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NATIONAL NOVEL WRITING MONTH

Toronto, ON, October, 2008 - At midnight on November 1, 2008, hundreds of writers across Toronto – poised over laptops and pads of paper, fingers itching and minds racing with plots and characters – will begin a furious adventure in fiction. By 11:59 PM on November 30, many of them will be novelists.

Welcome to **National Novel Writing Month**: a nonprofit literary crusade that encourages aspiring novelists all over the world to write a 50 000-word novel in a month. Now in its 10th year, **NaNoWriMo** has grown from humble beginnings in San Francisco to become the largest writing contest in the world. In 2007, over 100 000 people in over 70 countries took part in the free challenge. And while the event stresses fun and creative exploration over publication, sixteen NaNoWriMo novelists have had their NaNo-novels published, **including Sarah Gruen, author of New York Times #1 Best Seller, *Water for Elephants*.**

Around 18% of NaNoWriMo participants "win" every year by writing 50 000 words and validating their novels on the organization's website before midnight on Nov 30. Winners receive no prizes, and no one at NaNoWriMo ever sees the manuscripts submitted.

So if not for fame or fortune, why do people do it?

"I've wanted to write a novel for as long as I can remember," says Victoria Anisman-Reiner, three-time NaNoWriMo winner, "but sticking out the time-consuming, emotional process of actually writing one was another matter. It's amazing what can be accomplished with a tight deadline and hundreds of fellow writers cheering you on."

In Toronto, regular writing sessions and social events throughout November help participants stay motivated and allow them to connect and share pieces of their novels in progress. An overnight writing session toward the end of the month, and writing sessions on the TTC subway have become tradition.

If you would like more information about National Novel Writing Month, or would like to talk to participants from the Toronto chapter of NaNoWriMo, please visit our websites at www.NaNoWriMo.org and www.TorontoNaNo.org, or email us at press@torontonano.org.