

# I'll never forget teacher who turned me on to learning

As educators and their merits were being bandied about everywhere from Windsor to Waterloo in the midst of the furor of recent weeks, I found myself thinking back to my Grade 13 history teacher at Toronto's Leaside High School.

Not only did Don McLeod foster within me an appreciation of Canadian and American history, he also turned me on to the intrigues of the Canadian political scene, and to the joy of learning in general. Ironically, he carried the same



**From Where I Live**  
Bruce Stapley

insensitive students who are always quick to pounce upon a teacher's physical imperfections.

Despite Don's idiosyncrasies, I soon found myself snapping to attention in a classroom for the first time in my less-than-illustrious high school career, as he began each lesson with his take on what was happening in Ottawa that particular day.

Maybe it was the timing. After all, 1967-68 was a turning point in our country's political history.

Don put a unique, oft-times humorous spin on then-prime minister Lester Pearson and his attempts to nurse a minority government while grooming his sandals-wearing justice minister, Pierre Trudeau, to replace him.

Something clicked within me as I suddenly came to understand that history was the cumulative record of the Pearsons and Trudeaus of decades and centuries past.

While trying to decide what topic to choose for my American history essay, I met with Don after class and left brimming with inspiration.

How about a look at Abraham Lincoln and whether or not he was better suited to splitting rails in Ohio than enacting presidential legislation, Don suggested.

He hinted strongly that Honest Abe was a crafty fox disguised as a country bumpkin.

He sent me away with a few

book titles to use for my research, and I set off on the road to academic discovery.

I can't remember if I got a B plus or an A minus for my efforts, but my unprecedented success on a school project spurred me on in my new determination to acquire knowledge.

A few months later, Don set me off to determine whether or not Arthur Meighen had been the author of his own misfortunes when he had no more than a cup of coffee as Conservative PM in the 1920s.

That assignment would help me understand the plight of poor Joe Clark a few years down the road.

Don also had a sense of humour.

On one of his American history tests he included a multiple choice question in which the correct answer was Santa Ana.

Among the five choices was the name of the jolly red-suited Christmas elf himself, Santa Claus. Each student let out a little giggle upon their discovery of Don's little gag.

It never occurred to me to thank Don for opening up the universe of learning for me.

You just don't think to do that sort of thing when you're in your teens.

I never went back in the years that followed either.

I vaguely recall hearing from someone that Don had died a few decades back.

I know I'll never forget him.

## New Poetry Contest \$48,000.00 in Prizes

*The National Library of Poetry to award 250 total prizes to amateur poets in coming months*

Owings Mills, Maryland - The National Library of Poetry has just announced that \$48,000.00 in prizes will be awarded over the next 12 months in the brand new North American Open Amateur Poetry Contest. The deadline for entry into the contest is December 15, 1997. Another contest begins December 16, 1997. The contest is open to everyone and entry is free.

"We're especially looking for poems from new or unpublished poets," indicated Howard Ely, spokesperson for The National Library of Poetry. "We have a ten year history of awarding large prizes to talented poets who have never before won any type of writing competition."

### How To Enter

Anyone may enter the competition simply by sending in **ONLY ONE** original poem, any subject, any style, to:

The National Library of Poetry  
Unit #1, Dept. 4696  
450 Tapscott Road  
Scarborough, Ontario  
M1B 5W1

Or enter online at [www.poetry.com](http://www.poetry.com)

The poem should be no more than 20 lines, and the poet's name and address must appear on the top of



Carolyn Johnson of California, pictured above, is the latest Grand Prize Winner in The National Library of Poetry's North American Open Amateur Poetry Contest. As the big winner, she was awarded \$1,000.00 in cash.

the page. Entries must be postmarked by December 15, 1997. "All poets who enter will receive a response concerning their artistry," indicated Mr. Ely.

### Possible Publication

Many submitted poems will also be considered for inclusion in one of The National Library of Poetry's forthcoming hardbound anthologies. Previous anthologies published by the organization have included *On the Threshold of a Dream*, *Days of Future's Past*, *Of Diamonds and Rust*, and *Moments More to Go*, among others.

"Our anthologies routinely sell out because they are truly enjoyable reading, and they are also a sought-after sourcebook for poetic talent," added Mr. Ely.

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## YORK REGION SEEKS YOUR ADVICE ON HOW TO MANAGE REGIONAL FOREST

The York Regional Forest represents 5,000 acres of conifer plantation, hardwood woodlands, treed swamps and creeks. It also is one of the most significant natural areas in the Region. Established in 1924, the forest is owned and managed by the Regional Municipality of York.

To administer these lands for both present and future generations, the Region is preparing a 20-year management plan.

To ensure the plan responds to citizens' wishes, the Region will hold three public information sessions to:

- describe the contents of the 20 year management plan and the 5 year operating plan,
- answer your questions as they relate to the Regional Forest and,
- receive your comments regarding the Regional Forest.

WHEN	WHERE	TIME**
Nov. 18, 1997	York Region Administration Centre, 17250 Yonge St., Newmarket - Committee Room B	6 to 9 p.m.
Nov. 19, 1997	Ballantrae Community Centre Room # 2	6 to 9 p.m.
Nov. 20, 1997	Pefferlaw Public Library Pete's Lane, Pefferlaw	6 to 9 p.m.

\*\*There will be a 45 minute presentation starting at approximately 7 p.m. Don't miss it!



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