



PACKING THEM IN! The seventh annual Eden Mills Writers' Festival was a resounding success under sunny skies on Sunday. Organizer and local author Leon Rooke estimated over 3,000 people attended the Festival, which attracted at least 40 renowned authors. (Eve Martin photo)

Over 3,000 at Writers' Festival

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Rockwood Miller

The seventh annual Eden Mills Writers' Festival on Sunday had it all: Local author and Festival organizer Leon Rooke parading in a 1959 Corvette to launch his new book, *Muffins*; "Save the Bowstring Bridge" advocates selling posters to raise money; and two Clydesdale horses pulling Ontario playwright James Ranney on a replica of the stagecoach once used for treks to Guelph from Erin.

Ah yes, and there were some writers, publishers, magazine and press companies in attendance. Plenty of them.

Rooke figured at least 40 writers - including well-known talents Mordecai Richler and Gordon Lish - and the same amount of magazine and press personnel, entertained a crowd in excess of 3,500 along the friendly banks of the Eramosa River.

"It was fantastic," reported a tired Rooke on Monday. "We tend

to get people who come once and repeat themselves. The coverage we received - Global Television, TV Ontario and Bravo - was extremely rewarding."

Richler drew about 800 people to his reading, while Victoria, B.C. poet P.K. Page received what Rooke believes was the first standing ovation in Festival history.

"First, I think it's the readings that people love the best before the nature aspect of the outdoors and the music," he added.

Although he didn't have time to visit, Rooke said he heard from several people that this year's introduction of a children's component was a hit with writers Jean Little, Warner Zimmerman and Paul Duggen.

An eight-member group from Guelph, with an array of musical styles and calling themselves *Black Cabbage*, went on a marathon run, playing until nearly midnight. Rooke invited them after they caught his eye at Hillside Festival.

Meanwhile, Rooke was taken through the heart of Eden Mills in a light blue '59 Corvette to launch his latest book, *Muffins*. The book includes a vinyl 45-speed record recorded during a live reading in April at the Rivoli in Toronto.

"I enjoyed it (the ride), but it was certainly silly," stated Rooke, adding the car-ride was the idea of his publisher, Tim Inkster. "Having the stage coach was a great treat, though."

Rooke said this year's Festival stands to make a profit with the modest increase in admission fees.

Fall events coming up!

COMING EVENTS

The dog days of summer are long gone and everyone's pace is picking up. A number of fall activities are happening in and around Rockwood and Eden Mills - so get out your calendar!

Sept. 20, Wednesday - 7 pm: Calling all parents of pre-schoolers! There will be a meeting at the Seniors' Resource Centre, Main Street, Rockwood, to discuss what parents would like to see in the toy lending library and children's play group, Tot Time. Come and give us your feedback! We also need good, used (or new!) toys. If you can help, please call Cathy Moffit, 856-2113.

Sept. 20, Wednesday - 8 pm: The Rockwood Gardening Club will have Larry Davidson showing slides of Unusual Perennials and discuss-

ing wintering perennials at their meeting at the Rockwood Town Hall. Everyone is welcome!

Sept. 26, Tuesday - 5 and 7 pm: Rockwood Presbyterian Church is holding their annual Beef Dinner at Rockmosa. Sittings at 5 and 7 pm. Adults, \$10; children 12 and under \$5; five and under are free. For tickets call 856-4645 or 856-9565.

Oct. 5, Thursday - 10:30 am to noon: George Lee will return as instructor of an eight-week Tai Chi course. Cost is \$30 to seniors and \$40 for adults and will be held at St. John's Anglican Church Hall, Main Street, Rockwood. To register, call The Eramosa Seniors' Resource Centre, 856-2113, or EWAG in Erin at 1-800-640-0928.

(If you're planning a special event, let us know. Our phone number is 853-5100; you can fax us at 853-5040.)



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Time to power-shop!

Here's your best bet for Christmas shopping this year: Rockwood's Lucky Losers are planning a shopping trip to Woodhaven, Michigan (near Detroit) and you're invited!

The Nov. 10 to 12 trip offers deluxe motor coach transportation and two nights accommodation at the Knights Inn.

Shopping stops include Meijers and Super K-Mart, which are open 24-hours.

Southgate Mall, Burlington Coat Factory and Gibraltar Trade Centre are also planned. Cost is just \$65 (four to a room), \$75 (three to a room) and \$90 (double).

There are 47 seats available; phone organizer Dot Polo at 856-9441 for details.

The Lucky Losers is a weight-loss support group which meets regularly at the Eramosa Library.

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