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GATHER.COM ANNOUNCES TWENTY SEMIFINALISTS IN WRITING CONTEST DUBBED “AMERICAN IDOL FOR BOOKS”

2,676 Manuscripts Submitted by Novelists from Across the Country

NEW YORK, New York/BOSTON, Mass., April 4, 2007 — Gather.com, the leader in [social media for adults](#), and the Touchstone imprint of Simon & Schuster, a global leader in the field of general interest publishing, today announced the twenty semifinalists in the Gather.com First Chapters Writing Competition. Referred to by numerous media outlets as “American Idol for Books,” the competition received 2,676 manuscript submissions since its inception in January. The names and hometowns of the semifinalists are below, as well as online at firstchapters.gather.com.

- Scott Auden—Colchester, CT
- E.J. Churchill—Phoenix, AZ
- William Delia—Broadalbin, NY
- Geoffrey Edwards—Chicago, IL
- Judi Fennell—Philadelphia, PA
- Eric Goodman— Baltimore, MD
- William Hershleder—Minneapolis, MN
- Christopher Hudson—Jackson, MS
- Candida Korman—New York, NY
- Jeff Kozlowski—Carlsbad, CA
- J. M. LeTurk—San Francisco, CA
- Geeta Menon—Los Altos, CA
- Scott Middlemist— Phoenix, AZ
- Robert Moscoso—Forest Hills, NY
- Rebecca Ruby—San Francisco, CA
- Stephen Prosapio—Oceanside, CA
- Rachel Schipul—Houston, TX

- Terry Shaw—Knoxville, TN
- Kieran Shields—Saco, ME
- Denise Wadsworth Trimm—Birmingham, AL

Since the contest began, Gather.com’s membership has nearly doubled, with a 30% surge during the month of March alone.

“The reaction to the First Chapters contest has been outstanding,” says Tom Gerace, Gather.com founder and Chief Executive Officer (tom.gather.com). “We feel privileged to be able to provide the platform and the opportunity for so many talented writers to showcase their amazing work.”

Beginning today, the second chapters of each semifinalist will be narrowed down until a Grand Prize winner is announced on May 31st. The manuscripts, which must be completed works of commercial fiction in order to qualify, are being evaluated by the Gather.com community of readers, writers and aspiring authors.

“The First Chapters competition has allowed Touchstone to harness the power of social media to discover new authors,” commented Mark Gompertz, Executive Vice President and Publisher, Touchstone. “The response has been enormously successful and we are excited to publish the winner of the competition.”

In addition to receiving a guaranteed publishing contract and distribution with Touchstone, the winner’s book will receive significant promotion at Borders®, the official bookseller of Gather.com. As the retail sponsor of Gather.com, Borders, Inc., a leading retailer of books, music, movies and stationery items, is promoting the First Chapters competition via email to its millions of Borders Reward® members.

“The First Chapters contest is very much aligned with our strategy to leverage innovation, technology and strategic alliances that differentiate Borders in the marketplace and help our customers to create richer and more satisfying lives through knowledge and entertainment,” said Borders Group Chief Marketing Officer Michael Tam.

The Grand Prize winner will be awarded a guaranteed publishing contract with Touchstone and a \$5000 cash prize from Gather.com. To obtain more information regarding the specifics of the judging, please reference the competition timeline below.

GATHER.COM FIRST CHAPTERS WRITING COMPETITION TIMELINE

Round 1: January 11 – April 3, 2007: COMPLETED

Round 2: April 4 – May 1, 2007:

The 20 semifinalists will have their second chapters posted on First Chapters where the Gather.com community and Editorial team will narrow the pool down to 10 semifinalists.

Round 3: May 2 – May 22, 2007:

The third chapters of the 10 semifinalists' manuscripts will be reviewed and rated by the Gather.com community and Editorial team and five finalists will be selected (four by Gather.com members and one Editor's Choice).

Winner Announced: May 31, 2007:

The esteemed judging panel will select one talented novelist as the Grand Prize Winner!

The Judging Panel:

- Carolyn K. Reidy, President of the Simon & Schuster Adult Publishing Group
- Mark Gompertz, Executive Vice President & Publisher of Touchstone Books
- George Jones, CEO, Borders Group
- Tom Gerace, Founder & CEO, Gather.com

About Simon & Schuster

Simon & Schuster, a part of the CBS Corporation, is a global leader in the field of general interest publishing, dedicated to providing the best in fiction and nonfiction for consumers of all ages, across all printed, electronic, and audio formats. Its divisions include Simon & Schuster Adult Publishing, Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, Simon & Schuster Audio, Simon & Schuster Digital, and international companies in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. For more information, visit our website at www.simonsays.com.

About Borders, Inc.

Borders is a subsidiary of Borders Group, Inc. (NYSE: BGP) a \$4 billion retailer of books, music, movies and stationery items that trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol BGP. Headquartered in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Borders Group, through its subsidiaries, operates more than 1,300 Borders and Waldenbooks stores and employs more than 34,000 people worldwide who serve more than 30 million customers each year. More information on the company is available at www.bordersgroupinc.com.

About Gather.com

Gather.com (www.gather.com) is the leader in social media for adults. Gather.com members connect around shared interests ranging from politics to books and from cooking to travel, and they're compensated for their activity on the site. Members can engage in conversation with state and local politicians, health and financial experts, personal coaches, bestselling authors, and more. Over one million people visit Gather.com each month to read content created by Gather.com members. Gather.com has a highly educated, highly informed adult audience membership -- a demographic elusive to most social networking sites. This demographic has made Gather.com an exceptional partner to media companies, advertising agencies, leading consumer brands, book publishers, and movie studios. Gather.com is a privately held, privately funded company headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts. Investors include Allen & Company, The American Public Media Group, Hearst, The McGraw-Hill Companies, and Southern California Public Radio. For more information, visit www.gather.com or call (617) 720-4000, x1032.

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