

Award winner has Snow Lake connection

My take on snow lake

A number of folks in Snow Lake have read Janita Van de Velde's book, *Postcards Never Written*, and the collective opinion appears unanimous - it's humorous, engaging, and extremely hard to put down.

It seems the people of the community aren't the only ones impressed with the author's first offering; word received early last week advised that *Postcards Never Written* has won the Reader's Choice Award at 2008 Saskatchewan Book Awards, and Ms. Van de Velde was announced as the award's winner at the Saskatchewan Book Awards Gala held in Regina on November 29th.

A city councillor representing the Regina Public Library was present at the Awards Gala to announce that the novel had won in its category. It was also noted that the honour was arrived at through online voting, as well as through votes cast at libraries across Saskatchewan.

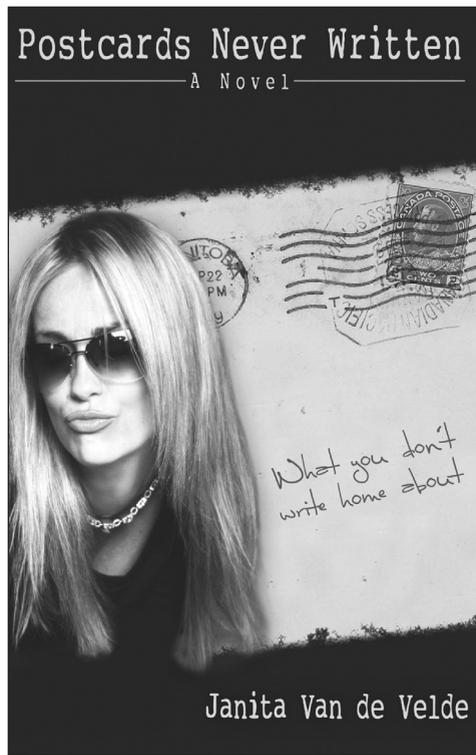
For those unaware, Van de Velde is the wife of former Snow Lake resident Roddy Macleod, and the daughter-in-law of Doctor Neil and wife Maureen Macleod.

A news release announcing the award, described the book as a "witty and often hilarious account of a globe-trotting adventure." The overview noted, "The heroine embarks on a journey across the continents with her boyfriend, who might just be the one - especially if their relationship can survive the trip. Travelling together can't be that hard, can it? She experiences moments of extreme clarity while baiting great white sharks in the Indian Ocean, getting tossed from a bridge high over the Zambezi River and hurling herself from a plane in New Zealand. She chronicles her entertaining stories with no excuses or apologies until she sends the sanitized postcards home to her parents. After all, why worry them?"

The author and her husband embarked on a similar journey in 2001 and although the book is a work of fiction, it's loosely based on their adventures. The release advises that she's not telling which stories are real and which are complete fabrica-



Marc Jackson
columnist



Janita Van de Velde

(L) Janita Van de Velde's award winning novel (R) Before and after doing her part for the cancer cause.

tions. Instead, she leaves that up to the reader's imagination.

This good news for Van de Velde was no doubt greeted with enthusiasm by the many who read the book and took the time to vote for it; however, there is one other entity that will benefit greatly by the novel and its author's popularity. When it was published, the author noted that a portion of all proceeds from its sale would be donated to World Vision. To this point, sales have allowed Van de Velde to donate over \$4,000.00 to that cause.

Moreover, Ms. Van de Velde's benevolence doesn't halt there, and apparently, there aren't many lengths she won't go to in order to endow her charities of choice - including doing away with the golden tresses upon her head. Several months back, during the Terry Fox Great Canadian head shave, the author cut all of her hair off. "I told my co-workers at Farm Credit Canada that if they raised \$10,000 in one week, then my straw bale would hit the floor," said Van de Velde in a recent email interview. "God bless their cotton socks, and their strong desire to see me bald, because they raised



Photos courtesy of Janita Van de Velde

over \$17,000."

When queried on her obvious yearn to help others, Van de Velde stated, "Without getting too philosophical, I think it has a lot to do with what my parents taught me in that giving back to others is one of the greatest gifts/legacies that we can leave. They taught me that life is one big board game in that you get your chips, play a good game and pass on the earnings as best you can. Never take more than you give - and in comparison to the rest of the world, we've

been given so much. I truly believe we'll have a hard time answering for ourselves if we don't do our part to make the world better and give back, especially when we've essentially "won the lottery" in terms of being blessed by our circumstances in life, whether it be the country we live in or simply having our health."

Postcards Never Written is available at bookstores throughout Saskatchewan and Manitoba or online at www.janita.ca

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