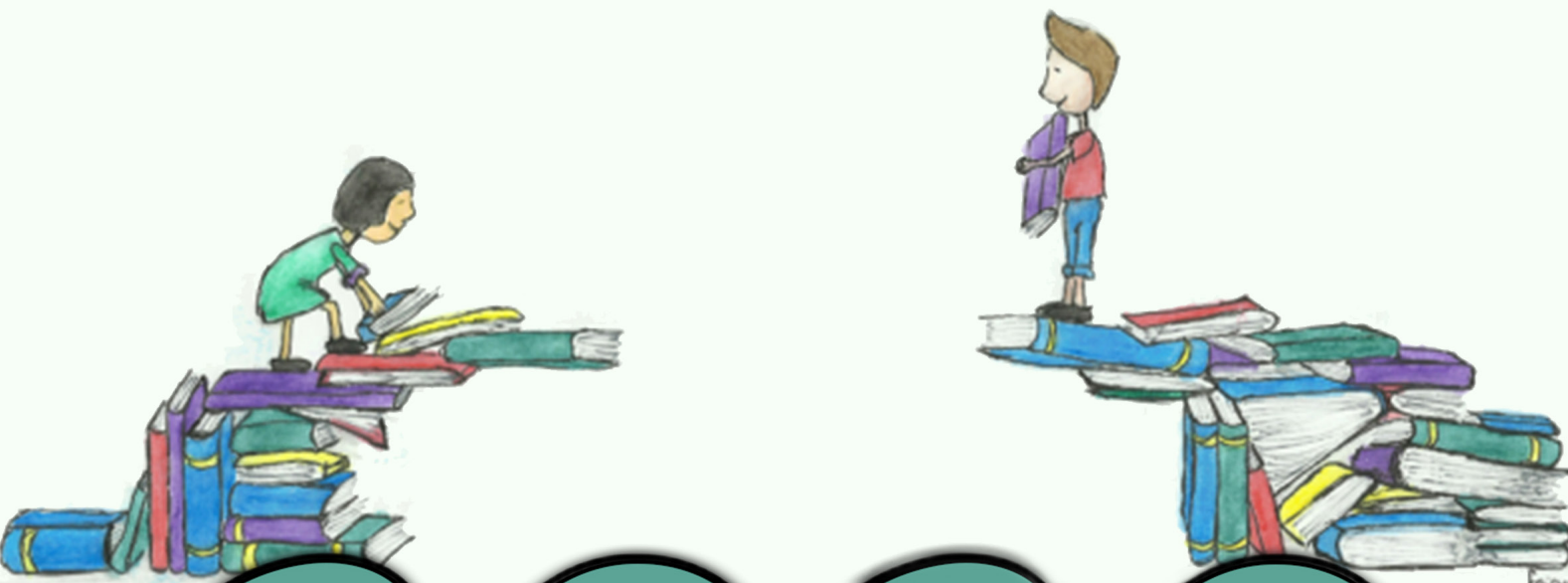


# The Report



# Bridging the Gap

# OWFI Report, Spring 2020

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The Report is the newsletter of the Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc., and is published three times per year. Submission guidelines are available upon request and questions or submissions should be directed to the newsletter editor.

Printed by Schatz Publishing Group.  
Please send changes of address to the OWFI  
Treasurer,  
treasurer@owfi.org.

Founded in 1968, the Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc. (OWFI) is a non-profit federation of writers' groups dedicated to promoting higher standards for the written word. We believe that the literary profession has come of age and merits a fair share of the critical acclaim so generously lavished on other worthwhile arts. OWFI shall seek to coordinate and encourage professional writing within and without its organization and promote the recognition of outstanding contributions to the written language.

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## From the President

The OWFI conference is fast approaching, and we are working around the clock to make this the best experience anyone can ask for. I'm so excited to have Alton Carter this year for our keynote. I first discovered him in an interview about his book, *The Boy Who Carried Bricks*. When I was growing up, my parents fostered three boys and one little girl who I have known as my sister for almost forty years now. When I was looking for the keynote for this year, I came across one of Alton's Facebook posts and knew I had to snag him for OWFI.

I'm happy to have Tamara Grantham this year as our pre-con speaker. I took one of her workshops on query letters a couple of years ago, and learned so much. This year for our pre-con session, she will share how to crack the newsletter code. I can't wait!

We have a great line up this year, with agents and editors taking pitches, and topics ranging from loglines to critique groups, all the way to world-building, poetry, writing comic books, editing tips and more.

There will be two luncheons I hope everyone will take advantage of. On Friday, Maria Veres will be hosting a Hungry Poets Open Mic. So come ready to share your poetry with everyone! For Saturday, we will challenge you with a game of OWFI Literary Jeopardy, which will include as much trivia about OWFI as we can find, so check out our Facebook group page for trivia hints and be ready to play!

Watch for conference updates on our website, new information is added regularly. I look forward to seeing everyone in May!



Keep Writing!

*Shelley Pagach is the OWFI President for 2019- 2020.*

A vibrant, colorful graphic with a background of overlapping geometric shapes in shades of red, pink, and blue. The text is centered and reads:

**PRESENTING**  
**LITERARY**  
**JEOPARDY!**  
**BROUGHT TO YOU BY OWFI2020**  
**WITH YOUR HOST, PRES. SHELLEY PAGACH**  
**AND CO-HOST, ALEASHA SHELNUTT**  
**MAY 2ND, LUNCHEON (TICKET REQUIRED)**

# Guest Article

## 5 Reasons to Attend the OWFI Conference

The Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc. (OWFI) Bridging the Gap conference is coming up on April 30 and May 1-2, 2020, at the Embassy Suites in Oklahoma City. This annual conference is the best value around for a conference of its type and size, and The Writer magazine has recognized it as the best writing conference in Oklahoma.

If you're an aspiring or established writer who would like to attend the conference, you still have time to register online at [www.owfi.org/register/](http://www.owfi.org/register/) or even at the door the day of the conference. If you're serious about treating writing as a career, then you should attend this conference.

Here are five reasons the OWFI conference will benefit you:

### 1. Learn from other writers.

One of the biggest reasons to attend a writers conference is to learn. Whether you are a new author who is interested in craft or a self-published author who wants to know more about formatting or marketing, there's a session for you. You may learn you're interested in new genres, and you'll gain insight into an ever-changing industry. The faculty is made up of professionals who are eager to share their hard-earned knowledge.

### 2. Learn from editors and agents.

The OWFI conference provides a wonderful opportunity to get your work in front of a professional editor or agent. Editors from traditional publishing houses and agents looking for authors to represent will attend and speak about the business of writing. They serve on a Q&A panel, which gives you a chance to learn about the traditional publishing industry in general and what editors and agents look for in particular.

### 3. Pitch to editors and agents.

Editors and agents take pitches in the afternoons. To pitch your manuscript, sign up for the professional who accepts projects in your genre. Practice your pitch (a short summary or elevator pitch of your project) before you go into the pitch room. Sit down one-on-one and offer your pitch. These sessions are offered at no additional charge to the attendee. Why not take a chance and see if one of the editors or agents wants to read your full manuscript?

And if you want to talk to an agent or editor but your work isn't in a genre they accept, you'll have plenty of opportunities to visit with them outside the pitch room.

### 4. Network with fellow writers.

In writing, as in any profession, relationships are paramount. Writing can be an isolating

profession, but it doesn't have to be. Nothing can take the place of meeting face-to-face with other people who understand your passion for writing.

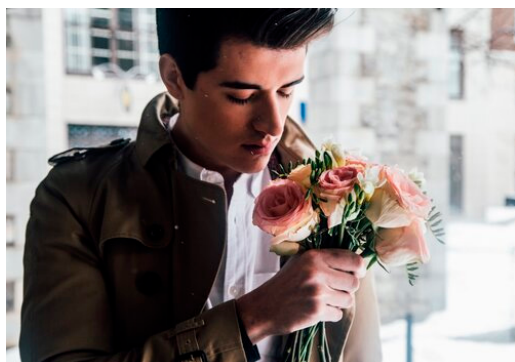
You'll find writers at every level at this conference, from beginner to multi-published. Take this opportunity to learn from them. And who knows? Maybe other attendees can learn from you as well. Take advantage of ice breaker activities, step out of your comfort zone to talk to others at your table during workshops, or take a fellow author to lunch.

### 5. Find motivation to keep writing.

There's nothing quite like a writers conference to inspire and motivate. You will leave after hearing others who are struggling with the same issues—and how they have overcome them. You will have new methods to implement and new ideas to tackle. But most importantly, you will be inspired to sit down and write.

Keep writing, OWFI. And I'll see you in May!

*Staci Mauney is the author of four devotionals and several short stories. Current OWFI Past President, she co-owns Prestige Prose, a professional editing and writing company. Visit her at [prestigepro.com](http://prestigepro.com).*



## Be inspired.

Enter a written piece inspired by these photos and you could appear in a future issue!

[owfi.org/report/prompt](http://owfi.org/report/prompt)



# All About the 2020 OWFI Conference

## Volunteer

*Want more from your conference?*

The people who get the most out of OWFI are our conference volunteers. Check the HOW TO VOLUNTEER section of this page, and then send an email with the area in which you want to volunteer to our president, Shelley Pagach at [president@owfi.org](mailto:president@owfi.org).

*Any questions?*

Check our website often at [owfi.org](http://owfi.org) to keep updated on conference news. We also have a very active Facebook group (search for “Oklahoma Writers’ Federation, Inc. (OWFI)” or find the link on our website). If you have questions that aren’t answered there, contact our president, Shelley Pagach or conference chair, Aleasha Shelnett.

## What to Wear

- There’s no dress code, but most people choose business casual clothing for the daytime sessions.
- The Friday night banquet features a costume contest. If you’d rather not enter, slacks, a dress, or even nice jeans are okay. See the graphic on page 12 for this year’s theme.



- Attire for the Saturday night banquet is usually fancier. If you aren’t into formal wear, business casual clothing is fine, too.

## What to Bring

- Business cards, if you have them.
- Notebook and pen, for taking notes during the sessions. Laptops are welcome too, but many rooms don’t have accessible outlets.
- A sweater or light jacket. The rooms can be chilly.
- Your ID, if you want to indulge during happy hour.

## Other Tips

- During sessions, people often need to come and go due to pitching appointments or volunteer assignments. Please make sure the doors close gently behind you.
- Please silence cell phones during sessions.
- Water is available in seminar rooms, and coffee can be purchased in the hotel restaurant.
- If you have any questions, ask the volunteers at the OWFI registration desk or anyone wearing an Officer or Volunteer ribbon on their badge. We’ll be glad to help.

## How to Volunteer

The more you put into the OWFI conference, the more you’ll get out of it. Volunteering is a great way to network, meet conference faculty, and grow your skills. Whether it’s your first conference or your twentieth, we have a place for you on our team. Many options are listed below. Be sure to check out what the conference has to offer you as well as ways that you can help in return.

Go to our website and hover over the CONFERENCE tab and select VOLUNTEER in the drop down. Click on the name of the committee chair member to send them an email.

## Don’t wait—the best jobs go fast!

- Basket Wars | Silent Auction— Keep an eye on the basket area and help people place bids. Sign up for one-hour shifts.
- Buzz Sessions— Sign up to host, present, or coordinate sessions. These are informal talks held after the Friday night banquet.



- Book Room | Author Signing— Assist in one hour shifts.
- Costume Contest
- Pitch Room – Help with scheduling, time keeping, and ushering. You can sign up for one hour shifts.
- Shepherds – Assist our conference speakers. You will introduce your speaker and help as needed during sessions. If another attendee doesn’t ask them to lunch, you’ll buy them lunch. Your duties may also include sitting with them at the banquets. If you want to spend one-on-one time with a publishing professional, you may never have a better opportunity. You must attend the speaker’s sessions at the conference.
- The Technoscribes – If you know tech, this may be the job for you. If you don’t know tech but are good at numbers and or logic, you *can* be taught! You need to be available when needed via text message, even during sessions.

# 2020 Keynote Speaker

## Alton Carter

**Alton Carter** is the winner of the 2016 Oklahoma Book Awards for his autobiography, *The Boy Who Carried Bricks*. Alton Carter received his bachelor's degree at Oklahoma State University and is using his story to inspire youth and adults to do all they can to "make the world a better place."

He makes his home in Stillwater, Oklahoma, with his wife Kristin and their children.

In addition, Alton Carter wrote *Aging Out*. Both books are about his life journey from foster care

through adulthood. He has also written two children's books, *The Boy Who Dreamed Big* and *The Boy Who Went to the Library*.

**What's your favorite genre?**

Non Fiction.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?**

*Moby Dick*

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?**

William Joyce.

**Best writing-related advice you've ever gotten?**

Don't believe in writers block.

**Favorite thing about conferences?**

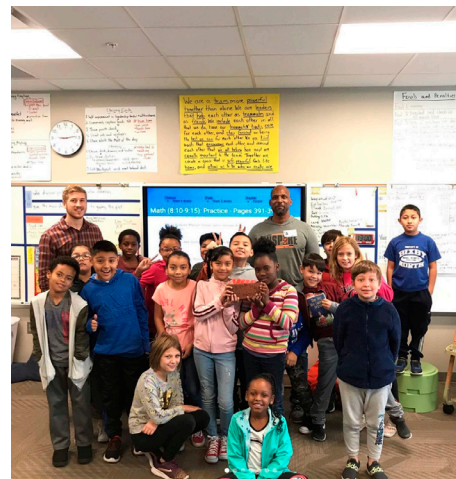
Getting to share my story and help others who might have been in my situation and inspire others who work so hard to serve children.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?**

Solving people's emotional problems.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?**

If I could, I would spend all day taking pictures of flowers!



We still have room for your logo on our 2020 conference swag as well as our OWFI website and in our conference program. The cost starts at just \$50.

WE'D LOVE TO SEE MORE OF OUR AFFILIATES STEP UP.

YOUR  
LOGO

Sign up at  
[www.owfi.org/sponsor/](http://www.owfi.org/sponsor/)

# Meet the President - Elect

## Meet your President - Elect: Aleasha Shelnutt



Has passion, will travel.

Originally a Texas girl, Aleasha thrives on adventure. She's lived in two countries, visited six others, and can't wait to use her passport again! Adventure at home looks like rooms overflowing with fur babies and boys, nightly dishwasher Tetris tournaments, and the occasional "What's That Smell" championship that occurs when the boys' laundry baskets are overflowing. She currently works as a sales coordinator and is a freelance creative—offering graphic design, crafty creations, photography, writing, and editing services.

Aleasha first stepped into OWFI through the side-door, volunteering as a Contest Category Chair before becoming a member-at-large. The next year, she took on the role of 2nd

Vice President, then moved up to 1st VP/Contest Coordinator. For the next three years, she collaborated with her fellow officers to streamline and modernize the annual writing contest, breathing new life into tradition, and helping reclaim the reputation this contest has built over many decades. This year, as conference coordinator, she's looking forward to applying her love for event planning to the annual gathering of writers, agents, editors and other industry professionals, as they cultivate the craft.

When she's not chasing chaos at home, or speakers for OWFI, Aleasha is still running after adventure—occasionally by plane, train or automobile—but most often between the covers of a great story. Visit her at *The Nutthouse Diaries*, and inspire her to share more often!

# 2020 Conference Schedule Thursday, April 30th

<p>5:00 P.M. <i>LOBBY</i></p>	<p><b>Registration Opens</b></p>
<p>6:30 - 8:00 P.M.</p>	<p><b>Tamara Grantham, Pre-Con Workshop</b> <i>Cracking the Newsletter Code</i></p> <p>Do you want a newsletter but don't know where to start? Maybe you have a newsletter but aren't sure what content to send? For beginners and experts alike, award-winning author Tamara Grantham shares her secrets on how to crack the newsletter code. You'll learn how to pick the best newsletter service to fit your budget, find out how to tailor effective emails with highly successful open rates, and discover the top methods for finding subscribers. You'll also learn how to put everything on autopilot so you can get back to doing what you love best—writing!</p> <p><b>OPEN TO PUBLIC - \$20</b></p> <p><i>(Not included in your conference registration. MUST purchase a separate ticket.)</i></p> <p><b>Tickets can be purchased in advance or at the door. (Cash only at the door.)</b></p>

# OWFI CONFERENCE Friday, May 1

Registration (Lobby) 8:00 - 12:00 PM  
Agent/Editor Pitches (Pitch Room) 2:00 - 5:00 PM  
Bookstore (Pre-Convene Area) 10:00 - 6:00 PM

	ROOM A	ROOM B	ROOM C	ROOM D
8:30 AM	<b>Opening Session - Opening Skit: Christine Jarmola</b> Welcome: OWFI President Shelley Pagach			
9:10 - 10:10 AM	<b>Agents &amp; Editors Panel</b> Ask our lineup of agents and editors questions			
10:20 - 11:20 AM	<b>Tamara Grantham</b> The First Page: A Guide to Staying out of the Rejection Pile	<b>Lara Allen</b> The Query Process: Who, What, When and Why	<b>Frank Steele</b> So You Want to Write a Play	<b>Marcia Preston</b> Women's Fiction
11:30 - 12:30 PM	Set up for Hungry Poets Open Mic Luncheon		<b>Shannon Iwanski</b> The Basics of Writing Comic Books (and Graphic Novels)	<b>Staci Mauney</b> Blogging: How to Share Your Passion With the World  <b>Amy Collins</b> Airport Stores, Book Stores, Chains: What it Takes to Get on the Shelves
12:40 PM	<b>Hungry Poets Open Mic Luncheon</b> hosted by Maria Veres Room AB (Prior ticket purchase required, no walk-ins)			
2:00 – 3:00 PM	<b>HB Berlow</b> History in the Making: The Challenge of Writing Historical Fiction	<b>Dianne McCartney</b> From the Judge's Point of View: Getting to the Winner's Circle	<b>Dr. Marty Ludlum</b> Ask a Lawyer about Copyright and Business Issues	<b>Traci Schafer</b> Productivity
3:10 - 4:10 PM	<b>Mary-Lane Kamberg</b> Getting Down to Business	<b>Glenda Galvan</b> Reading, Writing, and Loving Your Book! Why It's Important to Read out Loud!	<b>Dr. Lisa Marotta &amp; Charles Gosset</b> Mindfulness for Creatives and Taming the Inner Critic	<b>Ross Lampert</b> Write That Logline!
4:10 - 6:45 PM	Free time before banquet			
7:00 PM	<b>Banquet Keynote: Alton Carter</b>   Equip, Adapt, and Respond - Creating Survivors			
~ 9:00 PM	<b>Buzz Sessions</b> (Informal Come-And-Go Chats) <i>Locations and topics will be announced at the close of banquet</i>			



# OWFI CONFERENCE Saturday, May 2

Registration (Lobby) 8:00 - 12:00 PM

Agent/Editor Pitches (Pitch Room) 2:00 - 5:00 PM

Bookstore (Pre-Convene Area) 10:00 - 6:00 PM

	ROOM A	ROOM B	ROOM C	ROOM D
9:10 - 10:10 AM	<b>Traci Schafer</b> Building Worlds	<b>Heather Cashman</b> Writing a Simple Synopsis and Plot Editing in One	<b>Mary-Lane Kamberg</b> Writing Non-Fiction for Young Readers	<b>Dianne McCartney</b> Pitch Perfect
10:20 - 11:20 AM	<b>HB Berlow</b> The Writer's Life: Being a Writer in the "Real World"	<b>Maria Veres</b> Loving Your Limitations: A Hands-On Writing Workshop	<b>Casey Cowan</b> Those Aren't Even Your Judygy Pants	<b>Ross Lampert</b> Critique Groups: Finding One That's Right for You
11:30 - 12:30 PM	Set up for Literary Jeopardy Luncheon			
12:40 PM	<b>Literary Jeopardy Luncheon</b> Hosted by President Shelley Pagach & Conference Coordinator Aleasha Shelnett Room AB (Prior ticket purchase required, no walk-ins)			
2:00 – 3:00 PM	<b>Marcia Preston</b> 50 Shades of Crime Fiction	<b>Dr. Lisa Marotta &amp; Charles Gosset</b> Creating Space for Writing and Self Care	<b>Alton Carter</b> Inspire	
3:10 - 4:10 PM	<b>Staci Mauney</b> The Editing Process: Revising Work for Publication	<b>Jennifer Slattery</b> Growing Your Audience Through Effective Podcasting	<b>Glenda Galvan</b> Respectful Writing Utilizing Oral Histories	<b>Frank Steele</b> What's so Damn Funny? Has Political Correctness Changed Writing for the Better?
4:10 - 5:10 PM	Set up for OWFI board meeting			
5:10 - 5:25 PM	<b>OWFI Board Meeting</b>   Officers and Delegates			
5:25 - 5:35 PM	<b>General Membership Meeting</b>   All Members			
5:35 - 6:45 PM	Free time before banquet			
7:00 PM	<b>Banquet: Contest Awards Ceremony</b> The 2020 OWFI Keynote Speaker will be announced			

# 2020 OWFI Conference

## Meet the Faculty

Do you ever get tongue-tied when you meet the conference speaker you've been looking forward to meeting? Sharing your work with an agent? Dazzling an editor with your wit? Have no fear and learn a little more about them—and what you may even share in common.

### Lara Allen, Agent



**What's your favorite genre?** I don't have \*one\* particular favorite, but I do love a good historical

mystery, like *Girl Waits with Gun*, or anything by Alan Furst, as well as a good gothic romance, like *Rebecca*. I also really like middle-grade mysteries—I've been dreaming about a little ten year old Hercule Poirot-type character. And I like anything that features favorite subjects: art history, women adventurers (I have a collection on 19th century female botanists), and World War II spies.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** *The Catcher in the Rye*. Although I think this is one of those books if you read above the age of 20 you're not going to like it as much. Like the musical *Rent* (I 100% believe they should, in fact, pay rent.)

**Whose author fan club would**

**you be the president of?** Shirley Jackson, for one. That's what I'd campaign for, anyway. But maybe also Michael Ondaatje. Does Eleanor Roosevelt count?

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

Begin in the middle of the story. Something's happened before the reader comes in. This makes the whole thing more interesting, from the start.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** I do like meeting people and talking to them. I like finding out about their stories.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Flying. I'd never want to be invisible or have the ability to read minds—who wants to know what someone else is thinking about you? But being able to go where you want, above the crowd, sounds tantalizing.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I have a really weird, loud laugh. It sounds like a tittering horse. My friends find me in very large, crowded rooms by listening for it. One told me it'd be great for finding me in deep dark caves (which seems like a likely scenario).

### Heather Cashman, Agent

**What's your favorite genre?** I read in every genre. What grabs me is voice and character in those first pages.



**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?**  
*Moby Dick*

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** Leigh Bardugo and Maggie Stiefvater—don't make me choose, please!

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?** Write for yourself first. Edit for everyone else.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** Hearing about everyone's amazing ideas.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Downloading a book into my brain and being able to read all the books my heart desires.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** 'Should' is a strong word, but here's some fodder for you: I have anxiety around marshmallows because of a childhood...incident.

### Shannon Iwanski, Editor



**What's your favorite genre?** Sci-fi/Fantasy

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should**



### **\*Don't forget\***

All schedules and up-to-date information pertaining to the 2020 OWFI Conference can be found on our website! [www.owfi.org/](http://www.owfi.org/)

**have?** There are too many to name. The one that immediately comes to mind is *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

#### **Whose author fan club would you be the president of?**

Kevin J. Anderson. His sci-fi/fantasy worlds are so rich and well-imagined.

#### **What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

It's advice that I repeat as often as possible: You're not in competition with other writers.

#### **What's your favorite thing about conferences?**

The energy and reinvigoration I receive from being surrounded by so many writers.

#### **You're a super hero. What is your superpower?**

The ability to stop time.  
**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** When I submit pieces to be critiqued, it's usually the first draft. I rarely refine a piece before I have other people look at it. I know some authors wouldn't dream of this. For me, though, I consider this part of my creative process.

#### **Ally Robertson, Editor**



**What's your favorite genre?** Crime thriller/suspense/mystery.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** All of Jane Austen's books. It's shameful.

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** Ah, so many. If I had to pick one, it would be Michael Connelly.

#### **What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

Write one scene at a time.

#### **What's your favorite thing about conferences?**

Meeting people.

#### **You're a super hero. What is your superpower?**

The one I want or the one I have? The one I'd like to have...invisibility. The one I have...the ability to break a fall with my face.

#### **What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?**

I'm obsessed with murder but only in an observer capacity, not as a participant...yet.

#### **HB Berlow, Speaker**



**What's your favorite genre?** Hard-boiled crime fiction.

#### **What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?**

*Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace. (Probably on the retirement book list.)

#### **Whose author fan club would you be the president of?**

Raymond Chandler. His Marlowe is smooth, slick, and sarcastic, attributes I strive to achieve.

#### **What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

Write from the home. As a junior in college, I didn't understand

what Nobel Laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer meant. As I've grown older, I am more aware of who I am as a person and a writer. I've discovered my 'home.'

#### **What's your favorite thing about conferences?**

Getting together with old friends and making new ones.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Making people laugh and helping them forget their troubles for just a little bit. (Hey, maybe I AM a superhero!)

#### **What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?**

I am an ordained Dudeist minister who has officiated at nine weddings, the most recent of which was my niece.

#### **Amy Collins, Speaker**



#### **What's your favorite genre?**

Historical fiction. I LOVE a good king or queen.

#### **What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?**

I have tried many times to get through the JRR Tolkien classic, *Lord of the Rings*. I wish I could love it. I do not. 112 pages in and we are STILL AT THE BIRTHDAY PARTY? No. Sorry. Can't.

#### **Whose author fan club would you be the president of?**

Hilary Mantel. Lifetime appointment. No one else allowed to run until I die.

*Meet the Faculty continued on pages 12-15*

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

Start writing. Writing yields words yields talent.... Not the other way around.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** Getting to help authors and getting to know more people from this amazing industry. I have never met a nicer group of talented authors than when I last came to Oklahoma. Amazing talent.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Teleportation. I have always maintained that if you can teleport, you do not need any other superpower. They are all unnecessary.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I can name all 24 colors from the original Crayola Crayon box from the 70s. In order. From memory.

**Glenda Galvan, Speaker**

**What's your favorite genre?** I enjoy non-fiction material however, true crime also has my attention.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** I have tried to read Shakespeare several times in my life and just haven't been able to finish the book. Several college classes requested we read it so I did my best however, ended up reading sections of the book.

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** I have learned a great deal from Anne Graham Lotz and Jay Sekulow however if I have to choose one, let's go with Jay Sekulow. He's straight and to the point while citing his sources.

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?** I



have been told my books make the reader want to know more about who they are and where they come from.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** I enjoy the net-working at conferences! Meeting new people with like interests, different levels and angles of interests and knowledge are both fun and quite helpful.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** I never really thought about having a superhero in my life besides family members however, I grew up watching *The Wizard of Oz* and Glinda, the Good Witch of the North, was dear to me because she was kind, loved by everyone and very helpful. My superpower would have to be an abundance of kindness and patience throughout society in a way that it would rub off onto those who just aren't "feeling" it!

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I am the clan storyteller for my clan (Fox clan/Chickasaw Nation) responsible for carrying our clan stories into the next generation.

**Charles Gosset, Speaker**

**What's your favorite genre?** Poetry.

**What book have you not read**



**even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** *Great Expectations.*

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** David Whyte.

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?** Write first. Edit later.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** Meeting fellow creatives with a passion for words.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** My superpower is inspiring a writer's authentic voice to majestically appear every time they create.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I have a college degree in forestry and was the first North American to attend an international forestry school in Honduras, where all the instruction was conducted in Spanish.

**Mary-Lane Kamberg, Speaker**

**What's your favorite genre?** For writing, I prefer nonfiction, although I also write poetry and some short fiction. For reading I love suspense, especially novels

with international intrigue.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** *Atlas Shrugged*. Everyone says I will love it!

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** Garth Stein, author of *The Art of Racing in the Rain*.

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

Write different genres. Writing techniques are all the same no matter what you write, although some genres emphasize some techniques more than others.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** Hanging out with other writers.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Identifying and relating to others' emotions.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I have been kissed by a camel.

**Ross Lampert, Speaker**



**What's your favorite genre?** Science fiction, closely followed by fantasy.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** Too many to list, sadly. So many books, so little time.

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** I've never been a fan-boy, but Hugh Howey's, maybe.

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

BICFOK: Butt in chair, fingers on keyboard. Book's not gonna write itself.

**What's your favorite thing**

**about conferences?** Every one's an opportunity to learn new things and make new connections.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Cloudy clairvoyance: I can see a future, but no guarantees it's the future.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** That I hate these kinds of questions. Sorry.

**Dr. Marty Ludlum, Speaker**

**What's your favorite genre?** Suspense

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** *The Great Gatsby*.

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** Janet Evanovich.

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?** Only fail if you quit. (Bernhardt)

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** Happy hour, meeting new people, happy hour, new books, did I mention happy hour?

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Sarcasm. I am like the most sarcastic person in the world. Really.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** If the lawyer gig doesn't work I am also a darn good birthday party magician (themagicdad.com).

**Staci Mauney, Speaker**

**What's your favorite genre?** Mystery/suspense

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** *Moby Dick*. I've read a selection but



could never bring myself to read the entire book.

**Whose author fan club would you be the president**

**of?** Terri Blackstock, Christian suspense author.

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

Write the first draft without editing as you go. Now, if only I would follow that advice!

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** Learning, networking—all of it!

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** To write a full-length, ready-to-publish novel in one sitting! (Boy, don't I wish!)

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the-box thing we should know about you?** I don't know how strange it is because I think more people are like this than we know. But I eat one thing at a time from my plate, starting with the side dishes and finishing with the entree. Also, I don't like for my food to touch, unless I'm eating a casserole. In the case of a casserole, things are supposed to touch, so it's okay.

**Dianne McCartney, Speaker**



**What's your favorite genre?** Suspense.

**What book have you not read even though it's a**

**classic and you probably should have?** *War and Peace* by Tolstoy.

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** The Nora Roberts Fan Club

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?**

Figure out whose advice you should listen to and whose you should ignore.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** It's a great opportunity to meet publishing professionals of every level and interest.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Intuition. I always seem to understand things about people that others miss. It can be both helpful and a little disturbing.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I used to be a professional horsewoman and was taught by a man who had previously trained horses for the queen of England.

**Dr. Lisa Marotta, Speaker**



**What's your favorite genre?** An undergraduate course in Children's literature sparked my now longtime

love of Picture Books.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** *Moby Dick*. Someone spoiled the ending for me, and I am overwhelmed by the space it takes up on a shelf.

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** J. K. Rowling. Her imagination and ninja plotting skills are inspiring.

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?** Be persistent.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** I love the

schmoozing. This is a welcoming community of wonderful writers. I find it energizing to connect with other creatives.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** I can nap in under four minutes and wake up 20 minutes later refreshed and perky.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I have a small but priceless collection of blurry celebrity snapshots that may have been taken without permission.

**Marcia Preston, Speaker**



**What's your favorite genre?** Literary and crime. Even better when it's a literary crime novel!

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** Hate to admit this. *Little Women*.

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** Ann Patchett (Bell Canto, State of Wonder, The Dutch House).

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?** Stop researching and start writing! You can look up what you need as you go. (I was using research to stall the hard work of starting the book.)

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** Visiting and networking with other writers. I always learn something.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** Talking to the animals. And saving them all!

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I'm an amateur lepidopterist. I

sometimes raise caterpillars in mason jars on my kitchen counter top and watch them turn into butterflies.

**Frank Steele, Speaker**



**What's your favorite genre?** Biographies and auto-biographies would be my favorite genre.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** "*The Complete Works Of Shakespeare*." I bought it to impress a girl when I was in college. Nothing worked out with the girl, and I'm stuck with "*The Complete Works Of Shakespeare*."

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** I would be president of the writers of the old Sid Caesar "Shows of Shows." These were comedy geniuses, and produced a wonderful show each week. They all went on to become famous comedy writers, and are still working today.

**What's the best writing-related advice you've ever received?** Very simple, "Write what you know, and if you don't know it, research, research, research."

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** I love the camaraderie. Everyone is friendly, and willing to talk about ideas, and make suggestions.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** I would be Hospital Man. I would wear hospital scrubs, and be able to cure any illness with a swipe of my hand.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing**

**we should know about you?**

I'm related to Shakespeare, well actually, Lloyd Shakespeare to be exact. He was William's distant cousin by marriage. He was also a writer, but his specialty was writing phrases. His top three were, "Keep off the grass," "Ya break, ya buy," and "I'm rubber. You're glue. Anything you say bounces off of me and sticks to you." We were all pretty proud of Lloyd!

I also talked to and shook hands with Ronald Reagan.

**Maria Veres, Speaker**

**What's your favorite genre?**

There are so many! Probably YA/middle-grade fantasy.

**What book have you not read even though it's a classic and you probably should have?** *War and Peace.*

**Whose author fan club would you be the president of?** JK Rowling (see #1 above).

**What's the best writing-related**

**advice you've ever received?** Let go of perfectionism and have fun.

**What's your favorite thing about conferences?** Getting to see old friends and make new ones.

**You're a super hero. What is your superpower?** I can become invisible. The conversations I overhear will give me enough

writing material for several lifetimes.

**What is one funny, strange, and/or out-of-the box thing we should know about you?** I have queen-sized feet, size 11 wide. When I find cute, affordable shoes that actually fit me, I throw a party! Also, I'm right handed but I write all my poetry with my left hand.



# Donate Books for Literacy

This year we are excited to donate books for two worthy recipients, The Children's Hospital - OU Medical and the VA Hospital in the Oklahoma City area. What better way to bolster literacy in our community than by donating new and gently used books during the OWFI conference this May.

We ask anyone who will help to bring new or gently read books to the OWFI conference in May. We need books for children and adults.

We not only challenge individuals and affiliates to donate books to our drive, but also to donate books to other noteworthy organization. For

example, I plan to donate children's books, young adult, and adult books at the conference. At the same time my affiliate group also donates books twice a year to a local care facility for the elderly.

Boxes will be located by the conference registration table to collect donations. Thank you for your generosity.

*A special thanks to Vivian Zabel, OWFI Grants Director, who has spearheaded this literacy drive for the second year!*

# Spotlight Affiliates

One of the best benefits of OWFI is the many affiliate groups that are associated with us. This month, we're taking a closer look at the WordsmithSix and Prosateurs.

## WordsmithSix

[www.wordsmithsix.com](http://www.wordsmithsix.com)



Affiliate Since: 2019

Meeting info: Next meeting will be 1st Thursday, April 2nd @6:30 PM

Pacific Rim Restaurant 2061  
Paramount Blvd. Amarillo, TX 79109

Mission Statement: Our mission is to advance the writing craft and encourage writers from novice to novels!

*OWFI: What are the benefits of joining?*

WordsmithSix: 1) Sharing of knowledge about the publishing path. 2) Open discussions about the business side of publishing. 3) Inspiration to keep writing.

*OWFI: How many active members do you have?*

WordsmithSix: The WordsmithSix affiliate currently has 11 active members.

*OWFI: Convince us to join your group.*

WordsmithSix: We have re-established an OWFI affiliate group in the Amarillo area. Although new, we already have a diverse group of people from indie authors to NY Times best-selling authors with extensive back lists of titles, representing a diverse variety of genres. After meeting several times and polling the group, we discovered that most of our members are actively

involved in diverse critique groups already. We come together in meetings to share instruction, visit and come away inspired along with a good meal. From this diverse group you can hear all sides of the writing to publishing; the struggles and the successes. Our discussions are lively and honest about the book biz and the writing life. We'd love for you to join in the conversation!

*OWFI: What are some of the ways your group has contributed to OWFI?*

WordsmithSix: Although we are new, we have big plans for the future to increase our participation in OWFI. We hope to have enough members at the conference in 2020 to purchase a table at the banquet, and we will definitely be bringing several baskets for the basket wars. Sponsoring a contest category or conference sponsorship is something we hope to achieve in the future as we grow and reach out to writers in the Texas Panhandle area.

*OWFI: Are there any titles or upcoming releases from your members?*

WordsmithSix:

- *Keep 'Em Full and Keep 'Em Rollin'* by Natalie Bright
- *Deep in the Heart of a Texan* by Phyliss Miranda
- *On Nana's Shoulder* by Vicki Schoen
- *Unlawful Words* by Rory C. Keel
- *Holiday Highway: Route 66 Anthology* by Nandy Ekle and Lynnette Jalufkal

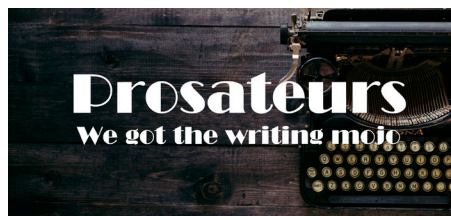
*Thanks to Rory C. Keel with WordsmithSix for answering our questions!*

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## Prosateurs

[Prosateurs.blogspot.com](http://Prosateurs.blogspot.com)

Affiliate Since: 2018



Meeting info: We meet the first Friday of each month from 1-3 p.m. at the

Ada Public Library and on ZOOM.

Mission Statement: To be published, to succeed in reaching the largest audience we can, and to benefit financially for our creative work.

*OWFI: What are the benefits of joining?*

Prosateurs: Members are 1) in a group that is actively writing, 2) paired with a mentor to reach their first-year requirements, and 3) learn from programs that focus on craftsmanship, marketing, creativity, and productivity. Collectively, we have more than 80 books in print and have countless articles, memoirs, poems, and other works published in magazines, newspapers, and other venues.

*OWFI: How many active members do you have?*

Prosateurs: We currently have nine active members. Our membership is limited to 12 due to bandwidth constraints while using ZOOM at the library.

*OWFI: Do you hold any annual contests?*

Prosateurs: Our annual anthology is judged by a third party outside the group. Best of the Book, 1st Runner-up, 2nd Runner-up, and Honorable Mention. This year's anthology will be named Journeys. We also have an awards program for multi-year members.

*OWFI: Anything else?*

Prosateurs: First-year members are teamed with a mentor to reach first-year requirements. They are only for the first-year members, and we hope will encourage them to be actively writing. Reach out to [Prosateurs@gmail.com](mailto:Prosateurs@gmail.com) for more information.

*OWFI: Are there any titles or upcoming releases from your members?*

Prosateurs:  
Current titles

- *Yule Tidings* by Prosateurs
- *Friend or Foe* by Debbie Anderson
- *Floozy Comes Back* by Stephen B. Bagley
- *Dawn Before The Dark* by Wendy Blanton



# Spotlight Member at Large

- *Nova Wave* by Debra Chandler
  - *River Bend* by Barbara Shepherd
  - *Monster Squad: Return of the Phoenix* by Heath Stallcup
- Upcoming titles in 2020/2021
- *Journeys* by Prosateurs
  - *Paws & Reflect* by Kathy Akins
  - *Predators Among Us* by Debbie Anderson
  - *Murder by the Mile* by Stephen B. Bagley
  - *Awakening In The Dark* by Wendy Blanton
  - *Sacrifice* by Debra Chandler
  - *That's Where You're Going* by Anita Robinson
  - *Caldera 12: Kingdom Come* by Heath Stallcup

Thanks to Stephen B. Bagley, president of Prosateurs, for answering our questions!

Member at Large:

**CM Healy**

Member Since: 2018

Website: [www.authorcmhealy.com](http://www.authorcmhealy.com)

FB Fan Page: CM Healy

Twitter: @authorcmhealy

Instagram: @authorcmhealy

**It's easier to sell yourself  
and your creation if you  
believe in it.**

*OWFI: What is the best advice you've received since the beginning of your writing escapades?*

CM Healy: Get an email list going immediately. Even if you aren't ready for a newsletter. Email is the best way to reach your customers & fans. Problem is I didn't get it until 3 years into writing when I attended my first OWFI conference.

*OWFI: What advice would you give to other writers?*

CM Healy: Don't be too hard on yourself. Create what you want to create how you want to create it. It's easier to sell yourself and your creation if you believe in it. Also, write down or keep a note of any idea you have. You never know what it could develop into.

*OWFI: When do you find time to write?*

CM Healy: The only free time I really have is right after school when the kids leave around 4 until about 5:45 when I have to go get my daughter from day care. And in that time I have to do school stuff, try to work out (once a week), practice my banjo, and of course book stuff.

*OWFI: Would you like to share a project you are currently working on?*

CM Healy: I'm always thinking about the next *Beyond the After: Princess Avery*, but I've been developing ideas for a horror anthology that's completely different than what I have out there now.

*OWFI: What do you enjoy doing when you aren't writing? How do you relax?*

CM Healy: Spending time playing with my baby girl; watching TV and playing Mario Cart with my wife.

*OWFI: Please tell us what you write and a little bit about your writing journey?*

CM Healy: Oh wow, okay. So I write children's books in poem format, poetry, and YA fantasy novels. The journey has been surreal. I never imagined myself being an actual author even though I've been writing odds and ends since sixth grade. When I came up with the idea for *Beyond the After* it took a few years for me to FINALLY finish it while I was getting some of my poems illustrated for kids books. That first summer 2015 after they were in print, I sold some to family and friends of course. But it was when I set up outside a coffee shop downtown Dallas where I started to sell my books to complete strangers; that's when I started to believe this could be a career. A year later, I got involved with a Kroger grocery store program and sold 2000 books in about six months. Things have slowed down since I've gone back to teaching and have a baby now. But I still keep plugging along, building every step of the way.



*OWFI: Tell me five things that I'd see when I walk in your front door.*

CM Healy: A mess (HA!). Well it splits, but off to the right is my Man Cave. Legos, board games, comics, Blu-rays, and stacks of my books.

*OWFI: What's your favorite book and or movie of all time and why did it speak to you so much?*

CM Healy: Book – *This Present Darkness* by Frank Peretti. This book literally changed the way I view the world and the things that happen. If you're curious how, just ask me.

Movie – *Goonies*. The sense of that kind of kid adventure has always appealed to me. And I actually have the idea for *Goonies: The Next Adventure*.

*OWFI: How has OWFI helped you in your writing endeavors?*

CM Healy: Oh geez, where to start. I've made amazing connections, learned all kinds of strategies, and boosted my confidence winning first place for my screenplay and fantasy novel.

*OWFI: Share two or three things from your bucket list.*

CM Healy: Go skydiving, be in a demolition derby with my friends, see the northern lights.

*OWFI: Any titles or upcoming releases?*

CM Healy: *Penelope Rose goes to India* (Fall 2020).

Thanks to CM Healy for answering our questions!

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Rcvd date \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Full \_\_\_\_\_ PreCon \_\_\_\_\_ F-S \_\_\_\_\_ F-L \_\_\_\_\_ F-B \_\_\_\_\_  
S-S \_\_\_\_\_ S-L \_\_\_\_\_ S-B \_\_\_\_\_ \$ Due \_\_\_\_\_ Club \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_

# Bridging the Gap 2020

## Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc. (OWFI) Conference



May 1 & 2

Embassy Suites, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

NAME (type or print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_

STATUS (circle as many as apply to you)

NON-MEMBER    MEMBER    FIRST-TIME ATTENDEE    FULL-TIME STUDENT    SCHOLARSHIP  
VOLUNTEER    VENDOR    SPEAKER    JUDGE    OWFI OFFICER    VEGETARIAN MEAL

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

AFFILIATE CLUB \_\_\_\_\_

*Members at Large, please indicate MAL.*

### FULL REGISTRATION (includes Fri/Sat seminars and both Friday night and Saturday night banquets)

Non-member	\$250 each × _____	\$ _____
OWFI Member, postmarked by March 15, 2018	\$175 each × _____	\$ _____
OWFI Member, postmarked <b>after</b> March 15, 2018	\$200 each × _____	\$ _____
Full-time Student with ID ( <i>25 years old or under</i> )	\$125 each × _____	\$ _____

### SINGLE DAY SEMINARS & BANQUETS

Non-member Friday Seminars and Banquet	\$125 each × _____	\$ _____
OWFI Member Friday Seminars and Banquet	\$110 each × _____	\$ _____
Non-member Saturday Seminars and Banquet	\$125 each × _____	\$ _____
OWFI Member Saturday Seminars and Banquet	\$110 each × _____	\$ _____

### EXTRA BANQUET TICKETS

Friday Banquet	\$50 each × _____	\$ _____
Saturday Banquet	\$50 each × _____	\$ _____

### EXTRA WORKSHOPS

Thursday 7:00–9:00 p.m. Pre-Con Workshop ( <i>no meal</i> )	\$20 each × _____	\$ _____
Friday Box Lunch Workshop ( <i>meal included</i> )	\$25 each × _____	\$ _____
Saturday Box Lunch Workshop ( <i>meal included</i> )	\$25 each × _____	\$ _____

## AGREEMENTS

By placing a checkmark or “X” in the box below, you hereby grant permission to the Oklahoma Writers’ Federation, Inc. (OWFI) to use photographs and/or video of you taken at the 2020 OWFI Bridging the Gap Writing Conference on April 30-May 2, 2020, in publications, news releases, online, and in other communications related to the mission of OWFI.

I agree.

By placing a checkmark or “X” in the box below, you affirm that you have read OWFI's Sexual Harassment Policy ([www.owfi.org/policies/sexualharassment](http://www.owfi.org/policies/sexualharassment)), acknowledge that you understand the policy, and agree to abide by the rules and standards of behavior set forth within the policy during the conference and during OWFI-related events.

I agree.

Conference registrants canceling their registration on or before April 1, 2020, will receive a refund of the conference registration fee, less a \$50 administrative fee. No refunds will be issued after April 1, 2020, for the 2020 OWFI Conference.

Registration available at [www.owfi.org](http://www.owfi.org), or mail completed form and check payable to **OWFI** to:

2020 OWFI Conference Registration  
c/o Vickey Malone Kennedy  
721 East Boyd Street  
Norman, OK 73071

Book your hotel room through [www.owfi.org](http://www.owfi.org) to receive the preferred OWFI room discount.

Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc.  
Vinita Eggers, OWFI Treasurer  
Box 61  
Heavener, OK 74937

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