

THE NEWSLETTER OF OKLAHOMA WRITERS' FEDERATION, INC.

THE REPORT

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Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc.

PROMOTING HIGHER STANDARDS FOR THE WRITTEN WORD

in Oklahoma, the United States and around the world



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Table of Contents

President's Letter	3	Work in Progress	7
Book Review	4	Photo Contest Winner	9
Web Review	5	2011 Write Now! Speakers	10
Book Doctor	6	Affiliate News	22

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

Dan Case: PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

LIKE A BOY SCOUT



“Be prepared,” I said while standing at attention, holding up three fingers on my right hand in front of my Boy Scout Troop. This was one of the first lines I ever uttered in front of a group of people, or in this case, a group of Boy Scouts. That was some time ago -- about the year 19... um... er... well, it was some time ago. “Be prepared” is the Boy Scout motto and that is one of the things that were recited out loud each week at our meetings. I think *that* is something all of us who are attending the upcoming 2011 “Write Now” conference should adopt as our own writer’s motto for the next few weeks.

Be prepared by booking your hotel room now and registering for the conference. The hotel information and everything else about the conference can be found on our website, www.OWFI.org and in this issue of *The Report*. It was pointed out to me in early February that the Embassy Suites hotel was charging the wrong amount for rooms for four people. This has been resolved (it was a computer glitch) and if you booked a room for four before the first week of February, call the hotel and make sure they are only charging you at the OWFI rate of \$119 per night. (Rooms for 1, 2 (\$109) or 3 (\$119) people were charged correctly.)

Be prepared by reading books and articles by the speakers. Each year I enjoy reading the books that I purchase at the conference from authors I meet there. I find that it is helpful to look up the speakers beforehand and read some of their earlier books. That way, I can see a more familiar face *and* know whether I would like to hear them speak. (Sometimes it’s hard to decide which session to attend.)

Be prepared by studying what agents and editors are looking for and putting together a great one-on-one pitch for that agent or editor. Each editor and agent’s information is listed on our website. Look under “2011 Conference” and then “Appointments” for a list with links to their websites and other information. If you plan on having appointments, it’s a really good idea to do a little research before you put together your “pitch.”

Be prepared to help out by volunteering. Look for our list of Conference Committee Chairs in this issue of *The Report*. Any or all would love for you to volunteer to help. Especially, Jan Morrill, jymorrill@gmail.com (be a shepherd!), Ruth Weeks, witchywoman2@sbcglobal.net (registration desk), Vivian Zabel, vivian@viviangilbertzabel.com (Basket Wars), Patty Stith,

pstith216@gmail.com (Editor/Agent Appointments), and Wes Warner, weswarner@hotmail.com (Autograph Party).

Be prepared to have a great time! I know you will.

And remember. If any of you old ladies need help to cross the street in front of the hotel for any reason... I may be able to help. I *do* have experience in these things... after all, I was a Boy Scout and I *will* be prepared.

HOTEL: Embassy Suites, 1815 South Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK 73108, 405-682-6000

Register no later than 4-21-2011 for the OWFI rate of \$109 for 1 or 2 guests, \$119 for 3 or 4 guests per room. Breakfast and Happy Hour included! IMPORTANT: Call the hotel and tell them “OWFI” to get these rates.

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Don't Miss This Book!

IMAGES IN SCARLET

By Samantha Lee (a pen name for Velda Brotherton)

Annie Withers, Book Review Editor

An Authors Guild BackInPrint.com Edition 2008, 310 pages (Originally published by Dorchester Publishing Co., Inc., 1999)

"The man lay across the trail on his back, one arm crushed above his head, the other crooked under his chest. He looked so peaceful he might have been asleep.

Those are Samantha Lee's first two sentences of her Post Civil War novel and I ask you, could you put that book down?

"She wore a black duster that billowed out like great bird's wings," Lee says of Allison Caine on the first page. She continues, "Beneath the duster, a Navy Colt hung heavy on her belt. She tucked the coat back to clear the butt of the revolver."

Yet Lee shows us beneath the crust into Allie's tender center. "He was so pitifully thin," she says, it made her want to feed him. She offered him some of her "precious canned peaches," and watched him finish the whole jar. Then to herself she says, "The last thing you need, Allie Caine, is some stray to take care of."

Lee used vivid descriptions – close-up shots like "fistful of reins wrapped around the brake handle," or "his muscles bunched and he scrambled to his knees." She's already told us Jake has long black hair but she gives us another

glimpse when "He grins, eyes as bright blue as cornflowers with a sparkle like sunlight on a creek." An intimate and humorous moment comes later when Allie is taking Jake's picture and wants him to smile. She says, "Look the way you did when I told you I had peaches."

Allie is an attractive blond alone just after the Civil War. Heading north in her "what's-it" wagon full of photography equipment, she planned to join a wagon train to Santa Fe to open a studio, an unusual pursuit for a woman.. She'd

learned the craft she loved from her father. When she was a mere girl, she watched bushwhackers rape and murder her mother and sister as she hid. Her father returned for her and they traveled together as he took pictures of the war. But he too had recently died - "Now everything she'd known and loved was gone."

Allie and Jake, two people broken and alone, travel together through the broken country. But humor erupts now and then, like after

they'd interrupted a saloon brawl in Westport and both smelled like stale beer. Jake tries to get Allie into a public bath "For Men Only" by saying she's a young boy, but you'll have to read how that turns out for yourself.

We know a lot about Allie but the mystery threading through the whole book until the last page is Jake's identity. He has hallucinations and no memory of

who he is or where he's from – just flashes of Andersonville prison.

The author's description on the jacket says, "Photographer, Allison Caine consorts with outlaws, rescues an abused woman, and falls in love with a wondering stranger. To prove he's worthy of Allie's love, Jake sets out to prove he is not the killer his fragmented memories suggest."

It's a gritty adventure, a haunting mystery, an accurately researched historical novel, humor - ribald sometimes and sophisticated at others, and a steamy romance, all folded into 300 fast-moving pages.

Samantha Lee is a pen name for our own Velda Brotherton. She's written twelve books (some under another pen name, Elizabeth Gregg) and hundreds of historical articles about Southern Missouri in the last 20 years. Her latest non-fiction book is [Fly With The Mourning Dove](#) (check it folks, five stars). You'll find all her books on Amazon. Her next book, another historical romance, [Stone Heart's Woman](#) is coming soon, published by Wild Rose Press as an eBook.

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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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Once Around the Web

AUTHORTECHTIPS.COM

Jen Nipps, Web Review Editor

I should be ashamed to admit, until recently, I had never heard of Author Tech Tips (www.authortechtips.com). Instead, I'm glad I've found it now. It is included in the most recent Writer's Digest Best 101 Sites for Writers, which calls the site "amazing."

It also has a presence on Twitter and Facebook and options for an RSS subscription to your reader of choice or subscription by e-mail. As a bonus, when you sign up to receive weekly tips by e-mail (in the right sidebar), you also get an e-book titled *12 Ways to Boost Traffic to Your Blog*.

Thomas Umstatted started Author Tech Tips in 2009. It's mission is "helping authors use technology to build their online platforms." It is geared toward the non-technical writers, so they won't be talking over your head. There are benefits for techies, too; so there's something for everyone.

On the main page, it bills itself as "help for writers timid about technology." In the look I had around the site, it appears to do exactly that. (And let's face it, some of us are reluctant techies who, even though we know how to use the technology, are still sometimes timid about it.)

Recent topics on the site include "Unleashing Your Muse – How to Be Creative in a Social Media World," "7 Secrets for Amazing Author Websites," "Why Print Designers Fail at Web Design," and more.

Articles have been divided into categories, including Blogging, Book Promotion, Social Media, Twitter, Writing, and Other. Don't be fooled into thinking there might be some overlap with Social Media and Twitter. The Social Media tab includes sub-categories for LinkedIn, MySpace, and Facebook. Twitter is it's own tab.

Speaking of sub-categories, Other

includes Author Interviews, Gadgets, Legal Issues, Podcasts, and Productivity. Book Promotion breaks down into Radio, Speaking, and Viral Marketing.

If you have something specific you're looking for, the site offers a "Search" feature in the upper right corner. If that doesn't get you the results you want, the "About" page invites visitors to leave a comment or send an e-mail.

The only advertising I noticed on the site was for services they offer, including the weekly tips e-mail subscription, Twitter and Facebook links, and RSS feed and e-mail subscription options. According to a broken links check, there is only one broken link on the site. It is not anywhere visible to viewers and would not have any impact on your visit to the site.

Rating: * * * * *

###

Jen Nipps is a member of the Web Writing Wonders. Her website is currently off-line but will return soon. She maintains an online journal addressing various issues related to creativity and writing at <http://jensorganized-writer.wordpress.com>. Reach her by e-mail at jennipps@gmail.com.



Twitter and Facebook addresses for Author Tech Tips:

<http://www.twitter.com/AuthorTechTips>

<http://www.facebook.com/AuthorTech>

True terror is to wake up one morning and discover that your high school class is running the country.

Kurt Vonnegut

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The Doctor is:

In*Out*

Industry Standard

Robyn Conley, The Book Doctor

What is it and when do we choose it? These two questions perplex even dinosaurs such as yours truly when so many changes emerge each day in this circus of publishing.

“Are allllll unpublished titles set off in all-caps?”

“Can I spell out numerals or simply type the numbers?”

“Is it okay to use italics rather than underlining?”

Questions pop into my email box 24/7 regarding the above and other “details” of our craft...and business. Craft, because even when inquiries relate to the mechanics of writing, the answers often relate to the business end, meaning: where is your piece of prose headed for submission?

Lucky for me, I have two sisters who help me remember how to handle these details. No, they are neither writers nor publishers. Younger sister Rikki is a whiz artist, able to create color and depth on any canvas, whether fabric, paper or her living room walls. Sister Rachelle is steadfast,

working for the same doctor over twenty years and being a cornerstone of smiles and consistency to his patients.

Each wonders how the other can do it, but I can see the treasures in both of them. Of course I’m biased, but their basic qualities are beneficial to us writers, too. You guessed it; answers to today’s writing questions need to balance both **creativity** and **steadfastness**.

Often the usual industry standards flit out the literary window if you’re working with a Print on Demand publisher or a small publisher with its own “house style.” On the other hand, I’ve even

seen a major house’s style change from book to book or when editors switch jobs.

When I wrote four books for Lucent Press, I realized their house style changed with each book and sometimes even during the same book, depending on what kind of mood hit the editor. Frustrating for sure when we’re trying to learn and then relearn a style.

So how in the world can we choose format and details before we submit? Remember first to remain steadfast to industry standard by sticking to the basics: 12-point, Courier or Times Roman font, and double-spacing. This guideline works for contest entries, too.

Does this mean ignore specific details if a publisher or contest requests a certain format? Of course not. It does give you a starting point, however, and allows you to submit without worrying.

Titles: Back in my infant days of writing, I remember editors specifying to use ALL CAPS for any unpublished title.

Since I haven’t heard anything different in all these years, I’d stick to ALL CAPS for unpublished titles. It definitely emphasizes a work’s status, and if there’s something creative or clever you want highlighted in a title, feel free to set it off with **boldface**, (something I hope Wayne

is doing for me, here). Use the technique sparingly, however, because too often can mean too much, and too much beyond industry standard can mean a rejection.

Numerals: most publishers prefer all numerals under 20 to be spelled out (zero – nineteen), and any numeral greater than 20 can simply be typed with the number keys (20 – 1,000,000,000,000).

Italics: we USED to show them by underlining a word or phrase because we didn’t have these fancy-schmancy machines with the Italics option. Now the industry standard has modernized to reflect technology: so yes, use the Italics button and ignore the underlining chore.

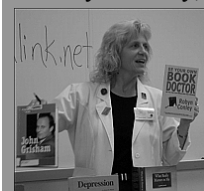
So, with a grateful nod to my sisters, there you have a smidgeon of how to balance your creative spirit with your steadfast common sense, in a world not always grounded in common sense. If you trust in the basics of format, then when you want to let your creativity loose, it should garner the result you desire and not make editors or agents roll their eyes in angst.

If something in your prose still puzzles you, remember you can send up to five free pages to the Book Doc at: **Robyn Conley, PO Box 506, Clyde, TX, 79510. Courier font, 12-point, double-spaced with an SASE for return of those pages.** And you can always, always email me at: **bookdoctor@earthlink.net**

Happy writing!

(The) house style (can change) with each book and sometimes even during the same book, depending on what kind of mood hit the editor. Frustrating for sure when we’re trying to learn and then relearn a style.

Robyn Conley, the book doctor, speaks and writes about writing, editing, and marketing what you write. Her books include: **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. Robyn has sold to major magazines, such as **The Writer, Writer’s Digest, ABA: Student Lawyer**, and a score of others.



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Work in Progress

March of Crime

Marcia Preston, Features Editor

If your work-in-progress is a novel or other long project, here's some great advice from Dennis Palumbo, a former Hollywood screenwriter, licensed psychotherapist, and successful mystery writer. His new novel, *Mirror Image* (Poisoned Pen Press), is the first in a series featuring psychologist Daniel Rinaldi, a trauma expert who consults with the Pittsburgh Police. Visit him at www.dennispalumbo.com. The essay below was published in the monthly newsletter of Mystery Writers of America. I liked it so much I asked his permission to reprint it for OWFI.

March of Crime

In the early 60's, there was a hot art-house movie called *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*. I think of this film sometimes when trying to help my writer patients working on long-form projects — novels, plays, screenplays, etc. The running analogy is a good one, because long-form writing is like running a marathon: It requires endurance, patience, a deep reserve of willpower and commitment, and an almost Herculean ability to delay gratification.

(To continue the analogy, other kinds of writing might be likened to sprints — short stories, sitcoms, poems. Sprints require a burst of speed and power, the knock-outpunch of a single idea or concept, and a quick build to an explosive finish.)

Where the long-form writer gets in trouble is in believing that he or she can maintain over the length of the project the same vigor and intensity that's brought to a shorter piece. Hence, when the work slows, or gets bogged down in exposition, or drifts off on tangents, the writer panics. His or her confidence flags. Enthusiasm drains away. The unfinished novel or screenplay is, metaphorically speaking, "put away in a drawer," often never to be brought out

again.

To avoid this, here are some suggestions to help you keep on keeping on during those long, painful stretches that plague anyone writing a big project:

◆ Pace yourself. As I said, it's a marathon, not a sprint. Sixteen-hour days at the keyboard, living on pizza and Red Bull, may get you through a short piece or re-write that's on deadline, but for a novel or screenplay it's deadly. Hard on your family, your vital organs, and your outlook on life.

◆ Expect slow spots, things that don't work, and reverses. Long-form storytelling has its own rhythm, in the reading as well as the writing. The reader needs to take a breath, be reminded of plot points, given a break from unending action and/or revelation. So do you, the writer. Like any extended trip, the journey through a novel or screenplay involves wrong turns, pleasant surprises off the beaten path, some down time to remind yourself why you're even taking this route — even return visits to places and events to see what further gold can be mined from them. Just keep reminding yourself that you're in this for the long haul, that there'll be good days and bad, pitfalls and peaks of inspiration, and then get on with it.

◆ Take side-trips. Stop occasionally to write a short piece — an article or essay, a letter to the local op-ed section, a blog. This gives your long-form muscles some much-needed R & R, and helps flex those short-form ones. Just because you're running a marathon doesn't mean you want to forget how to sprint.

◆ Don't rush the ending (just to get the damned thing finished). A hard temptation to resist, but you've got to try. There's no sense laboring over a piece for months, or even years, getting the narrative, characters and tone just right, only to rush the thing to its climax because you're so relieved to finally see

the end approaching. Let the reader — and you, too — enjoy the fruits of your labor; give yourself the luxury of bringing the same effort and care to making the most out of the conclusion. Do justice to your characters, your story, and to yourself.

◆ Finally, when the project is done, expect some postpartum blues. You've lived in the world of your novel, play or screenplay so long, it's familiar, the known. Despite its myriad problems and headaches, it's what you've called home for a long time. Believe me, after bitching about it the whole time you've been writing it, when it's finally finished, you'll miss it. Which is why, as hard as it is to write a long-form piece, as vehemently as you swear that you'll never do it again, pretty soon you'll start thinking about a new one. It's like the end of a long, painful relationship. You swear to anyone who'll listen that you'll never fall in love again. You don't want the grief, the false hopes, all the drama. Then, one day, you see someone in a bookstore, or at a party, and you say, "Hmm...." It's kinda like that.

Marcia earned degrees from University of Central Oklahoma, taught in public high schools for more than a decade, and worked for a time as PR and publications director for the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. As a magazine writer for many years, she also edited and published *ByLine*, a trade magazine for aspiring writers. She has also been president of Oklahoma City Writers and twice president of OWFI.



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The Ears Have It

Marjorie Bixler, Freelance Writers Network

My daughter's violin teacher, a member of the city orchestra, once complained that our newspaper music critic had a "tin" ear. She thought this malady came from his training as a piano player. While a concert pianist sitting in front of a Steinway can choose from 88 keys, presumably tuned to perfect pitch, the violinist has only four strings. In essence, he must constantly tune to produce all the notes his music requires. A writer, too, can easily develop a tin ear if she fails to listen to the sound of her words.

In Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*, the authors define style as the sound one's words make on paper. Your ear must be your guide. Although one of my fiction writing teachers advised us to use this famous handbook, I wondered if she had read it herself when she asked us to leave out "and" wherever possible, especially before the last word in a series. She said it sounded "modern." Print media had begun dropping "and" as well as the second space after the punctuation at the end of a sentence in order to cram more words on a page.

Neither space saver had anything to do with the quality of writing. Of course leaving out and works in news and textbook-style writing and sometimes it is used well in fiction. But "modern" is not a sound we should strive for unless it fits the story. Listen to this sentence from *Charlotte's Web* by White:

"So while the children swam and played and splashed water at each other, Wilbur amused himself in the mud along the edge of the brook, where it was warm and moist and delightfully sticky and oozy."

The repeated use of and helps reflect the laziness of summertime play by the children and a charming pig. Wilbur can't be "modernized" without taking him out of character. What I did learn from this teacher was to ignore writing fads.

Following the class, my instructor at a writers' conference redlined any progressive verbs. She demanded we express all action in simple present or past tense. She couldn't abide a sentence such as "The baby was crawling across the floor." It had to be "The baby crawled

across the floor." This leaves the reader in doubt as to whether the baby had already reached his destination or was still in transit. She would've hated this paragraph from *Therapy* by David Lodge, as would the rule makers who've somehow convinced themselves that

progressive verbs are passive.

"... I was leaving the London flat, hurrying to catch the 18.10 from Euston, scuttling backwards and forwards between the four rooms, stuffing scripts and dirty socks into my briefcase, shutting windows, switching off lights, re-setting the central-heating timer, emptying milk cartons down the sink, sloshing Sanilav round the toilet bowl..."

The repetition of the -ing sound in these well-chosen participles gives a rhythmic quality that adds to the feeling of rushing around: hurrying, scuttling, stuffing, re-setting, shutting, switching, sloshing. They seem to speed up the action, making the reader a partner with the protagonist. Blunt-ended past-tense verbs like scuttled, stuffed and switched

would show the action is already finished—the reader has no part in it. Change the -ing verbs to past tense, and we have a piece that sounds like a child beating a spoon on a rusty tin bucket.

As writers we should not let ourselves be cowed into mindlessly following rules. In any case, what works in one story may flop in another. Only our ears can tell us when we've chosen the right words and ordered them in a pleasing cadence. Ursula LeGuin said in an interview, "As a poet and as a prose writer, I'm extremely aware of the sound of my words. I hear what I write. And I do hear word-music, language music. There's a pleasure in sound."

We learn by reading—listening to—authors who are skilled at their craft. A fiction writer's job, first of all, is to tell a good story. Larry McMurtry is a master story teller who, at his best, has perfect pitch. Listen to the beginning lines of his *Lonesome Dove*:

"When Augustus came out on the porch the blue pigs were eating a rattlesnake—not a very big one. It had probably been crawling around looking for shade when it ran into the pigs. They were having a fine tug-of-war with it, and its rattling days were over."

Whatever the critics said about this best-selling novel—made into a movie—it wasn't to criticize the author's use of language. Redline the to-be and -ing verbs? I don't think so.

Marjorie Bixler's short fiction has appeared in several literary journals including *Pangolin Papers*, *The Heartland Review* and *The Chaffin Journal*. One of her short stories ran online as the "hot opener" at the *Potomac Review* website. Her novels still languish in a drawer.



In any case, what works in one story may flop in another. Only our ears can tell us when we've chosen the right words and ordered them in a pleasing cadence.

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Photo Contest Winner

From the Winter 2010 Issue



FIRST PLACE

Keep On Walking
By Ray "Grizzly" Racobs

Keep on walking. I see you with your nose turned up and the unkind smirk on your mug as you point at me, so the friend with you will notice me. Too late. She saw me about 100 feet away. Why do you think she switched places with you and moved to the street side of the walk?

Keep on walking. I hear you, too. Do you think I'm blind *and* deaf? Yes, I'm homeless. Did you think I sleep on this park bench because it's comfortable? Go ahead and tell the police about me. They know who I am. Some nice beat cops actually bring me a donut and a cup of coffee, on occasion.

Keep on walking. If I bother you so much, why don't you catch the bus on the next corner? No, I don't have a job or any money, for that matter. Something you rich kids will never experience in your happy-go-lucky lives.

Keep on walking. I don't care

if you think my existence is meaningless, but I've never done anything to you to deserve your snide comments. I raised kids, who are more respectful than you will ever be, but I choose not to bother them with my plight.

Keep on walking.

SECOND PLACE

Things We Do For Love
vickey malone kennedy

Seven cities in seven days is not a vacation it's a marathon. I expected to spend endless hours perusing modern art in ancient museums and touring deteriorating ruins. I never intended to spend my entire European vacation waiting outside dressing rooms while she tried on every French gown in every Italian boutique in England.

Whatever happened to the romantic getaway, second honeymoon and quality time together this trip was intended for in the first place?

How much shopping does a woman need to do in order to find the perfect little black dress? Then she's got to find the perfect little black pumps. Not to mention accessories; hand bags, jewelry, belts and who knows what else.

I can't afford half the crap she's already bought. We'll need a second mortgage to pay the duty charges on all her little foreign treasures. Hell it's going to cost a fortune just to check the extra baggage we'll need for the flight home.

Argh! Next we'll be shopping for new luggage.

I'm done for the day. I'm done for

the trip. I'd take my little back pack and go home but she's got my passport and the return airline tickets tucked away inside her fancy new Gucci handbag.

I might as well get comfortable. She could be in that shop for days. Besides, if I get arrested for loitering then she won't be able to drag me out on any more of these bloody shopping sprees.

Want to get your winning entry published in the *Report*? On the back cover of every issue there will be a photo. Write something based on that photo: the opening paragraphs of a short story or a novel, a story/novel synopsis, an entire flash fiction story. The only restriction is that you keep it **under 400 words**. The best one will be printed in the following issue of the **Report** (the decision of the judges is final). That, and a printed copy of the newsletter with your winning entry in it, will be your only reward.

It doesn't have to be a complete story. It can be a vignette, a slice of life, a caption, a dialogue — anything that a writer might write. Any person or persons in the photograph may be a central character or a secondary character of a story. You may pretend they are the subject of a biography or an interview. They may be the focus of an ersatz newspaper article. Perhaps you can best write about a given photo with a poem or an essay. Just write it and send it to the editor at wwyrick@sciencemuseumok.org. Send it within the body of the email or as a TEXT attachment. **Entry deadline is April 30, 2011.**

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Supporting writers and the craft of writing in Oklahoma,
the United States and around the world.



WRITE NOW! CONFERENCE SPEAKER PROGRAMS

Liz Berry (Publicist)

Buzzing Your Book: The Muse's View of What Makes Books Sell. Liz Berry has not only observed the book publicity and marketing world first hand working with her husband Keynote speaker Steve Berry, but has also served as Executive Director of the insanely successful Thrillerfest convention held each year in New York. She spends most of her time planning publicity for the authors and working with publishers first-hand. As a result, she is uniquely qualified to explain what works and what doesn't. Steve Berry had written books before he met Liz, but they only shot to the top of the charts after he added Liz to the team. Coincidence? Or perhaps we should all listen to what she has to say.

Andy Horton (Screen Writer)

Writing the Comedy-Centered Screenplay. Beginning Writing.

Michael Bracken (Short Story Writer)

Sin, Suffer, Cash the Checks: An Introduction to Writing and Selling Confessions. Michael Bracken, author of more than 200 stories for True Confessions, True Experience, True Story, and many other confession magazines, defines what makes a story a confession, describes the three primary types of confession stories, and provides tips, tricks, and techniques for writing and selling confessions.

Don't Quit Your Day Job: My Path to Freelance Success After My Day Job Quit Me. Michael Bracken, a full-time freelance writer/editor since April 2003, describes how he turned a part-time writing career into a full-time writing/editing career after losing his day job, and provides tips for other writers seeking to quit their day jobs (or who suspect their day jobs may be about to quit them).

Velda Brotherton (Author)

EXPLORE! Find a Publisher for Your Book. Because she has worked with various small publishers in the past, she knows they are there ready to take on your regional nonfiction book. You must become an explorer to find them, and she will show you how to save time and root out the ones best suited to what you have to offer. The search for a publisher may well be more difficult than writing the book. There are steps you can take to find the perfect publisher for your gem of a book.

PRESENT! Book Promotion Made Easy. Unusual and secret places where readers might look for your book. Subject matter dictates where and how you promote your book, but you can learn to reach beyond the mundane to the unusual. Finding the niche in which your nonfiction book will fit is the key to locating places in which you can make your presentations. And she can help you think around corners rather than in a boring straight line.

Gretchen Craig (Historical Romance Writer)

What Women Want: Romance Writing Today. Think all romance novels are alike? This presentation covers the conventions of romance novels, contemporary and historical, but we'll also discuss what makes each romance unique. Who are the romance heroes and heroines and what makes them click with readers? How do you create unique characters with universally admired qualities? What about reader expectations in plot, sexual tension, and emotional resonance? I'll provide lots of examples from current writers.

Packing in the WOW. Agents and editors are notoriously overworked. They have too much to read and too much of it is blah. Naturally they strive

for efficiency so that they can plow through all the rejects to give them more time for the great stuff -yours and mine. To keep them reading past the first pages, we need to show them the WOW. We'll analyze how best selling novelists from several genres pack in setting, tone, conflict, viewpoint character, stakes and hook.

Marilyn Collins (Author)

Stories on Your Doorstep. The plot for your next book doesn't have to be set in an exotic, far-away place to be successful. Learn to use the stories around you and the stories within you for the plot line and setting for your next book.

Check your story idea against seven essential criteria for a workable book idea. Learn how to capitalize on your site visits to give reality to your readers. Use the advantages of finding story ideas nearby to save you time and money. This workshop will give you new insight into looking for story ideas.

Organize Your Nonfiction Book with the Timeline Process. (Works for Fiction Too). Overwhelming research, stacks of photographs, copies of internet articles and newspaper clippings, interviews, and more—much more—fill all the horizontal space in your office. How do you turn this stuff into an organized and successful book? Use the Timeline Process to manage material, establish chapter breaks, provide essential information for the Appendix, and keep you and your reader on track. Among other essential tools included in the workshop are a Chapter Needs Assessment Chart, Interview Log, Site Visit Check List, and Release Forms.

Kelly James-Enger (Freelance Writer)

Breaking In: The Basics of Writing for Magazines (Thursday Early Bird Bonus workshop). Have you dreamed of writing for magazines? Want to see your byline in your favorite publication? While basic writing skills are essential, the keys to successful magazine freelancing are selecting and analyzing potential markets, developing winning article ideas and crafting attention-getting query letters. This program will introduce you to some common magazine

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2011 CONFERENCE SPEAKER PROGRAMS CONT.

terminology and cover basics like how to find markets, come up with story ideas, and nail your first magazine assignments. Kelly is author of eight books including *Six-Figure Freelancing: The Writer's Guide to Making More Money* (Random House, 2005) and 800+ articles for more than 50 national magazine articles.

Make More as a Book Author: Getting Started in Ghostwriting. Whether you're a freelance writer, book author, or both, you may not know about one of the most lucrative writing niches—ghostwriting. What skills do you need to be a ghostwriter? What's the difference between ghostwriting and coauthoring, and what are the pros and cons of both? How can you get started in this field, find clients, negotiate fees, and work efficiently with clients? Kelly ghostwrites and collaborates on book-length projects with a variety of clients, and blogs on making more money in less time as a freelancer.

Straight from the Lawyer's Mouth: Contract and Business Advice for Writers (Saturday Bonus luncheon workshop). OK, you've got the writing part down. But if you have questions about the business side of your writing career that involve signing contracts, negotiating with editors, tracking business expenses, and the like, this program will help answer them.

Max McCoy (Western—and other genres— Writer)

Narratives of the Damned. Max McCoy talks about interviewing and writing about those on the edges of society, from a-bomb survivors in Hiroshima to serial killers on American death rows -- and what their stories reveal about truth, writing, and (maybe even) art.

The Hero's Journey. Discover the secret weapon that Hollywood screenwrit-

ers (and novelists like Max McCoy) use to make epic stories like the Indiana Jones series and the Star Wars saga. Whether you're writing fiction or nonfiction, you'll never look at story the same way again.

Rhonda Penders (Editor-in-Chief The Wild Rose Press)

How to Lose an Editor in 10 Days. A tongue in cheek look at how querying a publishing company is a lot like going on a blind date. The path to both true love and to publication can be oddly similar.

Appointments. Penders will be taking appointments from authors who wish to talk to her about writing or to pitch their own romance stories.

Fred Pfister (editor Ozark Mountaineer Magazine)

Appointments. Go to the magazine's website for Writer's Guidelines: <http://www.ozarksmountaineer.com/WritersGuidelines.htm>

A Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction: Techniques for Visualizing Your Audience. Because a writer is always separated in time and space from his audience, his audience is always a creation of his mind. Successful writers know now to create the audience and tailor their writing to that specific audience that exists in reality.

Amy Shojai (Pet Writer)

Lights! Camera! Action! Media Training for Authors. Learn the benefits of media for authors, and how to use it to your advantage—to sell books, promote yourself as an expert, and enrich your personal “brand” and platform. The session covers how to pitch radio and TV appearances, and what to do once you're booked; explain what radio and TV shows want; where to find media opportunities (traditional broadcast and online); ways to spin your book/expertise, and pitch appropriately; what to wear; and how to use “messaging” to best advantage. Fun mock interview sessions will be included.

eBooks: Writers' Brass Ring or Lead Balloon?. Do-it-yourself ebooks make

it easier than ever for authors to self-publish. But should you? This session describes the various opportunities available with the challenges of self-publishing. Audience is encouraged to share experiences and discuss how ebooks differ from traditional publishing; what do-it-yourself authors should expect; how social networking can help; and the pros and cons of this new publishing paradigm.

Wendy Lyn Watson (Cozy Mystery Writer)

Cozy Is as Cozy Does. In this workshop, I present a typology of crime fiction with special attention to the conventions of cozy mysteries. I also discuss, in broad strokes, how to go about developing a cozy series and writing the books in that series.

Write Naked: Finding and Flattering Your Authentic Voice. In this workshop, I discuss the elements of a writer's voice and how to characterize your own voice, and then I present a toolkit of resources and techniques for making your voice shine.

Dale Whisman (Mystery Writer/ Screen Writer)

Writing a Screenplay. Two of Dale Whisman's screenplays have been produced into award winning films, including the Grand Goldie Award For Excellence And Expertise In Filmmaking, and the DIGI Award for Best Feature Film at the International Digital Cinema Convention. His most recent screenplay, *Shadows*, just won the award for Best Feature Length Screenplay at the Bare-Bones International Independent Film Festival 2010. He will discuss reasons for writing screenplays, reasons for not writing screenplays, how to prepare yourself to do your best work, and what you do with it afterwards.

Writing the Mystery Series. Dale Whisman will discuss how you should plan your series in advance, how to get started, how to tie the series together, and when and how to “wrap it up” when the time comes. His own series, the Carl Jacobs Mysteries, published by Deadly

(Continued on page 12)

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2011 CONFERENCE SPEAKER PROGRAMS CONT.

(Continued from page 11)

Niche Press so far consists of three novels including Friends and Other Perishables, Friends on Fire, and A Witch Among Friends.

Regina Williams (editor The Storyteller Magazine)

How to Submit from an Editor's Perspective. From her personal experience and from talking to other editors, Regina will go over what to do and what not to do when submitting your manuscript and cover letter. She will also discuss the common mistakes writers make.

Kathleen Anderson (Literary Agent) That I've Heard All This, What Do I Do Now?

Award-winning editor and agent Kathleen Anderson will call on participants from the audience to describe their individual writing circumstances and give prescriptive advice on what your next step should be in accomplishing your goals.

Lenora Worth (Inspirational Romance Writer)

Writing for the Inspirational/Christian Market--You Gotta Have Faith. This session will cover the booming Inspirational/Christian Fiction market and everything you need to know to break into this market. While the inspirational market is going strong, writers need to know that this market is a bit different from the secular fiction market. Workshop will include tips, how to connect with publishers, what not to do and what inspirational editors like to see in a proposal.

Emotional Suspense. Emotional Suspense is just as important in a story as action and suspense. What goes on inside your character's head has to help build up the suspense by keeping questions in the readers mind. Learn how to

use internal conflict and thoughts to build up the intensity of your story.

Vivian Zabel (publisher, 4RV Publishing)

Submission Etiquette 101. Many writers have no idea what to do or how to do it when submitting to an agent, editor, or publisher. Some sit back and wait; others "bug" the recipient of the submission; a few react with anger when "rejected." Vivian Zabel's workshop will give ideas to know whether a submission arrived, when to contact the agent/editor/publisher, how to react to the outcome of the submission. A writer's etiquette may impact his chances with other agents or publishers.

Appointments. 4RV is looking for good 'tween and teen books; novels in the genres of mystery, mainstream, romance without graphic details; sci-fi, fantasy, Christian; and nonfiction. We list everything we accept on our website submission page <http://4rvpublishingllc.com/Submissions.html>. However we are not interested in children's books at this time. We open submissions for children's books twice a year: June 1 - 7 and October 1 - 7.

Scott Eagan (Literary agent Greyhaus Literary Agency)

Appointments: Romance! Go to the "Submission Info" page on Greyhaus Literary Agency's website to find out what Scott is looking for: http://www.greyhausagency.com/About_Us.html

Understanding the Romance and Women's Fiction Genres.

William Bernhardt (NYT Bestselling Writer)

Writing the Character-Driven Novel TBA

Verna Dreisback (Literary agent Dreisbach Literary Management)

Appointments Fiction - currently accepting young adult, literary and commercial fiction, with a particular fondness for mystery and thriller. **Non-**

(Continued on page 26)

BASKETWARS UPDATE

We're still needing baskets/containers for the OWFI BasketWars silent auction. Not only will conference attendees bid on the baskets of books, author needs, whatever a person's or affiliate's imagination creates, but the large basket and the small basket bringing the highest bids will receive a special award.

For more information or to notify that you or your affiliate will be donating a "basket," email Vivian@viviangilbertzabel.com.

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Rec'd date _____ Check # _____ \$ _____ Full _____ Pre-Con. _____ F.S. _____ F.L. _____ F.B. _____
S.S. _____ S.L. _____ S.B. _____ \$ Due _____ Club _____ Initial _____

Write Now!

2011 Oklahoma Writers' Federation Conference

May 5 – May 7

Embassy Suites Hotel, Oklahoma City

NAME (type or print clearly) _____

STATUS (circle): ATTENDEE, JUDGE, SPEAKER, OWFI OFFICER, SCHOLARSHIP, VEG-MEAL

HOME PHONE _____ BUS. PHONE _____ FAX _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ AFFILIATION _____

Members at Large - Indicate (MAL)

FULL REGISTRATION (includes Fri/Sat seminars and two banquets)

Postmarked by 3-15-2011..... @ \$150 each x _____ = \$ _____

Postmarked after 3-15-2011 @ \$175 each x _____ = \$ _____

EXTRA BANQUET TICKETS:

Friday Banquet (ticket name _____) @ \$ 40 each x _____ = \$ _____

Saturday Banquet (ticket name _____) @ \$ 40 each x _____ = \$ _____

SINGLE DAY SEMINARS (banquets NOT included)

Friday Seminars only @ \$ 70 each x _____ = \$ _____

Saturday Seminars only @ \$ 70 each x _____ = \$ _____

Extra WORKSHOPS (minimum 25 or up to 60 participants, NO WALK-INS)

Thursday 7-8:30 p.m. *Pre-Con Workshop (no meal) – Breaking In: The Basics of Writing for Magazines* with Kelly James-Enger @ \$ 15 each x _____ = \$ _____

Friday Box Lunch Workshop (*meal included*) – *Write Naked: Finding and Flattering Your Authentic Voice* with Wendy Lyn Watson @ \$ 25 each x _____ = \$ _____

Saturday Box Lunch Workshop (*meal included*) – *Straight from the Lawyer's Mouth: Contract and Business Advice for Writers* with Kelly James-Enger @ \$ 25 each x _____ = \$ _____

Total amt. enclosed = \$ _____

Full refunds granted only if requested on/before April 1, 2011 (less applicable PayPal fees); thereafter, a \$25 processing fee assessed for ANY refund granted.

Mail completed form and check or money order (no cash) payable to OWFI to Barbara Shepherd, OWFI, P.O. Box 54302, Oklahoma City, OK 73154

Or register and pay online at our website www.owfi.org; under "Store" choose conference.

HOTEL: Embassy Suites, 1815 South Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK 73108, 405-682-6000

Register no later than 4-21-2011 for the OWFI rate of \$109 for 1 or 2 guests, \$119 for 3 or 4 guests per room. Breakfast and Happy Hour included! **IMPORTANT:** Call the hotel and tell them "OWFI" to get these rates.

"WRITE NOW" 2011 CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Liz Berry is married to writer Steve Berry, and it was her interest in her husband's career that led her to her current role as Executive Director for International Thriller Writer's yearly gathering, ThrillerFest. Liz's background is in sales and marketing. She's heavily involved with Steve's book promotional activities and is ready to share the secrets that put him on the bestseller lists.



Michael Bracken is the author of 11 books and more than 1,200 shorter works. More than 800 of Bracken's short



stories have appeared in literary, small press, and commercial publications worldwide. Because he has sold more than 200 confessions to such magazines as *True Confessions*,

True Experience, *True Love*, *True Romance*, and *True Story*, his fellow confession writers have dubbed Bracken the "King of Confessions." Bracken is also the editor of five crime fiction anthologies.

Bracken is also editor of *Senior News*, managing editor of *Texas Gardener*, editor of *Seeds*, and editor of *Symphony Notes*, a monthly newsletter. His non-fiction has appeared in *Atlanta Parent*, *Inside Higher Ed*, *MAMM*, *Mothering*, *Mystery Scene*, *SFWA Bulletin*, *Teaching Miracles*, *The Writer*, and

other publications. He has edited corporate and organization newsletters, and has received local, regional, and national awards for advertising copywriting, including a Silver ADDY Award presented by the American Advertising Federation.

Velda Brotherton has been writing for 28 years. She has been published in historical romance and has 6 nonfiction historical books to her credit. Her columns have appeared in several local newspapers since 1990 and she continues to write an Ozark column in a local weekly newspaper. Her latest two books *The Boston Mountains: Lost in the Ozarks* and *Arkansas Meals and Memories: Lift Your Eyes to the Mountains* were published in the spring of 2010.



She is a member of Women Writing the West where her book, *Fly With the Mourning Dove* was a finalist in the 2008 WILLA Literary Awards for creative nonfiction. Her mainstream novel, *Once There Were Sad Songs*, won the Creme de la Creme award with OWFI in 2002. Velda is co-chair of the Northwest Arkansas Writers Workshop and a member of Arkansas Ridgewriters.

Marilyn H. Collins is an award-winning author of three history books and over 100 magazine and newspaper features. She is currently on tour leading workshops based on her latest book, *Write History Right*. Her professional background is marketing and publishing. Collins held executive positions with the American Association of University



Women, Washington National Cathedral Association and the Beaufort (NC) Historical Association. She owned Wilson Collins Marketing & Management Consultants in the Washington, DC area and currently is owner of CHS Publishing. Marilyn offers a free online newsletter for writers, Proficient Writer NEWS at www.proficientwriter.com.

Gretchen Craig was born in Florida and eventually ended up in Texas where her accent seems to fit right in. She follows politics, reads constantly, and is now the proud owner of a Kindle so that there is never a moment when she is book-less.

Gretchen writes historical novels with romance elements. Set in antebellum Louisiana, *Always and Forever* won the Colorado Romance Writers of America Award of Excellence and an Editors Choice review in the Historical Novel Society's magazine. Carrying the entwined slave, Creole, and Cajun families to the next generation, *Ever My Love* won the Greater Detroit RWA Booksellers Best Award. Gretchen's latest publication, *Crimson Sky*, is set among the pueblos in 1598 when the Spanish return, this time to stay.

As an ex-teacher, Gretchen often gives workshops about the craft of writing



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"WRITE NOW" 2011 CONFERENCE SPEAKERS CONT.

ing at chapter meetings and conferences.

Andrew Horton is the Jeanne H Smith Professor of Film and Video Studies at the University of Oklahoma, an award winning screenwriter, and the author of twenty books on film, screenwriting and cultural studies including, *Screenwriting for a Global Market* (U of California Press

2004), *Henry Bumstead and the World of Hollywood Art Direction* (U of Texas Press, 2003), *Writing the Character Centered Screenplay* (U. of California Press, 2000, 2nd edition), *The Films*

of Theo Angelopoulos (Princeton U Press, 2nd edition, 1999), and *Laughing Out Loud: Writing the comedy Centered Screenplay* (U. of California Press, 1999). His films include Brad Pitt's first feature film, *The Dark Side of the Sun* and much awarded *Something in Between* (1983, Yugoslavia, directed by Srdjan Karanovic). *The Library Journal* wrote about his *Character Centered Screenplay*, "Horton walks away with an Oscar in the valuable books for the prospective scripter category with his latest rendering."

On January 1, 1997, **Kelly James-Enger** escaped from the law, but don't worry—she's not a fugitive. After five years as an attorney, she changed careers to become a fulltime freelance journalist, eventually writing both nonfiction and fiction books in addition to launching a successful speaking career.

While she's covered a variety of subjects, she specializes in health, fit-

ness, and wellness, and has written for more than 50 national magazines including *Family Circle*, *Health*, *Parents*, *Redbook*, *Self*, and *Woman's Day*. She's also an ACE-certified personal trainer.



Max McCoy is an award-winning journalist and novelist. He won the Spur award in 2008 from the Western Writers of America for his novel, *Hellfire Canyon*. McCoy is the author of nineteen novels, including four original Indiana

Jones adventures for LucasFilm and the novelization of Steven Spielberg's *Into the West*. His fiction debut, *The Sixth Rider*, won the Spur/Medicine Pipe Award for Best First Novel. In addition to westerns and his-



torical fiction, McCoy also writes contemporary adventures such as *The Moon Pool*. His latest book is *Damnation Road* (Pinnacle, September 2010), the third book in the trilogy that began with *Hellfire Canyon*. He is currently at work on a new thriller that will feature characters introduced in *The Moon Pool*.

McCoy grew up in Baxter Springs and most of his books are set in Kansas or Missouri. He began his career in journalism at the *Pittsburg Morning Sun* and writing for pulp magazines such as *True Detective* and *Front-Page Detective*. Most recently, he was the investigative

writer for the *Joplin Globe*. He won first-place awards in investigative reporting for his long form narratives on serial killers and hate groups. McCoy is currently an assistant professor of journalism at Emporia State University, the director of the Tallgrass Writing Workshop, which is held every June on the Emporia State campus, and adviser to the student newspaper, the *Bulletin*.

Rhonda Penders is Editor-in-Chief of The Wild Rose Press which started in May 2006 as a small press and e-publishing

company. Today the company is home to over 1200 romance titles published in both electronic and print format. The company was built on the belief

that a publishing contract is a team effort between editor, author and publisher and Penders holds tight to that mission statement. Penders' writing background includes everything from small town newspaper reporting to several years writing confessions for Dorchester magazines. She has several full length novels and short stories published under the name Roni Adams.

Fred Pfister is a retired English professor and a founding member of the Ozarks Writers League. He edits *The Ozarks Mountaineer*, a magazine dedicated to presenting, protecting and preserving the history, art, folklore and culture of the Ozarks. He is the author of *The Littlest Baby: A Handbook for Parents of Premature Children* and *The In-*

(Continued on page 16)



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"WRITE NOW" 2011 CONFERENCE SPEAKERS CONT.

(Continued from page 15)



literature, writing, and regional history.

Amy D. Shojai, CABC is a certified animal behavior consultant, author of 23 nonfiction pet care titles, and consultant to the pet products industry. She hosts a weekly radio show, a twice monthly TV segment, and appears as an expert on Animal Planet DOGS 101 and CATS 101. Amy is past president and lifetime member of OWFI, founder/president emeritus of the Cat Writers Association, and member of International Thriller Writers. She likes shiny objects.



Wendy Lyn Watson writes deliciously funny cozy mysteries with a dollop of romance. Her *Mysteries a la Mode* (I Scream, You Scream (October, 2009) and *Scoop to Kill* (September,

siders' Guide to Branson and the Ozarks Mountains, and he is a frequent speaker on subjects relating to the Ozarks: Harold Bell Wright, Missouri Place Names, Ozarks Weather lore, and other topics dealing with

2010)) feature amateur sleuth Tallulah Jones, who solves murders in between scooping sundaes. While she does not commit—or solve—murders in real life, Wendy can kill a pint of ice cream in nothing flat. She's also passionately devoted to 80s music, Asian horror films, and reality TV.

As a novelist, screenwriter, playwright, and actor, **Dale Whisman** stays busy. His first Detective novel, *Friends, And Other Perishables*, was published by Five Star Publishing and released in hard cover December 2004. That novel, along with two sequels, *Friends On Fire*, and *A Witch Among Friends* are now available in Trade Paperback from Deadly Niche Press. Dale is a member of OWFI, Tulsa NightWriters, Oklahoma Mystery Writers, and Mystery Writers of America. His feature length film, *Down The Road*, won the award for Best Feature Filmed in Oklahoma at the 2005 Bare-Bones International Film Festival, and the following year it won the DIGI award at the International Digital Cinema Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. His short screenplay *Hookers*, won Best Short Screenplay at the 2006 BareBones International Film Festival, and following it's production, *Hookers* went on to win the Grand Goldie Film Award for excellence and expertise in film. The following year his original teleplay, *Home In America* won another Grand Goldie Film Award. And, another of his screenplays, *Friends On Fire*, based on his second mystery novel, won the Illinois International Film Festival Award for Outstanding Achievement



in Screenwriting.

A strong supporter of community theatre, Dale has had six stage plays produced.

Dale is uniquely qualified to write about detectives and the criminal element in our society. He was a licensed Private Investigator for eleven years, and his writing attests to his thorough knowledge of the human animal and all of our faults, as well as our strengths.

Regina Williams has been the editor of *The Storyteller* since 1996. It's been a great learning experience and wonderful having a place for writers to submit their work. As a writer herself, she knows how hard it can sometimes be to place a story. She's been published in *Midwest Literary Magazine*, *Shorelines Literary Magazine*, *Futures Mysterious Anthology Magazine*, *Echoes of the Ozarks Anthology*, *Voices Anthology*, *Writing on Walls Anthology*, *Tales from the South Anthology*, *Ozarks Magazine*, *Cuivre River Anthology* to name a few. Her suspense novel is with an agent and she just finished *Writing With a Mentor* in the *Writing With Series* from Highhill Press. Regina lives in Maynard, Arkansas with her husband, Tom and although the grandkids live next door, she's claiming them as dependents since they are at her house more than at home.



Lenora Worth has written 35 books for three different publishers. She reached a milestone in 2006 when she received her 25th book pin from Steeple Hill and Harlequin. Her books have won both regional and na-

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tional awards and she now has over 1 million books in print. Currently she is writing both Love Inspired and Love Inspired Suspense for Steeple Hill. Married to her childhood sweetheart, Lenora has two grown children. She wrote a weekly opinion column for five years for the local paper and is currently writing freelance for a local magazine. Lenora lives in Louisiana.



writing when she reads it. She's very qualified to discuss submission etiquette.

Kathleen Anderson is a literary agent with Anderson Literary Management, LLC. They specialize in adult and young adult literary and commercial fiction, narrative nonfiction, American and European history, literary journalism, nature and travel writing, memoir, and biography. Kathleen specifically represents in nonfiction books, novels, short story collections and juvenile books. In fiction she represents action, adventure, ethnic, family saga, feminist, frontier, gay, historical, lesbian, literary, mystery, suspense, thriller, westerns, women's and young adult.

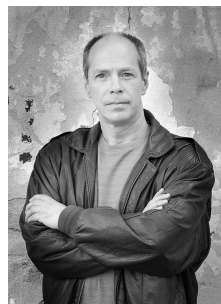
As an editor for over thirty-five years, an English and writing teacher for nearly thirty years, an author with poetry, articles, short stories, and novels published, and the head of a small publishing company for over three years, **Vivian Zabel** experienced both sides of the submission experience. Her publishing company, 4RV Publishing, produced the Oklahoma Book Award winner in fiction for 2010: *Confessions of a Former Rock Queen* by Kirk Bjornsgaard.



Other books have received regional awards in their categories. 4RV has released children's books, middle grade and young adult books, novels, and nonfiction books. Vivian has also received emails from rejected writers thanking her for sharing evaluation comments that help and swearing at her for being so blind she can't tell wonderful

Other books have received regional awards in their categories. 4RV has released children's books, middle grade and young adult books, novels, and

William Bernhardt finally had his first novel published by a division of Random House when he was thirty-one. To some, this may seem an early age to publish, but clocking it from his first rejection, it took twenty years! That was an "annus mirabilis" for Bill: his first son, Harry, was born in August, and his first book, *Primary Justice*, was born in December. The book, introducing lawyer Ben Kincaid, surprised everyone. The follow-up, *Blind Justice*, did even better and before he even realized it he had accomplished his goal—to be a real honest-to-gosh writer, and he has been writing ever since. He can now boast more than twenty novels, two edited anthologies, two books for children, and numerous stories, essays, puzzles, and poems plus three children!



Scott Eagan draws on his extensive

(Continued on page 26)

Contest Sponsorship

Thank you to PAWS and the Red River Writers – these affiliates have stepped up to sponsor a category for the 2011 OWFI writing contest.

Don't worry, there's still time for you to sponsor too!

Sponsorships pay the cost of awarding contest prizes for one category or half of a category. These help a great deal to make our conference self-supporting, so that registration fees can go towards expenses for bringing in quality speakers.

To sponsor one category, please contribute \$105, using the form below. If your writers' group is extremely small and cannot manage \$105, please try to contribute \$52.50 for half a category. Donations of any amount will be accepted and noted among the conference sponsors. You may request a specific category, and we'll honor the request if possible but can't guarantee it. (It's much easier if you simply donate for any available category.) Whenever possible, special requests to sponsor in memory of an individual will be noted.

Please send your contest sponsorship donation and this form to the treasurer, Barbara Shepherd, at the address below. Make checks to Okla. Writers Federation Inc. Also, to be sure your group is properly credited, please send a copy of the form below to Gayleen Rabakukk, by e-mail if possible, at Gayleen@rabakukk.com.

Mail checks to Barbara Shepherd
OWFI
PO Box 54302
Oklahoma City, OK 73154
owfiwriters@gmail.com

See page 18 for sponsorship form to be sent with your donation.

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The Plot Thickens

by Noah Lukeman

Reviewed By Erin Hartshorn,

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In *The First Five Pages*, Noah Lukeman discussed what agents and editors are looking for so they can reject your manuscript. *The Plot Thickens*, on the other hand, is about plot. In Lukeman's words, "It is the purpose of this book to show that plot is not just about having a single great idea." As with his previous book, this is a distillation of what he has learned through reading tens of thousands of manuscripts in his years as an agent.

The first three chapters are devoted to characterization -- outer, inner, and applied. I am not a fan of laundry lists of character traits. These lists have about as much personality as a police description: "male Caucasian, mid 30s, short brown hair, blue eyes." Even with height and weight, that is pretty generic, unless it is something like 5'11" and 320 pounds. But here, the lists are the merest starting point.

Outer characterization starts the process of "[quizzing] yourself fastidiously about every last detail of your character's inner and outer life." It begins with appearance and runs through medical history, family background, education, employment history, police record, etc. This is not compiling a list; it is creating an abridged biography, trying to capture the telling details of the character's life without any knowledge of motivation. It is a lot of work. It will not appeal to writers who get to know their characters through writing scenes or listening to the voices in their heads. For those who do create character sheets, however, this may provide a source for overlooked material.

The questions Lukeman addresses in the inner life chapter include such things as "Will he refuse to hold a job, [or] pay his bills?" and "Does he write poetry or frequent bars? Or both?" The first exercise for this chapter does require compil-

ing a list, but Lukeman uses further exercises to expand on it. One such exercise is to create a character list for a friend or family member and think about what makes them unique that is not included in the list, then apply that knowledge of oversight to your character profiles.

The chapter on applied characterization has many bits of wisdom that are not apparent from the chapter title, such

as discussing the impact of a character's frequent appearances, elaborating on the three objectives of a narrator or viewpoint character, and discussing what effects character interactions have on our perceptions of them.

This is, by far, my favorite of the chapters on characterization because it involves context with nary a list in sight. The distinction Lukeman draws between creating a multidimensional character and

relying on "realism" for characterization is worthwhile reading for everyone. "Art has become less an escape and more an embrace of the mundane." Regardless of one's writing style, reading and rereading this chapter when embarking on a new project can only give strength to one's writing.

Journey, the fourth chapter, takes a rather different approach than one finds

in Christopher Vogler's *The Writer's Journey*, which Lukeman does refer to. Again, the difference between internal and external comes up (called "profound journey" and "surface journey"), as well as the need to create parallels between the two. A journey requires a goal, a destination, and a beginning. "Story telling is not about giving away information but about withholding it; the information

itself is never as important as the path you take in disseminating it." The path, the journey, is what leads to satisfaction in the reader. Journeys provide inspiration, catharsis, change, and purpose. Lukeman discusses how multiple journeys can interact, as well as speed and pacing for the journey.

The topic that affected me the most in this book was suspense. He discusses how to

create it, how to lengthen it, when it is appropriate, and how to recognize if you have too much of it without a break. After reading this chapter, I sat down and wrote out an entire chapter for my current novel that simply created suspense because the main character did not make a decision. Later, I realized the entire chapter had to be cut, but it was a

(Continued on page 19)

Sooner or later all writers face the need to "murder their darlings," and Lukeman addresses this issue as well. We must cut out words carefully chosen, passages beautifully honed, and scenes that no longer work. They do not fit into the piece, and no matter how much we love them, they must go. The chapter on context discusses how to decide when things do not fit, or when they detract from the work as a whole. This is the shortest chapter in the book, but well worth reading.

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The Plot Thickens

by Noah Lukeman

(Continued from page 18)

great exercise in applying what I had read. Ways of adding suspense that he discusses include raising stakes, danger, a ticking clock, inability to take action, the unknown and sexual tension.

It seems that no book on writing can do without a discussion of conflict. Lukeman examines thirteen of the more basic forms of conflict. Anyone with any family at all (which is probably most of us) should not be surprised to find family on the list of conflict-generating situations, along with romance, work, and time.

Sooner or later all writers face the need to "murder their darlings," and Lukeman addresses this issue as well. We must cut out words carefully chosen, passages beautifully honed, and scenes that no longer work. They do not fit into the piece, and no matter how much we love them, they must go. The chapter on context discusses how to decide when things do not fit, or when they detract from the work as a whole. This is the shortest chapter in the book, but well worth reading.

The last chapter is on transcendency. It is hard to view this as having universal applicability. Not all works can stand out and become classics. This chapter looks at what transcendent works have in common. However, Lukeman points out that if these elements are to be incorporated into a piece of writing, it must occur organically rather than by force. Writing with an agenda is not transcendent, nor is writing a morality tale. Having said this, he goes on to include practical things to consider, such as emotion, the writer's motivation, and goals for the work. The two-plus pages on the audience arc should be required reading for every author as a reminder of where we are trying to go with our writing.

This book is a valuable addition to every beginning writer's bookshelf. I cannot say how much value it would have for those who have already published multiple works, who have demonstrated they already know that plot is more than a single idea. This examination of, as the author says, "age-old principles of story" does provide new ways of thinking about character and conflict, suspense and journey. I may have to reread this next week.

The Plot Thickens: 8 Ways to Bring Fiction to Life by Noah Lukeman
St. Martin's Griffin paperback published 2003, also available in hardback.
ISBN 0-312-30928-7 (pbk) 0-312-28467-5 (hbk)

The Writer's Journey (Paperback) by Christopher Vogler
Pan MacMillan (February 28, 1999)
ISBN 0-330-37591-1

Erin M. Hartshorn is a desert rat transplanted to a humid climate. She is a moderator at Forward Motion for Writers, an online writers community. Each year, she also indulges in NaNoWriMo, acting as regional Municipal Liaison. Her fiction has appeared in anthologies from Carnifex Press and Hadley Rille Books, online at Spacesuits and Sixguns, and has placed in the PARSEC short story contest.



Contest Sponsor Form

Name of group: _____

Contact person + e-mail & phone: _____

Check one: _____ Full category, \$105 _____ Two categories! Thanks!
_____ Half category, \$52.50

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TENTATIVE: 2011 "WRITE NOW" Conference Schedule

THURSDAY, MAY 5

5-8:30 p.m.	Registration Opens, Lobby Area (See Ruth Weeks)
7-8:30p.m.	Pre-Con Workshop, Pre-Convene, Kelly James Enger, <i>Breaking In: The Basics of Writing for Magazines</i>

FRIDAY, MAY 6

7:30-9:00 a.m., 12-12:30 Registration Opens, Lobby Area (See Ruth Weeks)					
9-5:50 p.m.	BOOKSTORE/TBD (8:30 a.m. check-in consignment books) (Operated by BEST OF BOOKS)				
2-5:00 p.m.	EDITOR/AGENT APPOINTMENTS (See Patty Stith) ROOM D				
	ROOM A	ROOM B	ROOM C	ROOM D	PRE-CONV
8:30 -8:50 a.m.	Opening Session, Introductions, Announcements, Sally Jadlow (Chaplain), etc.				
9-9:50 a.m.	Magazine Editor's Panel tbd, moderator				Speaker, <i>session title</i>
10-10:50 a.m.	Agent's Panel tbd, moderator				Speaker, <i>session title</i>
11-11:50 a.m.	Book Editor's Panel tbd, moderator				Speaker, <i>session title</i>
12:10-1:40 p.m.	LUNCH WORKSHOP, PRE-CONVENE, Wendy Lyn Watson <i>Flattering Your Authentic Voice</i> (Must be Pre-registered to Attend.)				
2-2:50 p.m.	Amy Shojai, Lights! Camera! Action! Media Training for Authors	Marilyn Collins, Stories on Your Doorstep	Verna Dreisbach, The Query Letter	Editor/Agent Appointments	Lenora Worth, Writing for the Inspirational/Christian Market ~ You Gotta Have Faith
3-3:50 p.m.	Velda Brotherton, PRESENT! Book Promotion Made Easy	Max McCoy, Narratives of the Damned	Gretchen Craig, What Women Want: Romance Writing Today	Editor/Agent Appointments	Kelly James-Enger, Make More as a Book Author: Getting Started in Ghostwriting
4-4:50 p.m.	Andy Horton, Writing the Comedy Centered Screenplay	Dale Whisman, Writing the Mystery Series	Michael Bracken, Sin, Suffer, Cash the checks	Editor/Agent Appointments	Liz Berry, Buzzing Your Book: The Muse's View of What Makes Books Sell
6:30-9:30 PM.	FAMOUS AUTHORS BANQUET, ROOMS A, B, C, D (Famous Authors Book Auction)				

After Dinner Informal Buzz Sessions (Hosts, Subjects, Locations, TBA)

SATURDAY, MAY 7

7:30-9:00 a.m., 11-11:30 a.m. REGISTRATION OPENS, Lobby Area (See Ruth Weeks)					
9-5:30 p.m.	BOOKSTORE/TBD (Operated by BEST OF BOOKS)				
8:30-11:30	EDITOR/APPOINTMENTS (See Patty Stith) ROOM D				
	ROOM A	ROOM B	ROOM C	ROOM D	PRE-CONV
8:30-9:20 a.m.	Lenora Worth, Emotional Suspense	Michael Bracken, Don't Quit Your Day Job: My Path to Freelance Success After My Day Job Quit Me	Speaker, <i>session title</i>	Editor/Agent Appointments	Wendy Lyn Watson, Cozy is as Cozy Does
9:30-10:20 a.m.	Gretchen Craig, Packing in the WOW	Liz Berry, Buzzing Your Book: The Muse's View of What Makes Books Sell	Dale Whisman, Writing a Screenplay	Editor/Agent Appointments	Amy Shojai, eBooks: Writers' Brass Ring or Lead Balloon?
10:30-11:20 a.m.	Marilyn Collins, Organize Your Nonfiction Book with the <i>Timeline Process</i> (Works for Fiction, Too).	Max McCoy, The Hero's Journey	Andrew Horton, Beginning Writing	Editor/Agent Appointments	Velda Brotherton, EXPLORE! Find a Publisher for Your Book
11:40-1:10	LUNCH WORKSHOP, PRE-CONVENE ROOM, Kelly Jame-Enger <i>Straight from the Lawyer's Mouth: Contract and Business Advice for Writers</i> (Must be Pre-registered to Attend.)				
1:30-2:20 p.m.	Scott Eagan, Understanding the Romance and Women's Fiction Genres	Kate Epstein, Are Editors From Mars?	Vivian Zabel, Submission Etiquette 101	Fred Pfister, A Writers Audience is Always Fiction: Techniques for Visualizing Your Audience	William Bernhardt Writing the Character Driven Novel
2:30-3:20 p.m.	Kathleen Anderson, Now that I've Heard This, What Do I Do Now?	Regina Williams, How to Submit from an Editor's Perspective.	Speaker, <i>session title</i>	Mari Garthing, Freelance Writing for Local Markets	Rhonda Penders, How to Lose an Editor in 10 Days
3:30-4:00 p.m.	OWFI BOARD MEETING				
4:00 - 4:20	GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING				
4:30-5:30 p.m.	AUTOGRAPH PARTY Held in the COURT YARD (See Wes Warner)				
6:30-10:00 p.m.	AWARDS BANQUET, ROOMS A, B, C, D				

Affiliate News

KANSAS WRITERS ASSOCIATION

Acceptances and Sales:

ARLENE RAINS GRABER: "Best Friend" to *Chicken Soup for Grandmothers*

ARLENE RAINS GRABER: November issue of East Wichita News, "Assuring Bang for your Charity Bucks" February issue for EWN "Couple Combines Life, Entrepreneurship",

Contest Winnings

ARLENE RAINS GRABER: Heart of America Christian Writers Network contest, 1st place, "Channeling Crisis."

Club News:

2011 officers: Gordon Kessler, president; Seti Walker, vice president; Starla Criser, secretary; Mikelle Fraizer, treasurer.

Scene of the Crime Conference, March 19, 2011. Details listed at www.kwawriters.org.

NORMAN GALAXY OF WRITERS

Acceptances and Sales

ANN CHAMPEAU sold an article to *The Writer* magazine, "Stop! Look! Listen! Don't Let Your Memories Fly Away." Sold an article, "Grandma's Christmas," to *Cappers*. Published

"Markets" columns in August, September, November, of Galaxy's newsletter.

CONNIE ECKSTEIN: A veterans' essay in *The Transcript* about her son's Iraq deployment and the impact on her.

JOCELYN PEDERSON: Feature story picked up by *AP*. Press release for professional race car driver, Marco Ferrera. Story in *Abner Magazine* about Mary Abbot Children's House in Norman. Article in *Silk* magazine.

HELEN DUCHON: Edited and published Norman Galaxy's newsletter *WriteLine*. Published University (OU) Women's Association newsletter. Published Friends of the Norman Library's *Among Friends* newsletter.

FRANCES SEARCEY: Poem accepted by *Blood and Thunder* for its 2010 issue. Poems published in *Mature Living*.

KATHLEEN NORRIS PARK: Produced Norman Baha'i newsletter. Published "Watching Your Language" column each month for Norman Galaxy's *WriteLine*.

VICKEY MALONE KENNEDY: published "A Bubba In Time Saves None" and "Bobby Sue Almost Got Married" on www.yarddogpress.com.

ROBERT FERRIER: Two poems on YOU Tube, from chapbook "The Dante Dreams: Inferno." Published "The Most Memorable Play I Ever Made," and "The Best OU game I Ever Witnessed" in *Norman Transcript's* Special Football Supplement, "Glory Days."

BARBARA SHEPHERD: Poem published in the new book "*Travelin' Music*."

HOLI HAGAN: Published Galaxy's August newsletter, *The WriteLine*."

STAN SOLLOWAY: Silliman on Sports columns. Writes sports articles for on-line site *Bleacher Report*, the largest on-line sport site and belongs to CBS Sports. *Bleacher Report* linked his

stories to USA Today, Forbes.com, LA Times, NY Daily News, Washington Times and India Times.

KEITH EATON: Article "Harold Hamn: All Cattle and No Hat" published in *Distinctly Oklahoma*.

Contests

JOCELYN PEDERSON received an unsolicited scholarship from *Golden Key International Honor Society* to aid her studies for a Master of Professional Writing.

NEAL HUFFAKER won two second places in the White County, Arkansas Writers' Conference: a cinquain poem "Good Riddance," and short story, "Katya's Thief."

BARBARA SHEPHERD won 1st HM for a poem, "The Auction," in the National Poetry Day Contest at the Poetry Society of Oklahoma.

Professional Activities

ROBERT FERRIER held a two-hour poetry workshop "Writing the Craft of Poetry."

BARBARA SHEPHERD read poetry with other Woody Guthrie poets at Istan Gallery in Oklahoma City. Her writing collage, "Dear Mary or Jari" was accepted in the gallery show at Gallery in the Paseo. Original works will be assembled into a book to present to First Female Governor of Oklahoma.

STAN SOLLOWAY read as Silliman on Sports online "Patino-Sypher Flick Tough Casting" "Yogi vs. Casey Quote War: Top That," "Yogi to Obama: Latest Mission for

[Affiliate News from Norman Galaxy Continued](#)

Celebrity," "Yogi Berra has met every sitting President," "Celebrate the 8th Anniversary of Silliman." In a national stand-up comedy contest in Indianapolis

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Affiliate News

Continued

(Trial by Laughter) to be filmed by Comcast TV. Took part in the comedy event at the Sooner Theater to benefit Food and Shelter for Friends in Norman. **JUDY HOWARD** gave "Oklahoma History in Quilts" program at Norman's McFarlin Methodist Church. Spoke and signed books at the annual Ancestor's Fair in the Oklahoma History Center.

Other

BARBARA SHEPHERD sponsored Annual Art Affair Literary Contest. **HELEN DUCHON** was appointed web master for League of Women Voters of Norman.

Members News

MADELAINE CULP lost her long battle with cancer September 8, 2010. She had a 20-year career as a teacher in California and before that she enjoyed acting, dancing and singing on various stages. She was writing historical romance novels.

ANN CHAMPEAU and her husband **BOB**, celebrated their 60th anniversary and Bob's 80th birthday the week of October 11-16.

HELEN DUCHON and her husband **CLAUDE** celebrated their 50th anniversary.

PEN & KEYBOARD WRITERS GROUP

Acceptances and Sales

MIKE HINKLE: ARTICLES: "Some laws best left in the dust", *The Edmond Sun* (11/17/10), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1672071390/Some-laws-best-left-in-the-dust> ; "Aid must come soon for veterans", *The Edmond Sun* (11/24/10), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x862969785/Aid-must-come-soon-for-veterans> ; "The Goose continues to fuel inspiration", *The Edmond Sun* (12/01/10), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x622284482/The-Goose-continues-to-fuel-inspiration> ; "Americans face stark choices", *The Edmond Sun* (12/08/10), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1199049768/Americans-face-stark-choices> ; "Deciphering the meaning of happiness", *The Edmond Sun* (12/15/10), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1168754569/Deciphering-the-meaning-of-happiness/print> ; "Stupid cure might be on the horizon", *The Edmond Sun* (12/29/10), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1758586264/Stupid-cure-might-be-on-the-horizon/print> ; "Decline in empathy may bode ill", *The Edmond Sun* (01/05/11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1091850799/Decline-in-empathy-may-bode-ill> ; "Blame the corpus callosum", *The Edmond Sun* (01/15/11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x233314325/Blame-the-corpus-callosum> ; "Science tries to sort through all the mysteries of womanhood", *The Edmond Sun* (01/26/11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x554665105/Science-tries-to-sort-through-all-the-mysteries-of-womanhood> ; "Humans require engagement with world around them", *The Edmond Sun* (02/09/11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x353715560/Humans-require-engagement-with-world-around-them>

vehoae: ARTICLE: BOOK REVIEW: "Zack and Karlana: A love story", Review of *From Whence They Fell: A Paradox of Love and War*, by William R. Van Osdol, at vehoae: Non-Fiction Research & Writing (12/02/10), <http://vehoae.com/2010/12/02/940/#comments>

vehoae: ARTICLE: BOOK REVIEW: "Zack and Karlana: A love story", Review of *From Whence They Fell: A Paradox of Love and War*, by William R. Van Osdol, at vehoae: Non-Fiction Research & Writing (12/02/10), <http://vehoae.com/2010/12/02/940/#comments>

RED RIVER WRITERS

Acceptances and Sales

KIMBERLY MAUCK: ARTICLES: "Around the World with the McCoys," *Oklahoma Today*, (Sept./Oct., 2010). "The Gentle Touch of Godly Wisdom," *Christian Woman*, (Nov./Dec., 2010).

Novels and New Books

RON WALLACE: new book *Oklahoma Cantos* is now on sale.

Professional Activities

RON WALLACE: Reading poetry at McAlester Public School, Dec. 16, 2010.

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Professional Activities

GAYLEEN RABAKUKK was awarded a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Vermont College on January 19. Vermont College offers a low-residency graduate program combining intense, but brief sessions on campus each semester followed by one-on-one work with a writing advisor. Gayleen's program focused on writing for children and young adults. During her two years as a student, she read 200 books, wrote a critical thesis exploring the use of multiple point of view in novels and completed a young adult historical mystery for her novel-length creative thesis.

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Affiliate News

Continued

NW ARKANSAS WRITERS GUILD

Professional Activities

MARILYN H. COLLINS: SPEAKER: Workshop leader for OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute - U of A) for six sessions at the Global Campus in Rogers, AR (Feb. 8, 15, 22/March 1, 8, 15). Her topic is "Memoir Writing: Write Your Life Story, Your Way (Part 2); SPEAKER: Collins will lead a four-part workshop for OLLI (March 28, Apr. 4, 11, 18) "Writing for Regional & Special Interest Magazines" (www.ollu.uark.edu); SPEAKER: She will also lead a full-day workshop at Hot Springs Village, AR (March 19) on "How to Brighten Your Leaf on the Family Tree."

LELA DAVIDSON: Taught *Beyond Blogging: How to Make Money Writing Online Content* (01/11); Taught *Blog-ging Basics: Article Writing Workshop* (01/11).

BARBARA YOUREE: Speaker at the Human Rights Forum at the University of Kansas Law, Lawrence, Kansas. Her topic was, "Witness to Injustice in Southern Sudan," based on her book *Courageous Journey* and the recent Referendum (02/11); Speaker at the monthly luncheon meeting of Benton County Democrats (www.bedems.net), Bentonville, Arkansas. Her topic was "World's Newest Country: South Sudan's Violent Past and It's Hopeful Future." (02/11).

Publications

MARILYN H. COLLINS: NEWSLETTER: Editor, free online newsletter for writers, *Proficient Writer NEWS*,

www.proficientwriter.com. Monthly newsletter offers practical tips and information for writers. All subscribers may list their upcoming conferences, speaking engagements, and current publications; EBOOKS: *Step-by-Step Writing Guides: "The Art & Business of Writing Local or Regional History;" "Bring the Past to Life: You Can Write a Book about Your Family;" Special Report: Get More for Your Money at Writers' Conferences;" Have an Idea for a Book? Seven Simple Steps to Make Sure Your Story Will Sell."*

LELA DAVIDSON: ARTICLE: "Trotting Out My Turkey," *VT Kids* magazine (11/10); ARTICLE: "10 Things That Could Go Wrong While Baking," *Family Times* magazine (12/10-1/11) and *Metro Parent* magazine (12/10); ARTICLE: "Anti-Resolutions," *Chesapeake Family* magazine (01/11); ARTICLE: "How to Save Money on Groceries Without Turning Coupon Clipping Into a Part-Time Job," *Chicago Parent* (02/11); ARTICLE: "Let Them Eat Cake," *ParentWise: Austin* (02/11); STORY: "Confessions of An Earth Mama Wannabe," *Chicken Soup for the Soul: New Moms* (03/11).

RHONDA FRANZ: STORY: "Yoga Night," *Chicken Soup for the Soul: New Moms* (03/11).

OKLAHOMA CITY WRITERS

Novels and New Books

AUDREY STREETMAN has published her memoir, *The Well*, about her spiritual and psychological journey from rural Texas in the 1940s to Oklahoma banking in the 1970's and 1980's. She had a book signing at Full Circle on December 14.

JUDY HOWARD New Book Release:

1905 Cookbook--Food for Body and Soul. All profits go to feed starving children. She had multiple book signings over the next several months.

AUDREY STREETMAN has published her memoir, *The Well*, about her spiritual and psychological journey from rural Texas in the 1940s to Oklahoma banking in the 1970's and 1980's. She had a book signing at Full Circle on December 14.

Acceptances and Sales

BERNADINE WELLS sold an article, "The Games We Played to The Good Old Days."

BARBARA SHEPHERD's poem "Afternoon Magic" was published in the *Lone Stars Magazine*, December 2010.

DIANE LOHR WILSON'S article, "Mrs Cremiensi" was published in the *Independent School Magazine*, February 2011

MARIA VERES had poems, "Venerating the Relics" and "I Wish You a Boring Life" by Edgz.. She had two poems, "Making My Way Home" and an untitled haiku, published in *Cross Timbers*, fall 2010.

Contest Winnings

BARBARA SHEPHERD won the following awards in the Norman Galaxy contest:

2nd, Unrhymed Poetry, "Mountain Top"; 2nd, Nonfiction Article, "You Can't Keep Good Woman Down"; HM, Nonfiction Article, "The New Vending Machines: RX and Weed"; HM, Short Story, "The Angler"; HM, Children's Fiction, "Francisco and the Mayan King"

SHELLEY ANNE RICHTER won an HM for a young-adult short story "Wheels" and an HM for a short-short story "Five Claws of the Dragon" in the 2010 Writers Digest contest. She sold a poem "The Ballerina" to *Looking Back Magazine* for the May 2011 issue.

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Affiliate News

Continued

Professional Activities

BARBARA SHEPHERD was reelected treasurer of Word Wrights-OKC Christian Writers Group.

MARIA VEERS also judged poetry contests for Illinois State Poetry Society and Kansas City Voices magazine.

OLGA VESTA BUTTON was featured on KFOR-TV evening news on February 6. The item was about her life and escape from a religious cult in downtown Oklahoma City.

CATHERINE KATY JOHNSON graduated from Rose State with an AA and a BA from UCO at the same time.

JUDY HOWARD presented the God Bless America Touring Quilts at the OKC Winter Quilt Show in January.

MID-OKLAHOMA WRITERS

Acceptances and Sales

BARBARA SHEPHERD: POEM: "Afternoon Magic," *Lone Stars Magazine*, (December, 2010)

Contest Winnings

BARBARA SHEPHERD: 2010 OCWI Annual Contest, FEATURE ARTICLE: 1ST Place, "You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down;" 2010 NORMAN GALAXY of WRITERS Annual Contest: UNRHYMED POETRY: 2ND Place: "Mountain Top," NON-FICTION ARTICLE: "You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down," 2ND Place, NON-FICTION AR-

TICLE: "The New Vending Machines: RX and Weed," Honorable Mention; SHORT STORY: "The Angler," Honorable Mention and CHILDREN'S FICTION: 1ST Place, "Francisco and the Mayan King"

CHARLES VASSEL: 2010 Annual Art Affaire Writing Contests WESTERN SHORT STORY: "The Fastest Gun Alive," Honorable Mention.

JUDITH DURBIN: 2010 Annual Art Affaire Writing Contests POETRY: "summer and twilight," Honorable Mention and "Robert," Honorable Mention.

Professional Activities

DAVID ROPER: Made a presentation to the Oklahoma City chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators on "Writing for Children's Magazines," (November, 2010).

BARBARA SHEPHERD: Re-elected as Treasurer for Wordwrights-OKC Christian Writers Group.

Club News

Mid-Oklahoma Writers meets at 7pm the second Tuesday of the month (except July and August) at the Learning Center, Room 110, Rose State College, Midwest City. Visitors welcomed.

FORT WORTH WRITERS

Professional Activities:

OLYVE HALLMARK ABBOTT: BOOK SIGNINGS: *Texas Ghosts: Galveston, Houston, and Vicinity*, Trinity Terrace, Fort Worth (11/10); *A Ghost in the Guest Room*, Jewish Community Center, Dallas (11/10); Panel member on Texas Authors, discussing "Writers Groups" on KYXQ-FM Radio (1/15).

Panel members on Texas Authors, discussing "Writers Groups" on KYXQ-FM Radio (1/). **CHRISTINE ENDY**

(President), **DEBBIE GILLETTE** (Vice-President), **ROGER LATHAM** (Director)

Club News

We are saddened as **RALPH LINSCOTT**, one of our good friends and fellow members, passed away on January 29, 2011. We will miss his wit, charm and tales from his beloved New Mexico.

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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2011 CONFERENCE SPEAKER PROGRAMS CONT.

(Continued from page 12)

fiction - currently accepting: Biography/Memoir, True Crime, Business/Economics, Social History/Culture, Spirituality/Religion, Native American Indian, Parenting, Women's Issues, Health, travel, Science.

The Query Letter. First impressions do matter and the query letter is no different. Writers struggle with form, content and style in this one page letter that determines whether or not an agent will request to see more. Learn how to avoid the most common mistakes and gain the edge when submitting your work to an agent.

Kate Epstein (Literary agent Epstein Literary Agency)

Are Editors from Mars? The editor-author relationship should be one of the most positive and rewarding business relationships an author can have—and most of the time it is. Your editor is your in-house champion, the person who communicates a vision of your project to every significant colleague. As such, she's extremely important to your book's success. As an agent, it's my role to act as something of a relationship counselor to authors. In this talk I'll share some of what I've learned about where editors are coming from and how authors can best create a solid mutual business relationship with their editors.

Mari Farthing (editor, Metro Family Magazine)

Ono-on-One appointments. See our guidelines at metrofamilymagazine.com/writers-guidelines.

Freelance Writing for Local Markets. Looking to break into the local magazine market? Mari will discuss her success and failure as freelance a freelance writer and give valuable information as to what those local market magazines are seeking. Includes tips and tricks for freelance writers and how to get your submission to stand out in a sea of submissions

Dreams are illustrations
from the book your soul
is writing about you.

Marsha Norman

2011 CONFERENCE SPEAKER BIOS CONT.

(Continued from page 17)

background in education, writing and literature to assist the writers at Greyhaus. He has a BA in English/Literature, a MA in Creative Writing and a MA in Literacy. Scott is also a writer (done mostly as a hobby) and is an active member of the Romance Writers of America. Outside of his work at the agency, he continues teaching writing on a part-time basis, works as a stay at



home dad. You can frequently find him flexing his theater muscles in local community theatre productions.

Kate Epstein is the founder and president of The Epstein Literary

Agency, and she is a member of the Association of Authors' Representatives. Kate travels periodically to her native New York City--an easy train ride from her Boston-area location--and is actively building relationships with editors at publishers large and small. Kate Epstein founded the Epstein Literary Agency in October, 2005, after four years' acquisitions experience at Adams Media. Kate Ep-



stein holds a B.A. with Highest Honors in English from the University of Michigan.

Verna Dreisbach is an agent, writer and educator. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in English, giving her an edge in the editorial process. She teaches through the University of California Davis Extension and is the editor



of *Why We Ride: Women Writers on the Horses in their Lives*, published by Seal Press. Verna is the founder of Capitol City Young Writers, a non-profit organization that supports and encourages creative writing in aspiring youth.

of *Why We Ride: Women Writers on the Horses in their Lives*, published by Seal Press. Verna is the founder of Capitol City Young Writers, a non-profit organization that supports and encourages creative writing in aspiring youth.

Mari Farthing is an award-winning writer who has been with MetroFamily Magazine since 2003. She started her career quite by accident, with a chance meeting and a passion for writing. She found her career at MetroFamily through freelance writing, eventually becoming a regular columnist and assistant editor before stepping into the role of editor in 2008. She is interested in connecting local readers with useful information written by local writers.

Along with magazine work, Mari is working on several projects, including projects for future publication (from children's books to adult novels), personal blogs (marimargene.blogspot.com), several collaborative blogs and an online music magazine that is currently in development.



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MAY 6-7, 2011

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Steve Berry

<http://www.steveberry.org/index.htm>

Kathleen Anderson (Literary Agent)

<http://www.andersonliterary.com>

William Bernhardt (NYT Bestselling Writer)

<http://www.williambernhardt.com>

Liz Berry (Publicist)

Michael Bracken (Short Story Writer)

<http://www.CrimeFictionWriter.com>

Velda Brotherton (Author)

<http://www.veldabrotherton.com>

Marilyn Collins (Author)

<http://www.mhcollins.com>

Gretchen Craig (Historical Romance Writer)

<http://www.gretchencraig.com>

Verna Dreisbach (Literary agent Dreisbach
Literary Management)

<http://www.vernadreisbach.com>

Scott Eagan (Literary agent Greyhaus Liter-
ary Agency)

<http://www.epsteinliterary.com>

Kate Epstein (Literary agent Epstein Literary
Agency)

<http://www.epsteinliterary.com>

Mari Farthing (editor, Metro Family Maga-
zine)

www.metrofamilymagazine.com/mari

Andy Horton (Screen Writer)

<http://faculty-staff.ou.edu/H/>

Andrew.S.Horton-1/

Kelly James-Enger (Freelance Writer)

<http://www.becomebodywise.com>

Max McCoy (Western (and other genres)
Writer)

<http://www.maxmccoy.com>

Rhonda Penders (Editor-in-Chief The Wild
Rose Press)

<http://www.thewildrosepress.com>

Fred Pfister (editor Ozark Mountaineer
Magazine)

<http://www.ozarksmountaineer.com>

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<http://www.shojai.com>

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<http://www.wendylynwatson.com>

Dale Whisman (Mystery Writer/Screen
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CONTEST PHOTO!

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