

CHAD NORMAN “Hugging The Huge Father”



Author Chad Norman and his son Michael share a moment reading “Hugging The Huge Father” with Uncle Lorne Putnam (right) of Masstown. Photos of Chad’s grandparents and great grandparents can be seen on the piano. (Harrington Photo)

By Linda Harrington

“Hugging The Huge Father”, a book of poetry written by local author Chad Norman, includes several poems featuring childhood memories while living on his grandfather’s dairy farm in Masstown. Those familiar with the Putnam family will recognize the names of Chad’s grandfather Albert (Bert) Putnam and Uncles Lorne, Merle and Gene mentioned in the book.

One poem called The Farmer, dedicated to Uncle Gene, talks of walks along the dykes, returning cattle to the barn and gives a vivid picture rural farm life.

Chad spent several years in Masstown back in the early

1970’s, before moving to Osoyoos, BC, when he was 15, to be reunited with his father. He feels his earliest writing began as a tool for communication. “I was a teenager and had trouble communicating with my parents, so we would leave notes when something needed to be done. This eventual lead to putting my thoughts on paper in the form of poems and when I was 20 I moved to Calgary and there I wrote my first book,” he says.

In 1997, he embarked on a cross Canada reading tour to celebrate literacy and Canadian poetry and wound up back at his Uncle’s home in Masstown for a visit. In 2003 he moved back to the

East Coast and now resides in Truro with his wife Elaine and son Michael.

“I was tired of city life and fed up with the Gordon Campbell Government (in BC). There had been a lull in my writing and it seemed I had lost interest so I jumped on a Greyhound bus and headed east. I guess I always longed to come back,” says Chad.

This new book of poetry is dedicated to Chad’s father Wilfred William Norman who passed away in 1989. Their relationship, and the book’s title, is illustrated by words he has inscribed within the first pages, “We spent a life at odds with one another, however just before your heart took you from us we had a chance to be eye to eye, when a door-sill allowed me to stand at your height, allowed to catch you off-guard with a hug, I never knew was waiting, or would help us to weep.” He says through his poetry he has been able to get to know his father in ways not possible when Wilfred was alive.

“Hugging The Huge Father” is a collection of poetry Chad has written over the last 15 years. He says there is a common thread among the poems which celebrates the men and boys who have been “selfless guides” throughout his life. Some are simply titled after these male influences, such as the poem Lorne or Albert Arthur, while others such as To Be Employed, describe life’s struggles not uncommon to any man.

Chad says he writes to “simply stay sane!” He finds writing poetry is his way to participate with life, nature and divinity. “When you get into the rat race you tend to forget about God’s great gifts,” he says. “I feel the need to write so I understand that I am a participant in the universe and to know I am connected.”

Chad’s Uncle Lorne is very proud and impressed by his nephew’s talents. “He has been very faithful to discipline and effort over the years and this has greatly impressed me. Poetry takes wisdom to put it all together but also to garner the inner thoughts,” says Lorne Putnam.

The book’s cover depicts a small child and a very large man embraced in a hug. This illustration was drawn by Chad’s twelve year old son Michael McPherson. “I told Michael the title of the book and asked him to draw the cover. What he came up with was very symbolic for the title and contents,” says Chad with pride. “My father was always the ‘huge’ father. He stood 6’3” and weighed 300lbs. This was a big man to a little boy.”

Chad has written twelve other books in the last 25 years but this is the first published under Grant Block Press, his own publishing

Central Power Sports Closes

Central Power Sports, Springhill closed its doors just before Christmas. The business which had operated for six years was a dealer for Yamaha.

Charlie Atkinson, owner, said the economy was just too tough, and the decision was made to cease operations.

Two staff and two part-timers are had worked at the

locally owned business.

The Cat Shack in Truro, owned and operated by Paul Blinkhorn, was recently appointed as dealer for the Yamaha line.

Bass River Fire Brigade Notes

By Pete Christensen

Hello from the Fire hall. Well the New Year has begun here at the hall. But the New Year has not been a particular good year. The start of the year saw one of our own in the hospital, a serious blow to moral at the hall. Not only the hall, but the entire community of Bass River plus up and down the shore.

And so it began the thirst to help those in need. Those who have been dealt a blow to their personal lives as well as their families in times of grief and fear of the future can count on the support of friends and community. It began as an idea by the friends of our fireman in the hospital and snowballed from there. The Hall became the centre piece of the community’s flood of compassion and truly good feelings and prayers for a speedy recovery.

On the day of Holly’s Jamboree the flood of humanity was amazing and heart-warming. The communities all along the shore and beyond came forth with music and singing from the Elliots to Jim Alward, to Jack Sibley warming the dance floor at the hall. Many folks took advantage of the happiness in the air and the extra room on the hall floor. When i arrived at least five hundred folks had signed the good wishes book at the front door. The final tally for the trust fund for Holly was around \$16,000. A really outstanding effort for everyone involved. A special thanks to Wendy Cox for spearheading the jamboree.

An awesome job Wendy, you might give thought to being the event organizer at the hall as well. We now have

another piece of apparatus for helping to retrieve folks from harms way, especially if they happen to need medical attention in a wood lot or a field or the shoreline.

The appratus is known as a four-wheeler rescue unit. It attaches to a four-wheeler, and has two flotation wheels with an aluminum frame. A rescue basket attaches to the frame. It’s a crucial piece of equipment, when folks are in harms way in areas not accessible by conventional means.

We had training on the new equipment last Monday night, we had our man Khol be the victim. Laying in the basket and strapped in securely, he felt safe, even with Dave driving and Tammy holding C-spine on his head. The trailer which holds the basket also has an extension allowing the Medical First Responder to position themselves behind the head of the person in the basket enabling them to apply C-spine to the patients head. A great find for our brigade.

On the rest of the hall news, the training is going

well, and we are getting ready for some recertification training in the next month or so.

The weather has been good on the wood piles round the area, but on cold nights the old fires begin again. Be careful with the stoves and make sure the fire is closed off once it is going well. The fast fire that is really going will cause your flues to get hotter, and any cresote in them may catch fire and begin a flue fire.

Keep it safe and don’t forget to check your smoke detectors as well. Any thing to help prevent a house fire makes it a no brainer. Just received word of another tragedy to a brigade members family, the brigade sends its condolences to the MacFarland family on their loss.

The days are long and cold this winter, and I’m afraid a good fire will not help keep out the chill. But with prayers and community, along with the love of good friends, hopefully the days and nights will begin to get shorter and warmer. Chin up and be safe.

Fireman Pete saying so long from the hall for this month.



Chad Norman, his latest book of poetry in hand, pauses for a few moments in front of the house he lived in during his early teenage years. The house is now owned by Paula (Putnam) Weatherbee, one of Chad’s cousins. (Harrington Photo)



Lorne Putnam and his nephew Chad Norman stop for a photo across from the Putnam family farm. Chad’s latest book of poetry has many references to special times he remembers on the farm, with his grandparents and uncles. (Harrington Photo)

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