

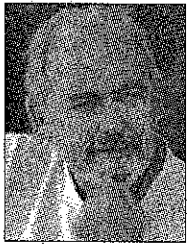
ingstar.com

Regional dean finds time to write

Morning Star Staff

When John Lent isn't overseeing the Kalamalka Campus of Okanagan College, or singing the low notes as part of popular Vernon trio Lent Fraser Wall, he can usually be found scribbling away in his note pad, or typing away at his computer.

In early October, the regional dean for the college and Vernon-based singer and writer will tour western Canada to launch his new book of poems, *Cantilevered Songs* (Thistledown Press).



John Lent

Lent will read in Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina, Edmonton, Calgary, Victoria, Duncan and Nanaimo, and will launch the book in the Okanagan later in November with events in Penticton, Kelowna and, finally, Vernon.

Cantilevered Songs is Lent's ninth book.

"It's hard to believe that I can still remember what it was like to launch (my) first book in 1978," he said. "In fact, there was no launch. I didn't launch a book here in Vernon until my third book was released."

Lent has come a long way since those early days. His 2005 book, *So It Won't Go Away* (Thistledown Press), was short-listed for the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and has gone into its second printing.

"It's a crazy game this writing life," he said. "You just go ahead doing what you're doing — in my case teaching and writing and singing — and you don't stop and wonder about the fame and glory end of it."

See VERNON page B8

Vernon plays a part in poetry

Continued from page B7

"There is no fame and glory," continued Lent. "It's the writing itself. It keeps you young. But you wake up one morning and 30 years have flown by, and you discover you've written nine books, and you wonder, 'how did I ever do that?' and you just feel lucky."

Cantilevered Songs is a book of poems about living in Vernon.

"I have always been mesmerized by two things," said Lent. "First, the thick texture of our day-to-day lives as they fly up around us; the people you meet on a morning walk; the colour of this place, its detail; and second, the way the head and the heart register those things, the rhythm and awareness of the body ticking away in all its random rushes."

The poems try to

mimic those rushes and that randomness, he added.

"I composed these poems as if I were playing an instrument. They tumbled down the page like notes from a saxo-

phone. They surfaced like jazz suites."

Cantilevered Songs will be available in bookstores after Lent launches the book in the Okanagan in November.