

People

Writer Chris Garbutt starts magazine

By KATE GILDERDALE
Correspondent

The *Lazy Writer*, a national magazine launched this winter, is the answer to every Canadian writer's prayer.

Publisher Chris Garbutt, a Toronto resident who lived in Stouffville "non-stop until I was 18," and whose family still resides here, has experienced first-hand the frustrations and joys of writing.

"I'm quite proud of the magazine. It has been about nine months' work from the time it was

conceived," he said, adding that the analogy to giving birth was an apt one.

Garbutt studied journalism at Carlton University and worked at *The Tribune* for two summers, in 1987 and 1988. "It was really my first break to come back from my first year of university and get a job," he said.

"I had begun to move away from journalism, but just to be in publishing was very exciting and I learned so much."

He always knew he wanted to be a writer, "but I lost interest in journalism, because although I really liked doing local stories, I didn't have a lot of interest in big city journalism," he observed.

After leaving university, he landed a job in health care publications and found the work more to his liking. He was promoted to head of his department, but continued to miss the creative side of writing.

"As a kid I wrote all kinds of fiction pieces - I think I did my best writing when I was about 13 - and now I'm getting back into it." He attended a publishing workshop in Banff, Alberta, while he was working for McGill Street Magazine and that workshop provided the catalyst for what was to follow.

"I came back with some ideas that weren't really right for the

magazine, so I decided to start out on my own."

A confessed magazine junkie, he found that while there was no shortage of publications aimed at writers, most were published in the U.S. with a bias towards the American market.

Establishing *The Lazy Writer* was exciting "because of the people I brought together, all of whom had contacts in the literary community. It was a combination of planning, luck and spontaneity."

The end result is engaging, informative and literate without being pompous.

The first issue covers everything from practical advice on submissions from five leading editors to interviews with Rosemary Sullivan and Donald Akenson on effective biography writing.

Add poetry, fiction, a calendar of events and some witty ruminations on the writing life and you have a welcome newcomer to Canada's literary scene. *The Lazy Writer* is published quarterly and subscriptions are available by calling 416-538-0559.

That this is a magazine for writers, by writers, is underlined by one of Garbutt's observations. "Writing is not like other things - you don't decide to do it, you can't help yourself."

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