

## BOOT CAMP FOR SCRIPT WRITERS

Just a few miles from Golden Pond, new playwrights can either sink or swim.

**Ernest Thompson** says that he wrote "On Golden Pond" over the course of one weekend because he didn't know that he didn't know how to write a play. That little script went on to become one of the most beloved and re-staged productions of all time, even winning Thompson an Academy Award for his screenplay of the movie version that was shot on Squam Lake.

Not everyone has Thompson's talent or useful ignorance, but now prospective local scribes with Broadway or Hollywood in mind can at least attempt to recreate his feat.

This summer Whitebridge Farm Productions is offering a series of Workshops on Golden Pond, which will challenge writers to conceive and complete a script over the course of an intensive weekend with Thompson as mentor and counselor throughout.

The sessions start cordially enough. No more than 12 writers are invited to Thompson's place in North Hampton for a

cocktail party and a discussion of what each one wants to write. Then the real work, and pressure, begins. At the end of the weekend professional actors will stage a reading of what the writers have created. Workshop dates are July 17-19 and August 21-23 for the writing workshops.

Thompson is not just a writer, he's an accomplished director and actor, so he's also offering a one-day master class in acting for stage and camera on August 1. These and other programs are detailed at [whitebridgefarmproductions.com](http://whitebridgefarmproductions.com).

People often come to Thompson for advice on how to get started on a play. When he asks what's stopping them, they run through a litany of obligations taking up their time. "Those are not reasons," he says. "Those are excuses. Here, you have no excuses. You have to put everything aside and start, Act 1, Scene 1, and write a play."

Visit [nhmagazine.com](http://nhmagazine.com) to read an interview with Thompson about the craft of writing.



Ernest Thompson talks with a couple of campers during one of his recent "Writing on Golden Pond" workshops at his North Hampton home.