

# More Than The Jobs We Do

By MARK SWANSON

I have often thought as I've traveled from store to store talking to our members that we are more than just the jobs we do. While many call us 'unskilled' labor, I know that we are skilled, and not just in the jobs we do. Many of our members have college degrees, many have technical or military training, and many are attending school. Rather than being 'unskilled,' we are adding to our skills in life by being on the job!

Many of our members own farms or ranches, raise horses, and have other interests outside of the job. Our diverse membership also includes people skilled in the arts. We have artists, actors, musicians and writers, just to name a few. One such person is John Carson, a member of Local 653 since 1973. He first came to Lunds on Lake Street in November of '72. A night stock supervisor for twenty years, he has also served as grocery manager for seven years; general merchandise manager for five years; and grocery assistant manager along the way. He has worked at Lake Street, Edina, Eden Prairie and Loehman's Plaza, and finally the full circle back to Lake Street.



But John is more than just the job he does — he is also a writer.

Since the age of 14, John has been working and writing. Over the years, between his job and an outside business, he has been writing in little cracks of time, steadily sharpening his skills and always with an eye to publication, a goal he has achieved several times now.

John has written three short stories, more than 100 poems, and two completed novels (not yet published), with two more in progress. He has written works and three more planned after that, and a song (*ep of the Night*) recorded by singer/entertainer Charlie O. He has been profiled and published twice in the *Sticello Times*, with a Halloween poem *Don't Turn Around* (October 30, 2003) and *Chocolat—The Horse with the Untied Feet*, which won top honors in a writing contest in 2004. He has also been published in several newsletters, as well as *The Gathering*, the in-house publication of Lund Food Products, Inc. His poem *Living Wise* hung on display in the waiting view Clinic at Lake Street for five years, and his poem *Red Glass* hangs on display in the home of Thea Helwig, an internationally known stained glass artist on the isle of Manitowish. You can click her link on John's website.

One of his proudest achievements was publication of his poem, *An I.O.U. to the Veterans of the USA*, in the newsletter for

Inspired by his mother as a child, John has made writing a family affair, entertaining his children as they grew, as well as friends and relatives. His wife, Marlene, is his coauthor on many projects, as well as the inspiration for his latest success, *Painting in Thread*, published in this year's Mother's Day edition of *Ideals*. His son and daughter have contributed with a website design and story ideas, as well as graphics work.

John's sister, Juliet Anderson of Hudson, Wisconsin, has done graphic and framing work for John's poems and sold them around the country at trade and craft shows for the last ten years. She owns a business called Expressions!, specializing in custom creations and art, as well as framing.

"I've had lots of support along the way, from family and friends and the people I work with," John told me. "The staff and management at Lunds have always been encouraging." Even Tres Lund has congratulated John on his recent success.

"*Ideals* is the biggest market I've been in yet; it's a real milestone for me," says John, even though his novel *Ramblin' Rose and the Internet Newsletter* is being read by R&R Publications. R&R's debut novel, *The Seer's Quest* by local author Chad Corrie, was a huge success.

When I saw John last, he was signing a copy of *Ideals* for a customer at Lake Street.

What's next? His sister is planning to feature him in a month-long art show of her paintings in June, at the Senior Center in the skyway downtown. "I'm hoping that some doors will open and I'll be able to finance my retirement and write full-time," John told me.

You can find out more about John and his writing at his website. Go to [www.geocities.com/johnwrite\\_51](http://www.geocities.com/johnwrite_51). Be sure to read *The Haunted Man* while you are there!

The *Ideals* Mother's Day edition is on sale at Lunds Lake Street, or online at [www.idealsbooks.com](http://www.idealsbooks.com), and you can contact Michelle Lodahl at 612-370-3869 for information on Juliet Anderson's art show.

Clearly, our membership is more than just 'unskilled' labor

## PAINTING IN THREAD

Crossing the stitch  
Painting in thread  
Using a lap  
For an easel instead ...

Colors strung through  
A needled brush  
Weaving the hues  
So deep and lush.

Pictures that take  
So much time  
Stitched with love  
Into patterns that rhyme ...

The patient artist —  
Her skillful touch  
Creating the works  
That mean so much.

Pillows and blankets  
Quilts and bibs  
Covers for tables  
And baby cribs —

Heirlooms that warm  
Comfort and hold  
Each one worth  
Its weight in gold.

Some artists paint  
Or work in clay  
Some sell their work  
Or give it away ...

Others hand it down instead —  
Crossing the stitch  
And painting  
In thread.

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