

Speed writing marks Artsweek

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By **ANDREA HOUSTON**
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With only 20 minutes, a single sentence and a vivid imagination, six local writers accepted the challenge last night to create inspired prose at the 20-Minute Word Project.

Presented by the Cooked and Eaten Reading Series as part of Artsweek, the 20 Minute Word Project at The Spill on George Street saw the writers produce literary masterpieces under extreme time pressure.

The participants included local writer and musician Jean Greig; writer George Kerr; event organizer and writer Esther Vincent; songwriter, composer and writer Mike Duguay; writer, actor, singer and choreography Wes Ryan and anya gwynne, a local actor, dancer and writer.

The wordsmiths were given the sentence, "it's probably because the wind ripped it out of her hand" before host Em Glasspool told them to start writing.

Some hammered out the words on a laptop while others scrawled furiously in notebooks.

As the pressure began to mount

and the time ticked away, some writers began showing signs of the stress.

Duguay anxiously ran his hand through his hair as he searched for the right word. Greig stared intently at her laptop screen while Ryan, brow furrowed, played nervously with his pen.

"Wow," said Ryan. "That was very stressful."

When the time ran out, each writer read their composition aloud. The writer who garnered the loudest applause was deemed the winner.

"The time just flies by," Greig noted.

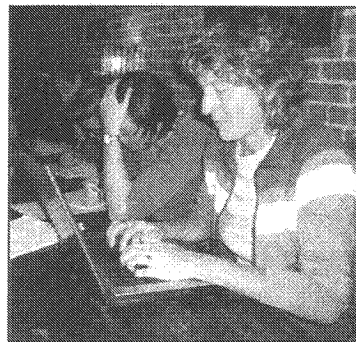
The end result was a tie between Greig and gwynne. The tie was broken by a "write-off" to decide the winner.

After a five-minute write-off, gwynne was declared the winner for her use of the word "hoote-nanny."

"It was fun to be given that boundary to work in," gwynne said. "I didn't expect to win. I guess the words were on my side."

NOTE: Lynna Johnson won a \$20 gift certificate for Titles Bookstore on George Street for contributing the sentence that was used in the competition.

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From left: singer and choreography Wes Ryan, songwriter, composer and writer Mike Duguay, event organizer and writer Esther Vincent and writer and musician Jean Greig compete last night in the 20-Minute Word Project during Artsweek.