

## *We're Pleased to Present...*

Richard Newman



**Award-Winning, Poet,  
Editor of River Styx, a St. Louis-based Literary Magazine**

**Topic: "Last Ones Standing: The Resilience of Successful Writers"**

**Thursday, April 20, 2006, 7-8 PM**

**Barnes & Noble, 8871 Ladue Road, Ladue 63124**

For lecture details, a map, driving directions, and more, visit our [Lectures](#) page

This event is FREE to members and non-members

**NOTE: Richard Newman has kindly agreed to answer questions and autograph books at this event.**

**RICHARD NEWMAN** was born in Illinois, raised in Southern Indiana, and now lives in St. Louis. He is the author of the poetry collection *Borrowed Towns* ([Word Press](#), 2005), as well as several chapbooks, including *Greatest Hits* ([Pudding House](#), 2002), *Tastes Like Chicken and Other Meditations* ([Snark Publishing](#), 2004), and *Monster Gallery: 19 Terrifying and Amazing Monster Sonnets!* ([Snark Publishing](#), 2005). His poems, stories, and essays have most recently appeared or are forthcoming in Ted Kooser's "American Life in Poetry," *Best American Poetry 2006*, *Boulevard*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Poetry*

*Daily*, *StoryQuarterly*, *Tar River Poetry*, *The Sun*, and many other periodicals and anthologies. He has been nominated for dozens of Pushcart prizes but says he has never won, not even once.

Richard earned his MFA at Spalding University. He teaches at St. Louis Community College, reviews books for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and, for the last ten years, has served as editor of [River Styx](#). He lives in the historic Soulard neighborhood of St. Louis with his daughter, Natalie, and their big black dog, Otis.

## ***Borrowed Towns***

### **“Mowing”**

*Sitting quietly, doing nothing,  
Spring comes, and the grass grows by itself.*

—classic Zen poem from the *Zenrin Kushu*

I'm no Buddhist, but I know enough of lawns  
to say the grass grows by itself even  
when I'm not sitting quietly. Take now,  
for example: I'm in a terrible mood, full  
of so much desire and April cruelty  
I could wash away the four noble truths,  
and, almost as I mow, the new growth  
pushes against my chloroplasted shoes.  
Even as a child visiting Virginia,  
I gazed down picnic-perfect battlefields  
and guessed that before the last cannonballs  
burst and the last dying soldiers cried  
their mothers' names into the air, the grass  
was already swarming back up the bloody hills,  
as it now goes about its green business  
with entrepreneurial zeal, cracking sidewalks  
and disheveling my brick patio.  
And when my daughter swings in our back yard,  
crying, "Watch me, Daddy! Look how high!"  
I look up from the mower as she launches  
into the leafy arms of the trees, the whole  
swingset heaving, then swoops back down again,  
her bare feet riffling over the blades,  
grass I scattered with my own two fists,  
and I know—sitting, standing, quiet or not—  
that as she grows there's nothing I can do.

(originally appeared in *The Sun*)



**ISBN:** 1933456019

**Format:** Paperback, 84pp

**Pub. Date:** May 2005

**Publisher:** Wordtech Communications

**Visit Richard Newman's website at: <http://www.vacuumpacked.net/>**

**River Styx website: <http://www.riverstyx.org>**