

Writer's Notepad

Serving Western Maryland and the Tri-state Region
a publication of Frostburg State University and the Frostburg Center for Creative Writing

Notes From the Director

It's holiday time. Black Friday has passed, and people are spending their money on gifts for their loved ones. I am here, buying books as presents (of course) and prepping to have the Center give to the Western Maryland community that has embraced it.

For the last few years we have been slowly building the Center to be a literary epicenter for the region. Now that we have mostly finished up our move to our new space at 22 East Main Street in downtown Frostburg, we can start being an active Center for writers and readers of all ages. This special issue of the *Writer's Notepad* is our holiday greeting card to the community.

Starting in 2010 the Center will have its doors fully open to the Western Maryland community, with both regular programming and open time where people can come in and read, write or spend time talking with other writers and artists. Add to it some special events—visiting authors, book signings and book release receptions, the Process of Making conversations—and you have a destination space that keeps giving to you year round.

And we want to have all of Frostburg involved. Interested in science fiction and fantasy—think about coming to our sci-fi/fantasy book group; ever wonder why the movie version of a book seems “not as good”—try our book-and-film group; just want an audience for that mystery novel you're working on—come to the writer's group. But it doesn't stop there: come to an open mic night at Mountain City Coffee and Creamery, a poetry slam at Dante's, a book release party at Main Street Books, a Process of Making conversation at Mountain City Traditional Arts, and you'll be reminded how involved the literary arts are in Frostburg's Arts and Entertainment District.

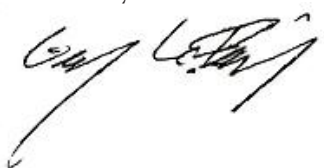
Of course, you can stop by our Center, too. Say hello to me, or Kimberly Brown our outreach coordinator, or any one of our volunteers.

And let us know what you want—the best presents are those given with an idea of what the recipient would like, so please, if there's a book group you'd like to attend, a writing style you'd like to learn more about, or an author you'd love to see visit the area, let us know.

Lastly, if you want to give back, the Center accepts donations and volunteers to help us do our work in the community. Feel free to contact us.

Happy holidays—and remember, books make great presents.

Gerry LaFemina



The New Center

Programs Begin in Spring 2010

The opening of the new Creative Writing Center on Main Street will bring a series of new programs offered to students, faculty and interested community members. Book groups and writing groups, among other opportunities, will start at the beginning of the Spring 2010 semester. All meetings will be held in the Center for Creative Writing at 20 E. Main St. Check out the list of upcoming programs:

Book Groups:

Reading Like a Writer Group - Gerry LaFemina will facilitate a creative reading group in which participants will look at how to read more deeply and consider the writer's point of view. The group will refer to the book *How to Read Like a Professor* by Thomas Foster.

Poetry Book Club - Facilitated by Gerry LaFemina and will be held on the third Monday of every month at 7 p.m.

Film/Book Club - Facilitated by Kevin Kehrwald and will be held on the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m.

Sci-Fi/ Fantasy Book Club - Facilitated by Andy Duncan and will be held the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m.

Writer's Groups:

Adult Creative Writing Group - Facilitated by Jessica Palumbo and Kimberly Brown and will be held the second and fourth Monday of every month at 7 p.m. This program is opened to all non-students in the area and will cover all ranges of creative writing.

Veteran's Workshop - Facilitated by Clint Garner and will be held every Wednesday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. This program is open to veterans only.

Local Student Creative Writing Workshop - Facilitated by Nina Forsythe, this program will allow local middle school and high school students to meet and work on creative writing techniques. The dates and times have not yet been set, so keep an eye out for an announcement.

We hope you're interested in these programs. For more information about Center Programming, or if there are any programs that you would like to see offered, e-mail cwcenter@frostburg.edu.

Holiday Storybook Village

Bundle up, and join in the winter festivities of this year's Storybook Holiday Saturday, December 5, 2009! Start the day off right with a breakfast, where elves are there to serve and entertain you (tickets sold in advance at Hotel Gunter). Immediately after, join the elves outside to cheer on your favorites during the traditional Elf Olympics, followed by a magical parade down Main Street. The author Jennifer O'Connell will be here to share her winter story to the community. Then, come see City Place turned into a winter wonderland filled with family fun activities for all. Throughout the day, elves will be hosting storybook readings in various locations, followed by the annual cookie contest. End the day by purchasing your ticket to watch the 1946 classic, *It's a Wonderful Life*, at the town's Palace Theatre. For more information, please contact the Children's Literature Centre at clc@frostburg.edu or (301) 687-3133.

Write in the Middle of Winter

Hemingway may have only needed a clean, well-lighted place, but most writers require a break from their nine-to-five, the kids, or the same old four walls that surround their writing space. Get away from it all this March for a weekend of writing, reading, and critiquing.

CityLit Project and the Frostburg Center for Creative Writing team up for the first annual "Write in the Middle of Winter" retreat. Escape to the mountains of Western Maryland March 4-7, 2010, (three nights) at beautiful Herrington Manor State Park for the time and attention your writing needs.

Retreat leaders Gerry LaFemina (poetry, Frostburg State University) and Merrill Feitell (fiction, University of Maryland) will guide writers through three days of critiquing text, presenting exercises, and talking shop, with plenty of opportunity to focus on your own writing. A special dinner Saturday evening, March 6, features Ed Ochester, general editor of the Drue Heinz Literature Prize and editor of the Pitt Poetry Series at the University of Pittsburgh Press.

"Let's face it, in our day to day lives, the writing often has to come last," said LaFemina. "There are kids or dogs or spouses—and sometimes all of the above—demanding our time. This is a chance to give yourself some writing time away while also being in a community of writers."

Feitell's first book, *Here Beneath Low-Flying Planes*, won the Iowa Award for short fiction. She has received fellowships from The MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Byrdcliffe, Bread Loaf, and the Taos Writers Conference, and her short stories have been short-listed in *Best American Short Stories* and The O. Henry Awards. She teaches in the MFA program at University of Maryland in College Park and is Fiction Editor at *Forklift, Ohio: A Journal of Poetry, Cooking, and Light Industrial Safety*.

LaFemina's seven books of poems and prose poems include *Graffiti Heart* (winner of the Anthony Piccione/Mammoth Books Prize in Poetry), *The Window Facing Winter*, and *The Parakeets of Brooklyn* (winner of the Bordighera Prize in Poetry). A new book, *The Vanishing Horizon*, is forthcoming in 2010 from Anhinga Press. He directs the Frostburg Center for Creative Writing at Frostburg State University, where he also teaches.

Registration is \$200 per person if received before January 15, 2010, and \$250 per person thereafter. Registration includes receptions on March 4 and 5, dinner on March 6, and a one-on-one critique session with the leader of your choice. (Note: if you wish to have a critique session, you *must* deliver a printed copy of 10-15 pages of your material to the appropriate leader no later than February 15, 2010.) Space is limited.

Accommodations and other food arrangements are extra. Cabin options are available on a first come, first served basis. There are four 3-4-person cabins (two bedrooms, one with two twin beds for \$120 and one with one full bed for \$150) and four 5-6-person cabins (three bedrooms, two with two twin beds for \$120 each and one with one full bed for \$150). Retreat organizers will try to accommodate you preferences on a first come, first served basis. We encourage writers groups to pre-arrange cabin-mate situations, but are happy to assign cabin-mates when necessary. Cabins are heated and equipped with full kitchens, and the park lodge serves a limited menu.

Sorry, no pets allowed and guests must provide their own bed and bath linens.

For more details on accommodations, please call 301-687-4024.

Come write with us, right in the middle of winter. Registration forms can be downloaded at www.CityLitProject.org/News (link will be on homepage for a limited time).

Rick Bass Reading

Frostburg State University's Center for Creative Writing is pleased to announce the visiting environmental writer for the fall semester. Rick Bass is the author of 24 books of fiction and non-fiction including his first short story collection, *The Watch*, which won the PEN/Nelson Algren Award, and his 2002 collection, *The Hermit's Story*, which was a *Los Angeles Times* Best Book of the Year. He will read on Thursday, December 3, at 7:30 p.m. in the Lyric Theater on 20 E. Main Street in Frostburg. Bass has received the Pushcart Prize, the O. Henry Award and his short stories have been collected in *The Best American Short Stories*. His most recent publication is his memoir *Why I Came West*.

Frostburg professor of Creative Writing Barbara Hurd says about Bass's visit: "What a fabulous opportunity. He's one of the leading environmental writers in this country, a passionate and sure-footed guide to combining art and activism. We'll be studying his work in two of my courses this semester, and his presence here in early December will only deepen students' understanding of the importance of his work. That we can get such a nationally known writer here at all is a sign of the increased visibility of our creative writing and environmental programs. I hope the whole campus comes out for his reading. They won't be disappointed." Bass received his B.S. in petroleum geology from Utah State University in 1979 and currently lives in the Yaak Valley in northwest Montana. He serves on the board of the Yaak Valley Forest Council and Round River Conservation Studies.

Bass's reading, sponsored by the Frostburg Center for Creative Writing, Maryland State Arts Council and the Allegany Arts Council, is free and open to the public. A book signing and reception will follow. For more information, call the Department of English at 301-687-4221 or the Frostburg Center for Creative Writing at 301-687-4024.

Two Spring Workshops

Veteran's Workshop Spring 2010

The Frostburg State University Center for Creative Writing is pleased to offer you a new opportunity. During the Spring 2010 semester, a mixed-genre creative writing workshop will be open to veterans, and veterans ONLY! The workshop is free, and will require no text or supply purchases on your part.

The workshop will be led by local veteran and writer Clint Garner, and will meet every Wednesday from 5:00-7:00pm, starting February 3, 2010. We will meet at the Lyric Center on Main Street in Frostburg. The objective of the class will be to equip participants with some basic writing skills, tools and resources. In class, participants will discuss basic components and conventions of all three major creative writing genres (non-fiction, fiction, and poetry), one at a time; read successful works from each genre by veterans from various eras and discuss what makes them work; and write a piece of your own in each genre and turn it in to receive feedback from your classmates and the instructor.

Our hope is to provide interested veterans with an avenue for meaningful and productive expression. Therapy, self-exploration, problem solving, creative outlet, starting block for producing publishable material in the future - make of it whatever you would like it to be for you. We ask only that you join us for what should be an exciting and productive endeavor.

Play Writing Workshop February 2010

The Frostburg State University Lyric Center for Creative Writing will host a 10-week playwriting workshop with local award-winning playwright Ty DeMartino. Sessions will begin in February and will be held on Thursday nights, starting at 7 p.m. at the Center located at 22 E. Main Street in Frostburg.

The workshop is open to both novice and established playwrights who want to learn more about the craft and art of writing for the stage. Participants will review such basics as how to tell strong stories in a theatrical setting, create memorable characters and write natural-sounding dialogue. Over the 10 weeks, participants will develop their own play ideas and receive feedback and guidance from DeMartino and their fellow workshop participants.

DeMartino's plays have appeared on stages from Hollywood to Off-Broadway in New York City and The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. In 2007, he was named Playwright of the Year by The Baltimore City Paper for his political piece "The Blessed Mothers of War" and in 2008, his family drama "Finding Fossils" was honored as Best Production of the Baltimore Playwrights Festival.

The cost for the 10-week workshop is \$100 per person with partial proceeds directly benefiting the Center. For more information or to register, contact the Lyric Center for Creative Writing at 301-687-4024 or visit online at www.frostburg.edu/cwcenter.

Literary Events Calendar

December 2009

Thursday, Dec. 3, 7:30p.m.	Rick Bass Reading	Lyric Theater	Frostburg, MD
Saturday, Dec. 5, 8a.m. - 10p.m.	Storybook Holiday	Main Street	Frostburg, MD

Spring 2010 Dates to Remember

Thursday, Feb. 11	Valentines Day Reading	Saville Gallery	Cumberland, MD
Monday, Mar. 8	Judy Kerman Reading	Lyric Theater	Frostburg, MD
Thursday, Mar. 11	Process of Making	Mt. City Trad. Arts	Frostburg, MD
Thursday, Apr. 13	Process of Making	Mt. City Trad. Arts	Frostburg, MD
Wednesday, Apr. 21	Back Bone Mountain Review Reading	Lyric Theater	Frostburg, MD

Happy Holidays!

From the Creative Writing Center

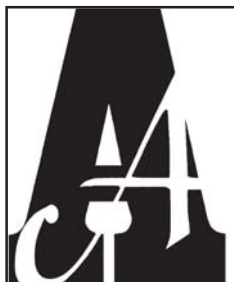
Would You Like to Support the Center for Creative Writing?

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In the memo line: Center for Creative Writing

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