



Spend the summer with a good book or three

Robert White
ChristianWeek Staff

School's out, extracurricular activities have ended and the church—except for Sunday—has shut down. A perfect time to hit that pile of books sitting beside the couch and enjoy a good summer read.

If you're unlike me, who's received a stream of review copies during the past year, deciding what to read may be a challenge. These three books, ranging from a novel about missionary experiences in South Africa and India to the journal of a street youth worker in Toronto, are sure to reinvigorate and refresh you during those hazy, lazy days of summer.

Bent Hope: A Street Journal

BENT HOPE: A STREET JOURNAL
BY TIM HUFF
PICKERING, ON: CASTLE QUAY BOOKS, 2008
CDN \$18.95, 244 PAGES PAPERBACK
ISBN: 1-894860-36-5

If you only have time to read one of these books this summer—this is the one.

A beautifully-written book, *Bent Hope* tracks Tim Huff's 20-year ministry with the homeless and street youth in Toronto. While Huff touches on some of the socio-political roots of homelessness, poverty and substance abuse, the book is really gallery of portraits. It includes Doogan, whose pain from verbal and physical abuse at home was dulled by gas sniffing and drug abuse; Sarah, a 17-year-old who'd never been hugged until one silent, holy Christmas night;

Tyson, whose healthy stature and rushed story tell the tale of one who had successfully left the street.

"It's about erasing the line between us and them," says Huff about the book's message—which isn't solely for urbanites. In his two decades of ministry Huff has found nearly two-thirds of those he meets are escapes from the abuse or desperation of small town Ontario. *Bent Hope* is as much about prevention—caring for people before they hit the streets—as it is about compassionate care for those on the streets.

"Right where we are is where desperation is," says Huff.

When Cobras Laugh

WHEN COBRAS LAUGH
BY DON RANNEY AND RAY WISEMAN
WATERFORD, VA: CAPSTONE PUBLISHING GROUP, 2008
CDN \$15.95, 223 PAGES PAPERBACK
ISBN: 1-60290-143-0

Combined a former orthopedic surgeon and a retired electronics technician and multiply their individual experiences on two different mission fields and you have *When Cobras Laugh*.

The historical novel follows the story of medical missionary Steve Manley in India, whose experiences are modeled on those of Don Ranney. Co-author Ray Wiseman's South African experiences are replicated in the story of Andrew Heath. Through a meeting at a Bible translation school, Heath and Manley become friends and share their trials and tribulations with each other.

"We would have had to name people, places and things and we really don't want to do that," says Wiseman about favouring the novel rather than the memoir format. Their stories needed to be told to teach readers about the realities of missionary life.

"People do need to know," says Wiseman. "It's hard to know without asking some pointed questions. We hope this book will

lead people to do just that."

The Beautiful Disappointment: Discovering Who You are Through the Trials of Life

THE BEAUTIFUL DISAPPOINTMENT: DISCOVERING WHO YOU ARE THROUGH THE TRIALS OF LIFE
BY COLIN MCCARTNEY
PICKERING, ON: CASTLE QUAY BOOKS, 2008
CDN \$19.95, 208 PAGES PAPERBACK
ISBN: 1-894860-35-7

Trouble often comes in threes—an adage Colin McCartney discovered was true. The executive director of UrbanPromise Toronto faced the murder of one of his staff members and the death of an eight-year-old boy who was part of the ministry's programs in the space of a year.

These incidents left McCartney spiritually, emotionally and physically beaten.

"We need to stop acting like we have everything under control, because life teaches us that we can control nothing," writes McCartney, just before taking a sabbatical which led to the third tragedy: a life-shattering water accident that left him temporarily paralyzed and permanently injured.

While recovering from the accident in Hawaii, McCartney slowly realized trials are really "beautiful disappointments" God can use to purge us of all the false things we have allowed to disfigure who we truly are.

"Sometimes we need help to recognize God's presence in our lives... Life's disappointments can often wake us up to our need for God and put an end to our vertigo of busyness," he says.

"This is what happened to me... I began to experience this wonderful God who is always around me."



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Canadian writers honoured

MISSISSAUGA, ON—Ontario writers are among the 38 winners at this year's Canadian Christian Writing Awards.

The annual awards gala, held at World Vision Canada's auditorium in June, celebrated both the 20th anniversary of the awards and the best of writing by Canadian Christian writers. The contest drew 225 entries in 31 categories.

Also awarded was the annual Leslie K. Tarr Award to Peterborough's Connie Brummel Crook, the author of nine young adult novels and three children's picture books. Her work portrays Canadian history and is widely used in public school classrooms and libraries.

Named in honour of its first recipient, the late Leslie K. Tarr, a Toronto journalist, editor and teacher, the Tarr Award celebrates a major career contribution to Christian writing and publishing in Canada. Previous Tarr Award winners include Christian writing pioneers Grace Irwin, Margaret Epp, E. Margaret Clarkson, Janette Oke, Rudy Wiebe and poet Margaret Avison, the last two both two-time Governor General's Literary Award winners.

Hosted by Toronto Raptors' in-house announcer Herbie Kuhn, the awards gala also featured book signings and the formal launch of Hot Apple Cider, an anthology featuring 30 authors who are members of The Word Guild.

Articles, Poetry, Song Lyrics and Scripts

Article—General Readership (articles that explain or encourage faith for mainstream readers)

Winner-Tie: Lorna Dueck of Burlington, Ontario for "Mother Teresa: We should all have such doubts" (*Globe and Mail*)

Winner-Tie: Jennifer Green of Ottawa for "Sacred Heritage" (*Ottawa Citizen*)

Article—Long Feature

Winner: Jennifer Green of Ottawa for "Faith on Fire" (*Ottawa Citizen*)

Article—News

Winner: Jennifer Green of Ottawa for "The Persecuted" (*Ottawa Citizen*)

Article—Personal Experience

Winner-Tie: Paul M. Beckingham of Vancouver for "Broken Bodies, Shattered Lives" (*Focus on the Family Canada*)

Winner-Tie: Fern Boldt of St. Catharines, Ontario for "An Ocean of Tears" (*Beyond Ordinary Living*)

Article—Profile/Human Interest

Winner: Ben Volman of Toronto for "From Newsman to Lieutenant-Governor" (*Faith Today*)

Article—Short Feature

Winner: Nicolette Beharie of Brampton, Ontario for "A New Beginning" (*Childview/Enfants du monde*)

Column/Editorial/First Person Essay (series)

Winner-Tie: James Beverley of Pickering, Ontario for "Is God a Delusion?" and "Making Sense of The Secret" (*Faith Today*)

Winner-Tie: Karen Stiller of Port Perry, Ontario for "How Green is Your Conscience?" and "Rebel with a Cause" (*Childview/Enfants du monde*)

Scripts and Screenplays

Winner: Alison Siewert of Mississauga, Ontario for "Jonah" (InterVarsity Christian Fellowship / RansomTHEDonKey)

Song Lyrics

Winner: Jassette Haughton of Brampton Ontario for "I Believe" (Praise Cathedral Worship Centre)

Books

Book—Apogetics/Evangelism

Winner: Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld of Waterloo, Ontario for *Recovering Jesus: The Witness of the New Testament* (Baker/Brazos)

Book—Biblical Studies

Winner-Tie: James Houston of Vancouver for *Letters of Faith Through the Seasons - Volume 1* (Cook)

Winner-Tie: James Houston of Vancouver for *Letters of Faith Through the Seasons - Volume 2* (Cook)

Winner-Tie: James R. Payton, Jr. of Mount Hope, Ontario for *Light from the Christian East: An Introduction to the Orthodox Tradition* (WIP Academic)

Book—Children

Winner: Tim Huff of Toronto for *The Cardboard Shack Beneath the Bridge* (Castle Quay Books)

Book—Christian Living

Winner: Donald N. Bastian of Brampton, Ontario for *God's House Rules: Seven Biblical Principles to Transform and Enrich Your Family Life* (BPS Books)

Book—Culture

Winner-Tie: Douglas Farrow of Baie d'Urfe, Quebec for *Nation of Bastards: Essays on the End of Marriage* (BPS Books)

Winner-Tie: Mark Vander Vennen of Cobourg, Ontario for *Hope in Troubled Times: A New Vision for Confronting Global Crises* (Baker Academic)

Book—General Readership

Winner: Bruxy Cavey of Oakville, Ontario for *The End of Religion* (NavPress)

Book—Leadership/Theoretical

Winner: James R. Payton, Jr. of Mount Hope, Ontario for *Light from the Christian East: An Introduction to the Orthodox Tradition* (WIP Academic)

Book—Special

Winner: Margo Swiss of Toronto for *Poetry as Liturgy: An Anthology by Canadian Poets* (The St. Thomas Poetry Series)

Novel—Contemporary

Winner: William P. Young of Gresham, Oregon for *The Shack: Where Tragedy Confronts Eternity* (Windblown Media)

Novel—Independently Published Fiction

Winner: Eric E. Wright of Colborne, Ontario for *The Lightning File* (Hidden Brook Press)

Novel—Mystery/Suspense

Winner: Eric E. Wright of Colborne, Ontario for *The Lightning File* (Hidden Brook Press)

Novel—Romance

Winner-Tie: Carolyn Aarsen of Neerlandia, Alberta for *All in One Place* (Faith Words)

Winner-Tie: Linda Hall of Fredericton, New Brunswick for *Shadows in the Mirror* (Steeple Hill)



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