



Dr. Ute Lischke, Professor and Chair
Department of English and Film Studies
519-884-0710 ext. 360 or ulischke@wlu.ca

Kevin Crowley, Director: Communications & Public Affairs
Wilfrid Laurier University
519-884-0710 ext. 3070 or kcrowley@wlu.ca

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A tale of two writers-in-residence

Authors Alissa York and Andrew Westoll host public events as part of Laurier residency

WATERLOO – The tale of these two writers-in-residence may not have much in common with Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, but the tales of authors Alissa York and Andrew Westoll – both writers-in-residence at Laurier – do have the human-animal connection theme in common with each other. They will discuss this theme and share their award-winning work at public events in Waterloo and Brantford.

York, Laurier's third-annual writer-in-residence following authors Lawrence Hill and Joseph Boyden, explores themes of homelessness and the human-animal connection in her novel *Fauna*. Westoll, Laurier's inaugural Edna Staebler writer-in-residence, recounts his experiences at a chimp sanctuary in his non-fiction book, *The Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary*.

The authors will join together to bring their unique perspectives to the human animal connection and read from their works at a public event March 6 at Laurier's Waterloo campus and March 7 at Laurier's Brantford campus.

York will also give a public lecture on homelessness and the human-animal relationship at Laurier's Faculty of Social Work in Kitchener on Feb. 28, and Westoll will offer a public reading from *Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary* at Laurier's Waterloo campus on March 26.

York, who visits Laurier between Feb. 25 and March 7, is the author of several books, including *Effigy* and the national best-seller, *Fauna*. *Effigy* was shortlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize, and *Fauna* was shortlisted for the 2011 Toronto Book award. York has also written award-winning short fiction, and her essays and articles have appeared in *The Guardian*, *The Globe and Mail*, *Quill & Quire* and *Eighteen Bridges*.

Westoll, whose Edna Staebler writer-in-residence takes place from January to April, is a primatologist and an award-winning narrative journalist. He is the author of *The Riverbones* and *The Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary: A Canadian Story of Resilience and Recovery*, which won the 2012 Charles Taylor Prize. The book was also shortlisted for the Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction and the BC National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction and named a book of the year by *The Globe and Mail*, Amazon.ca, *Quill & Quire* and CTV's Canada AM.

Public Events:

- **Feb 28**, 7-9 p.m., York Public Lecture: Homelessness and the Human-Animal Relationship, Room 101, Faculty of Social Work, 120 Duke St. W., Kitchener
- **March 6**, 7-8:30 p.m., York & Westoll Public Reading, Hawk's Nest, Fred Nichols Campus Centre, Waterloo
- **March 7**, 7-8:30 p.m., York & Westoll Public Reading on the Human-animal Connection, CB100, Carnegie Building, Brantford
- **March 26**, 7-8:30 p.m., Westoll Public Reading, Hawk's Nest, Fred Nichols' Campus Centre, Waterloo

- more -

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For information about the authors' events and activities at Laurier, please click [here](#) for York and [here](#) for Westoll.

About the Edna Staebler Writer-in-Residence: The Edna Staebler Laurier Writer-in-Residence program is a full-time, three-month residency for Canadian writers that comes with a \$25,000 award. The writer-in-residence resides in Lucinda House, a century home close to Laurier's Waterloo campus, and splits his or her time between writing and community programming at the university's various campuses. Andrew Westoll is Laurier's inaugural Edna Staebler Writer-in-Residence.

About Laurier's Writer-in-Residence program: Laurier sponsors an annual one-week writer-in-residence to offer support to Canadian writers and to give students, faculty and staff, as well as members of the community, the opportunity to discuss the writer's work and the writing process. Writers-in-residence meet with classes, reading groups and community members during their engagement at the university, as well as delivering a public lecture. Alissa York is Laurier's third writer-in-residence. Previous writers-in-residence included Joseph Boyden (2011-12) and Lawrence Hill (2010-11).

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