit; David O. Russell, The Fighter; Darren Aronofsky, Black Swan

Who Will Win- David Fincher. He's one of the best directors working today, and he tops himself with The Social Network. He should finally get his Oscar this year.

Possible Upsets- Tom Hooper for The King's Speech seems to be the obvious choice, but Darren Aronofsky really pushed the bounds of directing in Black Swan.

**Best Actor:**
The Contenders- Colin Firth, The King’s Speech; Jesse Eisenberg, The Social Network; Jeff Bridges, True Grit; James Franco, 127 Hours; Javier Bardem, Biutiful

Who Will Win- Like last year, both Firth and Bridges are nominated for the prize, but expect Colin Firth to finally win his first Oscar.

Possible Upsets- Jesse Eisenberg was fantastic in The Social Network. He's the one performance worthy of taking the prize from Firth. Jeff Bridges was great as Rooster Cogburn, the role that John Wayne won his first and only Oscar for in the original True Grit, but would they really give it to Bridges two years in a row?

**Best Actress:**
The Contenders- Natalie Portman, Black Swan; Annette Benning, The Kids Are All Right; Jennifer Lawrence, Winter's Bone; Nicole Kidman, Rabbit Hole; Michelle Williams, Blue Valentine

Who Will Win- Natalie Portman for Black Swan. The most dramatic role of last year. Portman just nails it in every scene. She deserves it for sure.

Possible Upset- Annette Benning has been nominated three times before. so she could have a shot.
Bullpen bloviations

The awful truth about radio

by Marshall J. Cook
editor-in-coach

It has been a quiet week in Altadena, my hometown, out there nestled up against the San Gabriel Mountains.

It’s been so quiet because the old Philco console in the living room finally gave up the ghost. Dad took all the tubes out and put them in a box by the backdoor to take down to the hardware to get tested, but then he went down in the basement to fiddle with his fishing gear forgot all about it.

Mom said they could practice the fine art of conversation, but then all she wanted to talk about was the radio, and that didn’t work out so well.

Steve the butcher, down at the corner grocery, had been filling her head with nonsense about radio he got out of some book, and it’s like the school-ground wiseguy telling her there’s no Santa Claus. Mom takes everything Steve the butcher says as Gospel. Same goes for Suzi the hairdresser and the Rev. Hailwood up at the Episcopal Church.

Doc Williams is not among Mom’s oracles. She gets all her medical advice from Steve, too. “You know that Beulah you like so much?” she was saying the other night after dinner, while she washed and Dad dried. I was sitting in the living room, reading a Captain Marvel and taking in every word. “You know, the one who’s always saying, ‘Love that man!’ about Fibber McGee?”

“I know who Beulah is,” Dad said, bracing himself. “What about her?”

“I know who Beulah is,” Dad said, bracing himself. “What about her?”

“Her is a him, a white him!”

“Oh, for the luvva... Of course Beulah isn’t a white man! You can tell by listening!”

“That’s what they wants you to think!”

“Well, what about the studio audience? They’d be able to see him, wouldn’t they?”

“Maybe they swear them to secrecy before they let them leave.”

“Next you’ll tell me Rochester is a white woman.”

“Steve didn’t say anything about Rochester, but he did say that...”

“Don’t tell me. Amos and Andy are Chinese.”

“No, silly. They’re white men, too!”

“Well, what if they are? And I’m not saying they are, mind you. But so what? It’s nothing to get your bloomers in a bunch about. It’s all make-believe, isn’t it?”

“I haven’t told you the worst of it.”

A pot slammed down on the counter.

“Oh, Lord, give me strength,” Pop said.

“What’s the worst of it?”

“Ma... Ma Perkins...” Mom stammered before starting to sob.

“Oh, now, Mother. Take it easy,” he said as quietly as he could. (Pop didn’t have an ‘indoor voice.’ I inherited that from him.) “What about Ma Perkins?” he said gently when Mom had subsided a little.

“When they started out, that was a young girl playing Ma!” She started to sob again.

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“When they started out, that was a young girl playing Ma!” She started to sob again.

“When they started out, that was a young girl playing Ma!” She started to sob again.

“Whoa, now. That was no little gal.”

“Twenty-three years old and not a minute older.” Steve said so.

“Well, there you go, then. If Steve said so...”

“And Leroy, that dear little boy his Uncle Gildersleeve took in after his brother died, he’s a grown man! Except he didn’t grow. He’s some kind of midget, and his voice never changed.”

“So Leroy shaves, huh? I’ll be a monkey’s...”

“And that little girl on Fibber? That’s really just Molly doing the voice. Notice how she’s never there when the little girl comes over.”

“Oh, bull feathers. I suppose Tonto ain’t a real Injun, too.”

He stopped in the face of Mom’s fierce head shaking. She was getting angry now, which Pop must have figured was at least a step up from weepy.

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“An 80-year-old Shakespearean actor!” Mom announced in mock triumph, balling her fists and hitting herself on the hips. “And those horses hooves...”

“An 80-year-old Shakespearean actor!” Mom announced in mock triumph, balling her fists and hitting herself on the hips. “And those horses hooves...”
“Whoa, now, woman. Don’t go taking Silver away from me. You gotta leave me something to believe in!”

I’d abandoned my comic book. I didn’t give a flap about Ma Perkins, but Mom was treading on a guy’s religion now.

“It’s all true!” she wailed. “Steve said so!”

“Hon, it doesn’t really matter,” Dad said, trying to jolly her out of it.

“Of course it matters! They’re fooling us!”

“Well, sure they are, Mother,” he said. “And a good thing, too. You don’t want the Martians to really invade Grover’s Corners, do you?”

“That’s different.”

“Different and the same. When we were listening to that show, you really saw those Martians, didn’t you?”

“What if I did? It scared you half silly, too!”

“It did,” Dad admitted. “That Welles fellow is a slick one. Made it all sound so real.

But that’s the point. They make it happen in our heads. You saw Martians. I saw Martians. Everybody saw Martians. We didn’t all see the same Martians, but it didn’t matter. The story stuck, just as real as if we’d seen the Martians.”

“Maybe so.” Mom was quieted but not convinced. “But you know that Maxwell car Jack Benny drives? Well, that’s really just... Where are you going?”

“I’m going to take those tubes down to the hardware and get ‘em tested. I’ve had about all the conversation I can handle.”

He whistled for the dog to come with him.

“Hi, yo, Silver,” I heard him call just before the backdoor closed.

And that’s the news from Altadena, where they elect movie stars governor, the weather never changes, and the smog isn’t as bad as it was in the good old days.

From the Mail Pouch
Conway was a locavore before it was cool

Dear Marshall,
I just enjoyed this issue so much. Really love the list of new words! The funny thing is, a month or so ago, I wrote this poem, before I heard of your new word, locavore. When I read this issue with that new word, I realized I must have been thinking along those lines when I wrote my poem.

Winter Blackberries
There is a time for peaches
a time for ripened cherries
days to sip amber ciders
taste ice-wines in late fall
Fruits are now without seasons
They’re brought in from foreign lands
long-fingered dates, apricots,
chartreuse apples for baking pies.
Eating blackberries in December
reminds me of my childhood
when farmer Gray hired us to pick berries sparkling in the morning dew.
Crops were locally grown then.
We learned business strategies.
The only sting was the soap
on our scratches in the tub.

Bonny Conway

Resner needs a new word

In the recent Extra Innings you had;
These just made it into the dictionary
I enjoyed the humor and creative aspects of the list but now have a question for you and your friends. Can you invent a word for the restless feeling that causes me to repeatedly look in the fridge when I'm bored? (and I'm getting bored more often since I'm retired).

Eddie Resner
How about it? Anybody want to create the word Eddie’s looking for?
A chance to contribute to two great online magazines

Marsh
I have to thank you for your book, Leads and Conclusions. Good advice and after reading it I came up with the idea for "Memorable Lines" for Yesterday's Magazette and The Perspiring Writer Magazine. The page will include opening, closing, or other memorable lines from books and movies. I hope your readers will send lines to: editor@yesterdaysmagazette.com

Ned Burke, editor/publisher
Along with editing two of the finest e-zines around, Ned's an old pal and a fine novelist. Madonna and I write for both these e-zines, and now you can, too! Send in those memorable lines--and check out the e-zines if you haven't done so already.

It's here! It's finally here!

Madonna Dries Christensen's latest book, Toys Remembered, is a reality at last, and you can get your copy at Amazon.com. Click this link http://amzn.to/e7qYNw to purchase. All proceeds from this book, as well as from her last book, Dolls Remembered, go to the Down Syndrome Association of Northern Virginia.

Also, check out Madonna's website at http://www.doorwaysmemoirs.com for the recent winners of the Doorways 2011 anthology of life history stories. Ned was one of the judges for this contest and says the entries were a joy to read.

"If you are destined to become a writer, you can't help it. If you can help it, you aren't destined to become a writer. The frustrations and disappointments, not even to mention the unspeakable loneliness, are too unbearable for anyone who doesn't have a deep sense of being unable to avoid writing." -- Donald Harington

BETTER TO SING NOW

Yes, yes, impermanence.
Better sing now
Tom the winter plum tree
outside the window,
a case in point,
its trunk black as a tire
pulled to a stop in the snow,
will soon be moving on.

Nobody’s too big
for dying. Thomas Jefferson,
a birder too,
took great pleasure
his last day on earth,
(too weak to leave his bed),
when a tiny Crown Sparrow
peered in at him
through the window.

The left hand
flat over the fingers
of the right hand,
fingers together
pointing up
means the clock’s
running out,
means we’ve used up
all our time outs.

An invisible wind sweeps
the bare branches. No matter
how tight the window,
cold gets in, a silver whistle
in its mouth.

Tom Crawford
A Coach’s Dozen Essential Books

Here’s my list.
How about you? Wanna play? If so, start your list and let it ebb and flow for a few days, settle on 12 (painful!), and send ’em on in. This way, we’ll all get introduced to and reminded of books we ought to know (and driven crazy by the fact that we’ll never get to read them all).
If you’d like to read the original list 0f 100 Kim sent me, just let me know, and I’ll email it to you.

1) The Bible
For poetry, narrative, inspiration, passion, guidance, wisdom...

2) the OED
If I can’t have all my online resources and references, I’d better have the Oxford Dictionary.

3) The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, by Mark Twain
Hemingway said the American novel started here.

4) The Portable Faulkner,
edited by Malcolm Cowley
If I can’t have the complete texts of The Sounds and the Fury, Light in August, and As I Lay Dying, I’ll take the book that salvaged Faulkner’s career.

5) Sometimes a Great Notion, by Ken Kesey
Kesey’s other novel, one of the richest and most powerful in the English language.

6) The Brothers Karamazov, by Fydor Dostoevsky
which barely beat out Crime and Punishment.

7) Hamlet
unless you’ll allow me to have the complete works of Shakespeare.

8) Horton Hatches the Egg, by Dr. Suess
For language, narrative structure, and moral uplift.

9) The Secret Panel, by “Franklin W. Dixon” (Leslie McFarland)
A sentimental choice, the first novel I ever loved, the one that started me being a reader and a writer.

10) The Old Man and the Sea, by Ernest Hemingway
I might have it memorized by the time I have to light out for that desert island with just 12 books to last me all my life, in which case, I’ll take Larry McMurtry’s Lonesome Dove instead.

11) To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee
This and Old Man are probably as close to perfect novels I’m ever likely to read. They made a brilliant movie out of it, too.

I want the width and depth this incredible resource provides. It also enables me to sneak in some poets. (I wanted to take Tom Crawford, Gary Busha, e.e. cummings, Tom Montag, Ellen Kort, and Billy Collins, but I couldn’t find one book that had them all. Maybe I should edit one, huh?)

Sorry Screwtape Letters, The Things They Carried, The Grapes of Wrath, Raisin in the Sun, A Death in the Family, Death of a Salesman… so many more, but the lifeboat’s about to be lowered over the side, and this is all I can carry.

See you right here next issue.