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For immediate release

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SEVEN WRITERS SHORTLISTED FOR BEST NEW AUTHOR AWARD

Toronto - Seven Canadian writers who are Christian are competing to get their first book published in the Best New Canadian Christian Author contest. This award recognizes the most promising book-length manuscript in either fiction or nonfiction genres. The winning book will be published by Castle Quay Books Canada in 2007.

The competition is open to any Canadian citizen or permanent resident who affirms the Apostles' Creed, is not currently under contract with a publisher, and has never had a book published by a royalty-paying publisher or on a work-for-hire basis.

Thirty-one entries from across Canada were submitted, up from 28 in 2005 and 19 in 2004. Four non-fiction works and three novels are vying for first place.

Three writers, Donna Carter, David Donaldson and Nan McKenzie Kosowan, have been shortlisted for the second time. The Best New Author contest enables entrants to revise their manuscripts based on judges' critiques of their first draft, and to re-enter the contest. Last year's Best New Author, Deborah Gyapong, won on her second attempt.

The shortlisted finalists are:

Donna Carter of Calgary for nonfiction, *The Blonde Leading the Blonde*

David Donaldson of St. Catharines, Ont. for nonfiction, *Before There Was Hannah: One Family's Journey Through Teenage Pregnancy*

Nan McKenzie Kosowan of Uxbridge, Ont. for nonfiction, *Listening to the Sound of His Voice: From Childhood to Grandparenthood*

Marcia Lee Laycock of Ponoka, Alta. for a novel, *One Smooth Stone*

Keith Marward McDonald of Greenwood Village, Colorado for a novel, *A Time to Mourn, A Time to Dance*

Emily Wierenga of Edmonton for a novel, *Canvas Child*

Vi Wilson of Durham, Ont. for nonfiction, *Child of Grace - With a Dirty Face*

The winning author will receive an advance of \$1,000 and a book publishing contract.

The winner will be announced on June 14 at The Word Guild Canadian Writing Awards Gala in Mississauga, Ont., the premiere black-tie event honouring Canadian writers who are Christian. The Gala will feature a worship band, celebrity presenters, recording artists, excerpts from shortlisted work, book signings and reception. The public is invited to celebrate with the finalists, their families and friends.

The winner of the 2005 Best New Author Award, Deborah Gyapong of Ottawa, will mark the launch of her first novel, *The Defilers*. Awards also will be presented for outstanding career achievement, and for the best books, articles, poems, scripts and song lyrics published in 2005.

This is the fourth year that The Word Guild has collaborated with Castle Quay Books Canada, an independent Canadian Christian publishing imprint of Augsburg Fortress Publishers Canada, and its founder/publisher, Larry N. Willard, to offer this contest. It is part of The Word Guild's ongoing mandate to encourage excellence in Canadian writers who are Christian, by providing learning opportunities through writing contests, conferences, Internet discussion groups and critique services.

Previous winners of the Best New Author award are Paul Boge of Winnipeg in 2003 for a novel, *The Chicago Healer*, and Angelina Fast-Vlaar of St. Catharines, Ont. in 2004 for an autobiographical account, *Seven Angels for Seven Days*.

Entries for the 2007 Best New Canadian Christian Author contest will be accepted until November 30, 2006. Details will be posted at www.thewordguild.com.

The Word Guild Canadian Writing Awards Gala will be held at World Vision Canada, 1 World Drive, Mississauga, Ont. (near the 401 and Hurontario Street) on June 14 at 7 p.m.. Tickets are \$15 and will be available shortly for online ordering through www.thewordguild.com.

This contest is co-sponsored by The Word Guild, an association with the mandate of connecting, developing and promoting Canadian writers and editors who are Christian. For further information about Castle Quay Books Canada, see www.castlequaybooks.com.