

Connecticut Songsmith

Newsletter of the Connecticut
Songwriters Association



CSA is an educational, non-profit organization dedicated to
improving the art and craft of original musical and lyrical composition.
Serving music's artisans and craftsmen since 1979.



Mar 2011
Volume XXXII
Number 3
Issue #369

Combining Arts,
Education, and
Community Outreach

1979 - 2011 : 32 Years of Combining Arts, Education, and Community Outreach

Tuesday, March 15, Glastonbury YMCA Meet Producer/Engineer Tommy Byrnes of Sovereignty Music

The CSA meeting for March will be Tuesday
March 15, 7:15pm at the Glastonbury YMCA on
Welles St. (*directions page 2*).

Our special guest will be Producer/Engineer
Tommy Byrnes of Sovereignty Music, in
Massachusetts. Tommy is a long time veteran
of the music business, and as an Independent
Artist, is very supportive of the Indie
community.

A very proficient musician (guitar), Tommy
teaches, performs, and runs a music
production studio.

Tommy will share his expertise on digital home
recording systems and techniques, and how to
get your home studio to produce the best
quality recordings.

In the Critique Session, Tommy will listen to
your songs and offer critique from the
production perspective if the song is recorded,
or production suggestions if the song is
presented live.

This meeting is \$5 for members, \$10 for non-
members. See you there, and bring a friend!

**CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT
APRIL 1-3 -- REGISTER NOW!
LAST CHANCE BEFORE
RATES GO UP AT THE END OF
THE MONTH**

CRITIQUE SESSION

Following the program, as time permits, there will be
a critique session. To participate in the critique
session, members may bring a song on CD (or do it
live), with 20 copies of typed lyric sheets, and receive
constructive feedback. Critique sessions are a good
forum for works in progress or rough demos. For
best feedback, note on your lyric sheets the intended
genre and audience for your song, and what your
goals are (i.e. picked up by a commercial artist, self-
produce, etc.). The programs at most CSA monthly
meetings, except for special workshops, are free to
members, \$5 to non-members, applicable toward
membership if you join within 30 days. Members are
encouraged to bring a friend who might be interested
in what CSA offers. .

CSA EVENT CALENDAR

(for complete listing see www.ctsongs.com)

Mar - Glastonbury - Digital Home Recording with Tommy Byrnes
Apr 1-3, 2011 : CSA Songwriting Retreat! Register Now!
Apr 30, 2011: Voices For Hope finalists concert
May 1 - Deadline for Entries to Podunk Bluegrass Contest
May 14, 2011: CSA Day of Praise Collaborative Concert
Jun 14 - Crowdfunding Workshop with Noel Ramos, Glastonbury
Jun -19 - CSA Showcase/Picnic, Glastonbury
July 12 - Wesleyan University - Emmy Winner AJ Gundell
July 22 2011 Special Program TBA !
Aug 28 - CSA Showcase/Picnic, Glastonbury
Sept-Dec - More to come!
Dec 6 - Glastonbury
Dec 03 2011 The Annual LUNCH Holiday Show

**COMING May 14:
CSA Day of Praise Collaborative
Concert!**

Sign up now! Pre-registration is required!

Success comes from opportunity.
Opportunity comes from involvement. Get involved!

COMBINING ARTS, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOR 32 YEARS

Guiding Songs Along the Path from Creation to Realization to Proliferation

CSA RHYTHM AND NEWS

How to
Get There!

Directions to Glastonbury YMCA (Welles St.): From I-91 going north or south:

Take Exit 25 over the CT River onto Route 3 to Glastonbury. Bear right onto Route 2 towards Norwich. Take Exit 8 (Hebron Av.) off Route 2 and go right at the light onto Hebron Av. Go right at the next light which is New London Turnpike. Take first left (Welles St.) and a quick right into the Fox Run Mall. Go straight, park anywhere and look for CSA signs near People's Bank.

From I-84 east or west: Take Exit 55 onto Route 2 towards Glastonbury to Exit 8. See above. **From Norwich / New London area:** Take Route 2 to Exit 8 in Glastonbury and go right and a quick left onto Hebron Av. Go 2 lights to New London Tpke. See above! **PLEASE NOTE: If you have any used printer ink cartridges, please bring them with you to the meeting. CSA is part of a recycling program where we can receive a donation.**

PLEASE NOTE: If you have any used printer ink cartridges, please bring them with you to the meeting. CSA can recycle them and receive a donation.

TAX SEASON! GET A TAX DEDUCTION FOR YOUR OLD STUFF !

If you have any old music or office equipment lying around or just old "stuff" that you don't need, consider donating it to CSA and you'll get a generous tax deduction !

CSA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all items donated to us can be deducted at their maximum fair market value. We have helped many folks get nice deductions for their old items, which certainly can be useful to us either in our regular CSA programs or our community outreach programs through LUNCH.

We can use any office equipment and supplies, old computers, any type of music and studio equipment, and any type of item that could be used for auction or raffle. We'll provide a tax receipt that will give you the best possible tax-deduction. If you have anything that you might like to donate, contact Bill Pere at bill@billpere.com

A message from the folks at USA Songwriting Competition: ENTER YOUR SONGS - USA SONGWRITING COMPETITION is Open to all regardless of nationality, you may enter the 16th Annual USA Songwriting Competition and win \$50,000 Grand Prize worth of cash, cool music gear from Sony, Ibanez Guitars, Peavey, Audio-Techica and more! Winning songs will receive airplay on a nationally syndicated radio program in United States and Canada. Judges include A&R from Universal, Sony/BMG, EMI and Warner Music. Obtain the entry form from the internet at: <http://www.songwriting.net>

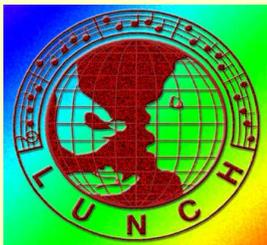
CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT

**REGISTER NOW FOR THE CSA SONGWRITING
RETREAT. SLOTS ARE GOING AND
RATES GO UP AT THE END OF THE MONTH.
LIMITED TO 12 SLOTS !**

www.ctsongs.com



Connecticut
Songwriters
Association



Local
United
Network to
Combat
Hunger

Saturday,
May 14, 2011,
7pm at
Union Baptist
Church
Corner of
Route 1 &
High St,
Mystic

SATURDAY May 14, 2011

Union Baptist Church, Mystic

A DAY OF PRAISE

Collaborative Concert

**of Spiritual and Inspirational Music to Benefit Social Services
through LUNCH**

Have an Ensemble of CSA members perform your song! Hear it come to life!

**1pm-5pm: Rehearsal - Work on arrangements of each
other's songs**

**5pm- 6pm: • Fellowship Pot-Luck Supper
(Please bring a dish to share;
Full kitchen facilities are available)**

6pm-7pm: Prep and Sound Checks for Concert

**7pm - 9pm Concert, open to the public,
proceeds to benefit Social Service
Agencies through LUNCH**

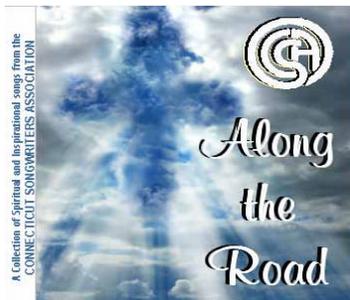
**Advance
Registration
Required!**

**Registration in Advance is only \$10 for the entire program (\$15 for
non-CSA members). You can be at the concert portion of the
program either as an attendee or as a performer.**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PERFORM AT THE CONCERT :

1. Contact Bill Pere no later than March 10, 2011 for slot availability
2. Submit a recording of 1-2 songs that you would perform. Songs must be inspirational, spiritual, or gospel related and appropriate for being performed for a family audience in a church setting. Songs from the CSA Compilation CDs receive preference and do not need to be submitted again.
3. Sound system will be provided for the concert, supporting primarily an acoustic sound - - There will be a keyboard provided, and percussion set.
4. The number of songs from artist will be determined by the final number of performers participating and the available rehearsal time, but it's usually one song per artist.

**All registrants may have a spot on the merchandise table to display and sell
CD's. It is requested that \$1 of each item sold be donated to CSA**



ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!

CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT

A GREAT SUCCESS IN 2010 - EVEN BETTER IN 2011 !

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN- LIMITED TO JUST 12 SLOTS

Slots are going - Reserve your spot now!

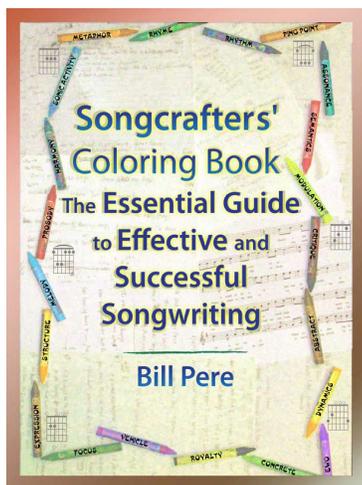
Take control of your creative process!

Take your songwriting to a new level!

You'll see songwriting in a whole new way and experience a level of creative control you never thought possible.

A time away from the distractions of everyday life, where all you have to think about is your music. A beautiful setting in the woods, with meals and lodging provided, and a group size limited to 12. You'll get personalized attention guaranteed to give you new ways to improve the effectiveness of your writing, and bring it to a new level.

**April 1-3, 2011, at Camp Wightman,
North Stonington, CT**



The program of Master Classes, performance and critique, will be based on the concepts of Bill Pere's internationally acclaimed songwriting book, "Songcrafters' Coloring Book", and led by Bill and Kay. This content, presented nationally at major conference events, is not available anywhere else at this affordable cost. All the details about the program, the facilities, schedule and registration are online at: <http://www.ctsongs.com/Retreat/SongwritingRetreat.htm>
See what others have said -- There are photos and reviews of the last retreat at the CSA website/

The program is limited to 12 participants. The earlier you register, the lower the cost, and it guarantees your spot. **The cost includes lodging for 2 nights, 4 meals, all workshops.**

(Note: If you have to arrive late or leave early, we cannot make cost adjustments).

Register by:	Member rate is for active members of CSA, Songsalive, IndieGrrl
(Before Nov 31)	Member Rate = \$150 Non-member = \$165
(Dec 1 – Feb 28)	Member Rate = \$170 Non-member = \$185
(Mar 1 – Mar 25)	Member Rate = \$185 Non Member = \$195

Three ways to Register, for your maximum convenience and security:

1. PAYPAL SECURE REGISTRATION ONLINE (www.ctsongs.com)
2. VISA/MASTERCARD SECURE REGISTRATION ONLINE
3. BY MAIL: Send check or Money Order payable to CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic CT 06355

You must include your e-mail address, phone number, street address, and member ID # (if you are a member of CSA, IndieGrrl, or Songsalive).

QUESTIONS ? Check the Website for FAQ Info. If you don't find what you need, e-mail us at retreat@ctsongwriting.com

CSA Says Goodbye to One of Our Original Members

Renamae (MacLaren) Johnson, 73, of Groton, passed away Saturday, Jan. 29, 2011, at the Groton Regency.



Rena will be missed. She was an original member of the Connecticut Songwriters Association. At the first CSA event I attended in 1979, she was there in line right in front of me, and we both joined the Association right then. She was member #50, and I was #51. Rena's tightly written country-flavored songs became a staple of CSA showcases. It was my privilege and honor to produce and arrange her music for more than 30 years, especially the music project we worked on together for Hurricane Katrina relief in 2005. The last time I saw Rena was May 16 2009, up on stage with us at a concert to send a mission team to New Orleans to help rebuild the 9th Ward. I know that's how she would want her songwriting friends to remember her. --

Bill Pere, President, CSA

Born in Minneapolis, Minn., she was the daughter of the late Alfred and Alma (Tucker) MacLaren and lived in southeastern Connecticut for most of her life.

Rena worked at The Westerly Hospital as a switchboard operator for 27 years up until her retirement in 2004.

She was a loving and devoted mother to her four children, raising them and making sure they all received a good education. After raising her children, Rena attended college earning her bachelor of science degree in English at Eastern Connecticut State University, something she was most proud of. Her hobbies included reading, music, and song writing. She also enjoyed gardening and solving crossword puzzles.

Throughout her life Rena was involved with various organizations which included, Mystic Junior Women's Club, Girl Scout's, Three Rivers Alumni Board, and was a member of the Connecticut Songwriters Association. She was also active in raising money for Hurricane Katrina victims.

She leaves her children, Kristen Panse and her husband, Gregory, of Mystic, David Johnson and his wife, Theresa, of Preston, and Erica Kelly of Va.; sister, Jackie Riley of Mass.; and five grandchildren, Chelsea and Ian Panse, Ryan and Seth Johnson, and Robert Kelly. In addition, Curt Rivard, who she revered as a sixth grandchild.

Sadly, she was predeceased by her son, Mark Johnson, and three sisters, Margie, Pauline, and Betty.

The family will receive friends from 11 to 11:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 4, at the Mystic Funeral Home, Route 1, Mystic, immediately followed by a service at 11:30 a.m. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Connecticut Songwriters Association, PO Box 511, Mystic, CT 06355.

The family invites you to visit www.mysticfuneralhome.com to share an online message of condolence.

CALLING ALL WRITERS

THE CSA 2011 COMPILATIONS Get your songs in by October 31, 2011

CSA Compilation CDs are released when there are enough songs submitted in a particular category. CSA CDs have received radio airplay and are displayed at national conferences, and the digital downloads pay artist royalties.

- 1: **SONGS of SOCIAL RELEVANCE** - Songs that address an issue of social importance -- hunger, homelessness, the environment, substance abuse, global warming..... This is your chance to speak out and be heard. TIP: Don't just write a song that preaches -- Make your point by showing it, not telling it.
- 2: **SPIRITUAL/INSPIRATIONAL SONGS** - Our 4th collection in this very popular series. See our previous Spiritual/Inspirational collections "Share the Journey" , "A Light Ahead", and "Along the Road" for examples of songs that fit this category.
- 3: **HOLIDAY SONGS** - One of the favorite categories -- CSA has released four great holiday collections. The holidays keep coming, and so do the songs !
- 4: **GOOD OL' COUNTRY SONGS !** - Always popular, and there is no lack of good quality country songs in CSA.
- 5: **COLLABORATIONS !** - Songs written by two or more writers - any style.

Please Remember: **submission is not a guarantee of inclusion.**

GUIDELINES

- At least one writer must be a **current** CSA member. All songs must be professionally produced, up to 'radio-ready' standards.
- Social Relevance songs must address a specific topic and social issue, such as hunger, homelessness, substance abuse, the environment, global warming, etc...
- Spiritual Inspirational songs must be appropriate to the category. See examples on the previous CSA Compilations "Share the Journey" , "Along the Road"., and "A Light Ahead".
- Holiday songs must have some winter holiday theme. (Christmas, New Year, Hanukkah, Thanksgiving)
- Country songs may be about any topic, but should have a country music feel to the arrangement.
- * Collaborative songs must have at least one writer who is an active CSA member.

Please specify for which CD Collection you are submitting.

- Any musical style is okay
- Submission is **NOT** a guarantee of acceptance. Songs will be selected based on :
 - Appropriateness to the theme
 - Song Crafting
 - Production Quality (must be professionally recorded and radio-ready)
 - Available space on the CD (if there are more acceptable submissions than can fit on the CD, those submitted earlier and those of shorter length will be given greater consideration.
- Songs must not violate the terms of any third-party agreement (e.g. with a publisher). Unsigned songs are preferred. If a song is under contract to a publisher, a signed release from the publisher must be provided.
- Songs may not have been included on any previous CSA CD Compilation of the same theme, but may be re-submitted if they also fit a different theme.
- Submissions will not be returned.
- At CSA discretion, songs from the compilations may be made available for digital downloads, with royalties paid to the writers.

TO SUBMIT, PLEASE SEND THE FOLLOWING:

- A recording of the song on CD, suitable for duplication (put your name and contact info on the CD)
- Clearly indicate the **TIME** of the track, in minutes: seconds
- A lyric sheet (put your name and contact info on the lyric sheet)
- A signed release form, printed out from the CSA web site (www.ctsongs.com)
- A non-refundable one-time \$15 per song processing fee payable to CSA.
 - If you want your complementary copy to be mailed to you, please include \$3 for postage.
 - (there are no additional costs, whether a song is accepted for inclusion or not)

Send your recording, lyric sheet, release form, and \$15 (+ \$3 postage) to CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic CT 06355.

IF YOU HAVE A SONG which is not yet fully produced and you want to know if it acceptable for consideration before doing the production, you may bring it to a CSA critique session

PLEASE HELP SPREAD THE WORD!



The 5th Annual
VOICES FOR HOPE
Scholarship and Vocal Competition

Service-Learning Through Music
for students ages 11-19

Finalists audition live at the East Hartford Community Cultural Center
and participate in a Harry Chapin Legacy Concert

AN EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG VOCALISTS

The winner receives prizes valued at more than \$1500, including:

- a \$500 scholarship
- professional recording and performing opportunities, with worldwide distribution
- professional vocal and performance coaching
- a lifetime membership to the Connecticut Songwriters Association

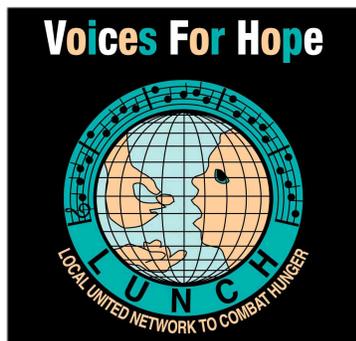
All participants are part of a service-learning outreach to support agencies which provide services for kids with special needs, and basic human services for those in need.

Previous winners have had opportunities to meet and perform with artists like Melba Moore, Diana Degarmo, The Harry Chapin Band, Patti Austin, and the LUNCH Ensemble at venues like the Bushnell, The Shubert Theater, University of Hartford, the Granite Theater, and many more. Their recordings have been released worldwide. Participants have come from many states, and our winners range in age from 11 to 19.

EVENT DETAILS AND ENTRY FORMS are at www.lunchensemble.com

ENTRY DEADLINE: April 9, 2011

FINAL LIVE AUDITIONS AND CONCERT: April 30, 2011,
E. Hartford Community Cultural Center



VOICES FOR HOPE is an outreach of L.U.N.C.H (Local United Network to Combat Hunger), using the Power of Popular Music to Produce Positive Social Action, in partnership with CSA

For additional information and inquiries, contact
Bill Pere, Founder and Executive Director, LUNCH
bill@billpere.com
860-572-9285
www.lunchensemble.com



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

**If you like Bluegrass music, this is for you -
If you have never gotten into Bluegrass
music, this is still for You!**

SECOND ANNUAL COMPETITION

CSA has partnered with the well known Podunk Bluegrass Music Festival to present a songwriting competition opportunity., with some great prizes and a chance to be heard by thousands of people. If you've written any bluegrass songs, here's a chance to put them to work for you. Most importantly, if you've never written in the Bluegrass style, here's a great reason to give it a try! Bluegrass, by it's very nature, is meant to be accessible to all, an easy style to write in. One of the great things about the style is that you don't need a percussion set or really fancy lyrics. Listen to some examples and give it a try.

All the details and entry forms are online at <http://www.ctsongs.com>.
Click the Podunk logo.

ALL FINALISTS WILL RECEIVE

- All Access Podunk credentials for up to two
- Listing and link on the Podunk Bluegrass website
- One-year subscription to Bluegrass Music Profiles magazine

1st PLACE WINNERS WILL ALSO RECEIVE

- A 10 minute performance on the Main Stage at Podunk on either Thursday, August 4 or Friday August 5, 2011. Must include song chosen as one of the top three.
- A check for \$300 (Three hundred)
- Lifetime Membership to CT Songwriters Association (\$400 value)

2nd PLACE WINNERS WILL ALSO RECEIVE

- A check for \$150. (One hundred Fifty)
- A 10 minute performance on the Main Stage at Podunk on either Thursday, August 4 or Friday August 5, 2011. Must include song chosen as one of the top three.

3rd PLACE WINNERS WILL ALSO RECEIVE

- A check for \$50.00 (Fifty)
- A 10 minute performance on the Main Stage at Podunk on either Thursday, August 4 or Friday August 5, 2011. Must include song chosen as one of the top three.

Contestants must enter by May 1, 2011 by completing the [Official Entry Form](#) and mailing it to:
CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic, CT 06355 USA OR by entering online at www.ctsongs.com

WHAT IS BLUEGRASS MUSIC ? *a discussion by C. Roger Moss, Podunk Bluegrass Music Festival*

Bluegrass is a style of acoustic music that originated in the 1940s when Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs combined elements of country/western, gospel and blues music with the British, Irish, and Scottish music of their Appalachian mountain heritage. It is played most commonly on the mandolin, fiddle, five-string banjo, six-string guitar, and upright bass, but the resonator guitar ("Dobro"), harmonica, and electric bass are also found in bluegrass. Percussion is not generally used, with the insistent rhythm being a result of the interplay of the stringed instruments. Bluegrass music is often called "that high lonesome sound" but it includes a wide range of lively instrumentals, sweet ballads in three-part harmony, soulful a cappella gospel quartets and up-tempo love songs.

The unique, driving sound of the original Blue Grass Boys was built upon by many musicians, including the Stanley Brothers, Reno & Smiley, Jim & Jesse, and Jimmy Martin. Bluegrass blossomed with artists like the Osborne Brothers, the Dillards, the Seldom Scene, the New Grass Revival, and Hot Rize. Today bluegrass is popular worldwide, and its stars include Ricky Skaggs, Alison Krauss & Union Station, the Del McCoury Band, Laurie Lewis, the Lonesome River Band, Blue Highway, and the Nashville Bluegrass Band.

Bluegrass is a very inclusive music, with friendly and informal jam sessions springing up around almost every event. It's a great way to learn to play an instrument and sing, for kids and adults alike. Almost all bluegrass events have a family atmosphere, and performers and listeners are equally welcome. We hope to see you soon at a bluegrass event!

*Success in the music business is based on reputation and integrity.
Here is Robert Wilson's take on it.*

THE UN-COMFORT ZONE with Robert Wilson

On my Honor

With the morning mist still on the Hudson River, and the sun just kissing the cliff tops of the New Jersey Palisade, Aaron Burr, Vice President of the United States shot and killed former Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton. Political opponents for years, the duelists faced each other after Burr sent these words to Hamilton: "Political opposition can never absolve gentlemen from the necessity of a rigid adherence to the laws of honor."

Once upon a time people were motivated by honor. Acquiring it, maintaining it, defending it. Bitter duels were fought in its name. I don't hear much talk about honor anymore.

Could it be the concept of honor is too difficult to understand? Is it truly ineffable - impossible to define - to the point that no one really knows what it means? As a virtue, it has certainly taken a beating when some cultures identify the murder of family members as an "honor killing," and when criminals such as the Mafia call themselves "men of honor."

I looked it up in the Webster Dictionary and found the words "reputation" and "integrity." But, honor seems to be more than that. It is similar to the definition of character which is: "what you do when no one is watching." Again, it must be more than that. So, I researched what some historical figures said about it. Most of them described honor by what it is not.

Thomas Jefferson said, "Nobody can acquire honor by doing what is wrong." OK, we'll assume he means you must do what is right or good. The problem may be that by today's standards those are up for debate.

The ancient Greek playwright, Sophocles, also tells us what not to do, but at the same time defines what is wrong: "Rather fail with honor than succeed by fraud."

Which reminds me of my favorite quote from *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini: "There is only one sin, only one. And that is theft. Every other sin is a variation of theft....When you kill a man, you steal a life. You steal his wife's right to a husband, rob his children of a father. When you tell a lie, you steal someone's right to the truth. When you cheat, you steal the right to fairness."

Of course fraud is theft, and any way in which someone defrauds another is wrong. Today, however, I feel as if fraud is the new coin of the realm. That it has become an accepted part of our culture. I hear so many conflicting claims from government officials - whether it is about global warming or the cause of terrorism or how to repair the economy - that sometimes I don't really know what to believe. It reminds me of a bit of graffiti I saw years ago: "Believe nothing of which you hear and only half of what you see."

I also like this observation by former U.S. President, Herbert Hoover, "When there is a lack of honor in government, the morals of the whole people are poisoned." In other words, if we feel like our government is cheating us, then a kind of a trickle-down corruption starts to exist. Now that is frightening indeed.

Others say that honor is something that we are born with, and that we must strive to keep it. German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, said, "Honor has not to be won; it must only not be lost." Here is a similar statement by French author and poet, Nicholas Boileau, "Honor is like an island, rugged and without shores; once we have left it, we can never return." Still, neither tells what it is.

And, you can't really claim to have it, as Ralph Waldo Emerson notes, "The louder he talked of his honor, the faster we counted our spoons." Could it be something that only other people can observe in you?

Leonardo da Vinci, endeavored to define it as, "He who sows virtue reaps honor." One of the best definitions I found is from journalist, Walter Lippmann, "He has honor if he holds himself to an ideal of conduct though it is inconvenient, unprofitable, or dangerous to do so."

I recall my father teaching me about honor and duty, and I have endeavored to teach my sons about it as well. I hope they will grow up in a world where honor has a resurgence and people are motivated by it once again.

Robert Evans Wilson, Jr. is a motivational speaker and humorist. He works with companies that want to be more competitive and with people who want to think like innovators. For more information on Robert's programs please visit www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com.

To challenge myself, I imposed the constraint of using exactly 26 words, each word starting with the next letter of the alphabet (a,c,b,d...etc) The above result may not be great poetry, but the satisfaction of successfully meeting the challenge is rewarding. This took 94 seconds to do. If I had tried it twenty years ago, it would have taken much longer. Swinging the extra bats truly builds up the mental songwriting muscles.

A popular use of yclept writing is in palindromes (words or sentences that read the same backwards and forwards) e.g., "Red rum, sir, is murder"; or one of the best: "A man, a plan, a canal, Panama!" These types of exercises force you to really look at the structure of words and in developing that ability, you hone your skill at generating sonic activity and fresh word combinations.

Besides just exercise, can this have any actual application for real songwriting? The answer is absolutely yes! When I was a teenager, first experimenting with songwriting, I wrote a song for a girl, such that the first letter of the third word in each line spelled out "I Love You.", and the tag of the song said:

*Look at the first letter in the third word of each line
And you'll see why I'm glad that you are mine*

I always remembered the sense of accomplishment in meeting that challenge (and the big smile on the girl's face...). More recently, I was working with some kids who had various reading and auditory learning differences, such as dyslexia. I wanted to write a serious song that might look at things from the perspective of such a child, and tell a story with emotional impact, with the message that God will answer the prayers of a child. I decided to embed pairs of anagrams and palindromic words (same backwards or forwards e.g., top/pot) in the lyric to simulate an aural dyslexic effect. This is the technique of creating phonetic ping-points through sonic-reversal, as discussed in "Songcrafters' Coloring Book".

So the challenge that lay before me was to tell a meaningful story, incorporate a dyslexic child, prayer, the act of reading, have God (and thus a doG) involved, and use specific types of words, all while maintaining a consistent verse/chorus structure and some degree of rhyme-scheme. Suffice it to say, it was one of the most difficult songwriting tasks I've undertaken, but, it came out to be one of my best songs. I threw away dozens of pairs of words for every one that I could use but over the course of several days, the song emerged.

The lyrics are presented here below with the special word-pairs italicized. There are 29 pairs of palindromes and anagram words. The song is cited by best-selling author Anu Garg on his website www.wordsmith.org. "doG" was called by hit writer Sheila Davis "a lyrical "tour-de-force", and has been used for many special events involving special education, and programs on spirituality and the power of prayer. (The video, with the anagrams animated, is at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZkAK0tHZIg>)

doG *words and music by Bill Pere*

A child is born and as he grows he sees the world through different eyes
They call him **dumb**, his name is **mud**, he cannot read, he does not know why...
Words **reverse**, then **reflip**, they **pilfer** shapes this **loser** cannot **resolve**
He has no friends but hopes for a life where **love** will **evolve**..

Coming home from school he feels a pull that **draws** him **toward** a side street
Dim amid the shadows stands a dog, a homeless stray
He gives a **yell** into the **alley** at the dog, as the words **spill** from his **lips**
Both **drawn onward**, like two **sister** ships, a pull they just can't **resist**

Each life tells a tale, but who among us can say
Whose hand is directing this play?
Each scene is scripted with care,
When a child says a prayer...

They run the whole way home, he **pets** the dog as they bound upon his **doorstep**
He forgets how all the kids call him **a fool**, act so **aloof**, he's happy now.
A boy and a dog **felt left** out, now each has a friend
But this story is only beginning, this play's not reached its end

continued...

The dog runs down the hallway, gives a yawn, leads the boy up to the bookcase;
The boy feels a warm tingle in his flesh, takes a book from the shelf.
This syndrome that makes palindromes is something now he knows he must fight
He seeks a switch, a lever that will let him revel in light...

Each life tells a tale, but who among us can say
Whose hand is directing this play?
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He opens up the book and for a long time, he does not emit a sound
He does not gape at the page, it has no gaps, he does not drown in words
He calls into the kitchen to his Mom, "Now I won, I understand!
Something's guiding my eyes on a path, like an invisible hand..."

His mother stops the cooking, drops the pots to see what it was he saw
Her child sits with his dog, his best pal, a book in his lap..
She keeps peeking at the page he is reading, to see if he is right..
It says "In the beginning, there was darkness, then there was light..."

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Bill Pere was named one of the "Top 50 Innovators, Groundbreakers and Guiding Lights of the Music Industry" by Music Connection Magazine. With more than 30 years in the music business, as a recording artist, award winning songwriter, performer, and educator Bill is well known for his superbly crafted lyrics, with lasting impact. Bill has released 16 CD's, and is President of the Connecticut Songwriters Association. Bill is an Official Connecticut State Troubadour, and is the Founder and Executive Director of the LUNCH Ensemble (www.lunchensemble.com). Twice named Connecticut Songwriter of the Year, Bill is a qualified MBTI practitioner, a member of MENC, and as Director of the Connecticut Songwriting Academy he helps develop young talent in songwriting, performing, and learning about the music business. Bill's song analyses and critiques are considered among the best in the industry.

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