



# The Confluence

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## CNC students prepare for Chapbook awards

### **Tyler Clarke, The Cutbanks**

CNC instructor Graham Pearce made sure that his English 205 Creative Writing Poetry class has a decent chance of winning an award at this year's upcoming Annual Barry McKinnon Chapbook Awards by having every student develop a chapbook throughout the semester. "Throughout the course they developed a theme of whatever's going throughout their mind," he explained, adding that themes have been around animals, hip hop music, Russian travels and various other things. "Everyone's is different."

Acting as a buzz generator, every one of his 20 students created 20 copies of the chap book the developed in order to put them up for sale during a chapbook fair and poetry reading on campus, December 7. Last year, Pearce said that two of his students received awards at the Barry McKinnon Chapbook Awards ceremony, including runner up and third place. Going up against university students and long-term local area poets, he said that this is quite the accomplishment for students who are mainly relatively new to poetry. During the December 7 reading, the unique talents of Pearce's English 205 class became clear, making them prone to racking up a few awards at this year's Barry

### **McKinnon Chapbook Awards.**

While all students had varying and unique talents as writers, a few stood out of the bunch. First to stand out was CNC security guard Wayne Hermanson. Although not a student, Hermanson was invited to read as an introduction to the event. Going through a few humorous rhyming poems and one longer more insightful poem, Hermanson set the evening's tone of humour and seriousness that would continue throughout the rest of the readings. Pop culture references ended up being a large part of the evening, with a number of students apparently spending a lot of time submersed in popular media. One of student Brandon Raskob's most memorable pieces of poetry surrounded his interpretation of Star Wars both before and after his understanding of science, with Raskob concluding that the trilogy is a lot more enjoyable with scientific ignorance. One of student/poet Chris Volgelsang's pop culture poems focused on actor Bruce Willis as a religious experience. With Willis always getting the terrorist, his never being struck by the myriad of bullets being shot at him, and always having an awesome soundtrack, there's something magical about him, according to Volgelsang. In addition to the humours pop culture poems, a number of poets

focused on personal memories, such as Maureen Massini, who read a poem recalling being in the back seat with her siblings on road trips as a child. Fellow poet Jen Slater-Brocke wrote about her new van, relating it to the cooler, more hip cars she drove when she was younger. "The windows are still tinted, but they know what's inside," she read, implying children.

The 4th Annual Barry McKinnon Chapbook Awards and Prince George Chapbook Fair is to take place April 24 at 7:30 p.m. in CNC room 1-306.

Named after now retired CNC English instructor Barry McKinnon, the awards have become nationally recognized, according to Pearce. The guidelines for those interested in submitting to the awards are that chapbooks must be between 8 and 48 pages long, produced after April 2008, with the poet residing in Northern BC. Two copies are to be sent to Pearce at – English Program, CNC 3330 22nd Avenue Prince George BC V2N 1P8

The submission deadline is April 10. The grand prize is \$250 courtesy of the UNBC Arts Council. The April 24 event itself is free to the public.