

Re: Writing Contest (Pen Pals)

By: Antony Tinsman, POB 3000, Forrest City, AR., 72336

Topic: Pen Pals who are News Services, Collaborators and Fans

My first passion was words. I didn't even know what I was looking at as a toddler, but there was some kind of magic in the structure of writing and power in what people could share by reading it aloud. Since I have some time to work on this passion a little more, I have come a long way. It started with writing fiction and poetry, to master the conveyance of thoughts and stories: a.k.a. style. I like to say I can't keep up with the speed of my own thoughts, so reading my stuff is like hearing it straight from a rock n' roll interpreter. Whether true or not, that interpreter was a little off, since no publisher, editor or friend with internet access felt compelled to help get the words out there.

I needed long term support, and exposure to interest readers for my work. So I tried something new, writing to newsletters, obscure news magazines, and local newspapers. The switch to non-fiction has opened up some doors. Not only is my work getting published weekly now, but I am building relationships with each editor. Cards and special submissions and kudos go a long way, and they are often reciprocated. To me this is better than writing a bunch of steam letters to girls in county jail. This route will get me out there, and should it attract the right types, I'm confident these personal relationships are more fulfilling.

Getting fan mail, and corresponding with fans is a blast. I get letters from the CTA Durland Alternatives Library on Cornell Campus. The interns read my Journal (odds and ends

from my calmative submissions) and they say how much they enjoy the stuff. When I write back, asking "Describe your campus, what type of trees line its walks? What does the library smell like, must or coffee? What impression did you first get when seeing it for the first time?" and get a response, well, it is something more than another piece of mail: It is coming from the streets from Candace or Sylvia or Sophia or ..., all of them taking me far far away. The power of words still pleasures me, and it humbles me to be a contributor to this sensation.