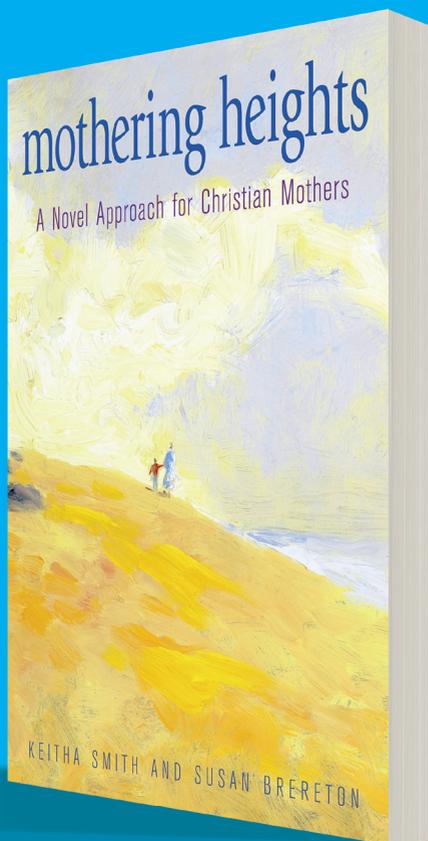


FEBRUARY - MARCH 2016

THE CHRISTIAN writer



BOOK REVIEW

Mothering Heights
BY KEITHA SMITH

SEE INSIDE FOR

Competitions
New Members
& Latest News

Rightly explaining the word of truth – 2 Timothy 2:15
(New Revised Standard Version of the Bible)



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Membership, Subscriptions and Address Changes:

Jan Pendergrast (email: jan@roads-end.co.nz)

Book Review Requests: (members only)

Post a copy of your book to Julia Martin

286 Karapiro Road, RD4, Cambridge 3496

(NB: Your book will be added as a donation to the NZCW library on completion of the review.)

The Christian Writer is published bimonthly by the New Zealand Christian Writers and distributed to all its members. Contributions on the theme of writing are always welcome. If you have some advice or encouragement for Christian writers, or an announcement of some event of interest to members, do send it to the editor for consideration by the 20th day of the month prior to the publication date. Submissions should be no more than 500 words long and hard copy manuscripts will not be returned unless a self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed.

The editor reserves the right to condense and / or edit any contributions for reason of space. Ideas and opinions will not be edited, but editing of a technical nature may occur to maintain the highest quality of writing possible.

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The views and opinions of authors expressed in this magazine do not necessarily state or reflect those of the editor.

Website:

Our vibrant, user-friendly website is full of interesting information, such as details of workshops and copies of past magazines. It also gives each individual member an online presence. So please encourage other Christian Writers you know to join us via our website.

www.nzchristianwriters.org

President's Report

A happy New Year to all of you and may you know God's presence throughout 2016. We enjoyed New Year's Eve with most of our children and grandchildren and a few close friends. Benjamin, our latest grandson, was also there

This morning, when we attended a church in Whangarei, the speaker, a missionary, spoke on Acts 20:24, which states: 'I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.' Near the conclusion of his message he stated that, in all probability, the visits to those churches did not result in as much blessing as what Paul later wrote while imprisoned. His concluding verse was 1 Thessalonians 5:24, 'the one who calls you is faithful and He will do it.'

We have important dates for 2016 events planned. Our Autumn Seminar is on 23rd April aboard the YWAM ship M/V Pacific Hope. Speakers will be John Peachey and Rosie Boom. We plan to commence the seminar at midday and conclude with an evening concert. Our AGM and Spring Seminar are set for 3rd September. We will advise you later of speakers and venue for the Spring Seminar.

It's great to see members work in print in local papers. Denis Shuker and Keith Willis both come to mind. There is so

much written today that is disgusting. Last week I felt compelled to write to a northern paper after an article was headed up 'Hallelujah for Porn Again.' Thankfully they printed my response, but even if they didn't at least one person would have read that response for it to be rejected.

On a lighter note, but not to do with writing, it's good to share our faith. I recently met a young man collecting for CCS. He asked where I was headed to which I replied. "Heaven. Are you coming too?" He hesitated briefly before replying: "I hope so, but just not as soon as you."

Let's get to work and finish the race well.

Janet Fleming



Mike and Janet Fleming with their bevy of grandchildren



Autumn Seminar

23rd April 2016

Venue: YWAM's ship, M/V Pacific Hope
Auckland Docks (mooring berth yet to be confirmed)

Starting at 12:00 Noon

followed by a dessert evening and a members' concert

Speakers will be:



John Peachey—

author, dyslexic, researcher, broadcaster, husband, father, believer, jazz vocalist, motivational speaker and unashamed dreamer. His organisation, The Think Farm, provides development and coaching for leaders in business, the community, education and church. In 2013, he wrote *The Girl and the Dragon*, a simple yet powerful story book aimed at giving children language around breaking the silence that perpetuates abuse in NZ and worldwide. This book is currently being turned into an animated short film for use in classrooms. John's keynote address is:

Once Upon a Time...

Rosie Boom—

lives with her husband Chris and their six children on a lifestyle block in rural NZ. She spent her childhood in New Guinea and later worked as a missionary in Borneo. She is a singer/songwriter and the author of a number of books. Her first series, *The Gift of Values*, reflects Rosie's passion for family and is a resource to help and inspire parents in the challenging task of raising Godly children. In the multi-award-winning series, *The Barn Chronicles*, Rosie writes about the Boom family's fun and adventures as they make their home in a 94-year-old barn. Her latest book *My Heart Overflows* is a daily devotional. Rosie's topic will be:



Twenty-five Writing Tips

**Cost: \$20.00 pp or \$35.00 for a couple
plus a small donation to YWAM for the dessert.**

BOOK EARLY – SPACES ARE LIMITED TO 40 PEOPLE MAX

Bring your cheque book or cash as no Eftpos is available.
Also don't forget to bring a packed lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided.

For more details contact:

Janet Fleming or Jan Pendergrast on

Tel: (09) 405 0126 / Email: mjflamingos@xtra.co.nz / Email: jan@roads-end.co.nz

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I would like to put together a poetry book made up of poems submitted by our members.

If anyone has a poem they would like me to consider using, please have them email Rod Hickman at the following address:

rodnehickmanpoet@gmail.com

Thanks so much.

Regards,

Rod

Looking for Professional Editing/Writing Services?

Then why don't you contact the following NZCW members?

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Warm Welcome to NEW MEMBERS

Hannah Abernathy

Hamilton

Shirley Cunliffe

Waiuku

Yona Jitesh

Browns Bay, Auckland

Congratulations

to

Tevita and Melanie

(nee Mason)

Unufe

who started the New Year on a high note by getting married on 2nd January 2016.

May the Lord richly bless your marriage with joy, love and peace.



The happy couple in their wedding regalia

For those who are not aware of it, Melanie has been a member of New Zealand Christian Writers for a number of years and it is our hope that she will continue her membership with our collective. From the few articles she has had published in the magazine through entering the Level One competitions, it is clear she is a deep thinker with much to contribute through her writing skills. We wish her and Tevita well in their new life together.

How to Write a Debate Outline

Debates are a common assignment in high school and college classes where two individuals or teams discuss an issue. In many ways, writing a debate outline is similar to the other outlines you might write for papers and speeches. However, since debates are not necessarily a familiar form of communication, it is important to know how to write a debate outline so your side is structured properly.

CREATING YOUR BASIC OUTLINE

- 1. Identify the form of debate you are using.** Each form has its own organisational structure. You will base your debate outline on that structure. There are two common forms used in schools and competitions. Other forms are simply varieties of these two, changing the amount of time available and the organisation of different segments.
 - Team debates are one of the most common debate forms. In the first half of the debate, each team has two segments to present arguments for their side. In the second half of the debate, each team has two segments to rebut arguments presented in the first half.
 - Lincoln-Douglas debates are set up to allow one side to present their arguments, and then the other team to cross examine them. The second team then

presents their arguments and has the first team cross-examine them. Finally, each team has an opportunity for a final rebuttal.

2. Do your research. Whatever form your debate takes, you will have the opportunity to present your side of the issue. Gather all of your research and look for common arguments. On a piece of paper, list different pieces of evidence under each line of argument. This can include quotes, examples, cases, facts, and statistics. Be sure to note all bibliographical information on your notes.

- For every supporting piece of evidence you find for your case, try to find another piece of evidence to counter it. This will help you build your argument later.
- It is better to include more points than you think you will need, than not doing enough research and lacking evidence.

3. Follow outlining principles. While the order of your material will be determined by your debate form, the format for your debate outline should follow the basic guidelines for outlining.

- Subdivide information. Main headings will probably consist of arguments, while subheadings will contain different pieces of supporting evidence.

4. Outline your case. Your case is your primary argument: the value

you are trying to uphold through a variety of evidence. Start the outline of your debate by compiling a list of evidence that supports your case.

Order it so that the most influential and powerful evidence is the first to be presented, mediocre evidence is in the middle, and a final powerful piece is at the end.

- If you have a fairly lengthy debate planned, break up your case evidence into categorical sections. For example, you could have legal, moral, and economic support for your case.
- Aim to have a minimum of three supporting facts or pieces of evidence in your case outline.

5. Prepare potential rebuttals. You will have the opportunity to rebut or question the arguments presented by the other side. Identify potential arguments they may bring up. Many opposing arguments will probably be addressed in your research. Brainstorm different ways to counter these arguments during your rebuttal.

- Look to find rebuttals for both the individual parts of their argument in addition to the whole of it. This will fortify your position in the debate.
- Many times their argument will be the opposite of yours, so while your argument lists the pros, theirs is listing the cons of a particular value. If you pay attention to this, you will be able to not only prove their side of the

argument invalid, but also help to further promote your own.

6. Add detail to your outline. When you have made a bare bones outline of your case and rebuttals, begin adding a bit more detail that will benefit either essay writing or debating on the subject. Keep the outline form of headers, sections, and bulleted lists, but write in complete sentences, add in helpful questions and evidence, and make your argument more well-rounded than just a list of a few words.

- Write this more detailed outline as if you were speaking in the debate. This will help you with wording and understand your own argument, and coming up with logical questions and rebuttals for your opponent.
- Be sure to avoid logical fallacies in your case outline and rebuttal/response. A sound argument will be based on solid evidence that you can back up with if necessary.

AVOIDING LOGICAL FALLACIES

1. Avoid using a straw man. Often used by beginning debaters in their outlines, the straw man fallacy is when you misrepresent your opponent's case by describing it wrongly to the audience. Make sure you don't do this in your rebuttal, and if your opponent does it to you be sure to call them out on it.

- For example, if you're promoting the abolition of the death penalty,

your opponent might commit the straw man by accusing you of lacking sympathy for the families of victims, and that you don't want true criminals to pay for their crimes.

2. Watch out for the slippery slope.

When making your outline for your case and rebuttals, it may be easy to refer to using the slippery slope fallacy. This happens when you assume something more extreme will happen on the basis that something less extreme is about to occur.

3. Be careful of the ad hominem fallacy.

Often used by the losing part of a debate, the ad hominem fallacy is when instead of attacking the merit of a case being presented, the opponent makes personal attacks against the person presenting the case.

4. Avoid asking loaded questions.

When loaded questions are used in debate, they seemingly point to an obvious fault in the argument, when instead they have caught the debater off guard. Loaded questions are those which have a presumptuous base, so that the person answering the question is forced to defend themselves even if it's not true.

5. Avoid using ambiguous language and explanations.

When someone doesn't quite know what to say or is trying to avoid saying something that would appear detrimental to their case, they often use ambiguous language. This is where you give

unclear explanations and are incredibly vague in your descriptions of things and events.

- For example, if you ask your opponent why exactly we should convert to a socialist system and they say something about how more people will benefit from it, but they aren't able to supply clear evidence other than emotional reasoning.

6. **Stay away from the bandwagon fallacy.** This is one of the most commonly committed fallacies, in which you assume something is correct or good simply because it is of popular belief.

7. **Be careful of using the false dilemma fallacy.** Often used at the end of a debate to highlight the goodness of making a decision in your favour, the false dilemma fallacy occurs when you offer only two final options (black or white) when there may indeed be several other options available.

8. **Avoid using anecdotes instead of evidence.** When presenting to an audience, often it is easier to rely on personal experiences and stories as the basis for an argument rather than finding clear evidence that supports a belief.

*With acknowledgements to WikiHow.
For more information and picture examples of how to put together a debate outline, go to*

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Debate-Outline>

Wisdom Writing and Homilies

By John Lindsay

For several years I have been writing short pieces I describe as Wisdom Writing. They might also be called Homilies.

According to <http://literarydevices.net/homily/>, the main purpose of a homily 'is to convey a moral lesson to the people. Besides teaching moral education, it awakens people's conscience, calls them to repentance and nourishes their faith. Another purpose is to interpret the lives of the people in such a way that they could reconcile with God Almighty and with one another.'

I find this type of writing stirs my creativity and I enjoy watching the piece unfold because when I start I am not always sure how it will develop. The ideas may be triggered by a news item, something I am reading, a conversation or experience. Length varies but I usually aim for 300 to 400 words.

Here is an example.

Don't Do That

There are three words most of us don't like to hear:

"Don't do that."

No matter how much freedom we have, we focus on the limitations.

I grew up in a town with no bars or liquor stores. The community had many positive features, but those who wanted alcohol grumbled about the restriction as

they made the half-hour journey to the nearest outlet.

Occasionally I see an impatient driver waiting for a green light. When they see a break in the traffic, they ignore the red signal and drive on because the delay is inconvenient.

Although the road rules say, ‘Don’t do that’, they ignore them.

Now, you may be thinking, “I obey the rules. I wouldn’t go through a red light.”

But what about other boundaries?

I know how easy it is to justify our actions when we’ve broken the rules.

We say things like, “It didn’t hurt anybody. I’ve never done it before, surely it doesn’t matter this once. Everyone else does it. It was a silly rule.”

But we say this to feel better, to reduce our guilt or justify our actions.

It doesn’t change the fact we did something we were told not to do.

Now be honest, what happens when someone breaks a rule and hurts you.

Suddenly the restriction is important.

Now it matters. It’s no longer a silly rule you can quietly ignore.

I’ve been hurt. I want justice. Punish the lawbreaker.

This is a universal issue. It touches all of us, no matter where we live or who sets the limits.

It’s also an issue that transcends our journey in this life.

When I read the Bible, I discover that God gave the first human beings wide ranging freedoms and a single prohibition.

Pointing to one tree in the fabulous Garden called Eden, God said, “Don’t eat the fruit from that tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

Sadly, that one rule proved to be one too many.

Adam disobeyed God’s command and brought death and suffering on himself and every other human being.

Like Adam so long ago, we’re all guilty of disobeying the instruction, “Don’t do that.”

And just as Adam needed God’s mercy and forgiveness, we also need to turn to God, confess our rebellious thoughts and actions, and ask for His forgiveness.

Smile Awhile

A four-year-old spilled his cola on the rug and wanted to clean up the mess himself. So his mother told him the mop was just outside the back door. Quickly, he ran to the door, but realised it had become dark outside. Suddenly scared, he told his mother what the problem was. Assuring him, she told him Jesus is everywhere, even in dark places, and that He’ll always protect him. This put a smile on his face! So, he opened the door just enough to poke his head outside and called, “Jesus, if you’re out there, could You pass me the mop?”



—Source Unknown

PUZZLE PAGE

ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND MNOMICS

Although in most writing it is correct to write words and titles in full there are times when using an abbreviation or acronym is appropriate and there are set rules about how these are written. For example, if writing about a crime investigation or on a health issue we would not expect the author to write deoxyribonucleic acid (“What’s that?” you may well ask!) instead of DNA.

An **abbreviation** is a shortening of a word instead of writing it in full. (e.g. approx. instead of approximately.) Many abbreviations use full stops between the letters or at the end of the abbreviation and there are rules for that which we will not discuss here.

An **acronym** is a word formed from the initial letters of other words. (e.g. Anzac from Australia and New Zealand Army Corps.)

A **mnemonic** is a word or phrase invented to help memorise something. Often these are coined by an individual for a specific learning task. An acronym could be used as a mnemonic in many instances.

How many of these **abbreviations and acronyms** do you know without looking them up?

1. **Acronyms:** Anzac, Laser, Scuba
2. **Abbreviations from foreign sources:** NB (Latin), RSVP (French), AD (Latin)
3. **Related to science:** UFO, NASA, DNA, SARS
4. **Military / Security:** AWOL, NCO, SIS (NZ), RSA

5. **Crime / Investigation:** FBI, CIA, CIB, Interpol
6. **International agencies:** OPEC, NATO, UN, UNESCO, UNICEF, CIS
7. **NZ Organisations / Business:** YMCA, AA, U3A, QMS, FBT, IRD, DOC, ACT (Political Party)
8. **Academics:** MA(Hons), BSc, BCom, NZCEA, LTh (and many more)
9. **Honours / Qualifications:** Rt Hon, Rt Rev, GP, MD, MBE, QSO (and many more)
10. **Other everyday abbreviations:** BYO, asap, PTO, ETA (or eta), AKA (or aka)

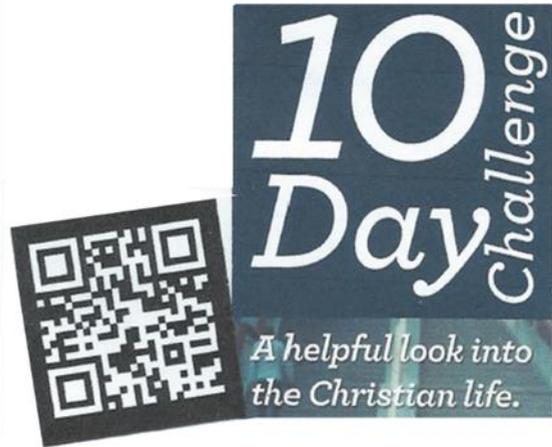
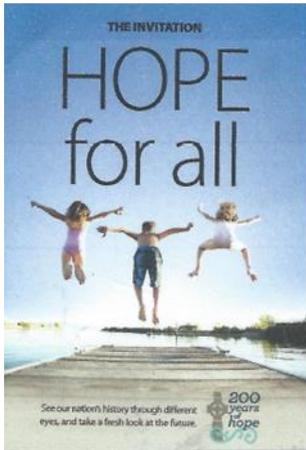
Answers on Page 14

Origins of 5 Common Idioms

Dead Ringer / Saved by the Bell—both these idioms have the same origin and go back hundreds of years, when people were sometimes accidentally buried alive. To save them, someone came up with the idea of putting a string with a bell attached through a hole in the coffin. If the ‘dead’ person woke up, they’d ring the bell. On hearing the tinkle, the caretaker (called the **Graveyard Shift**—another idiom related to the above two) would realise they were still alive and dig them up.

The Whole Nine Yards—possibly refers to the amount of fabric needed to make a fancy dress in the 1700s.

White Elephant—in Burma and Thailand, white elephants were viewed as sacred, which meant they couldn't be used to do any useful work. However, because these animals were valuable, they were sought after by those who could afford them, as a sign of their wealth to the less fortunate.



***HOPE* Booklets—Nationwide Project For All**

The aim of the *Hope Project* is to see the message of Hope in 1 Peter 3:15 become more widely known in New Zealand by encouraging hope while giving all an opportunity to investigate the Christian faith. David Mann of Tauranga heads up the multi-media project, which by Easter 2016 will have distributed three attractive quality booklets to nearly every New Zealand home.

The *Hope for all* booklets feature stories from our Nation's early history, beginning with Chief Ruatara's invitation to Samuel Marsden to set up a mission station—resulting in Maori learning reading, writing and agricultural skills, how to grow new produce, new building techniques and more. Thanks to churches and supporters, the third *Hope for all* booklet will be distributed just prior to Easter, supported by TV and web media. There are also sermon outlines for churches, studies for small church groups and a website designed to explain the faith to neighbours and friends (10DayChallenge.co.nz).

Hope Project enquiries welcome: www.AllTogether.co.nz

ANSWERS TO PUZZLE PAGE:

1. **Acronyms:**

Anzac = Australia and New Zealand Army Corps

Laser = Light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation

2. **From foreign sources:**

NB = Nota Bene = Note please or pay special attention to

RSVP = Répondez s'il vous plait = Reply if you please / please reply

AD = Anno Domini = in the year of our Lord / of the Christian era

3. **Related to science:**

UFO = Unidentified Flying Object

NASA = National Aeronautics and Space Administration (US)

DNA = Deoxyribonucleic acid

SARS = Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome

4. **Military / Security:**

AWOL = Absent without leave

NCO = Non-commissioned officer

SIS = (NZ) Security Intelligence Service

RSA = Returned Soldiers' Association (also Republic of South Africa)

5. **Crime / Investigation:**

FBI = Federal Bureau of Investigation (US)

CIA = Central Intelligence Agency (US)

CIB = Criminal Investigation Branch (of the NZ Police)

Interpol = International Criminal Police Organisation

6. **International Agencies:**

OPEC = Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries

NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

UN = United Nations

UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund (was originally International Emergency Fund)

CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States (of the former Russian Confederation)

7. **NZ Organisations / Businesses:**

YMCA = Young Men's Christian Association,

AA = Alcoholics Anonymous and Automobile Association

U3A = University of the Third Age

QMS = Quota Management System (NZ)

FBT = Fringe Benefit Tax (NZ)

IRD = Inland Revenue Department

DOC = Department of Conservation

ACT (Political Party) = Association of Consumers and Taxpayers

8. **Academics:**

MA(Hons) = Master of Arts with honours

BSc = Bachelor of Science degree

BCom = Bachelor of Commerce

NZCEA = New Zealand Certificate of Educational Achievement

LTh = Licentiate of Theology

9. **Honours / Qualifications:**

Rt Hon = Right Honourable (MPs and the like)

Rt Rev = Right Reverend (Church minister)

GP = General Practitioner (Family Doctor)

MD = Medical Doctor / Doctor of Medicine

MBE = Member of the Order of the British Empire (old Honours list)

QSO = NZ Queen's Service Order

10. **Other everyday abbreviations:** **BYO** = Bring Your Own (food, drink etc.)

asap = as soon as possible

PTO = Please turn over (turn to the next page or the back of the page)

ETA (or eta) = estimated time of arrival

AKA (or aka) = also known as (e.g. Grandma aka Ruth Linton!)

Bibliography:

The NZ Pocket Oxford Dictionary Third Edition, Oxford University Press, 2005

Chambers Concise Dictionary, Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd, 2004

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Check out www.initiatemedia.net

Get Creative is Back

The 'Get Creative' column was suspended last year due to lack of response from members. This was a pity as the purpose of 'Get Creative' is to provide an opportunity for those who do not enter the competitions to have their work published on its own merit, and without critique.

After giving the matter some thought, I have resurrected the 'Get Creative' column, but with a slight difference to the requirements. I have also added an incentive that I hope will encourage more people to submit creative pieces of writing to me for consideration.

**The next 'Get Creative' Topic is:
'If I were...'**

Deadline: Email your submission to sddp@xtra.co.nz by 10th March 2016.

Requirements:

- Poems – four verses long maximum, and no more than six lines to each verse.
- Prose – 250 words maximum.
- Include the words 'Get Creative' with your submission.
- You may also include a suitable picture or graphic (optional).
- Suggest a 'Get Creative' topic for the next issue of the magazine.
- NB: If your submission is not the one chosen for 'Get Creative', it will be published at a later date, at the discretion of the CW editor.

—Debbie McDermott, Editor

Literary Devices

Hyperbole

Hyperbole, derived from a Greek word meaning ‘over-casting’, is a figure of speech which involves an exaggeration of ideas for the sake of emphasis.

It is a device that we employ in our day-to-day speech. For instance, when you meet a friend after a long time, you say: “Ages have passed since I last saw you.” You may not have met him for three or four hours or a day, but the use of the word ‘ages’ exaggerates this statement to add emphasis to your wait. Therefore, a hyperbole is an unreal exaggeration to emphasise the real situation. Some other common hyperbole examples are:

- My grandmother is as old as the hills.
- Your suitcase weighs a ton!
- She is as heavy as an elephant!
- I am dying of shame.
- I am trying to solve a million issues these days.

It is important not to confuse hyperbole with simile and metaphor. It does make a comparison but unlike simile and metaphor, hyperbole has a humorous effect created by an overstatement.

Let us see some examples from Classical English literature in which hyperbole was used successfully.

Example #1

In American folklore, Paul Bunyan’s stories are full of hyperboles. In one instance, he exaggerates winter by saying:

‘Well now, one winter it was so cold that all the geese flew backward and all the fish moved south and even the snow turned blue. Late at night, it got so frigid that all

spoken words froze solid afore they could be heard. People had to wait until sunup to find out what folks were talking about the night before.’

Freezing of the spoken words at night in winter and then warming up of the words in the warmth of the sun during the day are examples of hyperbole that have been effectively used by Paul Bunyan.

Example #2

From William Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, Act II, Scene II,

‘Neptune’s ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No. This my hand
will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.’

Macbeth, the tragic hero, feels the unbearable prick of his conscience after killing the king. He regrets his sin and believes that even the oceans of the greatest magnitude cannot wash the blood of the king off his hands. We can notice the effective use of hyperbole in the given lines.

Example #3

From W.H Auden’s poem *As I Walked One Evening*

‘I’ll love you, dear, I’ll love you
Till China and Africa meet,
And the river jumps over the mountain
And the salmon sing in the street,
I’ll love you till the ocean
Is folded and hung up to dry’

The use of hyperbole can be noticed in the above lines. The meeting of China and Africa, the jumping of the river over the mountain, singing of salmon in the street, and the ocean being folded and hung up to be dried are exaggerations not possible in real life.

Example #4

From *The Adventures of Pinocchio*,
written by C Colloid:

‘He cried all night, and dawn found him still there, though his tears had dried and only hard, dry sobs shook his wooden frame. But these were so loud that they could be heard by the faraway hills...’

The crying of Pinocchio all night until his tears became dry is an example of hyperbole.

Example #5

From Joseph Conrad’s novel *The Heart of Darkness*:

‘I had to wait in the station for ten days—an eternity.’

The wait of ten days seemed to last forever and never end.

Function of Hyperbole

The above arguments make clear the use of hyperbole. In our daily conversation, we use hyperbole to emphasise for an amusing effect.

However, in literature it has very serious implications. By using hyperbole, a writer or a poet makes common human feelings remarkable and intense to such an extent that they do not remain ordinary.

In literature, usage of hyperbole develops contrasts. When one thing is described with an over-statement and the other thing is presented normally, a striking contrast is developed. This technique is employed to catch the reader’s attention.

For more information on literary devices, visit <http://literarydevices.net>

Notice Board

AWCT Book and Manuscript Awards

A single award of \$10,000 will be given to the author of a published book in the Mind Body Spirit genre. Entries to be adult fiction, non-fiction or poetry. Books submitted may be published traditionally or self-published.

Eligibility:

The author must be a NZ citizen or permanent resident currently living in New Zealand. A current IRD number must be provided as proof of residence.

Books must be published between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016.

Books must contain 48 pages or more. A printed and bound version of an e-book is also eligible.

Deadline: 31st March 2016

Send entries to:

Ashton Wylie Charitable Trust Book Award, PO Box 68982, Newton, Auckland 1145

For further details and a Book Award application form, go to www.awct.org.nz

Have Your Short Story Published in MiNDFOOD

Closing Date of competition:
31st July 2016

Prize: a NZ\$1000 gift card

Entries should be 2000 words long and previously unpublished. One entry per month is allowed and must include your full name address and phone number.

Email your entry to
mindfoodshortstory@mindfood.com

Library Corner

Julia Martin's Book Review



Mothering Heights

By

Keitha Smith & Susan Brereton

Most people would agree that motherhood is special and always will be. But the authors of this book believe twenty-first-century motherhood can be a highly complex business; for while it exists with more opportunities and choices today, there are also greater pressures and challenges than ever before and these can cause difficulties.

From a wealth of experience in raising children and leading women's ministries, Keitha and Susan have written this book to help young mothers make the most of their motherhood experience and to be encouraged in their relationship with the Lord. They describe such motherhood as *intentional* mothering and see it as a relational role rather than a task-oriented role.

A large part of the book is devoted to God's design and expectation for mothers and their families. The writers examine biblical examples of mothers and contrast these with the perfect example of Christ as the ultimate role model to follow. In places it draws on the honest opinions and experiences of local women representing a range of mothering styles. Their comments add a personal touch to the topics under discussion.

At the end of each chapter there is an excellent set of review questions for personal application and possible group discussion. This book is jam-packed with practical advice, common sense, and scripturally based wisdom. I highly recommend it and believe it should be required reading for all aspiring mothers who need guidelines and encouragement for this challenging vocation.

Enquiries about this book can be made to: smithkeitha@xtra.co.nz

Recent Library Additions

Many thanks to the following NZCW members for donating a copy of their published books to our library:

Fun at Work

By Dr Kathryn Owlver

www.joyworkz.co.nz



Play in the Garden

By Sarah O'Neil

www.sarahthegardener.co.nz



BOOKS FOR SALE

NZCW has a large number of second hand books for sale—details of which can be obtained from Jan Pendergrast via email at jan@roads-end.co.nz.

With such a wonderful range of topics, there is something to suit everyone. Jan will take offers in the form of a donation for any books you may want. The postage will be either \$2.40 or \$4, depending on the size of your package. Just let her know your choices and she'll let you know the total cost.

Anything not sold by the end of March will go to an Op Shop, or be burned.

Competition Results

Under 20s

Judge:
Vicki Nogaj

Requirement:

What modern day item would you like to sell/ gift to a character in the Bible and how would they react? e.g. selling a pair of Nikes to Jesus so he can walk in comfort. 250 words.

No Under 20s entries were received.

Level One

Judge:
Debbie McDermott

Requirement: REFLECTIVE—If you knew Jesus was coming tomorrow, what would you change today? Try to concentrate only on a couple of areas that are most important to you and remember to not be preachy. 400 words.

General Comments

I was a little disappointed (and surprised) to receive only three entries to this first Level One competition of 2016—especially as the topic ties in so well with the making of New Year resolutions. I can't think of a better way to start the year than by doing something to prepare for Jesus' return, so congratulations to Cindy, Felicity and Yvonne for taking up the challenge. Each of the entries are well written and thought provoking, and I hope you will follow through on some of the areas where you feel change is needed.

Do remember that, when writing on a topic such as this, it is important to concentrate on only two or three key

areas if you are to make the most of the limited word count. There is only so much you can say in 400 words, so it is vital to ensure every word counts. Cindy has achieved this very well by highlighting just three main areas of concern: her priorities; her relationship with Jesus, family and friends; and her need to witness more. Her entry is also extremely well structured, with each paragraph presenting a clear and focused train of thought.

Once again, well done to Cindy, Felicity and Yvonne for entering this competition. I look forward to receiving more entries from you in the future.

First Place



Cindy David
of Titirangi, Auckland

If Jesus were coming tomorrow

If Jesus were coming tomorrow, what would I change today? My priorities! Often, my priorities revolve around the things that serve my day-to-day existence but have no eternal significance. Today, for example, I need to complete a client order, prepare meals, run to the shops and, later in the evening, plan for the future of my business.

Everything is always about life on Earth: how I can make living here more comfortable and more rewarding for my

family and me. It is all about fulfilling my ambitions, earning money and buying more stuff. I must admit that I also pay attention to what others think of me, that I have become a driven person who is gratified only by accomplishments.

If Jesus were coming tomorrow, I know exactly what I'd do: relegate everything to the side. I would gather everyone I love and ensure that they not only hear about Jesus but also know *who* he is. Yes, I would do what I have been meaning to do for a long time: resume a devotional time with my family. I would make sure they know that Jesus is the most important person in their life. 'There is no other name given among men under heaven by which we must be saved' (Acts 4:12).

If Jesus were coming tomorrow, I would have a complete makeover—of my heart. I would stop worrying about the future and be concerned only about whether I am ready to face him. Is my heart truly in the right place? Have I repented to God for my sins? Will I make him proud? Will he say to me, 'Well done, good and faithful servant'?

If Jesus were coming tomorrow, I would also do my best to forgive and to love the people around me, even those who have wronged me. It's not an easy thing to do, but I know I owe it to Jesus. If he did not die on the cross for me, there is no way God would forgive me, and there would be no chance of meeting him tomorrow.

Although I might feel excited if Jesus were coming tomorrow and put myself

in a frenzy preparing a great meal like Martha did in the Bible, I know much of me would start feeling more relaxed. Jesus is coming, and that's all that matters!

Judge's Comments

Cindy has met the requirements of this competition exceptionally well. Each paragraph is punchy, well written and follows a clear train of thought. There is also a good flow to the whole article, with each paragraph following on nicely from the previous one. Repeating the phrase 'If Jesus were coming tomorrow...' at the beginning of several of the paragraphs is also very effective.

What impressed me most about Cindy's entry is her transparent honesty. Writing in the first person and concentrating only on what she needs to change in her own life rather than in the lives of others not only prevents the article from becoming preachy, it also challenges the reader to seriously consider the question: 'What would I change today if Jesus were coming tomorrow?' Such a response from the reader is the aim of good Christian writing. For this reason, I hope Cindy will consider publishing her excellent article so it can reach a wider audience.

Cindy's grammar and punctuation are excellent throughout her entry. My only recommendations are as follows:

- *Put the title in Title Case; so every word begins with a capital letter.*
- *Para 2—last sentence: Replace the comma after 'of me' with a full stop. Then delete the word 'that' and rewrite 'I have become a driven person...' as a new sentence.*
- *Para 3—sentence 2: delete 'that'.*

Second Place



**Felicity
Logan**
of Feilding

Let's Party

It would blow my mind to be told in some convincing way that Jesus would return tomorrow. Immediately I'd regret not knowing certain neighbours or acquaintances better! I'd suddenly become more sociable, inviting them to a swish afternoon tea where I'd tell them of my Hope for the morrow and the reason for it. My husband would head for the supermarket to fetch supplies! I'd offer guests some printed Bible verses that spell out Salvation – perhaps Acts 2:38 -- and Mark 1:15 would be very apt (“The time is fulfilled...repent...believe...”).

Facebook still puzzles me, but I'd post a message with Privacy settings open, and spread a similar email message. My phone would run hot, alerting Christian friends. Since we have a large lounge with piano, I'd invite them all to a Pot-Luck tea and evening retreat. Would it become a sleepover? Could anybody actually sleep?

We'd continue on The Day, with a party: a “DeParty”! During those hours we'd share testimonies, readings and thoughts, and sing praise songs. The gathering would be like the Five Wise Virgins of Matthew chapter 25 anticipating the bridegroom's arrival.

If I felt athletic I'd spray-can a message on our house roof “WELCOME LORD JESUS!”, giving air traffic and satellite viewers reason to ponder. Desecrating a roof -- what a change from our near-worship of property!

Surely I'd phone relatives. There'd be some immediate rejection but perhaps it would encourage re-think. The intervening hours would be continuously prayerful for us – forget private projects, however urgent or attractive -- and that's what the biggest change would be.

Wondering “What if...?” reminds me friendships need to be nurtured regardless of whenever Christ returns. Changes, preparation: these are for NOW. Fellow believers, pray for those who reject the gospel: pray for opportunities to witness, for words to offer, and for the quoted Scriptures and the Holy Spirit to inspire each opportunity!

We are told none knows the exact day, but it will be one of our “morrrows” and too late then for change. In the meantime, “What if...?” prompts me to reinstate ignored resolutions – enlarge social contacts, spend more time in Bible study, prayer and Christian reading. These are more important than creative writing, décor changes, wardrobe anguish and other worldly concerns.

So Amen! Come Lord Jesus! But help me change what I must, while I wait for that day.

Judge's Comments

Felicity has met the requirements of this competition very well. Her entry has a good flow to it, with each paragraph flowing on nicely from the one before it. Her desire to tell as many people as possible that Jesus is coming is also evident throughout her article, and I like her practical approach to achieving this. Using social media, phone calls, a get-together, etc to get the message out is something most folk—particularly women—can relate to.

While Felicity has mentioned what she would like change in her own life, I do think she could have elaborated a little more on this aspect. The third to last paragraph is also a bit preachy. She could have avoided this happening by writing the third sentence as: 'We, as Christians, need to pray for those who...'

On a slightly negative note, I do feel the title of the piece does not quite fit what is essentially a serious topic. That, however, is my opinion. Others may feel different.

Felicity's punctuation and grammar are very good. Corrections are as follows:

- *Para 1—sentence 3: 'hope' does not need to begin with a capital letter.*
- *Para 1—Last sentence: Put a space after each set of ellipsis points.*
- *Para 2—sentence 3: there needs to be an 'a' before the word 'piano'; 'pot luck' should not begin with capital letters, neither should it be hyphenated.*
- *Para 3—sentence 1: 'DeParty' should be in single quote marks. Double apostrophes or speech marks should only be used for direct speech.*

- *Para 4—last sentence: 'near worship' should not be hyphenated.*
- *Para 7—sentence 2: 'What if...?' is not direct speech so therefore should be in single quote marks.*
- *Para 8—'What if' and 'morrrows' should be in single quote marks (they are not direct speech).*

Apart from the above recommendations, this is a very good entry, Felicity, and I hope to see more from you.

Third Place



**Yvonne
Mossom**
of Whangarei.

To the Editor:

Jesus is coming tomorrow

The startling news that Jesus is coming tomorrow has caused varied responses in the populace. They range from mockery to shocked disbelief. The scoffers are having a field day.

Why is this so? Complacency is one of the root causes of all these reactions.

It's easy to analyse the so-called intelligentsia's disdain. They have no need for the Lord. Their lives are perfectly controlled. They have everything they need. They have 'evolved' into super humans who can control their own destinies: the 'I'm alright' syndrome. They do not question the media's analyses of how it all began. They do not see that their acceptance of so-called scientific theory requires just as much of a leap of faith as those who

believe in Jesus. A theory is NOT a theory unless it can be tested repeatedly. This would call for a giant leap for mankind back into swinging from branch to branch. Unfortunately, the situation in most schools is very autocratic. "Don't listen to all that religious rubbish. It will get you nowhere." If I could single-handedly change the situation I would propose equal time for both sides of the story. Let the students make up their own minds. Let us not be guilty of brain-washing the youth. What would Jesus do?

How does complacency endanger the believers? They also have the 'I'm alright' syndrome. They go to church regularly, and listen to sermons every week. Come Monday they are back to daily humdrum existence. The bible reference is forgotten unless they have noted it down for future reference. They do not question the authenticity of what they hear. They feel self-righteous. They give regularly and donate their used clothing. They have cake sales. They knit blankets, BUT they do not ensure the spread of the word. There is a desperate need for the word of God to get to everyone.

This is not a time for feeling inadequate, or unimportant. This is a time to wake up. Rescue the old folk in the rest homes. Collect all the kids and teenagers. Everyone reading this letter could meet together at the Town Basin to greet Jesus. Great things would happen in our little town. See you there.

Yours faithfully,

Yvonne Mossom. Maunu.
Whangarei

Judge's Comments

As I am a person who likes 'shooting from the hip', I feel there is much to be said for Yvonne's entry. It is frank, honest and shows her deep concern over issues that need to be addressed in these end times. I particularly like the second to last paragraph, where she exhorts Christians to bring the truth of the gospel to those still living in darkness. However, her exhortation would have been more powerful had she included herself in this paragraph. For example:

'How does complacency endanger us believers? We also have the 'I'm all right' syndrome...'

Including herself would also prevent this paragraph from sounding too preachy.

Unfortunately, the manner in which Yvonne has written her letter makes it more of a declamation on what is wrong with Christians and non-Christians, rather than an answer to the question: 'If I knew Jesus was coming tomorrow, what would I change today?'

When writing such a letter to an editor (or making an impassioned speech—a genre Yvonne's entry is better suited for), it is important to put your points across passionately but without ridiculing the system or person you are opposing. Avoid using derogatory words like 'so-called intelligentsia' and 'swinging from branch to branch'. Such language can offend the people you want to impact and even cause an editor (or emcee if you're making a speech) to shut you down. Learning to be direct yet tactful in the public forum takes a lot of practise, but it is a worthwhile practice that will enable you to more effectively impact your reader/hearer.

Regarding the flow of the piece, swapping the order of the third and fourth paragraph would improve it. A swap would mean changing the 'intelligentsia' paragraph slightly so that it leads nicely into the final paragraph. For example:

'It's easy to understand why the intelligentsia believe they have no...'

Swapping the paragraphs would also highlight the most important aspect of Yvonne's letter (sharing the gospel) near the beginning instead of near the end. The paragraph on the intelligentsia will also then seem less harsh.

Apart from using speech marks instead of quote marks, Yvonne's grammar and punctuation are generally good.

Corrections include:

- Para 1—sentence 4: insert the word 'begin' after 'frantically'.
- Para 2—sentence 4: delete the space before the full stop.
- Para 2—sentence 7: insert 'a' before 'so-called'. Also, 'Jesus' should begin with a capital J.
- Para 2—sentence 8 is incorrect. Rewrite it as 'A theory remains just a theory unless...'
- Para 2—sentence 9 is grammatically incorrect and disconnected from the previous sentence. I recommend deleting 'swinging from branch to branch'. Then rewrite the sentence as: 'To accept such an unproven theory as fact would call for a giant leap backwards for mankind.'
- Para 2—sentence 15: 'brain washing' does not need to be hyphenated.

Apart from the above, this is a commendable entry that you have put a lot of time and effort into, Yvonne. Well done.

Level Two

Judge: Janice Gillgren

Requirement:

Write a poem based on a favourite psalm. While a traditional rhythm pattern isn't essential, there should be a noticeable rhythm. Rhyme is optional. 20-25 lines, or a maximum of 250 words.

General Comments

John and Shirley gain 1st and 2nd places respectively for their well-written and enjoyable poems. Susan's poem, at 3rd place, has a simple and effective message.

Do your best to keep your rhythm simple. That doesn't necessarily mean a boring uniformity throughout your poem, but try not to clutter your chosen pattern with too many words or syllables, which often require half-beats. A clearly discernible rhythm is much easier to follow.

Beware of trying so hard to create and maintain a rhyming pattern that the rhythm suffers. Rhyme was optional so that you could concentrate on rhythm, which John and Shirley did well.

Try clapping the rhythm as you read each line aloud, and if you find yourself having to make words sound shorter or longer unnaturally in order to fit, that is a strong clue that you need to do some more work on your poem.

Another good idea is to leave the poem for a week or two, then come back to it and read it aloud as if you hadn't read it before.

Poetry is very subjective of course, so I'm sure not everyone will agree with my

critiques. However, simplicity generally improves readability.

I was pleased to see that everyone had taken note of format, word length, and requirements for this competition. Grammar, spelling and punctuation were also good.

First Place



**John
Lindsay**
of Christchurch

Psalm 66

I shout to you with joy, O God;
In awe I stand and view Your works.
Come join this song of praise, O earth;
And foes of Him who reigns on high
Bow down, submit to His great name.

Our God has done great things for us,
Dry steps He gave
through sea and flood,
As in the ancient books we read.
Yes, join our song, rejoice in Him,
And rebels, too, accept His rule.

Despite the tests along the way
And heavy loads that weighed us down;
When feet would slip
and death seemed near
The Lord has laid firm paths for us,
Delighting us with rich rewards.

Now I respond and bring my gifts
Of sacrifices pure and clean.
Fulfil the vows I made to Him,
The promises in times of fear
When I felt lost, in trouble deep.

O Lord, a sinful heart offends
Your holy, pure and righteous name.
But You have listened, heard my prayer,
Poured out Your love,
held nothing back.
What can I do but praise You still?

Judge's Comments

Hi John. I really enjoyed this poem, for which I awarded you 1st place. It expresses the feeling and meaning in this Psalm very well, and is uplifting. The rhythm is consistent, making the poem very readable. Although a title isn't essential, it does help to draw in the reader.

I notice you capitalise pronouns referring to God. Although this is my personal preference also, it isn't generally accepted in writing today, even in Christian circles, so this is something to keep in mind. Because of the short lines in poems, it also makes the language seem stilted to capitalise words within them.

Keep up the great work.

Second Place



**Shirley
Jamieson**
of Featherston

My Incredible Lord and Friend

(Taken from Psalm 139)

O Lord it's too amazing
For me to comprehend
That you know all about me
And are my closest friend

You know what I am doing
And what I'm thinking too,
You know what I'll be saying
Before I ever do

And Lord you're right there with me,
Won't leave me all alone
In places I can't handle
To face them on my own

You knew the very moment
My spark of life began
And watched as I was growing,
And wrote my lifelong plan

So Lord I want to ask you
To search my heart today,
Cleanse all that is offensive
And lead me heaven's way

Judge's Comments

Hi Shirley. This poem came in a close second. I enjoyed the simple rhythm and rhyming pattern. This is a very readable poem, expressing the psalm's content well. The title is appropriate, and gives a clear invitation to read on.

The main problem I see in this poem is an over-use of the word 'And' to start your lines. (You've done this 6 times in only a 25-line poem)

Although it is possible to read the 1st line of the 3rd stanza by giving the 'And' a half-beat; it would be better to start with 'Lord...'

In the 4th stanza, you've started the 3rd and 4th lines with 'And'. You could probably start the 4th line with 'Then' instead.

Third Place



**Susan
Flanagan**
of Paihia

Inside Out;

Based on Psalm 139

You know me.
Inside and out,
Top to bottom.
My heart and my mind,
The good and the rotten.

You see me.
There is no escape,
No place to hide.
With my hand in Yours,
You are my guide.

You made me.
Knitted me together,
With colour and love.
My days planned with purpose,
From heaven above.

You search me.
Your thoughts of me,
Are like waves on the sea.
Search me, my God,
And lead me, please lead me.

Judge's Comments

Hi Susan. I enjoy the way you have expressed the meaning of this psalm in simple terms that are easy to understand for any reader. You've earned 3rd place as a result. However, there are some problems with both the rhythm and the rhyme.

In the 1st stanza, the words 'bottom' and 'rotten' don't rhyme.

The rhythm pattern is not consistent; especially when comparing particular lines of each stanza. For example, the 4th lines of the 1st 2 stanzas have the same number of beats, but the 4th line of the 3rd stanza can read as one extra beat (unless the word 'purpose' is read quicker than usual) and the 4th line of the 4th stanza is one beat less than that of the 1st 2 stanzas.

In counting out the beats of your poem, there is a /-/-- pattern (or a small variation of this) in each of the verses (lines) of each stanza except for the first verse, which is -/-. I find this change of pattern difficult to read easily.

In the last verse of the 5th stanza, 'me' has no accent to fit into your rhythm pattern, but as the last word of that verse, it would be better emphasised. The word 'sea' (two lines above), which is intended to rhyme with 'me', is accented as the last word in that verse, so it is natural to expect the same accent for the last word in the last verse. The only way I can see you could correct that would be to take out one word of that last verse. For example: 'And lead, please lead me.' (-/--/)

In the 3rd stanza, 'knit' would fit better than the two-syllable word 'knitted'.

I am highlighting these problems I see with the rhythm because they affect the readability of the poem. When we read our poems to ourselves, we tend to shorten or lengthen the words slightly to suit how we would like them to sound, without realising we've done so. This may be done to try to force the rhythm to fit the rhyme pattern we've chosen.

This is a long critique, so I hope you won't find it discouraging.

Level Three

Judge: Ruth Linton

Requirement: NEWSPAPER ARTICLE—Write a newspaper article on a significant international, national or family event in the past month. Write from a clear Christian worldview but without overt preaching. 250 words max.

General Comments

What a thrill to receive seven great entries for this competition. A special welcome to Jean Shewan, newly promoted from Level Two. Although not placed in this competition she produced a creditable entry.

As pointed out in Janice Gillgren's support article, a good newspaper article is in a 'pyramid shape' with all the important details (what, who, where, when) in the first paragraph and other information tapering down to the least important at the end, the part an editor may omit if space is short. A good title or headline is often what draws the reader's attention to the article.

The requirement that the article be written from a Christian worldview caused some difficulty and many entries became Christian comment suitable mainly for Christian publications or, perhaps, editorials, 'think pieces' or 'letters to the editor', especially in local newspapers. Christian worldview includes values such as sanctity of life, honesty, caring for others of whatever gender or race, and caring for God's creation. God, Jesus and our Christian faith can be woven into the report discreetly where appropriate; don't let fear or political correctness make you leave them out if they are essential to the article. Debbie Roome's entry is a good example of Christian worldview that would be acceptable in most newspapers.

First Place



**Debbie
Roome**
of Christchurch

Mechanic Jacks Bus off Woman in Oтира Crash

The plans of 36 Asian tourists changed dramatically when their bus collided with a van on the way through Otira Gorge. It was 11am on New Year's Eve 2015 and they were travelling from Christchurch to Greymouth. Witnesses say that the bus wove erratically across the road before ploughing into a vehicle on the other side.

Matthew Miller, a mechanic, (23) was one of the first on the scene and immediately initiated action. "The batteries were sparking so I disconnected them before helping smash the windscreen with a rock. The driver was hanging upside down so I cut the seatbelt to free him before helping other people through the hole in the glass."

His attention was then alerted to a woman trapped under the bus. "She was unconscious but I could feel her breath on my cheek. I got some gear from my work truck and we gently jacked the bus up." After leaving her in the care of some nurses, Miller assisted in loading the injured into helicopters. "It was a terrible situation," he said, "but I believe God was on hand. An ambulance happened to be passing by and medical staff were recruited from the line of backed-up cars. It was life and death stuff but all the injured survived."

Miller supplied a first aid kit, fire extinguisher and sunscreen from his work truck and his employer paid him for the hours he spent at the scene.

Judge's Comments

This report met all the requirements of the competition. The most important information was presented in the first paragraph with the exception of mentioning a possible cause of the accident. Many readers would like to have known what happened on that challenging portion of highway.

Matthew Miller's action showed Christian love in action and made his comment 'I believe God was on hand' acceptable to all readers. The presence of suitable medical personnel on a lesser-used highway also endorsed his statement.

The final paragraph could be omitted if publication space was at a premium but it adds a heart-warming touch to the article. Well done, Debbie.

Second Place



**Lois
Farrow**
of Christchurch

Happy Campers

The Tops Conference Centre, one hour south of Sydney, Australia, was stretched to the limit last week when almost 800 people attended a conference convened by Creation Ministries International (CMI). Speakers came from the USA, Australia and Hong Kong, and attendees, while mostly from

Australia, came from several other countries as well, even as far away as Canada.

Twenty teaching sessions over four days made for an intense conference. Torrential rain for the first three days dampened the grounds, but not the spirits of those attending. Planned star gazing sessions were rained out until the last night when the skies cleared.

Planning began three years prior and the organising team did a superb job, ensuring the smooth running of the camp. Creche, children’s programs and teenage activities proved a big hit with the many families attending.

Staff at the camp worked hard, particularly those in the kitchen responsible for feeding 800 people. Cabin and dormitory accommodation proved very comfortable. When the skies cleared attendees could see the coast and the beautiful tree-clad hills in which the venue was set.

“We believe it is important to teach the truths of the Bible regarding the creation of the world,” says CEO of CMI, Australia, Doctor Don Batten. “I am encouraged by the scientific knowledge of each of our speakers and how they present their subjects in a way everyone can understand.”

Participants have gone their separate ways, but new friendships formed and new knowledge gained will be a lasting legacy.

Judge’s Comments

This is another well-constructed report though the Conference may not be of so

much interest to the general public. Also, being an Australian event, New Zealand papers would not be so interested in publishing it.

That being said, the most important information is in the first paragraph and the lesser details come later. Lois supplied a heading but it is rather bland. Would it capture the attention of many readers? I suggest something like ‘Hundreds Survive Torrential Downpours at Tops Conference Centre’.

The final sentence of the first paragraph would flow better by rewording the last section as ‘...while attendees, though mostly from Australia, came from several other countries...’. This makes a contrast between speakers and attendees.

The final paragraph (again one that could easily be omitted if space dictated) would be better with order of the last half changed to emphasise the knowledge which was the main thrust of the conference: ‘...but new knowledge gained and new friendships formed will be a lasting legacy.’

Good writing, Lois.

Third Place



**Debbie
McDermott**
of Waiuku

Prison Fellowship— the Answer to New Zealand’s National Crisis?

Once considered to be a place where people could live in safety, the present

crime rate in New Zealand is cause for alarm. Just this week alone, there have been two stabbings and a fatal attack on a woman in Remuera, Auckland. How many more people will be killed before the year is out?

Based on Statistics New Zealand figures (<http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz>), the average monthly crime rates for January to October 2015 are:

- Homicides and Related Offences: 8
- Assaults: 3768
- Sexual Assaults: 415
- Abductions and Kidnapping: 26
- Robberies, Extortion and Related Offences: 259
- Unlawful Entry / Burglary: 5411
- Theft and Related Offences: 12217

For a nation with a population of just over 4.5 million people, these statistics are frighteningly high and could increase further if not addressed. The implementation of interventions and rehabilitation programmes by the New Zealand Ministry of Justice over the past couple of years has seen some reduction in repeat offending, but it is the work of Prison Fellowship NZ (a Christian based organisation) that has been most effective in achieving positive long term results.

Together with the church and the wider community, Prison Fellowship volunteers actively assist with transforming the lives of prisoners through in-prison support, reintegration services and introducing them to a faith. They also work towards reducing

intergenerational crime by strengthening the families and children of offenders. The outcome is often a life completely turned around.

Judge's Comments

This is a well-written article with views supported by excellent statistics. However, it was hard to decide the actual news content. Was it the stabbings and fatal attack listed in the first paragraph? If so, there are no answers to the who, what, where, how and why questions the reader would like to know.

The other possibility would have been a recent news report about the problem of re-offending in the judicial system and the failure or success of various rehabilitation programmes. This is hinted at in the paragraphs below the bullet points and makes a good platform to talk about Prison Fellowship, based on Christian values and producing excellent outcomes.

Deborah's title was strong and being a rhetorical question provokes interest. I think it would have been even better worded as '...the Answer to New Zealand's Prison Crisis?'

As an article or comment on current events this entry is an example of excellent writing.

The Lord is my rock and my
fortress and my deliverer;
My God, my strength, in whom
I will trust;
My shield and the horn of my
salvation, my stronghold

—Psalm 18:2

Competitions for April 2016

Due by March 10th

EMAIL ENTRY AS AN ATTACHMENT, COMPLETE WITH WORD COUNT AND YOUR NAME.

Font: Times New Roman, 11 pt. **Heading:** Bold, 14 pt. **Line spacing:** single.

Spaces between Paragraphs: 6 pt. **Paragraph Indentation:** None.

Send a high resolution photo of yourself in the event you are awarded a place.

Level One—for members 20 years old and over

Requirement: LETTER — An organisation such as Voice of the Martyrs has put you in touch with a Christian living in a country where followers of Jesus are severely persecuted for their faith. Now write a letter of hope and encouragement to this person about whom you know very little. 250 words.



Debbie

Email entry to: Debbie McDermott at: sddp@xtra.co.nz

Level Two—for members 20 years old and over

Requirement: MAGAZINE ARTICLE — If you could invent a new technological marvel to help mankind, what would it be? Tell us what you would invent, why, and how you could imagine it being used. It isn't necessary to explain how it could be made. Write it as a magazine article, with research (even if some is fabricated), dialogue, clear points, and a strong introduction and conclusion. 400-450 words.



Janice

Email entry to: Janice Gillgren at: jangill1359@gmail.com

Level Three—for members 20 years old and over

Requirement: DEBATE the following statement: 'Being politically correct is important for our Christian testimony.' Be sure to present both sides of the debate. 400 words max. (*Resource articles: Your Writing is an Expression of You by Janice Gillgren, and Writing Techniques –how-to-study.com, Pages 12 and 14 The Christian Writer, Aug-Sep 2014.*)



Ruth

Email entry to: Ruth Linton at: ruthlinton2015@gmail.com

Under 20s—for members 7-19 years old

Requirement: Write a poem or song about one of the following: Bullying, Friendship, Refugees, Graffiti or Speak Life. Four verses maximum.



Vicki

Email entry to: Vicki Nogaj at: nogaj@vodafone.co.nz



NZ CHRISTIAN writers



KEITHA SMITH lives in Auckland, is married and is mother to two children. To date she has published four works of fiction (*Maybury Place*, *The Bell Curve*, *The Tender Conflict* and *The Journey*) and a non-fiction book for

Christian mothers called *Mothering Heights*. She wrote her first book – a children’s twist-a-plot novel – as a class project when she was sixteen but never really considered writing as something a person might do as a profession. However, through her twenties and thirties her love of writing continued to grow, with her main focus being on writing women’s fiction, exploring life’s rich tapestry through funny, flawed and familial fictional characters.

To purchase *Mothering Heights* contact Keitha at smithkeitha@xtra.co.nz

For more information on Keitha and her other novels, please visit her website:

www.KeithaSmith.co.nz