



## Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador

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MEDIA RELEASE

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### **GRANT, DAWE TAKE HOME 2010 NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR BOOK AWARDS**

(May 14, 2010– St. John's, NL) It's yet another literary win for first-time novelist Jessica Grant, who takes home the 2010 Downhome Fiction Award today for her novel, *Come, Thou Tortoise*, published by Knopf Canada in 2009. The winner of the 2010 Bruneau Family Children's/Young Adult Literature Award is a long-time favourite on the Newfoundland literary scene. Tom Dawe won the award for his children's picture book, *Moocher in the Lun*, illustrated by C. Anne MacLeod and published by Flanker Press in 2008. The winners were announced this afternoon during an awards ceremony at Government House. Each winner received a cash prize of \$1,500.

The 2010 Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards are co-presented by the Writers' Alliance and the Literary Arts Foundation under the distinguished patronage of The Honourable John C. Crosbie, PC, OC, ONL, QC, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador.

"The Writers' Alliance is proud to be a continuing part of The Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards, which are once again shining a spotlight on some of the finest books to be published in the past two years by writers from our province," says Théa Morash, the

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organization's executive director. "This year's winners and runners-up are all wonderfully talented authors deserving of such recognition, and they represent what makes the here and now a very exciting place and time for writing and publishing."

Chip Clark, the vice-president of the Literary Arts Foundation, echoes this sentiment and adds, "We were delighted with the submissions for this year's awards, both for the quality of the work and the diversity of styles and topics. I didn't envy the judges in their task of selecting two runners-up and a finalist for each award."

"These awards celebrate the vibrancy of the literature of this province, and the immense talent and creativity of our writers. Tom Dawe and Jessica Grant join a distinguished group of past winners, and bring fresh voices, characters and insight to their work—and therefore to us as readers. They should be on everyone's summer reading list."

Fiction category judges Gerard Collins (St. John's), Pam Frampton (St. John's), and Lee Thompson (Moncton, NB) said of *Come, Thou Tortoise*: "At times sweet, enchanting, eccentric, hilarious and achingly sad, *Come, Thou Tortoise* explores the full Monty of human emotion... Author Jessica Grant takes readers into an imaginative world peopled with offbeat characters who are convincingly portrayed. This is St. John's as we've never seen it, but we're itching to return, and Audrey Flowers is one of the freshest, funniest, honest characters to come out of these parts... Grant's writing is spare yet descriptive; each word chosen with precision. If this is the world according to Jessica Grant, please, give us more."

Children's/YA Literature category judges Carmelita McGrath (St. John's), Robin McGrath (Happy Valley-Goose Bay), and Ellen Bryan Obed (Maine, U.S.) said of *Moocher in the Lun*: "*Moocher in the Lun* has a classic elegance. The rhyming appears effortless, the situations are original and funny, and the language is wonderfully natural. It demands to be read aloud just for the pleasure of the rhythm, the inventiveness of the language, and the situations created... Like

Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, it captures a magical language, a real one that contains a wealth of traditional knowledge, and makes it come alive again, appealing on different levels and holding as much interest for adults as for younger readers... [Dawe] dignifies the language, using it with love, affection and respect, striking a balance between the rigor and compression of poetic form and the utterly wild potential of language.”

All four runners-up—Kenneth J. Harvey and Lisa Moore for fiction, and Andy Jones and Janet Russell for children's/YA literature—each received \$500.

This is the 14th consecutive year for the awards, which consider books released in the two previous years. In alternate years, works of non-fiction and poetry are recognized.

This year's awards were made possible by the generous sponsorships of the Bruneau family and Downhome Inc., as well as the support of *The Telegram* and Access Copyright.

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Established in 1987 to contribute to a supportive environment for writing in the province, the Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador offers workshops, programs, and information to both professional and aspiring writers. <http://wani.ca/>