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# THE REPORT



*Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc.*

PROMOTING HIGHER STANDARDS FOR THE WRITTEN WORD

in Oklahoma, the United States and around the world





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**DO NOT SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE EDITORIAL OFFICE.**

Dan Case

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



“Write every day.”

Do you know who said that? Probably every writing teacher you ever heard. Writing every day is said to be the most important trait of a successful writer. Is this really true? I was curious to know if this is what the most successful writers actually do, so I checked.

Here's a few “successful” writers who say they “write every day” or, at least, something close to it. Nora Roberts, James Patterson, Charles W. Sasser, Robert B. Parker, Dean Koontz, Debbie Macomber, Janet Evanovich and J. K. Rowling. Pretty good list of successful writers, wouldn't you say?

OWFI exists to, among other reasons, help you become a successful writer. So with that in mind, let's give our 2010 conference a big kickoff by naming it, “Write Every Day,” 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Oklahoma Writers Federation Conference.

I'm very happy to announce that “Write Every Day” will be held on April 29-May 1, 2010 at the Embassy Suites Hotel/OKC at 1815 S. Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK 73108. We last had our annual conference at this hotel in 2007. As many of you know, every room is a “suite” with either 1 King size bed or 2 Queen size beds plus an extra pull-out couch bed. Room rate this time is

\$109 for up to 4 people in a suite—much less than the last conference price. You can start reserving rooms now by calling the hotel at 405-682-6000. Be sure to say that this is for OWFI to get this special rate.

By the time you get *The Report*, we should have the website updated with our lineup of faculty for “Write Every Day.” Deborah Bouziden (conference chair) and I have been working hard to get a great mix of agents, editors, and writers that (to my knowledge) have never presented at an OWFI conference. I used a couple of criteria for selecting speakers. 1 – they haven't yet presented at an OWFI conference, 2 – I or someone I know have heard them speak and they are good! So far, we are making good progress on our goal of a great conference for 2010.

How are you progressing on *your* goals? Are you saving up for the conference? Are you writing every day?

I read a book called *On Writing* by Stephen King. Yes, *that* Stephen King. One of the most successful writers of our time. Here's a direct quote from that book.

“Write every day.”

Well... if Stephen King says it, it *must* be true.

## More Stephen King Quotes:

**Each life makes its own imitation of immortality.**

**Get busy living, or get busy dying.**

**I am the literary equivalent of a Big Mac and Fries.**

**I guess when you turn off the main road, you have to be prepared to see some funny houses.**

**I watched Titanic when I got back home from the hospital, and cried. I knew that my IQ had been damaged.**

**People want to know why I do this, why I write such gross stuff. I like to tell them I have the heart of a small boy... and I keep it in a jar on my desk.**

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## Read This Book!

# Who Dares Wins—The Green Beret Way to Conquer Fear and Succeed

By Bob Mayer

Kristen Lamb, Book Review Editor

Publishing is changing, and writers of today have to be smarter, faster, and better trained than ever before. In my opinion, there is no better roadmap to success than NY Times Best-Selling Author Bob Mayer's *Who Dares Wins—The Green Beret Way to Conquer Fear and Succeed* (Simon & Schuster 2009). It is no accident that I chose to review a self-help book designed for conquering fear. Writers are assailed by fears every day and from every angle, regardless where we are in our career. Fear we won't endure. Fear of finding an agent or even the right agent. Fear of failure and even, strangely, fear of success. If left unchecked, these anxieties can sabotage our creativity and even our dreams. So if reality dictates that fear is going to be a part of our lives, then I believe most of us would rather master our fears than be ruled by them. Thus, I can think of no better training than the same tactics applied to the most elite fighting forces in the world.

Bob Mayer takes principles he used as a soldier and adapts them to become a highly successful writer. In *Who Dares Wins* he teaches strategies for victory in a very easy-to-read format and gives clear examples and templates to help guide the reader along the path to excellence. He then makes these techniques come alive by using illustrations from military history and his own experience both as a leader of an A-Team and as an author.

As the publishing industry evolves and adapts to the 21<sup>st</sup> Cen-

tury, authors must also evolve and adapt. By cross-applying many of the tactics used to train Special Forces, *Who Dares Wins* teaches writers how to think, act, and plan like the elite.

This book illuminates the shadowy world of Special Forces and brings their tactics to us regular folk.

Bob helps readers understand the power of character and how both positive and negative traits can affect how we contend with outside challenges. But, more importantly, he equips us to take on the internal challenges and arise vic-

torious. It is impossible to separate the writer from the writing, which is why it is absolutely critical for us to face our fears and master our weaknesses. We cannot separate who we

are from what we write. Thus, we must become the best to write the best. If we have no focus and direction, that can translate onto the page in the form of plot problems or character issues. If we as writers are not genuine and vulnerable, how can our characters ever hope to be?

There is so much more to being an author than words on a page. One can study grammar, characterization, narrative structure, etc. until the cows come home, but bottom line? Being an author is a mindset, and this career choice is certainly not for the faint of heart. That is why I believe *Who Dares Wins* is a worthy staple for every author's reference collection.

**Writers are assailed by fears every day and from every angle, regardless where we are in our career. Fear we won't endure. Fear of finding an agent or even the right agent. Fear of failure and even, strangely, fear of success. If left unchecked, these anxieties can sabotage our creativity and even our dreams.**

**Kristen Lamb is an award-winning writer who is currently pursuing her Master's degree in English at the University of Texas at Arlington. She has worked as a freelance writer/editor for six years, is President of the Freelance Writers Network and is also on the board of directors for the DFW Writers' Workshop.**



**A poet is someone who is astonished by everything.**

Anonymous

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## Once Around the Web

# QUIPSANDTIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL WRITERS: A WEBSITE REVIEW

Jen Nipps, Web Review Editor

Laurie Pawlik-Kienlen understands blogs can be valuable tools and resources for writers as much as websites can be. Her blog, Quips & Tips (<http://www.theadventurouswriter.com>), provides writing and editing tips and tricks for writers.

Her blog posts tend to take the form of informative articles. She has advice from authors such as J.K. Rowling to professional bloggers, such as Darren Rowse, an Australian blogger who started Prologger (<http://www.prologger.com>), which includes a job board for bloggers.

She covers the good and the perhaps not-so-good aspects of being a freelance writer. One entry talks about some of the drawbacks writers can anticipate if they choose to freelance full-time. Another discusses the personality traits of successful writers. Yet another lists some tips to be successful as a full-time freelance writer.

As a contributor to *Readers' Digest*, *Woman's Day.com*, *alive*, *MSN Health*, *Spirituality & Health*, and more, Laurie brings her own experiences to her blog, in addition to those of others, to offer quips, tips, hints, and advice for writers looking to make a living writing. About her goals for her career and her website, she says, "My writing goals include writing non-fiction books that inspire people to pursue their dreams and achieve their goals..."

She also posts tips on Twitter, such as this one from August 14, 2009, "Writing is about polishing a piece until you can't possibly make it

better....& the next day seeing all the gaps & flaws." You can find her on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/quipsandtips>.

A report generated by Dead Links (<http://www.dead-links.com>) indicates 147 invalid links. Since this is a blog and not a static website, some of the links could be broken by posts being moved or files and images pointed to from outgoing could have been removed. This is not an impression on Laurie, but is, rather, the nature of blogs.

The tagline for her blog is "Where writing quotations meet practical writing advice. And live happily ever after." Since she is a full-time freelance writer, this appears to be true for her. She thinks it can be for others as well.



Jen Nipps writes from her home in Ada, Oklahoma. She is a member of the Tulsa Nightwriters, McAlester McSherry Writers, and Web Writing Women. Her website is [www.jenifernipps.com](http://www.jenifernipps.com).

Other sites and blogs hosted by Laurie Pawlik-Kienlen See Jane Soar (<http://seejane-soar.theadventurouswriter.com>): A blog about life lessons from successful women in history, including Amelia Earhart, Rachel Ray, Annie Oakley, and more.

Quips and Tips for Achieving Your Goals (<http://theadventurouswriter.com/blog>): A blog similar to the one reviewed that includes inspirational quotes from successful people and practical life tips.

Quips and Tips for Couples Coping with Infertility (<http://theadventurouswriter.com/blogbaby>): The goal for this blog is the same as the one reviewed and the one on goals, but it is a bit more personal.

Psychology Suite 101 (<http://psychology.suite101.com>): Laurie is the featured writer for Psychology Suite 101.

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The Doctor is:

In

Out

## TEN Secrets Your Book Doc Wants to Share

Robyn Conley, The Book Doctor

A popular column in *Reader's Digest* offers its audience insights into a different person's perspective each issue. One month I learned what dry cleaners really think behind bundles of whites and smelly party clothes. In another issue I discovered how mother-in-laws would prefer we'd interpret their sometimes overbearing actions. Interesting, interesting.

Later in the day after reading my latest edition of *Reader's Digest*, I scanned through a writing blog, appalled to see what one author had to say about book doctors and freelance editors. Much of it was not on target.

So this book doc promptly decided to borrow the format of the insider's scoop, and pass along a few tidbits about my tenure in the business. These might be helpful tips for any of you who have a desire to start your own freelance editing business, or if you are in need of an objective view of your work.

1. One major bonus for me is the amount I've learned from my clients' work and how interesting all you writers are in every genre. What a treat to have edited folks from all across

this terrific, varied nation, as well as from countries as far away as Tahiti!

2. Something many writers should ask when considering any book doc, is if their flexibility of payment. With me,

folks can send as little or as much of their work as they want, so it's easier on their budgets. Other book docs may prefer the entire project arrive at once. This can be a tad overwhelming on a writer's pocket book, especially during these lean eco-

nomie times.

3. Good and fair book docs should always offer a free sample of the type of editing they do. If you request a five page sample and are rejected, then consider moving on to

another choice.

4. There should always be a give and take with communication after the pages are returned. If you think your potential book doc isn't going to help you understand the comments, or be willing to reread a small section at no cost—just to make sure you have adopted necessary changes—then find an editor who will go that extra mile.
5. Ask about bartering! Hey, we book docs are also underpaid writers who don't mind a little old fashioned trading. I've edited pages in exchange for a fax machine, a clarinet, even a few hours flying time with a private pilot. We understand writers are often cash-strapped, so don't be afraid to make an offer.
6. Do act courteous and realize you're not the only client the book doc is dealing with, so be patient and be specific when you're emailing or phoning. Even though I just typed

(Continued on page 20)

**There should always be a give and take with communication after the pages are returned. If you think your potential book doc isn't going to help you understand the comments, or be willing to reread a small section at no cost—just to make sure you have adopted necessary changes—then find an editor who will go that extra mile.**



Robyn Conley, the book doctor, speaks and writes about writing, editing, and marketing what you write. Her latest book is *BEYOND THE BRANCHES, Writing and Scrapping Your Complete Family Tree*. Other writing books are *BE YOUR OWN BOOK DOCTOR*, which gives a checklist of editing tips for writers, and *What Really Matters to Me*, a journal that helps people discover their goals, and then offers practical tips to make those dreams come true. Her other published titles include a diversity of topics, such as the biographies: *John Grisham*, *Cartoonists*, *Alexander G. Bell*, as well as these juvenile reference books: *Meerkats*; *Depression*; *Motion Pictures*; and *The Automobile*. She has sold to major magazines, such as *The Writer*, *Writer's Digest*, *ABA: Student Lawyer*, and a score of others.

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## Why We Write:

# Velda Brotherton: From the Log Cabin to the Computer

Nita Beshear, Features Editor

She was born in a log cabin, toward the end of the twentieth century. Her education a combination of various high schools as her family moved, her parents, especially in the early years, and her own thirst for knowledge and love of reading. She's climbed mountains, raised vegetables, canned those vegetables, raised a family and is a published writer.

Velda says she is compulsive about her schedule, "the house would have to fall on me to change it." She says.

Maybe that's why she has been published in magazines, newspapers, and books. The lady is serious about her writing, and being published.

Velda writes, because that's who she is, a writer. She writes because that's what she does, write. And she writes to visit new places, try new things, or relive old adventures.

In her younger years Velda climbed and hiked all over the Ozarks, which are neither mountains, nor hills. Today she saves most of her hiking and climbing for her heroines. She says, "I've made no trips to Paris, taken no cruises or safaris, but in my books I've done all those things.

She has two nonfiction books coming out next year. THE BOS-

TON MOUNTAINS: LOST IN THE OZARKS, a book about many of the lost communities of the Boston Mountains, the settlers and their stories. In this book we learn what the Ozarks are, since they're neither mountain, no hill. Her other book, untitled at the moment, is a cookbook that will combine authentic Boston Mountain recipes collected by her mother, and the stories about those recipes Velda has collected. About her fiction, Velda says, "I always have a piece of fiction going,

but the market is so slow there's nothing on the front burner right now." She admits to having short stories in several anthologies, and always has one of them in the works. So why do you write? For ad-

venture? To travel? To share information? Because that's what you do? Velda writes for all of those reasons, what's yours?

**In her younger years Velda climbed and hiked all over the Ozarks, which are neither mountains, nor hills. Today she saves most of her hiking and climbing for her heroines. She says, "I've made no trips to Paris, taken no cruises or safaris, but in my books I've done all those things.**

Nita Beshear is a member of McAlister-McShery Writers and Tulsa Nightwriters.

She has two blogs which can be found at

[www.roadtoscholarship.wordpress.com](http://www.roadtoscholarship.wordpress.com) and [www.nita-onewomansview.blogspot.com](http://www.nita-onewomansview.blogspot.com).



## Just a Taste of the 2010 Conference Speakers

**Jessica Burkhart** - <http://www.jessicaburkhart.com/> - Tween writer In eighth grade, Jess had a spinal fusion for severe scoliosis. During her recovery, she read dozens of teen magazines and thought "Ooooh! I could do that!" She finally stopped writing about topics she thought editors wanted to read and wrote about what she loved. She has six books releasing in 2009 and two scheduled for 2010.

**Gloria Teague** - <http://www.gloriateague.com/> - is an award-winning author of fiction and nonfiction, articles, short stories and novels. It was while working in the healthcare industry she realized there were phenomenal events taking place that many people were unaware of. She compiled several nonfiction stories to become *Beyond the Surgeon's Touch-One Miracle Away from Death*, her latest book release.

**Linda Apple** - <http://www.lindacapple.com> - is a Toastmaster, a graduate from the Christian Leaders Authors & Speakers Services (CLASS), and a Path Elements Profile Trainer focusing on communication skills. She is currently enrolled in the masters program at the University of Life! Her latest book **Inspire! Writing from the Soul** is an excellent resource for the new as well as the "burned out" writer.

**Page Lambert** - <http://www.pagelambert.com> - writes about the western landscape, mentoring and guiding people who want to creatively connect more deeply with the natural world. She facilitates outdoor creative adventures, often working in partnership with other professional organizations and venues such as the Grand Canyon Field Institute, The Women's Wilderness Institute, and the Aspen Writers' Foundation.



# A Meteorological Fiction

by Paul Mark Tag

Until 2001, I spent my career as a research meteorologist, delving into areas as diverse as cloud physics and weather modification, numerical weather prediction, and artificial intelligence. Over a span of more than thirty years, I'd written numerous technical articles. But nearly seven years ago, I retired from my job with the Naval Research Laboratory.

Why did I retire? At the time, I was doing some of the most fascinating research I'd ever done. However, I knew that unless I quit then, I'd miss a dream I'd been harboring for decades: that of writing fiction. (At my retirement luncheon, several colleagues jokingly suggested I needn't have retired to claim that distinction.)

For years prior, in association with author/mentor Arline Chase, I'd written short stories to learn storytelling skills. It's one thing to write a story, but quite another to write one that is enthralling and keeps the reader riveted. Regrettably, most of what we write in technical journals - although less so for the *Bulletin* - is hardly stay-up-all-night-turning-the-page material. Another way to put it is that fiction has to be fun, at least for the genre of fiction that I chose for my first novel.

After retiring, I spent another year writing short stories exclusively. But in 2002, I tackled a novel. Those of you who read fiction know there are various genres. During my short story period, I tried many of them: humor, fantasy, young adult, romance, mystery, and thriller. I concluded that I had the most success

and fun writing thrillers. What is a thriller? Here's a good definition: A novel of suspense with a plot structure that reinforces the elements of gamesmanship and the chase, with a sense of the hunt being paramount. The common thread is a growing sense of threat and the excitement of pursuit. Those of you who enjoy books by Tom Clancy know that he writes thrillers.

So, with genre in hand, I had to choose my topic. In fiction, a common saw is to write what you know. What did I know? Meteorology. And so, for months, with coconspirator Robin Brody (a meteorologist who continues to be my primary reader), we debated ideas worthy of a thriller, together with a plausible premise. After months of discussion, we had the makings of a story.

As the author, I had one nonnegotiable requirement: Enough of James Bond-like spies - I wanted the protagonist to be a meteorologist. If the world had to be saved (and it often does in a thriller), I wanted our

discipline to be up there - in lights. Why choose a meteorologist? The choice is obvious. The qualities that manifest our ranks are many: intelligence, attention to detail, the ability to integrate and make sense of disparate sets of data, training in both theoretical and numerical processes, and a thorough appreciation of science in general. One other important quality is our ability to accept frequent failure,

and criticism; who among us who has made a forecast would n't agree? What more could you want from a protagonist who must decipher complex clues and save the world in the process? Of course, I gave my protagonist, Dr. Victor Mark Silverstein, a few added gifts: I gave him a photographic memory (I've always wanted one of those)

and a genius IQ (something I could have used). The most fascinating characters are not perfect, however. They become interesting and more human because of their faults. Silverstein is arrogant because he

*(Continued on page 9)*

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## A Meteorological Fiction

(Continued from page 8)

knows he's smart, and he often uses his talents to manipulate people. As you might suspect, this combination can get him into trouble. There to save him is his associate, Dr. Linda Kipling, also a meteorologist, who possesses complementary skills - and is fearless.

Fiction is either "plot driven" or "character driven." The best books are both. I tried for a balance. You can imagine that meteorology shows up in the plot, whereas human interactions (often involving moral/ethical dilemmas) provide the character-driven aspect.

Two-and-a-half years later, I completed *Category 5* (iUniverse, 2005). Obviously, the plot concerns hurricanes. I won't give away the premise; suffice it to say, the bad guys are doing bad things with hurricanes, and it's up to the good guys to stop them.

As an aside, I've concluded that it is impossible to publish a book with no errors. Readers have spotted a few. I'm proud to say, however, that not one of them (yet) has been meteorological. I can't take the credit. Robin Brody and several other meteorologist reviewers saved me from embarrassment. (Note, however, my fortuitous forecast for 2007's Hurricane Noel, for which my book's east coast track is close to the observed, including "...threading the needle between Cuba and Haiti...")

To make my story more realistic, I visited all chapter locations except for two remote sites (Christmas Island and the Suez Canal) and the

CIA. For example, at the end of *Category 5*, considerable commotion breaks loose in Bermuda. My wife Becky and I spent a week there scouting appropriate sites (someone had to do it) and taking their GPS coordinates (they're listed at the beginning of chapters). If you use Google Earth (or go to my Web site, where I've summarized the images), you'll see where I imagined the action occurred. Enter the coordinates for chapter 6 (32°22'02"N, 64°40'39" W), and you'll find yourself at the Bermuda Weather Service (where the staff was most helpful). Do the same for chapter 3 (41°01'03"N, 28°58'17"E), and you'll be looking at the approximate location for the Pandeli Restaurant, located in the Spice Market in Istanbul, Turkey. My wife and I had a nice lunch there. In other instances, I "construct" a building in a location I've scouted. The chapter 8 coordinates (32°18'20"N, 64°47'20" W) in Bermuda identify the concrete fortress where the final showdown occurs.

Following *Category 5*, I wrote a sequel called *Prophecy* (iUniverse, 2007), published in July. Although this time the problem facing the world is not meteorological, I chose to keep my meteorologist protagonists. The skills that make us what we are transfer easily to other areas of science - in this case genetics, DNA, and the genome.

However, I must say I feel guilty about deviating from meteorology, and have decided to make amends with the third book in the series. Because it seems to be the meteorological topic of this decade, I've decided to tackle global climate change. Robin and I have developed a premise worthy (we think) of a complex thriller. And, if a fictional character is going to be doing the heavy lifting in resolving a climate crisis, I'm go-

ing to make damn sure that he or she is a meteorologist. We deserve the recognition!

(This article by Paul Mark Tag was published in the December 2007 issue of the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society and is reprinted with permission).

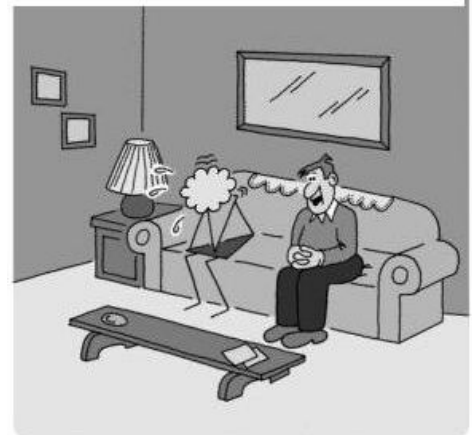
### About The Author:

Until he retired in 2001 to write fiction full-time, Paul Mark Tag's work revolved around meteorology and his career with the Naval Research Laboratory. *Prophecy* is his second novel, following his thriller, *Category 5*. Tag lives in Monterey, California, with his wife, Becky.



Visit <http://www.paulmarktag.com>.

### When good characters go bad!



Francine, I'm afraid you're just too one-dimensional for me...

<http://www.UnlikelyStories.com> (c) 2000 Michael P. Stype

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# 2009 OWFI CONTEST WINNERS

## 2009 Crème de la Crème Winner: Donna G. Young

When I was contacted about writing about the overwhelming effort I put into my Crème-de-la-Crème-winning piece, I thought, "Oh no, now everyone in OWFI will know I'm a fraud!" Then I thought I would just claim my muse must have been with me as I wrote "The Pepsi Generation," a story about being a tomboy in the country. Upon more reflection, however, I realized that I followed some of the great tips that were reiterated by speakers throughout the annual conference, knowledge I must have retained at some level from writing classes in the past.

First of all, I wrote the story that wanted to be told. I'm in the time of life when I long for the simpler days of the past. I would love to relive the times in which I lived life to the fullest, not stymied by cultural expectations or social mores. By writing about what I wanted to experience, the words just flowed out of me and onto the page. I think that this is closely connected to writing what one wants to read, and I love to read about the familiar, either a time or a place with which I can identify. I enjoyed the writing experience itself, sometimes smiling as just the right turn of phrase came to me at just the moment I needed it.

Secondly, although I'm sure I romanticized the story somewhat from what it was in reality, I was honest to my memory, and the characterization of myself as a scrawny little tomboy who only learned to back down from a dare in relatively recent years. I tried to be as fair as I could to my characters, because they are family, after all, and even though they may never read my

story, there's an outside chance they might stumble across it and recognize themselves. But I also kept in mind that truth doesn't have to be boring, and I wanted to entertain my audience.

That brings me to the third component that I never realized that I utilized until recently, and that is my audience. I wrote "The Pepsi Generation" for a writers' group deadline, but I also wrote it for my son. I wanted him to know what the old Pepsi sign hanging on his father's wall meant to me. Because he was the audience I had in mind, I wrote conversationally, as if I were telling him the story, but with better word selection, or at least words chosen more carefully.

Finally, I wrote with passion. Things are just things, but when they symbolize something larger, like who we are or memories of loved ones long gone; they assume a completely different value. The Pepsi sign could be sold for nice sum, I'm sure, but to me it holds the memories of growing up half-wild on my grandparents' farm. It only takes one look at the sign for me to smell July evenings and hear the oil wells thrumming in the background, and that is beyond value to me.

Winning the 2009 Crème-de-la-Crème was beyond my wildest imagination when I entered my nostalgic prose piece in the contest. I must admit that except for some minor revisions suggested by my friends at PAWS, the story nearly wrote itself. Of course I had some early edits and some internal arguments over word selection, but for the most part I wrote what was on my heart, and pouring out my heart is what it means to me to be a writer.

Donna Young returned to her native Oklahoma after a career in the Air Force. She earned a PhD in English from The University of Oklahoma and currently teaches at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee. When not teaching, working at Meeker Public Library, reading or writing, Donna breeds and trains English Springer Spaniels with her husband, Alan. She has one son, two



## Inspirational Prose: Sara Hoklotubbe

I am a self-taught writer and I like to quote something Oklahoma State Senator and artist Enoch Kelly Haney said while describing his transition from painter to sculptor. "Since I have no formal training," he said, "I have no limits." I have never forgotten his words.

When I started writing in 1996, I pored over writing magazines, bought books on writing, and attended writing conferences. I absorbed everything I could from professional and amateur writers, alike.

I wrote daily to polish my skills, submitted as much as possible, and tried to face rejection with a positive attitude. Eventually, rejection turned into acceptance and offers to publish.

I discovered that I could submit to three different publishers and receive three completely different assessments of my work. It became clear that submitting quality writing becomes a game much like piecing a puzzle together. The work becomes one part of the puzzle, the publisher (or judge) becomes

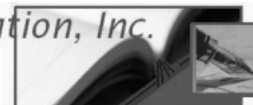
*(Continued on page 11)*

**The best measure of a man's honesty isn't his income tax return. It's the zero adjust on his bathroom scale.**

**Arthur C. Clarke**

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# 2009 OWFI CONTEST WINNERS

(Continued from page 10)

another. The challenge is to find two pieces that fit. When they don't, it is wise to take those caustic comments from publishers (and judges) with a healthy dose of skepticism.

In 2007, I wrote an essay for *Mystery Readers International Journal*. Publication of that article led to an invitation from Dana Stabenow to sit on a panel at Bouchercon in Anchorage that same year. A program held in conjunction with the conference, "Authors to the Bush," gave me the extraordinary opportunity to spend four days in two Siberian Yup'ik villages on St. Lawrence Island. I documented my experience and used those words to create the article that I entered in OWFI's Inspirational Article category. It won first place.

I really do believe in Haney's "no limits" theory. My winning article, *Yup'ik Wisdom*, has been accepted for publication by Alaska Sisters-in-Crime for an anthology scheduled for release in 2009.

Sara Hoklotubbe's first mystery, *DECEPTION ON ALL ACCOUNTS*, earned the *Wordcraft Circle Writer of the Year Award* in 2004. Her short stories have appeared in several anthologies.



Sara is a member of Stillwater Writers and Tulsa Night Writers and lives with her husband on Monkey Island in northeastern Oklahoma.

## Play/Film/TV Script: Maria Hooley

This year I took first place in the film category for a comedic script called *Skunks, Trunks, and Pedro*, and it's the same manuscript that didn't place last year, which should tell you three things about me as a writer. First I don't give up. Second, I never ask what the odds are that I'm going to place or get published. Third...well, I don't give up.

What does that have to do with contests? Winning and publishing in this business are often about persistence and dedication. Sometimes it's the luck of the draw but sometimes, it really is about entering something more than once, taking feedback, revising, and entering it again. I've done it numerous times, especially at OWFI, and it's pretty amazing what happens when you look at comments, and make your work better.

I never ask what the odds are in this business because it doesn't matter. If I don't compete or submit, then the answer will always be negative. I enter as many categories in OWFI as I can. This year it was twelve, and this year I placed in one and was rewarded with two honorable mentions, which is really awesome. But it was also a lot of work. I write everyday, and I write because it matters to me. It's what I do for me, and I really hope that one day an agent and editor will recognize the potential in my novels.

I know a lot of people get really discouraged about writing and contests, and it seems really easy for someone who wins to be this optimistic, especially in this market, but I do understand how you feel. Yes, I have placed in contests, and yes, I have published. But there is one final thing you should know about me. When most people say they have unpublished novels they are

trying to sell, they mean a handful at most. I am working on novel 22 and script number 5. And, just for the record, I'm still not giving up.

Maria Rachel Hooley's work has been featured in over 85 national journals, including *Kimera*, *Green Hills Literary Lantern*, and *Westview*. She has written over 20 novels, including *New Life Incorporated*, *When Angels Cry*, and *Sojourner*.



## Juvenile Short Story: Maria Veres

Before I won, I lost. Then I cried, sulked, dumped my entries in the trash.

But when my tears dried, I did what I always do when I'm feeling down—I wrote about it. And wrote some more. Contest or no contest, I knew I'd go on filling my notebooks, for the same reasons I began.

I love the feel of my new words on a clean page. I love the satisfaction of polishing a piece until it shines. I love knowing my work has touched people's hearts.

I still want awards, publication, money. But first and last, writing is a gift I give myself. No editor, judge, or critic can take that away.

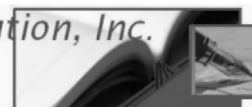
I'm proud of earning first place. But even if I never win again, I'll keep writing.

Maria Veres is the author of a poetry chapbook *Waiting for Miracles*. She has published fiction, poetry, and nonfiction for adults and children in over 40 magazines. She teaches creative writing at Francis Tuttle Technology Center.



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# Writing Children's Books: No More Excuses!

by: Laura Backes

Rejection is never easy. But some authors can't separate themselves from their work, and take rejection letters very personally. I get many emails from disgruntled writers who can't get past their anger to figure out why their work was turned down in the first place. So before you spend hours sticking pins in your editor voodoo doll, see if you recognize yourself below:

**The complaint: "Editors practice age discrimination. I'm over 50 and editors believe only young authors can write for children."**

The truth: Editors are interested in finding good books, period. It doesn't matter how old the author is. Take a look at the lists of award winners (ask your librarian, or do an Internet search for Caldecott or Newbery Awards) and note the ages of the authors. Many didn't start writing until their kids were in school full time, or took up writing as a second career. Editors also know that the best stories come from years of life experience, and older writers have more to draw from. Yes, occasionally a book written by a teenager will make the news, but more often than not it's the novelty of the author's age that gets the publicity, not the quality of the writing. And why does the editor know your age in the first place? There's no reason to mention it in your cover or query letter, unless it has direct bearing on the story. If you're writing historical fiction and you actually lived through the events in the plot, or your nonfiction book is based on years of study in the subject, then your age is a plus.

**The complaint: "I'm a man, and editors think only women can write children's books."**

The truth: Sorry guys, but this one's a little ridiculous. Again, look at that list of award winners. Men are well-represented. Glance through the names of editors in Children's Writer's & Illustrator's Market published by Writer's Digest Books.

Lots of men there too. The only time your gender might be an issue is with the readers themselves. For example, teenage boys might not buy a science fiction/adventure story written by a woman, or middle grade girls may think a man can't possibly pen a series featuring four adolescent girls at summer camp. They're wrong, but you can always use your first initial instead of your name to fool your audience.

**The complaint: "They're just wrong about my writing! All editors want these days are famous names, not quality books."**

The truth: Yes, many editors (especially those at larger houses) have to be concerned with making money for the publisher, and so rely on a certain number of established authors each year to pay the bills. But they also know they need to find new writers, because those standbys aren't going to be writing forever.

Sometimes it's almost impossible to interpret a rejection letter, and one or

two form rejections does not mean you're a failure. Editors are people too, with personal tastes and the need to balance each list by subject matter and age group. However, several rejections in a row deserve a closer look. Are you submitting to appropriate publishers, who actually publish the kind of book you've written? Have any of the houses on your list recently published a book very similar to yours? Is your manuscript riddled with typos or grammatical errors? Even though a copy editor will fix these before the book's published, sloppy presentation can give an editor reason to reject a

manuscript when she's got 50 others sitting on her desk waiting for her attention.

In most cases, though, it's the writing that gets the manuscript rejected. And since it's the editor's job to recognize good writing and help those authors make their books even better, there is a chance (admit it!) that the rejection is deserved. How can you tell? First of all, if you get personal comments about your manuscript in the rejection letter, take those to heart. Play devil's advocate and assume the editor's right, and see if those changes improve the work. Secondly, get objective input. Join a writer's group, get a professional manuscript critique, or pay for a personal critique session at a

*(Continued on page 13)*

**Sometimes it's almost impossible to interpret a rejection letter, and one or two form rejections does not mean you're a failure. Editors are people too, with personal tastes and the need to balance each list by subject matter and age group. However, several rejections in a row deserve a closer look. In most cases, though, it's the writing that gets the manuscript rejected. And since it's the editor's job to recognize good writing and help those authors make their books even better, there is a chance (admit it!) that the rejection is deserved.**

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# Writing Children's Books

(Continued from page 12)

writer's conference (most Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators workshops—<http://www.scbwi.org>—have optional one-on-one critiques). Take writing classes, read books on writing. Do whatever you can to learn how to judge your work and make it better.

**The complaint: "Publishers aren't interested in publishing books that will help kids."**

The truth: Whoa! If children's book publishers didn't produce books that benefit kids, they'd go out of business in a heartbeat. Of course, we can all walk into a book store and find books that aren't worth the paper they're printed on, but that's true of any product. (Have you ever bought a T-shirt that disintegrated in the first wash, or a DVD player that self-destructed in a week?) I'm not saying that's a good thing, but our society seems to tolerate a certain amount of drivel in the marketplace. However, all publishers prefer commercially-appealing books that also have substance. This complaint consistently comes from writers whose goal is to "help kids," or teach them how to grow into solid, caring citizens through their books. This is admirable and even desirable, but very often the message is heavy-handed and preachy. The message smothers the story, and the book ends up sounding like a lecture. It's simply not good writing. Try reading several popular books with a message embedded in the plot (ask a teacher or librarian for recommendations) and work on the writing-improvement suggestions above.

**The complaint: "I'm disabled/poor/have had a hard life and want to share my story, but no one will listen."**

The truth: I imagine it's difficult for an editor to reject a manuscript that comes from someone who has struggled with adversity and is still determined to follow their lifelong dream of becoming a published author. The tough circumstances themselves don't work against the writer (very often they contribute to powerful stories) but an author's unique situation cannot outweigh less-than-stellar writing. What's on the page is what matters the most. If your story is too personal (it's about your life as an adult, or you haven't extracted the universal feelings and crafted them into a story that will be relevant to a wide audience), the book simply won't sell in the children's market. Again, learn what makes a quality children's book and get objective feedback on your manuscript. Remember, no one owes you a publishing credit just because you took the time to write a book. Writing is hard work, and requires self-education, practice, and persistence. There's no shame in putting aside a manuscript that simply won't sell and writing something new. Every published author has a drawer full of those, and enough rejection letters to wallpaper an office. So join the club— it's worth the price of membership.

About The Author  
Laura Backes publishes Children's Book Insider, the Newsletter for Children's Writers. For info about writing children's books, free articles, market tips, insider secrets & more, visit <http://Write4kids.com>. For a free 3 month mini-subscription to CBI, go to <http://write4kids.com/minisub.html>



## What book got you hooked?

"What Book Got You Hooked?" invites readers everywhere to celebrate unforgettable books from childhood and help provide new books to the children who need them most. First Book asks visitors to share the memory of the books that made them readers and then vote for the state to receive 50,000 new books from First Book, helping to get more kids hooked on reading.

Past winners include Oklahoma in 2007 and Kentucky in 2008, with each state receiving 50,000 new books for children in need.

Join us this year in sharing the joy of great books with kids who need them most.

To see details and to vote (often!) go to <http://booksforkids.firstbook.org/whatbook/index.php>

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# BasketWars 2010

**What is BasketWars?** Affiliates and/or individuals create a "basket" (can be any kind of container) with books or items a reader or writer could use (imagination needed). At the OWFI Conference, the basket is checked in with Vivian Zabel. A silent auction then earns money to help with the conference expenses/scholarships. Individuals or affiliates may donate more than one "basket."

**Includes 2 divisions:** A division for large baskets includes containers with 15 or more items; a division for small baskets includes containers with 14 or fewer items. A token of my appreciation will be given for the following:

1. Large basket by an individual which brings the highest bid in the auction.

2. Small basket by an individual which brings the highest bid in the auction.

3. Large basket by an affiliate which brings the highest bid in the auction.

4. Small basket by an affiliate which brings the highest bid in the auction.

## Guidelines:

1. If people notify me their affiliates, or they individually, are bringing a basket by April 15, 2010, I can have paper work ready and know how many tables to have available.

2. Be creative. Be as generous as possible, but remember this is a voluntary project.

3. Please be sure that the name of

the individual or affiliate is attached to the basket (container) when it is checked in at the conference.

4. The time when the auction will end will be posted by the basket display.

5. The results of the silent auction will be posted by the tables where the baskets are displayed.

Yes, we often invest more in our donation container than is received in a bid, but each basket is just that, a donation for a good cause.

**Information needed**, when you notify me of a basket that will be donated, please send the following:

1. Name of person or affiliate
2. Name of contact person for an affiliate
3. Email address of person to contact

BasketWars contact information:  
Vivian Zabel, [vzabel@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vzabel@sbcglobal.net)  
or [Vivian@viviangilbertzabel.com](mailto:Vivian@viviangilbertzabel.com)  
cell phone 405-820-9640, address  
2912 Rankin Terrace, Edmond, OK  
73013

P.S. I lost the addresses of the individuals who won the individual basket prizes and the affiliate which won the top small basket award. Would the winners please email me those addresses?



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People have no idea what a hard job it is for two writers to be friends. Sooner or later you have to talk about each other's work.

**Anatole Broyard**

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# Oklahoma Writer's Federation, Inc.

## Membership Form

Valid from October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2010

### MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

New members may join at any time of the year; however, dues are not prorated.

#### PLEASE CHECK ONE:

\_\_\_\_\_ **MEMBER AT LARGE - (MAL) \$25.00**

Gives you the status of independent OWFI member.

**OR,**

\_\_\_\_\_ **AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBER**

You will be a member of one of the many individual writers' organizations that have met specific requirements to be accepted into OWFI.

**\$15.00** - Discounted if paid *before* November 30, 2009

**\$20.00** - If paid *after* November 30, 2009

Affiliate Club Name \_\_\_\_\_

What position do you hold (if any) in this affiliate? \_\_\_\_\_

Some affiliate clubs charge an additional membership. Check with the affiliate club's treasurer for more information. Visit the OWFI website for a list of affiliates:

<http://www.owfi.org>

### PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS:

Please complete this form and mail it, along with your check or money order (made out to **OWFI**) to:

Barbara Shepherd –OWFI

P.O. Box 54302

Oklahoma City, OK 73154

### MEMBER INFORMATION:

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a New Membership [  ] or a Renewal [  ]. Is this an address change? Yes [  ] No [  ]

Phone (Home): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (Other): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Website Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to receive the newsletter as: **Hard Copy** [  ] **Email** [  ]

# OFFICIAL OWFI 2010 CONTEST COVER SHEET



**Do not write in this space. For use of Category Chair only.**

Poetry line count \_\_\_\_\_ Prose word or page count \_\_\_\_\_ Category Number \_\_\_\_\_

Category Chair Initial \_\_\_\_\_ SASE enclosed (circle one) Yes No MS Number \_\_\_\_\_

**WINNINGS (please circle) | First | Second | Third | 1st HM | 2nd HM | 3rd HM**

**NO HANDWRITTEN MANUSCRIPTS WILL BE ACCEPTED!**

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Make sufficient photocopies of this form to provide a separate Cover Sheet for each entry.
2. Complete all blanks, except those designated for the Category Chair. Please type or print legibly.
3. Use paper clips to attach appropriate cover sheet to each entry. **Do not** staple manuscripts. Only **one** copy of each manuscript is required.
4. Attach to each entry a self-addressed envelope sufficient to mail manuscript flat and unfolded. **Manuscripts will not be returned by mail without proper postage on the return envelope**, although they may be picked up at the conference. The envelope is **REQUIRED**.
5. Mail each entry to the appropriate Category Chair, with **NO SIGNATURE** required (chairs cannot stay home all day to collect such entries). **Do not** mail entries to the **General Contest Chair**. Doing so will invalidate your entry.
6. Collaborators must be paid members of OWFI. A collaborative team is considered one entrant.
7. Entries must be postmarked by February 1, 2010.

- |                                |                                     |                                 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Mainstream Novel            | 13. Poetry, Rhymed--Short           | 25. Western Article             |
| 2. Contemporary Romance Novel  | 14. Poetry, Rhymed--Long            | 26. Inspirational Article       |
| 3. Historical Novel            | 15. Short-Short Story (Adult)       | 27. Mazie Cox Reid Column Award |
| 4. Mystery/Suspense Novel      | 16. Short Story (Adult)             | 28. Confession Story            |
| 5. Western Novel               | 17. Juvenile Short Story            | 29. Nostalgia Prose             |
| 6. Sci-Fi/Horror/Fantasy Novel | 18. Young Adult Short Story         |                                 |
| 7. Nonfiction Book             | 19. Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror Story     | <u>TROPHY AWARDS</u>            |
| 8. Picture Book                | 20. Prose Humor                     | 30. Best Juvenile Book Award    |
| 9. Middle Reader Book          | 21. Essay                           | 31. Best Nonfiction Book Award  |
| 10. Young Adult Book           | 22. Play, Film, or TV Script        | 32. Best Book of Poetry Award   |
| 11. Poetry, Unrhymed--Short    | 23. Technical and/or How-To Article | 33. Best Fiction Book Award     |
| 12. Poetry, Unrhymed--Long     | 24. Feature Article                 |                                 |

<b>Category</b>		<b>No.</b>
<b>Manuscript Title</b>		
<b>Author's Name</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>
<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>	
<b>Club Affiliation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Member-at-Large <input type="checkbox"/> Student	

Entrant's Last Name:

# OFFICIAL OWFI 2010 CONTEST ENTRY FORM

(Note: Writing teams *may not* enter works by one member of the team **on the same form**. Individuals must enter separately)



Name		<input type="checkbox"/> Dues Paid	<input type="checkbox"/> Dues Enclosed
Address			
City	State	Zip	
Phone	Email		
Club Affiliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Member-at-Large	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	

	Cat #	Category	Title
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
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8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			

1. Send photocopy of this form; keep original for your records. If necessary, include more entries on back of photocopied form.
2. Entry fee must be postmarked on or before FEBRUARY 1, 2010.
3. Make check or money order payable to OWFI Contest 2010. Fee of \$20 covers one entry in all 33 categories.

**SEND ENTRY FORM AND ENTRY FEE (check or money order) in business-size envelope to:**

Inez Phillips, General Contest Chair  
6200 N. Quapah Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Questions? Call 405-946-0981 or email [inezbowman@cox.net](mailto:inezbowman@cox.net)

You must be a paid-up member of OWFI or a full-time student to enter the contest. Send your membership fee of \$20 (\$15 if paid before Nov. 30th) for club affiliate members or \$25 for members-at-large to:

**OWFI, c/o Barbara Shepherd  
P.O. Box 54302  
Oklahoma City, Ok 73154**

Not sure if you've paid your 2010 dues? Email Barbara at

[owfiwriters@gmail.com](mailto:owfiwriters@gmail.com)

# 2010 OWFI Contest Eligibility Requirements and Entry Procedures

**NOTE: Category Chairs have not yet been announced. Do not send manuscripts until Category Chairs are announced. Check [www.owfi.org](http://www.owfi.org) or the next edition of this newsletter.**

For each entry, contestants must include a self-addressed, 9 x 12 stamped envelope (SASE), and a standard OWFI cover sheet. Contestants must pay careful attention to format and word length. To facilitate fair judging, entrants' names MAY NOT appear on the manuscript.

The annual OWFI contest is open only to paid OWFI members.

If you are not yet an OWFI member and wish to join, you may submit the membership form and your dues payment along with your contest entry form, or send it separately to the OWFI treasurer. (Name and address are on the form). You may join as a Member-at-Large (no association with any recognized OWFI affiliate writing group) for \$25.00, or as an affiliate member for \$15.00 (\$20.00 if paying after November 30, 2009) plus any dues required by the affiliate and paid to the affiliate. Check the list of approved OWFI affiliates and their contact information at [www.owfi.org](http://www.owfi.org).

Note: Members who join OWFI between mid October and mid February are advised to review contest information and requirements posted on this website, or photocopy all contest information from a fellow member to ensure having it well in advance of the contest deadline.

1. Entrants must be paid-up members of OWFI or full-time students (students must provide verification of student status). Membership dues are \$15 per year if paid before November 30th and \$20 if paid after November 30th for affiliate club members and \$25 for members-at-large.
2. No manuscript that has won a cash prize (1st, 2nd or 3rd) in a previous OWFI

contest may be entered again — EVER.

3. Contestants who win first place in an OWFI contest category may not enter that same category the following year.
4. Unpublished entries must be unaccepted for publication at the time of submission. (If accepted by a publisher after entry, the submission will be considered valid.)
5. Electronically published novels for the trophy awards must be hard copied before being sent to the category chair.
6. Judges may not enter contests that they are judging.
7. Category Chairs may not enter category they chair.
8. If entries are co-authored, both authors must be OWFI members. This will be considered "one" entrant.
9. Entrants may submit one manuscript per category. No manuscript may be entered in more than one category.

## ENTRY PROCEDURES

10. Entrants must pay a \$20 NONRE-FUNDABLE entry fee, which covers administrative costs and awards. This entitles participants to enter as many categories as they want (see #9 above).
11. Manuscripts must be submitted to the appropriate Category Chair.
12. Entries must be postmarked by February 01, 2010. OWFI is not responsible for entries lost or delayed in the mail.
13. Mail all entries flat, no folds. Folded manuscripts or entries in envelopes smaller than 9" x 12" will be disqualified.

## MS PREPARATION & FORMAT

14. All unpublished manuscripts must be editor-ready. That means \*typed and double spaced\* on one side of 8½" x 11" white paper. Poetry may be singled spaced. Book sample chapters must also be double-spaced but "front/back matter" such as synopsis/overviews, table-of-contents, and chapter outlines should follow industry standard (double-spaced, single-spaced or combinations thereof).

Play, film, or TV scripts should follow industry-standard formats. Use an easy-to-read 12-point font such as Times Roman or Courier that results in approximately 250 words per page (about 25 lines per page). Manuscripts using small print which violate these conditions will be disqualified. Fancy fonts are not allowed. Clear photocopies or computer printouts (laser, ink-jet, or near-letter-quality dot matrix) are acceptable.

15. For ALL ENTRIES in unpublished categories (books, short works, and poetry): In the upper right hand corner of the first page, type the category number. Beneath the category number (upper right hand corner of the first page) type one of the following:

- \* Number of lines (for poetry entries)
- \* Number of pages entered (for book-length prose entries)
- \* Word count for short works of prose (short stories, articles, etc.). Calculate using word processor word count or average 10 words per line, 25 lines per page.

\* Specific genre (see category descriptions) in multi-genre categories-- optional but highly recommended

16. Entries over the maximum length or under the minimum length will be disqualified.

17. No author's name, pen name or other author identification may appear on any manuscript page. Do not submit a manuscript in which your name is blacked out, whited out, cut out or covered with tape.

18. A completed copy of the Cover Sheet must be attached to each submission with a paper clip (do not staple). The sheet must include: Category name, manuscript title, name of club, author's name, address and phone number. If not affiliated with any OWFI club, check Member-at-Large box.

19. All entries must include a self-addressed envelope no smaller than 9" x

*(Continued on page 21)*

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Book Review:

## The Wind Comes Sweeping

By Marcia Preston

Reviewed by Annie Withers

Layers of intrigue pull you in like Chinese fingers. Even the front cover shows a sad little girl you know you'll meet again before it's over. The first dead body is on the second page and she slowly increases the suspense for two more pages until we discover it's only a bird. But it sets the ominous tone that keeps us nervous through to the end.

Like award winning Preston's other books, it's not just a delicious mystery. As you gather clues, the flat, windy, and barren landscape of the Central Oklahoma plains builds love/hate passions that trap the characters and capture us in the process. Sometimes it blends

subtle colors like a renaissance painting or other times its crisp and brittle and elegant like a classic black and white movie. She keeps our senses alive - tornado winds, smell of rain or blowing dust, blinding sun on wheat fields, or a blanket of night stars.

As if that's not enough to think about, the characters begin to march in with their powerful memories, sturdiness, overlapping grief, and killing disappointment. In fact, the people are so real it's almost an insult to call them characters. Tears catch in our throat when Preston says of

the two little girls, "when they were six and eleven, they sat up their dolls on their mother's grave and talked to her when the lonesomeness got too strong." You'll wonder how she makes such common folks so compelling they stay in your mind for weeks.

Young professional and painter Marik Youngblood is alone except for her older sister whom she seldom sees. Marik is now the fourth generation owner of 1280 acre Killdeer Ridge Ranch. Like her sister, she escaped while her father was alive, but now that he's dead too, she's drawn back to it, the only relation-

ship left that gives her life meaning. Pain and the past are constant companions as she tries to grieve her father through tangled layers of regret. While she's consumed by survival, trying to put the ranch business back on its feet by leasing a right-of-way to the power company for a

wind farm, new dangers creep in cloaked in old dangers.

And if you've forgotten by now it's a mystery, you remember when Preston finds the next dead body. I won't spoil the suspense but by then it requires what's left of Marik's confidence while answering long forgotten questions.

The frustration of this book is that you'll want to relax and let her carry you along. But you're all writers and won't be able to avoid paying attention and putting sticky notes in the pages. You'll rip through plot twists at high speed and suddenly

come upon a field of beautifully crafted phrases that forces you to skid to a stop and reread them two or three times. How does she do that, you'll ask yourself, making the descriptions so unique just by combining ordinary words in new ways, like "...deep breath that shuttered in her chest..." And she has so many other creative ways to use verbs like this phrase - "...her shadow bunched beneath her feet..." or "The chill diluted the February sunshine." Then she plants vivid multi-sensory images - "His dark shape rocked the mattress as he pulled on his boots." Preston was reared in this part of the country and her ear is delicately tuned to their colorful voices. She says of a couple, in the no-nonsense way Oklahomans understand, "They were poor as pond water, but they were a team."

The people, the land, the wind, the loneliness, all so deep and rich they're unforgettable. This book captures your attention for a few hours and keeps your heart a lot longer and you'll still be thinking about it by the time her next five star book is on the shelves.

Marcia Preston is our last year's OWFI president (2008) and, for many years, publisher/editor of By-Line Magazine. In 2004 she won both the Mary Higgins Clark Award and Oklahoma Book Award for fiction. And she makes a habit of writing great books like this one.

Annie Withers, originally from Tulsa, lives in Kansas City, and is a member of KC Writers Group, Tulsa Night Writers, OWL, and OWFI. She writes articles, mostly profiles, of people, events, and places and is writing her first novel. She's a designer, photographer, and okay - a bit of a philosopher.



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# Jumpstart your publishing career: Join the Query Club

**Ed. Note: I received this e-mail unsolicited. Neither the editor of the Report nor the officers of Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc. endorse, support or receive any financial considerations from this site. This material is presented here for informational purposes only.**

Dear Writer,

The path to publication begins with the query letter. You and members of your writing group probably already know this. In fact, many of you already have experienced the stress and frustration of trying to write queries that would generate the desired request of "please submit your manuscript."

Having spent 30 years in the business as a publisher, Time-Life editor, and author, I know what makes a query letter effective, and what doesn't. Since I personally can't teach and interact with every writer on the planet, I'm doing the next best thing.

Introducing the QUERY CLUB (membership offered at no charge). This unique club is your best source for guidance on how to write the vital documents all writers need—query letter, synopsis, first page, and/or book proposal.

When you and your writer friends sign up for the query club, you receive THE QUERY CLUB monthly newsletter, crammed with information to help you move along toward publication. Each issue features:

- Query Wizard chats/lectures dates and times
- Agent updates
- First page tips
- Advice from the synopsis doctor
- Query letter "red flags"
- Links to instructional videos
- "Don't ever do this" suggestions

- Self-critiquing techniques
- Publishing industry insider information

**An additional perk for** Query Club Premium members is a PDF download (no charge) of my 31-page Query Letter Mini-Workbook

To join the QUERY CLUB mailing list, receive the monthly newsletter, and access other perks, go to <http://QueryClub.weebly.com/>.

We share the same goal: getting you published.

Write on!

Molli Nickell

[mollinickell@thequeryclub.com](mailto:mollinickell@thequeryclub.com)

## Book Doctor continued

*(Continued from page 6)*

- "phoning," I rarely talk on the phone. You have a better chance of a response through email. It's always at a convenient time for both parties.
7. Always, always, always pay attention to the format the book doc prefers. I've sent a good many mss right back in their attached SASEs so the writers can reformat them before I edit. Most of these were single-spaced, I kid you not. Double-space, courier font, 12-point is what I require, along with an SASE, through the mail, with payment enclosed. Yes, remember to include payment and SASE.
  8. Some book docs will read pages sent via email attach-

ments, but I've often found that route to be trouble-some and contingent on software matching up on both computers. Another problem with the electronic notes is the writers aren't "playing" with changes on their own. They can simply hit, "accept changes" and never revise a word themselves. As writers, we can't learn if we skip steps, and electronic editing makes skipping too easy.

9. The above point brings me to a crucial issue—make sure your book doc does not alter your style or your voice when suggesting content change or structure revision. Any comment or example jotted in the margin by the book doc, even though it may not match your style, should be revised with your style in mind, with your character's voice in mind. If your book doc or critique buddy thinks everything should be changed, run for the literary hills.
10. Ask for references. All potential freelance editors should be willing to share names and email contacts of previous clients. Any who won't may not be the right choice for you.

Employing a book doc should feel like a good fit, and every person is different, so take your search seriously.

To give me a try, send any sample of your work (the first five pages in double-spaced, courier font, 12-point of say, maybe an OWFI Contest entry?) to me at: Robyn Conley, PO Box 506, Clyde, TX 79510 along with an SASE for their return.

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## 2010 Contest Eligibility Requirements and Entry Procedures

continued

(Continued from page 18)

12." If you plan to pick up your entries at the conference, you may omit postage, but the self-addressed envelope is required. Use your own name and address for both addressee and return address on these envelopes. Paperclip the return envelope to each entry. Note: Trophy entrants who choose not to pick up their materials at the conference should provide an appropriately sized and stamped mailer for postal return of their published book entry. Entries without the proper return envelope will be disqualified and destroyed. Entries without return postage, which are not picked up at the conference, will be destroyed.

### CAUSES FOR DISQUALIFICATION

- Entries or entry forms/fees postmarked after the February 01, 2010 deadline.
- Contestants or entries fail to meet the Eligibility Requirements (see above).
- Manuscripts folded or mailed in envelopes smaller than 9" x 12" (SEE EXCEPTION for Trophy entries).
- Entries sent to the wrong Category Chair, though authors may resubmit before the postmarked deadline.
- Handwritten manuscripts.
- Manuscripts which use smaller type that allows more than 250 words on a double-spaced page (approximate).
- Entries over the maximum length or under the minimum length.
- Entries that contain any author identification (name, pen name, byline, etc.) any place other than the coversheet.
- Entries without the proper return envelope (these will also be destroyed).
- Any manuscript found not to be the original work of an entrant. The Executive Board or its designated committee will screen all winning entries.

## Book Review: The Forest for the Trees by Betsy Lerner

Reviewed by Shane P. Carr  
©2001, Shane P. Carr

### The Forest for the Trees: An Editor's Advice to Writers

ISBN 1-57322-857-5 pub. Riverhead Books \$12.00 U.S.

When I am out searching the shelves of my local bookstore, I keep my eyes open for that book that will enlighten me or offer some me some secret advice on how to become a best-selling author. As most struggling writers will tell you, there is no secret advice or magic that will make a publisher buy your book; however, in my search I found a book that does come close.

The Forest for the Trees: An Editor's Advice to Writers by Betsy Lerner is a fascinating book that gives writers a glimpse into the world of editing and publishing from an editor's point of view.

The book opens with an honest and sometimes brutal look at the psychological makeup of most writers. Through her experience working with various authors, Lerner gives a first hand account of the trials and tribulations all writers face. She covers personality traits and mental disorders that plague the most gifted of writers, as well as the demons that can affect the creative mind, such as alcoholism and drug abuse.

In each instance Ms. Lerner manages to make you empathize with the writers she discusses as she guides you through their rise to fame and their untimely downfall to their inner demons. We learn that being a writer can be a trying experience for the mind that wishes to create but cannot find the words to do so.

This is where some of the subtle enlightenment sets in. While reading The Forest for the Trees, I realized how much I had in common with many of the writers discussed. It was refreshing and calming to learn that even great writers

such as Truman Capote, J.D. Salinger, and George Orwell suffered from "creative angst." I gained the knowledge that I was not alone in feeling the emotions that most writers experience.

Ms. Lerner even shares her own personal struggles to break into the field of writing and publishing. With deft humor, Lerner manages to touch her reader's hearts with her most trying experiences in the publishing industry.

At this point we only have begun to approach the enlightenment this book offers. In the second section, readers get the insider's look at what it takes to get a publisher's attention. Drawing from her personal experiences as both writer and editor, Betsy Lerner gives solid advice on finding an agent, preparing a query letter, and submitting to the right publishers. She explains in detail what attracts the attention of an agent or editor, as well as what will immediately turn them off to your manuscript.

So whether you are a writer who is preparing to submit a manuscript, or just a reader who wishes to learn how writers, editors, and publishers think, The Forest for the Trees: An Editor's Advice to Writers is a must read.

**Shane is an amateur writer of fantasy and horror. He also writes mainstream and poetry. Shane is currently working on a few short stories and has started on a manuscript for a fantasy novel. Like all writers, Shane is an avid reader and enjoys reviewing books. More of his reviews can be found at [http://www.cartemipper.com/vision\\_a.php](http://www.cartemipper.com/vision_a.php).**

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# Affiliate News

## FREELANCE WRITERS NETWORK

### Acceptances and Sales:

**MARJORIE BIXLER:** Twenty-page excerpt from her novel, *The Second Weekend in August*, published in *Atlantic Pacific Press*, a literary journal (Summer '09).

**JULIE COSGROVE:** ARTICLES: "How to Stay Focused and Succeed as a Christian Writer," *Cross and Quill* (May/June '09); Commissioned to write weekly devotionals on The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth (Southern Cone) Women's Website and to be communications coordinator and writer of articles for that site ('09-'10); Contracted to provide three weeks of daily devotionals a year for 3-5 years for Bible Reading Fellowship's *Good News Daily* (beginning '10).

**ROGER LATHAM:** LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Roger is a regular contributor of thought-provoking letters to *The Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, from community color to national politics.

### Novels and New Books:

**MICHAEL BUMAGIN:** STORIES: "Bloodless Surgery" in *13 Nights of Blood* (also available as an e-book & CD); "Floaters" in *Nights of Blood 2*. 23 House Publisher ('09).

### Professional Activities:

**OLYVE HALLMARK ABBOTT:** BOOK SIGNING and speaker for Community Hospice of Texas (8-25-09); TELEVISION: Interview concerning her books and musical career, Channel 31, Fort Worth (9/09).

**JULIE COSGROVE:** Workshop/ Inspirational speaker, "Why Intercessory Prayer?" for the Annual Daughters of the King Retreat in Granbury, TX (Feb. 26-28, '10).

**MARILYN KOMECHAK:** POETRY: Participating in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday Poetry Series for ekphrastic painting and poems at Benbrook Library in Fort Worth (8-11-09); BOOK SIGNING: Will display her published books and short stories at the Women of Worth (WOW) Show, a branch of the National League of American Pen Women, in the atrium of the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth (8-5 thru Sept/09); Scheduled to present poetry related to paintings in the Milan Gallery in downtown Fort Worth, 7 P.M. (9-26-09). The public is invited.

**NELL NOONAN:** BOOK SIGNING: Will speak and sign books for the Health Fair and Senior Focus Breakfast at St. Barnabas Presbyterian Church in Richardson, Texas, (8/22/09); INTERVIEW: Q & A column concerning her book, *Not Alone: Encouragement for Caregivers*, was published in *The United Methodist Reporter* (6/09).

### Club News:

Best-selling author, **BOB MAYER**, presented a 2-hour "Warrior Writers" workshop for the Freelance Writers Network in Las Colinas, TX (7-09).

## MCALESTER'S MCSHERRY WRITERS'

### Acceptances and Sales

**SHARON ERVIN:** BOOK: signed contract for *CANDLESTICKS* a new hardcover, third in the Jancy Dewhurst se-

ries, scheduled for release from Five Star/Cengage in June, 2010.

Also the audio version of **ERVIN'S** 2006 release, *THE RIBBON MURDERS*, debuted in May from Books in Motion.

**MARY ANN KERL:** BOOKS: signed a contract for *LOW COST RECIPES FOR FARM MARKET VEGETABLES*, to be published by Quixote Press;

**KERL** also signed a contract for *DEVOTED TO ECONOMIZING*, to be published by AWOC.

**KERL** also sold an article, "Make \$\$\$ for Your Work," to *Writers' Journal Magazine*.

**DONA T. MULARKEY, Ph.D.:** BOOK: *MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AND SOCIETY - MAKING LIFE BETTER*. The book is used as a text at SMU.

**DEBRA POWELL's** ARTICLE "Riding in the Big Fort County," appeared in the May issue of *Mules and More Magazine*.

### Professional Activities

**MCALESTER'S MCSHERRY WRITERS:** judged a teen writing contest sponsored by the McAlester Public Library in July.

**SHARON ERVIN** was interviewed March 4 for Cox Cable's "Read About It," series. She also spoke to the Eufula (Oklahoma) Friends of the Library on March 18.

**ERVIN** signed her new release, *AFTER-MATH*, at Steve's, 2612 S. Harvard in Tulsa June 13.

**MARY MCCAULEY** and **ERVIN** participated in the Border Queen Festival Saturday March 7th in Comanche, OK.

**JAN MEINS**, a member of the faculty at Eastern Oklahoma State College, helped with a Presentation on Plagiarism. Meins recommended [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) to double check suspected plagiarism of any work.





## Affiliate News

Continued

### Club News

McAlester's McSherry Writers (McWriters) meet to critique at 1 p.m. every other Saturday in the conference room of the McAlester Public Library, 401 N. Second Street, McAlester. Meetings are free and open to all area writers. The next meetings are August 22 and September 5.

## TULSA NIGHT-WRITERS

### Acceptance and Sales

**DEANNA PONDER:** STORY "Matchmaking Cat" in the September 2009 issue of True Romance. Also had an article in the June issue of Life's Vintage Newsmagazine titled "Living the Dream Interrupted" about TNW Jackie King. Additionally she sold an article to Sew News Magazine - due to be released in their holiday edition around October.

**GLORIA TEAGUE SHIRLEY:** ARTICLE in Woman's World magazine in their Turning Point section. A photographer was sent to take pictures of Gloria and her family to accompany the article. It's in the Oct. 5 issue.

**LAURA JANE POPP:** STORY to Joyful Magazine.

**SALLY JADLOW:** STORY accepted for Cup of Comfort for Fathers.

**MARY ANN KERL:** ARTICLE to Writer's Journal. "Get \$\$\$ for Your Work."

### Novels and New Books

**MYRA JOHNSON:** NOVELS. She just signed her third contract with Barbour Publishing's Heartsong Presents line.

*Where the Dogwoods Bloom* will be number three in a three-book series of contemporary inspirational romances set in Missouri. The first book, *Autumn Rains*, releases in October, to be followed early next year by *Romance by the Book*.

**JIM LAUGHTER:** NOVEL: *Ghost in the Dark* will release on August 15th. He just signed a contract to publish a true crime novel ... *From Victim to Hero -- The Untold Story of Steven Stayner* yesterday. It goes into production in September and should be out by the end of the year.

**MARY ANN KERL:** BOOKS, working title *Low-Cost Cookin' with Farm Market Products*, and one featured in the *Devoted to* series that Dan Case is publishing with AWOL books. It will feature devotions that illustrate how to deal with today's economy.

### Contest Winnings

**RADINE NEHRING TREES:** NOVEL. *A River to Die For* is a finalist for the Silver Falchion Award for best mystery, 2008 to present.

**M. CAROLYN STEEL:** NOVEL 2nd place-Tricia Johnson-McDuffie Award, Arkansas Writers' Conference, 1st Honorable Mention-Short Story, Hot Springs Village Writers' Club Award, Arkansas Writers' Conference and 1st Honorable Mention-Young Adult Novel, 2009 Frontiers in Writing Contest.

### Honors and Awards

**LAURA JANE POPP:** Was invited to become a member of Japanese Exchange Teaching (JET) Program and is currently living in Japan, missing all of us.

**SALLY JADLOW:** Finalist in Cup of Comfort for Mothers.

### Professional Activities

**M. CAROLYN STEEL, BOB AVEY, PEGGY FIELDING, JACQUELINE KING AND GLORIA TEAGUE:** BOOK SIGNING at Eastern Oklahoma AuthorFest. Carolyn, Peggy, Jackie and Gloria also gave a speech.

**PEGGY FIELDING AND JACKIE KING:** SPEECH & BOOKSIGNING for the Stillwater Writers at the Public

Library on June 20. Afterward they had a book signing at the Hasting Bookstore in Stillwater.

**RADINE TREES NEHRING:** INTERVIEW with host Sylvia Dickey Smith on MURDER, SHE WRITES on [www.blogtalkradio.com](http://www.blogtalkradio.com) on Sept. 14.

Then off to Killer Nashville mid-August, where she will be speaking. Her speaking event is at Midwest Mysteryfest in St. Louis, mid-September.

**DAN CASE:** TAUGHT two workshops and held interviews with aspiring authors at the Oregon Christian Writers retreat.

**GLORIA TEAGUE SHIRLEY:** INTERVIEWED about her career in writing in the June issue of The Author's Desk.

**MARK DARRAH:** TAUGHT a class "Ten Secrets..." about how to write convincing male characters at Tulsa Community College.

**PEGGY FIELDING:** Will be TEACHING a free class in "Writing the Short Story" in home to Tulsa NightWriter members.

**SEVERAL OF OUR AUTHORS** will be SIGNING BOOKS at the Chisholm Trail Book Festival in Duncan, OK on October.

## Arkansas Ridge Writers

### Acceptances and Sales

**LINDA APPLE:** ARTICLE: "My Recipe for Chicken Soup for the Soul," *Writing for Dollars* (06/09) also reprinted in *Romancing the Ozarks Newsletter* (08/09).

**JAN MORRILL:** STORY: "Puppy Love," *Chicken Soup for the Soul: What I Learned from the Dog* (09/09).

**DUSTY RICHARDS:** SHORT STORY: "Tough Ride," *Saturday Writer's Cuivre River Anthology, Vol. IV* (09).

**DONNA VOLKENANN:** INTERVIEW: with Tracy Mack and Michael Citrin on Kidsreads.com (06/09); BOOK REVIEW: *The Fall of the Amazing Zalindas* and *The Mystery of the Conjured Man*, by Tracy Mack and Michael Citrin on Kidsreads.com

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## Affiliate News

Continued

(06/09); BOOK REVIEW: *The Last Ember* by Daniel Levin on Bookreporter.com (08/09); ESSAY: "Coming Home" accepted for publication in *Irish Inspirations* anthology by Blue Mountain Arts (08/09).  
**RUTHBURKETT WEEKS:** SHORT STORY: Bubble Gum Messages, NWA Writer's Skipping Stones Anthology (3/10)

### Novels & New Books

**DUSTY RICHARDS:** NOVELLA COMPILATION: "Two Foxy Holiday Hens and One Big Rooster," Deadly Niche Press (07/09)

### Contest Winnings

**JAN MORRILL:** Arkansas Writers' Conference, TRICIA JOHNSON-MCDUFFIE AWARD: 1<sup>st</sup> Place, "Broken Dolls"; HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE WRITERS' CLUB AWARD: 1<sup>st</sup> Place, "Sacrifice Rock"; W.H. HOLLAND AWARD: 2nd Place, "Number 756"; DEL GARRETT'S GIMME THE CREEPS AWARD: 2nd Place, "Initiation".  
**DONNA VOLKENANNT:** Summerset Review Readers' Fifty for Fifty Contest, Tie for First Place, "Comments on 'Out Across the Nowhere' by Amy Willoughby Burle" (06/09).

**RUTHBURKETT WEEKS:** The Sage Journal Writer's Contest, SHORT STORY: 1st Place, "Second Chances."

### Honors & Awards

**RADINE TREES NEHRING:** Runner-up, David Award, Best Mystery Novel in USA, 2008, A RIVER TO DIE FOR. (Chosen by Deadly Ink); Finalist, Silver Falchion Award for Best Mystery Novel, 2008 to present, for A RIVER TO DIE FOR. (to be awarded by Killer Nashville.)

### Professional Activities

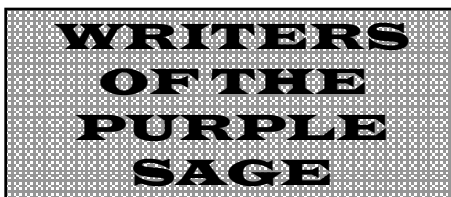
**LINDA APPLE:** Spoke to Bella Vista Ladies Group, Bella Vista, AR "Life from a Writers Point of View" (08/09)  
**DONNA VOLKENANNT:** Host for WOW! Women on Writing Author Book Tours on Donna's Book Pub <http://donnasbookpub.blogspot.com> for Ann Whitford Paul (06/09), Elizabeth Kirschner (07/09), and Sue Silverman (08/09).  
**DUSTY RICHARDS:** In May he hosted a three day writing school Branson, MO; spoke

to the library supporters and volunteers annual banquet at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia, Ark; spoke on two of the panels at the Arkansas Book Festival in Little Rock; and headed the annual fund raiser auction for Ozarks Writers League in Branson. In June he taught at West Texas A and M University in Canyon Tx at their writing academy "How to write a western."

**RADINE TREES NEHRING:** Workshops: "The Birth of Your Creative Self" I Love a Mystery in Kansas City area on July 23, and at Nightbird Books in Fayetteville, AR, on August 1. Based on the workbook, THE WRITER'S JOURNEY JOURNAL.

### Club News

**Saturday Writers Events:** Aug 29: Dusty Richards on "Developing Character and Setting"; Sep 26: Amy Harke-Moore and Tricia Sanders on "Exercising Your Writing Muscles"; Oct 24: Annual Workshop, featuring Pat Carr on "Vision, Voice, and Viewpoint" and Regina Williams on "Query Letters," [www.saturdaywriters.org](http://www.saturdaywriters.org).  
**Saturday Writers 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Short Story Contest:** \$175 in prizes. 2009 word limit, deadline November 1, 2009. Details on [www.saturdaywriters.org](http://www.saturdaywriters.org) Contest page.



### Contest Winnings

**LEORA BRIDGEWATER:** Writers of the Purple Sage In House Flash Fiction Contest, SHORT STORY: 1ST Place, "The Anniversary Present." **SUE MCMURPHY:** Writers of the Purple Sage In House Flash Fiction Contest, SHORT STORY: Honorable Mention, "Pink Glads."

### Professional Activities:

**J.C. CHRISTOPHER** judged a Children's Writing contest. The winner will go to Washington, D.C. **LEORA BRIDGEWATER** continues writing her column, "View from the Pew," published in the *Beaver Herald Democrat*, Beaver, Oklahoma. In June, **PATRICIA HILL** and **SUE MCMURPHY** attended the week long writing workshop on the cam-

pus of West Texas College in Canyon, Texas. Pat Hill enjoyed the Western Novel writing session with instructor Dusty Richards and Sue McMurphy attend the Romance Novel session with instructor Jodi Thomas. **JOANNA PEARD** helped coordinated the Cowboy Storytellers of the Western Plains' meeting held at the National Cowboy Museum and Western Heritage Center in Oklahoma in April.

### Acceptances and Sales

**LEORA BRIDGEWATER:** ARTICLES: "Greatest Event in History – Resurrection of Christ," "Idol Disgrace," "Living a Holy Life," and a Notice "Author to Appear in Beaver," in the *Beaver Herald Democrat*. **NANCY SALISBURY:** ARTICLE AND PHOTOGRAPHS: "President Bush Speaks at Woodward's 4th of July Celebration," *Vici Vision*.

### Club News

**MEHELLE ANDREWS's** surgery to repair a knee required a few follow-ups of therapy at the Jim Thorpe Center in Oklahoma City. **LEON BEALL** is recovering at home, looking healthier and much thinner after having heart surgery in Oklahoma City in May. **CAROLYN LEONARD** should be traveling Alaska and Canada now, after a near meltdown on the eve of departure concerning her Passport. Only after a jaunt to the Federal Courthouse in Houston, Texas and an assist from Lieutenant Governor Mary Fallin's office was a matter resolved.

Writers of the Purple Sage meet the last Sunday of each month OG&E Building, North 9th Street, Woodward, Oklahoma 73801

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## Affiliate News

Continued

## WEB WRITING WONDERS

### Acceptances & Sales

**CONNIE BLALOCK:** NOVELS: *Witch's Magic*, book four in the Winslow Witches of Salem series, is scheduled for release September 7 from Eternal Press in E-form, then two weeks after that date, will be released in print at Amazon.com.

### Professional Activities

**CONNIE BLALOCK:** Will be having a book signing and will speak at the Buckley Public Library in Poteau, Oct. 30 at 7 p.m.

**PAULA GORGAS:** Presented a Young Adult Writing Workshop at Buckley Public Library in Poteau on July 8 as part of their Summer Reading Program.

**JEN NIPPS:** Received her Competent Communicator certificate through Toastmasters International. She has been a member of Toastmasters since March 2008. Started work as a copywriter for articles and sites through TheVisibleDentist.com. Will be a writer-in-residence at the Writers' Colony at Dairy Hollow from September 13 through October 4.

### Club News

Web Writing Wonders is a web-based affiliate that meets via a group on Yahoo! Groups at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/webwritingwonders/>. They also get together after the Saturday night banquet at the OWFI conference each year.

## MID-OKLAHOMA WRITERS

### Acceptances and Sales

**DAVID ROPER:** CHILDREN'S STORY: "Mr. Coyote's New Boots," *Red River Kids* (Spring, 2009) and CHILDREN'S STORY: "What Makes a Boomerang Come Back?," *Stories for Children Magazine* (Online Magazine, August).

### Contest Winnings

**CHARLES VASSEL:** *Writers' Journal* Write to Win Contest, SHORT STORY: HM, "They Took My Baby."

### Professional Activities

**DAVID ROPER:** Presented *Magic Tricks and Stories for Children* at Magical Storytime, Del City Library (July 14, 2009).

**JAN HALL:** Teaches *Memoir Writing* at Rose State College (Fall Semester).

**CAROL HAMILTON:** Conducted a *Poetry Workshop* for Oklahoma City Writers and was one of the presenters at the *Poetry Society of Oklahoma Summer Workshop* (both events in August).

## PEN AND KEY- BOARD

### Novels & New Books

**SUZY KOCH:** *Being Jacob: First Day of School*, 4RVPublishing, Illustrator Aidana Willow Raven.

### Professional Activities

**JACQUE GRAHAM** is doing a series of presentations as Belle Cobb, first woman doctor in Indian Territory. Graham is writing a book about Cobb, who was a great aunt of Graham's husband.

Title of the book will be *Skeleton in the Attic*, because Cobb kept her medical school skeleton in her attic. Scheduled presentations include Aug. 5, Blackwell; Aug. 15, Sapulpa; Oct. 7, Fairview.

**ELYSABETH ELDERING** attended the Love to Learn Homeschool Info and Resource conference in Charlotte, NC Aug. 8, to promote State of Wilderness and State of Quarries in her Junior Geography Detective Series, plus Bubba & Giganto. She will promote her books in the JGDS series at the Children's Book Festival in Savannah, GA, Nov. 14.

**SUZY KOCH**, *Prayer Pig*; **ERIC MATHE**, *Tommy Turtle: Exercise is Fun*; and **VIVIAN ZABEL** and **JACQUE GRAHAM**, with all the 4RVPublishing's children's books, attended the OKC Zoo Animal Author Expo July 25.

**VIVIAN ZABEL** and **JACQUE GRAHAM** attended the Eastern Oklahoma AuthorFest in Tahlequah, Aug. 8; joined by **SUZY KOCH** they will attend Encyclo-media, Cox Center, Sept. 17-18; **ZABEL** and **GRAHAM** will attend the Chisholm Trail Book Festival, Duncan, Oct. 24.

**MIKE HINKLE** writes *Hey Hink*, an Opinion column, every Thursday in the Edmond Sun.

Tentative presentations for the **Heartland New Day BookFest** (April 9-11, 2010) include:

**JORDAN DANE** and **VIVIAN ZABEL** as part of an author panel discussion of mystery/suspense/thrillers.

**JACQUE GRAHAM**, in-character presentation of Belle Cobb.

**PAT BROWNING**, workshop, *Let's Write a Mystery*.

BookFest Website: <http://www.hndbookfest.com/>

### Club News

Pen and Keyboard meets the 2nd Saturday of the month in the Edmond Library. The club web site is at [www.pen-keyboard.weebly.com](http://www.pen-keyboard.weebly.com).

Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc.

PROMOTING HIGHER STANDARDS FOR THE WRITTEN WORD  
Supporting writers and the craft of writing in Oklahoma,  
the United States and around the world.



## Affiliate News

Continued

Aug. 15, 10 a.m.: Pen and Keyboard meeting at Edmond Library.  
1 p.m. Heartland New Day BookFest committee meeting, Allaus Coffee Shop, Edmond.

## Ada Writer's Club

### Acceptance & Sales:

**DOROTHY MILLIGAN**, "Area Briefs" column in *Ada Evening News*; 7/29/2009, "Manufacturers Overlook Importance of Market-Women Who Live Alone"; 8/12/2009, "New Bethel Cemetery Is Site for New Life".

**Club News:** The Ada Writer's Club meets at 2:30 pm on the third Sunday of each month at the Oak Avenue Baptist Visitor Center, 523 N. Oak. The club offers an hour of readings, critiques, encouragement, and instructional programs for the art. All interested individuals are encouraged to attend. We'll see you there.  
RI

## ROMANCE INK

### Sales and Acceptances:

**RINDA ELLIOTT:** SHORT STORY: "Cane River", The Mammoth Book of Special Ops Romance, Perseus Books, March 2010 (UK), June 2010 (US).

**SARAH BASORE**, writing as Sara Saint John: POEM: "Haunted House",

Mausoleum Memoirs, House of Horror Publishing as part of the patchwork project <http://www.patchworkproject.com/>, 2009. **SARAH BASORE** also received an ACCEPTANCE for her article "Books of Wisdom" for The Indies on Writing Anthology, Odd Mind Press, date pending.

## Oklahoma City Writers

### Novels and New Books

**CAROLYN WALL'S** book *Sweeping Up Glass* came out in the UK and Australia. In answer to requests from 500 bookstores, Random House "second printed" the book four weeks before it comes out on the bookstands. It has been has been nominated for a Barry Award, as this year's Best First Novel.

### Professional Activities

**MARIA VERES** hosted the Last Sunday Poetry Reading at Full Circle Bookstore, June 28, 2009.

Maria's poetry will be on display at Flips restaurant, 63rd and Western, to accompany the work of painter Lark Baxter O'Neil.

**M. CAROLYN STEELE** was featured in an article about her book *Preserving Family Legends for Future Generations* in the *Daily Oklahoman*.

**JESSICA ACRES** had a book signing at the Shawnee Mall for her book, *The Speaker*.

**JUDY HOWARD** has presented the *God Bless America Quilt exhibit*: June in Ravenna; Nebraska, July in Olive Hill, Kentucky and Muskogee, Oklahoma; in August in Eureka, Montana

**CAROLYN WALL** signed copies of *Sweeping Up Glass* at Barnes and Noble, N. May and Memorial, on Saturday, August 8.

**JEAN STOVER** will be teaching *Writing Your Life Story* at three different locations. These classes are offered through the Integris Third Age Life or-

ganization.

**SANDY SOLI** presented a program of poems titled "Offstage: Poems as Monologue" at east Central University in Ada in April. She was the featured poet at St. Benedict's Marketplace in Shawnee, also in April. She was among the featured poets at the 2009 Woody Guthrie Festival in July.

### Contest Winnings

**CATHERINE JOHNSON**, won 4<sup>th</sup> place in a caption contest.

**SHELLEY ANNE RICHTER** won awards in the Arkansas Writers Contest: 2nd HM Essay on Hometown "Lodi, Ohio"; 2nd HM 250 Word Horror Story "Blade"; 2nd HM Free Verse Poem "Ruins of the Day"; 2nd Place Short Story "Granny Thistle"

**GERALD HIBBS:** First place in the "Frontiers of Writing" 2009 contest for short story "The North Dakota Trade Off"

## Members At Large

### Novels and New Books

**VINNIE HANSEN:** FICTION: *Death with Dessert*, Mainly Murder Publishing (June 2009). *Death with Dessert*, the fifth mystery in the Carol Sabala series, continues from *Tang Is Not Juice*, OWFI Best Book of Fiction 2005.

## INKLINGS

### Sales and Acceptances

**SONIA GENSLER:** *The Revenant* to Alfred A. Knopf for publication in 2011.

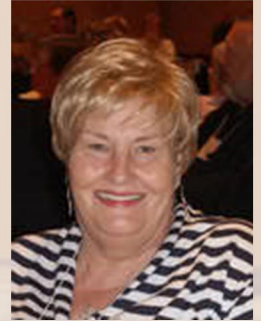
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# Word By Word Conference 2009 Revisited



**WWW.OWFI.ORG**

**The Oklahoma Writer's Federation, Inc. is a non-profit federation of writer's groups dedicated to promoting higher standards for the written word.**



**Wayne Harris-Wyrick  
8704 NW 87 Terrace  
Oklahoma City, OK 73132**

**Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc**

All address changes must be submitted to the OWFI Treasurer.

Treasurer: Linda Basinger, 728 Chautauqua Ave., Norman OK 73069-4606  
[lindabasinger@cox.net](mailto:lindabasinger@cox.net)

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make history.  
Only a great  
man can write  
it.**

Oscar Wilde

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