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PEOPLE

Intell columnist awarded Leacock honorable mention

By Henry Bury

The Intelligencer

It's taken an honorable mention to inspire Belleville's Orland French to enter more literary competitions.

French, 52, received an honorable mention for a short story, titled "Uncle Morris," he entered in the eighth annual Leacock Humorous Short Story contest.



FRENCH

It was one of 61 entries received across the country. The competition was open to anyone who enjoys writing funny short stories. French was one of three authors receiving an honorable mention.

"I'm obviously pleased with the honorable mention and I now have the inspiration to submit more stories in future competitions," French said.

His 1,000-word entry told the humorous tale of the burial of Uncle Morris, a fictional bootlegger.

"Like all fiction, it's based on real and imagined characters," he said.

He wrote the story a while back but recently refined it for the Leacock contest.

It's one of the few contests he has entered in his journalistic career — until

now.

French is a journalism teacher at Loyalist College and a freelance writer. He writes a weekly light-hearted column which appears in Saturday's Intelligencer.

He began writing short stories on a regular basis after joining a writing group near Cobourg five years ago.

He especially revels in writing humorous stories and his newspaper columns.

"I enjoy making a point in a story but telling it in a funny way. And that encourages readers to stick with it."

Doug Bell, manager of the Leacock Heritage Festival in Orillia, said he was impressed with the entries.

"The quality of writing continues to make the selection process challenging but the judges continue to be up to the task," he said.

Contest winners were announced during the festival that ran from July 26 to Aug. 5.

First prize of \$500 went to Brian Sweet of Kingsville, Ont., for his entry, The New Bridge; second prize of \$200 went to Dick Hainsworth of Victoria, B.C., for 98 Degrees in Los Angeles.

Honorable mentions were also given to David Hobson of Waterloo for his entry, Criminal Gardners, and Jill Summerhayes of Cambridge for A Qualified Cleaning Lady.