



Waseca native
Bryan Boyce
gives a literary
forum for the
developmentally
disabled.

getting the WOLCO

Creativity and imagination are skills which belong to every person on this earth. At the Daily Grind, a coffee shop in Waseca, Minnesota, people with developmental disabilities were given a unique opportunity to share these thoughts and talents with the community.

Between My Windows: Writing by Wasecans with Developmental Disabilities was released on August 16 and a public reading was held the same day in celebration. The book, designed and edited by Bryan Boyce, was a result of months of hard work not only by Boyce but by fourteen writers as well.

It was easy to see a strong sense of pride in these writers as they stood up in front of a full house to read their stories, essays and poems. Some of the pieces were serious, while some were humorous. Some were a few sentences, and some were several paragraphs. Some were abstract, and some were realistic. Most importantly, all of them were different and interesting in their own way.

After the reading ended, writers signed books that had been distributed to guests free of charge. They chatted with people who came to listen to the readings, and were eager to autograph their pieces and talk about them.

"I've never seen anything like this," Bryan said. "I'm really proud of what everyone's done."

Bryan Boyce, 21, was inspired to work on this project by his younger brother Jay Boyce, 19 who is developmentally disabled. As an alternative to watching TV, the two spent time writing stories together on their home computer while

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Bryan was home from Grinnell College for winter break. When he returned to Grinnell, a liberal arts college in Iowa, he realized how easy it would be to publish an anthology as long as adequate funding was available. With inspiration from his brother and a desire to help his hometown community, Bryan decided to seek funds to compile writing by the developmentally disabled.

Bryan contacted the Prairie Lakes Arts Council in Waseca, an organization that receives funding from the Minnesota State Legislature, and was provided a grant. The grant was given to Advocates for Developmental Disabilities, where Brian was assisted during the whole process.

He decided to devote his entire summer to the project. He met developmentally disabled people from Waseca and held one-on-one sessions to help them put their thoughts in writing. He was careful not to let his own words get in on any of the writing. Bryan transcribed many of the pieces, and read them back to the writers to make sure it was exactly what they wanted to say.

"It's their words," Brian said.

As any person would, the writers for *Between My Windows*, wrote about subjects that interested them and impacted their daily lives. They wrote about subjects relating to their jobs, pastimes, and school.

"A lot of the stories reflect the season they were written in," Bryan told the audience. The stories were written during one of the hottest summers on record, and it was seen in much of the writing.

One of the writers, Alicia Rew, 14, likes to write about her dogs - especially her new puppy Oreo. In her story "My Dogs," she writes about the bond she has with her pets.

"My mom thinks that me and Oreo are alike because we're both hyper and like to be annoying," she wrote.

Aside from writing with Bryan, Rew has kept a journal to write in on her own time. She says writing helps her to let out her emotions, and

she would like to continue writing in the future.

Matthew Miller, 22, gets inspiration from watching the news and reading the newspaper. He is especially interested in the upcoming elections, and it shows in his essay titled "Politics."

"The elections are coming up now," Miller writes. "There's a lot of heated issues like ethanol, pollution, the war, jobs, primaries - where they're going to be held and in what states."

Bryan seems to have accomplished his goal of the project, which was to encourage the creative expression of people with developmental disabilities. He had seen other forms of art done by developmentally disabled people, but it was all visual art. Bryan wanted to help people with disabilities to go beyond visual art and into writing.

"Creative writing isn't a medium they can't work in," he said.

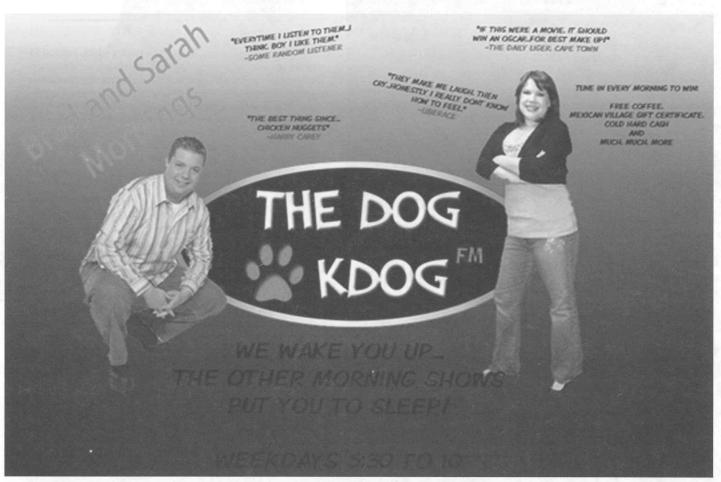
Bryan had a strong sense of accomplishment the night of the book release. He said it was all his work spent in the span of half a year-visualized. He would like the book to reach as many places as possible, so people in other communities can realize the capabilities of the developmentally disabled. One of his friends took copies of the book to hand out in London where he is studying abroad, so Bryan's wish has already begun to come true.

Brian also hopes *Between My Windows* will stand the test of time and impact future generations

"If I die right now, this still exists. It's something that lives beyond me," Brian said. "I just had a heck of a lot of fun."

Between My Windows: Writing by Wasecans with Developmental Disabilities, can be obtained free of charge at the Daily Grind coffee shop in Waseca, the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council in Waseca, or by contacting Ican, Inc. at 507-835-9140.

Jackie Knutson is a Static intern. She can be reached at jacqueline.knutson@mnsu.edu.



The Wright Brothers and the Crazy Horses by JAY BOYCE

The flying Wright brothers jumped out of a barracuda. The Wright brothers said, "Don't eat us. We're too big for you." Then the sweet little dust bunny asked the barracuda to spit out the Wright brothers. The barracuda was busy trying to swim and eat plankton. Then the Wright brothers saved the barracuda and crab for lunch. The Wright brothers decided to eat fish. Then they jumped over the meadow and saw a couple of crazy horses jumping out of the lamp...

The Roses that Don't Like the Sun by MICHELLE MEYER

Sun shines like a star.
Roses pose for a picture.
Mall calls people.
Sun runs all the time
Spraying can is trying to find the pan.
Corn is born for a short time.

America's Railroads by JOSH GERTZ

I have a toy train set because I love trains so much. I love trains because we have one here in town. Sometimes they go in different directions. They go as long as it takes, because those things die hard and last long, the black ones. I hear this from my seven train movies, America's Railroads. It's about finding your true self, because they live forever, because those things do."

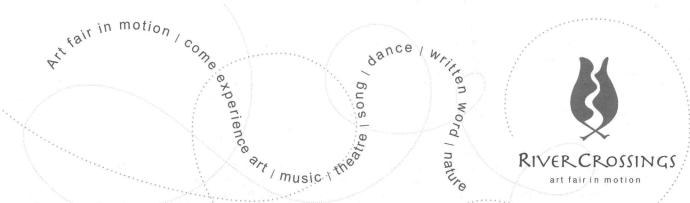
Carrie's Dreams by CARRIE DIETRICH

I miss my grandma very much. I wish I could meet her again if she was alive. I like the way she made apple pie. I like the way she took care of my mom. She took care of me when I was hurt.

Cow Tipping in the Dark by CHAD SOMMER

Have you ever been cow tipping?
When you tip them over they have a heart attack.
If there's a bull there you run,
run so fast!
If there's a bunch of bull you should run so fast to
get out of there or jump a fence.
When you go cow tipping, you scare them and you
say Rah! and you tip them over.
They can't see at night.
They have bad eyesight."

excerpts from Between My Windows



Saturday, October 7, 2006. 10 am - 5 pm & Sunday, October 8, 2006. noon - 5 pm. Saint Peter & Mankato