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THE

# REPORT



*Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc.*

PROMOTING HIGHER STANDARDS FOR THE WRITTEN WORD

in Oklahoma, the United States and around the world





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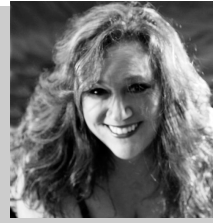
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**DO NOT SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE EDITORIAL OFFICE.**



Patty Stith

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Are you excited? I am. Beside myself, actually. The 45<sup>th</sup> OWFI Conference **Revive! Strive! Thrive!** is fast approaching. We have some exciting new features this year. The conference will be held at the Norman Embassy Suites and Conference Center in Norman, OK. Because of the size of the hotel, we will be having six consecutive sessions on Friday and Saturday instead of the usual four sessions. Pretty cool, right? We have something for everyone from genre specific workshops to self promotion and e-publishing to craft development.

Another exciting addition to the OWFI lineup is the Reading Room. It is open to anyone attending the conference. Participants will need a poster of their book. A reading time will be booked prior to the conference. Specifications for the posters are on the website. You'll need to e-mail your poster sample to: Casey Cowan, kidsundance203@yahoo.com.

As mentioned, I don't have a clue about poetry, so Jan Morrill, the lovely conference chair, has organized a poetry slam. Yeah, you heard that right. A POETRY SLAM! Woohoo. I have no idea what that means, but it sounds like fun. It will be held on Friday night in addition to the usual Buzz Sessions. Not only is this an opportunity to reveal your poetic soul, you can win cash! Yep, a whopping \$20 or so.

We have room for twenty exhibitor tables. They are \$50 for the entire weekend. Since the space is limited, let me know as soon as possible if you're interested in getting one. It's a great opportunity to showcase your awesomeness.

I'm really excited about the keynote speaker, Patrick Rothfuss, philanthropist and bestselling fantasy author. I wanted to mix it up a bit since we've had a series of crime novelists as keynote the last couple of years. Come on, admit it, you're intrigued by the beard, aren't you? Not only is Mr. Rothfuss a

trendsetter in the fantasy world, he's also an amazingly generous man. His charity Worldbuilders has raised over \$1 million for Heifer International ([www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org))

Cindy Davis is a fantastic editor and book doctor. She has agreed to give twenty-five lucky OWFI members a fifty-page edit for \$50. That's half price at least! If you're interested in getting a critique, please e-mail me [president@owfi.org](mailto:president@owfi.org) by April 1<sup>st</sup>. She'll review your pages and schedule one-on-one time with each person who signs up for a critique. And get this. Not only do members get a review for half price, Cindy has agreed to split the proceeds with OWFI. So, you get an in-depth review, you help out OWFI. It's a win-win!

Agents, editors and publicists, oh my! We have six agents converging on Oklahoma. Please take a look at the agents and what they represent and make an appointment. The appointment slots will be available March 1-April 15. Contact Steve Whelchel ([sswhelc@yahoo.com](mailto:sswhelc@yahoo.com)). In addition to agents, we have several publishers taking pitches as well.

Don't forget the publicist, Milton Kahn, who brings to the table his years of experience as one of the entertainment industry's premiere public relations and marketing specialists. The creator of countless ingenious blockbuster campaigns for major Hollywood films, including *Fried Green Tomatoes*, *Watership Down*, Ron Howard's directorial debut *Grand Theft Auto*, and the Oscar winning Fellini's *Amarcord*. Milton Kahn has orchestrated a total of 74 Oscar and EMMY Award nominations, winning 11 Oscar and 9 EMMY awards.

Be sure to check the website every Sunday. I've interviewed each of the speakers, editors, agents, etc. and I post a new interview each week. It's a good way to get acquainted with the OWFI Faculty.

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## Read This Book!

# BENEATH THE WINDOW: Early Ranch Life in the Big Bend Country By Patricia Wilson Clothier

Annie Withers, Book Review Editor

### BENEATH THE WINDOW

#### Early Ranch Life in the Big Bend Country

By Patricia Wilson Clothier

Iron Mountain Press, Houston, TX

Published 2004

167 pages

The author calls her elegant little book a memoir. But I call it an American saga to match **Gone With the Wind**, **Grapes of Wrath**, and even shades of **Little Women** - full of passion, beauty, and pathos. It's truly larger than life and makes everyone cry. But it was the only life she knew. She was born on one of the last American frontiers – southwest Texas in Great Bend which is now a National Park.

Her father, Homer Wilson, from Del Rio, 200 miles east, became a mining engineer. After WWI, he came home to pursue his dream. He saw rich cinnabar deposits in the foothills and mountains on the Texas-Mexico border. In 1929, he gathered 65,000 acres together surrounded on three sides by the Rio Grande River. The next year, he married beautiful Bergine, a city girl excited by his huge vision.

In those early days, a band of outlaws camped along the border on the Wilson ranch. Homer rode his horse up to their camp, the metal shoes sending clanking noises through the canyon. Like Gary Cooper, he said, "You must leave now!" When they laughed and lowered their hands toward their guns, so did he. "If you don't leave, I'll throw you off the ranch." They shrugged, gathered their bedding and supplies, and rode toward Mexico.

When Patricia was born, she was the only little girl for 30 miles except the few children of Homer's ranch workers. But she loved this land even as a child. She learned to avoid danger as she ran free, usually barefoot, in this paradise full of wild animals, arroyos, and craggy outcroppings. By age ten, she could ride and shoot like Annie Oakley.

As eldest child, she helped run the ranch. Homer developed herds of valuable Rambouillet sheep and

angora goats, highly prized in the lucrative wool markets. This would support the family and generate revenue to develop the mining operation. A thrill for Patricia at age seven was when Homer let her ride 100 feet down a small shaft sitting in a metal ore bucket suspended on a rope at his Fresno Mine.

Patricia learned to love art, literature, and beauty from her mother who provided plenty of books. As she absorbed the intensity of the land – sounds, smells, and colors, she became an accomplished painter/artist and photographer and an award-winning writer. Since the ranch was 130 miles from schools, she took correspondence courses, then a tutor lived with them for two years.

They had to be self-sufficient well after the rest of America enjoyed modern conveniences. Homer used to say, "If you have a problem, do something about it." When the family attempted something difficult, Patricia's father would say to her, "Now, your mother's a city girl. Take care of your mother." But Bergine was willing to learn. She once joked about the old mail-order house where snakes sometimes slithered in under the back door, "It's hard to clean

*(Continued on page 20)*

**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

# 3 SITES WRITERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

Jen Nipps, Web Review Editor

While we all know we need to be involved on social media sites, there are other websites that are beneficial to writers. Check these three out and add them to your list:

1. **QueryTracker:** QueryTracker (QT) is a service that helps writers connect with editors and agents. They have a video about their service on the front page. Over 1,200 agents and 175 publishers have listings on QT. It is a free service. From their Q&A, someone asked a question about why it is free. Here is what they say: "QueryTracker is free because it is our goal to collect as much data as possible about query letter results. To do that, we need as many members as possible to submit their data, and the best way to do that is to make it free."
2. **National Writers' Union:** The National Writers' Union (NWU) describes itself as "The National Writers Union UAW Local 1981 is the only labor union that represents freelance writers." (It is a division of United Auto Workers, hence UAW). They have information about contracts, disputes with publishers and magazines, and scams. They also have a book division. There are too many sections to their website to describe here. The annual membership fee depends on how much money a writer makes in a year. There are options to join for six months or a full year. (Yes, I am a member of NWU and because of budgeting reasons, I join for six months at a time. No, they did not ask me to include information about their organization in this column.)
3. **Writer Beware:** A. C. (Ann) Crispin, Victoria Strauss, and Richard White run WriterBeware. It originated as a service of the Science

Fiction Writers of American and is described as the public face of SFWA. They provide information on scams and unscrupulous publishers that prey on writers. They have a search feature on their site so writers can research a particular agent, editor, publisher, conference, or contest. There is also an area where writers can send them questions about the above if they cannot find it in a search on

(Continued on page 21)

**Addresses for the sites mentioned:**  
**National Writers' Union –**  
**[www.nwu.org](http://www.nwu.org)**  
**QueryTracker –**  
**[www.querytracker.net](http://www.querytracker.net)**  
**(WritersMarket Online –**  
**[www.writersmarket.com](http://www.writersmarket.com) – offers a**  
**similar service for a fee with a much**  
**larger database.)**

Jen Nipps is a member of the McAlester McSherry Writers and Web Writing Women. Her books, *Get Twitter-pated: A Writer's Handbook to Twitter*, *Windsong & Other Poems, Devoted To Creating*, and *Navajo Rose* (written as Kat O'Reilly), are available on Amazon or directly through her. Visit her Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/byjennipps>.



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The Doctor is:

**In***Out*

# Spring Cleaning for Writers

Robyn Conley, The Book Doctor

With our May conference just around the corner, how about talking a little spring cleaning?

To stay healthy, we writers must identify any “soiled” behaviors that can infect our careers and make them sick. Some inferior actions hold simple remedies, such as ignoring television and internet surfing, but some are harder. Some take more practice.

One thing for sure is the need to speak up at the conferences—speaking up using our pleasant, professional manners of course—and I do mean good, old-fashioned manners.

Writers who barge up to an agent or editor as he or she is talking with other writers or colleagues are not regarded as assertive, but as RUDE. As my Irishman said recently, “Tooting your own horn doesn’t mean blaring inches from another person’s face.”

Likewise, talking on cellular phones in hallways and in conference banquets is rude...rude, I tell you. This is definitely not a healthy habit for any writer.

So although we must tout our own abilities as well as our own writing and marketing platforms, we should do it when the opportunity arises in a natural way, and in a congenial, conversational approach, using cordial manners.

We shouldn’t monopolize Question & Answer sessions, nor should we speak so softly we can’t be heard when we choose to ask a question or contribute a point to a workshop. We must embrace our common sense, for goodness sakes.

Lest you think I’m the only curmudgeon out there, here are a few anonymous comments I’ve received via email from other writers my age who are also a bit appalled at our lapse in healthy behavior regarding pushy promotions:

“Show up for colleagues’ book signings and readings. It is not all about you. You are now part of a tradition and a fellowship.”

“Do you also send emails and FB messages that

say hello and how are you, not just ‘buy my book?’”

“If you are lucky enough to get a review, do you write to say thank you to the person who wrote it and also the editor who published it?”

“Do you write a note (not an email) to the store owner/manager who hosted a book signing for you?”

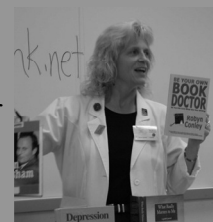
“Do you send congratulations to a colleague whose name you see with something new in print?”

Hands down, though, both at weekend events, as well as in my own newsletter and other writing blogs, I’ve noticed how we often lapse into “promotional speak” rather than genuine conversation. Who can

*(Continued on page 20)*

**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, ***THE HEALTHY WRITER’S HANDBOOK***, featuring tips from dozens of writers she’s met over the past two decades who know how to succeed and stay healthy in their writing careers.

***What Really Matters to Me*** is a journal, which helps people discover their goals and reach their dreams. Her other published titles include a diversity of topics, such as ***BEYOND THE BRANCHES, Writing and Scrapping Your Complete Family Tree*** and ***Pray the Bible with Paper and Pen***. Her biographies include: ***John Grisham, Cartoonists, Alexander G. Bell***, and the juvenile reference books: ***Meerkats; Depression; Motion Pictures; and The Automobile***, and ***THE COLOR ME BIBLE***. Robyn has sold articles to major magazines, such as ***The Writer, Writer’s Digest, ABA: Student Lawyer***, and a score of others.



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## MARKETING

# WHAT IS DISCOVERABILITY?

Lela Davidson, Social Media Guru

You want to sell books online? Me, too. You want to sell more books? Of course you do. Online sales are an incredible opportunity, but only if people can find you. The world of publishing is buzzing with the concept of discoverability, but what does that mean? Simply put, being discoverable means that people can find you online—preferably the people who want what you are selling.

Writers do not have the luxury of ignoring online discoverability. Discoverability is not only for techie types or the Millennial generation; it's for all of us—small businesses, artists, non-profits—and yes, even writers. Maybe especially writers.

Technopedia defines discoverability like this:

Discoverability uses social media, search engine optimization and other passive messaging tools to ensure that potential customers can find services when they need them as well as interact with customers to help provide what they need.

Even if people routinely find your website from somewhere out in the real world, you are missing out on considerable potential sales and relationship building if you are not discoverable online. How many people can you connect with in the real world? With consistent focused effort, you can create paths for many, many more to find you online—and it does not have to be complicated or time-consuming.

Discoverability is all about consistency—putting

yourself and your work out there in a way that people can find you and get to know you. Consistency can seem overwhelming if you think you have to tackle everything all at once. You don't. Success online is no different than success in any other area of business. What you have to remember online is

that you are dealing with infinite possibility, so you have to focus on a few key actions and drown out the rest of the chatter. Keep it simple and keep at it.

Ready to learn more? Come to my sessions at the conference. And plan to snag a copy of *Sexy, Smart, and Search-Engine Friendly: Get Found Online Without Wasting Your Time or Losing Your Mind*.

This no-nonsense guide will be available March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Lela Davidson is the author of *Blacklisted from the PTA* and *Who Peed on My Yoga Mat?* She has sold thousands of books online, and she has been a regular at OWFI since 2007.

Website ~ <http://leladavidson.com/>

Twitter @leladavidson ~ Facebook ~ LinkedIn

**Even if people routinely find your website from somewhere out in the real world, you are missing out on considerable potential sales and relationship building if you are not discoverable online.**



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# It Wasn't Such a Dark and Stormy Night After All.

Wayne Harris-Wyrick

"It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents — except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets (for it is in London that our scene lies), rattling along the housetops, and fiercely agitating the scanty flame of the lamps that struggled against the darkness."

Edward George Bulwer-Lytton, *Paul Clifford*, 1830

This, the first sentence of *Paul Clifford*, is often quoted as the epitome of a bad opening sentence for a novel. It is so bad that the English Department of San Jose State University sponsors an annual "Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest." Entrants are invited "to compose the opening sentence to the worst of all possible novels" — that is, deliberately bad. According to the official rules, the prize for winning the contest is 'a pittance,' or \$250.

Yet, to contemporaries, Bulwer-Lytton was not considered the hack writer, as so often parodied by Snoopy in his never-finished novel that begins "It was a dark and stormy night..." Some reviewers of his day considered him equal to, or even better than, Charles Dickens. Dickens thought so much of Bulwer-Lytton, he sought his advice on the manuscript of *Great Expectations*, eventually taking Bulwer-Lytton's advice and changing the original, unbearably sad ending in which the lovers part forever, to the ending we all know today in which the lovers meet again and vow to never part.

Twenty-one years before Bulwer-Lytton penned his famous "It was a dark and stormy night..." quote,

Washington Irving wrote in *The History of New York*:

It was a dark and stormy night when the good Antony arrived at the creek (sagely denominated Haerlem River) which separates the island of Manna-hata from the mainland. The wind was high, the elements in an uproar.

Many scholars believe that Bulwer-Lytton was merely satirizing Irving's quote. Now there is the annual Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest in which writers satirize the satire.

**Yet, to contemporaries, Bulwer-Lytton was not considered the hack writer, as so often parodied by Snoopy in his never-finished novel.**

Some other oft-repeated Bulwer-Lytton quotes that you probably didn't know he penned:

"Genius does what it must, talent does what it can." (From *Last Words*, reported in *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, 10th ed. (1919).

"Beneath the rule of men entirely great, the pen is mightier than the sword." (From the play *Richelieu* Act 2 scene 2, 1839)

"He is certainly a man who bathes and 'lives cleanly', two especial charges preferred against him by Messrs. the Great Unwashed." (From *Paul Clifford*, 1830)

"My father died shortly after I was twenty-one; and being left well off, and having a taste for travel and adventure, I resigned, for a time, all pursuit of the almighty dollar, and became a desultory wanderer over the face of the Earth." (From *The Coming Race*, 1871)

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# BASKET WARS

**What is BasketWars?** Affiliates and/or individuals create a “basket” (can be any kind of container) with books or items a reader or writer could use (imagination needed). At the OWFI Conference, the basket is checked in with Vivian Zabel. A silent auction then earns money to help with the conference expenses/scholarships. Individuals or affiliates may donate more than one “basket.” Last year, we brought in over \$1,000 with 28 “baskets” to be used for this year’s scholarships.

**There are 2 divisions:** A division for large baskets includes containers with 15 or more items; a division for small baskets includes containers with 14 or fewer items. Each affiliate and/or individual may enter more than one donation.

Please check donations into Vivian Zabel no later than Friday morning, 9:00 AM.

**Please be sure that the name of the individual or affiliate and size division is attached to the basket (container) when it is checked in at the conference.** Check in times: Thursday night and Friday morning.

The silent auction ends **Saturday at 11:00 AM.**

The results of the silent auction will be posted by the tables where the baskets are displayed. Baskets must be paid for before 12:15 Saturday.

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

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

1. Name of person or affiliate
2. Name of contact person for an affiliate

3. Email address of person to contact  
BasketWars contact information: Vivian Zabel, Vivian@viviangilbertzabel.com cell phone 405-820-9640, address 2912 Rankin Terrace, Edmond, OK 73013

Also, I hope people go by the bidding guidelines posted by the tables of “baskets” at the conference. We have tight time schedules.

When written in Chinese, the word 'crisis' is composed of two characters - one represents danger, and the other represents opportunity.

Saul David Alinsky

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# SHEPHERD REQUEST

I am in the process of identifying potential “shepherds” for the 2013 OWFI conference. Shepherds are volunteers who are handcuffed (or linked in some more figurative way) to a speaker, agent, publisher or other VIP who is contributing to the conference.

Please let me know if you would have an interest in serving as a conference shepherd this year.

Shepherding provides an excellent opportunity to network at conferences. In other words, if you need a little help in actually approaching an OWFI speaker or agent, etc.—perhaps because you are worried that the person will look at you and think, “Who is this intrusive little nit?”—shepherding may be just the thing for you. The responsibilities may include:

Picking the speaker up at the airport and providing transportation to the hotel. If the hotel does not have a shuttle service back to the airport, the shepherd may need to provide transportation back to the airport for the departure flight.

- Taking your assigned speaker to lunch
- Making copies
- Verifying room set-up
- Welcoming participants into room
- Introducing your speaker for their presentation
- Assisting with handouts
- Watching the clock during the presentation (not for any particular reason, just because sometimes clocks like to be watched)
- Telling bad jokes during awkward silences (for those concerned about this

one, my son has a copy of The Big Book of Jokes on his Nook and I may be able to negotiate lending privileges).

If you don’t have the resources to pick up a speaker at the airport, don’t worry: there are local speakers who don’t need to be picked up. In fact, they probably don’t even need a shepherd, so your job will be easy. In other words, if you want to volunteer as a shepherd but have constraints, just let me know what those constraints are and we may be able to accommodate you.

If you would like to volunteer or simply have questions, please contact me at [eric.reitan@okstate.edu](mailto:eric.reitan@okstate.edu). Your questions will almost certainly go unanswered until I can ask them of someone who knows more than I do, but I should get back to you eventually. Also, if you know of someone who may be interested in serving as a shepherd, feel free to forward this e-mail to them, preferably along with an attachment of a cat doing something funny.

**Eric Reitan**  
**2013 Shepherd Coordinator**

**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
THE ALMOST RIGHT WORD  
AND THE RIGHT WORD IS  
REALLY A LARGE MATTER -  
'TIS THE DIFFERENCE BE-  
TWEEN THE LIGHTNING BUG  
AND THE LIGHTNING.**

**Mark Twain**

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# 2013 Conference Speakers, Agents and Editors

## Keynote Speaker: Patrick Rothfuss



**Patrick Rothfuss** was born in Madison, Wisconsin to awesome parents who encouraged him to read and create through reading to him, gentle boosts of self-esteem, and deprivation of cable television. During his formative years, he read extensively and wrote terrible short stories and poetry to teach himself what not to do.

Patrick matriculated at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, initially studying chemical engineering, which led to a revelation that chemical engineering is boring. He then spent the next nine years jumping from major to major, taking semesters off, enjoying semesters at part-time, and generally rocking the college student experience before being kindly asked to graduate already. Surprisingly enough, he had enough credits to graduate with an English major, and he did so grudgingly.

Patrick then went to grad school. He'd rather not talk about it.

All this time Patrick was working on "The Book," as he and his friends lovingly titled it. When he returned to Stevens Point he began teaching half-time while trying to sell The Book to publishers. In the process, he disguised a chapter of The Book as a short story and won the Writers of the Future competition in 2002. This put him into contact with all the

right people, and after deciding to split The Book into three installments, DAW agreed to publish it. In April 2007, *The Name of the Wind* was published to great acclaim, winning the Quill Award and making the New York Times Bestseller list.

All this success was wonderful. Patrick eventually had to stop teaching in order to focus on writing, though he screwed that up by having an adorable baby with his adorable girlfriend. He started a charity fundraiser called Worldbuilders and published a not-for-children children's book called *The Adventures of the Princess and Mr. Whiffle* in July of 2010 through Subterranean Press, which was adorable, and seriously isn't for children.

After a great deal of work and a few cleared throats and raised eyebrows from his patient editor, *Wise Man's Fear* came out in March 2011 to even more acclaim, making #1 on the New York Times Bestseller list. Life continues to rock for him, and he's working hard on writing the final installment of the series.

**Jodi Thomas** is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling novelist who has written 35 books and 11 anthologies. She is also a 5 time RITA award winner, the coveted recognition from the Romance Writers of America which earned her a place in their Hall of Fame. With a degree in Family Studies, Thomas is a marriage and family counselor by education, a background that enables her to write about family dynamics. Honored in 2002 as a Distinguished Alumni by Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Thomas enjoys interacting with students on the West Texas A & M University campus, where she cur-



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# 2013 Conference Speakers, Agents and Editors

(Continued from page 11)

rently serves as Writer-In-Residence. Jodi inspires and encourages writers to have courage and "put feet to your dreams."

**Jane Friedman** is the web editor for the Virginia Quarterly Review, where she oversees digital content strategy and online marketing/promotion. Before joining VQR, Jane was a full-time assistant professor of e-media at the University of Cincinnati and former publisher of *Writer's Digest*. Jane has more than a decade of hands-on experience in using new media and technology to engage and grow both online and offline communities. Her expertise has been featured by NPR's *Morning Edition*, *Publishers Weekly*, *GalleyCat*, *IBPA Independent*, and *PBS*, among many others, and she has consulted with organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts and the Creative Work Fund in San Francisco. An active blogger for more than a decade, Jane's current blog was named one of the Top 10 Blogs for Writers in 2011-2012. Her presence on Twitter (150,000+ followers) is often cited as a model for those seeking to use social media effectively.

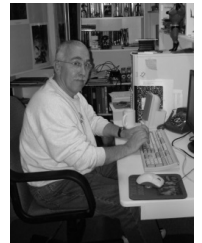


Avon/Harper Collins launched **Jordan Dane's** debut suspense novels in a back-to-back publishing event in Spring 2008 after buying the 3-book series in auction. Pursuing publication since 2003, Jordan had received awards in 33 national writing competitions and was an energy sales manager in the oil and gas industry prior to selling. Now she is following her passion and writes full time. Ripped from the headlines, Jordan's gritty plots weave a tapestry of vivid settings, intrigue, and dark humor. She



loves challenging a reader's moral barometer with the borderline ethics of her characters and their flawed personalities—dark, angst-ridden antiheroes pitted against unforgettable villains. Publishers Weekly compared her intense pacing to Lisa Jackson, Lisa Gardner, and Tami Hoag—"romantic suspense that crosses over into plain thriller country with tight plotting and exceptional male characters, both bad guys and good."

**Ron Fortier** is a graphic novelist primarily known for his *Green Hornet* and *The Terminator* comic books and his revival of the pulp hero, *Captain Hazard*. During his comics career, he wrote many series for Now Comics, adapted a Gene Roddenberry's *Lost Universe* for Tekno Comix, and wrote an *Incredible Hulk Annual*. In 2006, along with artist Rob Davis, he started Airship 27 Productions, a production company devoted to publishing new adventures of classic pulp heroes. In 2011, Twilight Star Studio and Redbud Studio Comics began publishing Ron Fortier's *Tales of the Macabre*, a series of horror short stories written by Fortier and illustrated by comic industry up-and-coming artists. Fortier has also co-written three novels with noted science fiction author Ardath Mayhar.



**Rob M. Davis** began his career illustrating role-playing game modules for Mayfair Games (DC Heroes role playing game) and Iron Crown Enterprises (Champions super-heroes role playing game) His first "hit" comics work was on the Adult-oriented comic book Scimidar from Malibu Comics. Also for Malibu he penciled and inked the historic



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fantasy character Merlin and the fill-in work for the new series *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*.

Wishing to widen the scope of his professional credits, Rob worked on an issue of Maze Agency (a critically acclaimed "Thin Man" type of Mystery - Detective series) for Innovation Comics, eventually convincing editors there to allow him to draw *Quantum Leap* (based on the popular Science Fiction television series). This ended up being a stepping stone to work on DC Comics' two Star Trek comic books (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*, and *Star Trek* with Kirk, Spock, McCoy, and the original Enterprise Crew).

Rob and Ron Fortier have collaborated on the graphic novel entitled *Daughter of Dracula* and designing and illustrating a number of prose novels for Airship 27.

**Mark Coker** is the founder of Smashwords, the world's largest distributor of indie ebooks. Smashwords makes it fast, free and easy for any author or publisher to publish and distribute an ebook. In the last four years, Smashwords has helped over 50,000 indie authors and small presses around the world publish and distribute more than 150,000 ebooks.

In June 2010, The Wall Street Journal named Mark one of the "Eight Stars of Self-Publishing." In March 2012, MediaBistro named Mark one of the "Five Ebook Experts to Watch." In June 2012, Forbes profiled Mark in feature story titled, "Apple's Biggest (Unknown) Supplier of E-Books".

Mark's four ebooks on ebook publishing have been downloaded more than 250,000 times: *The Smashwords Style Guide* (how to prepare and publish an ebook), *The Smashwords Book Marketing Guide*

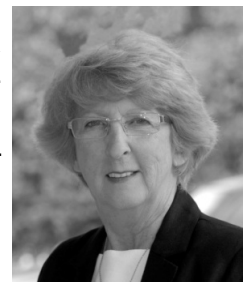
(how to market any book), *The Secrets to Ebook Publishing Success* (the best practices of the most commercially successful indie ebook authors), *The 10-Minute Public Relations Checklist* (how to implement a strategic communications program). Mark is also the co-author, along with his wife Lesleyann, of *Boob Tube* (a satire about the daytime television soap opera industry).

Mark blogs at <http://blog.smashwords.com> and contributes to the Huffington Post's books section at <http://huffingtonpost.com/mark-coker>. Find him on Twitter at @markcoker

**Sandra Mitchell** is an author of YA novels including *Shadowed Summer*, *The Vespertine*, *The Springsweet*, the forthcoming *Aetherborne* and *Mistwalker*. She's also the editor of the forthcoming YA anthology, *Defy the Dark*.



**Marilyn H. Collins** is an award-winning author of nonfiction books and—as both editor and freelancer—over 100 magazine/newspaper features. Collins is a frequent conference speaker, editor of the online newsletter Proficient Writer NEWS, and author of a new series, *Step-by-Step Writing Guides*. The guides include: *Memoir Writing Guide*; *You Can Write a Book about Your Family*, and *The Art & Business of Writing Local or Regional History*. Her workshops are practical, hands-on, with opportunity to share.



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She is also author of three history books published by Arcadia Publishing. She teaches online classes for Story Circle Network and is a writing instructor for OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute—Univ. of AR). Collins is also a contributing writer for *2Njoy Magazine*, a state-wide lifestyle magazine. Her professional background includes positions with the Washington National Cathedral Association, Beaufort (NC) Historical Association, and the American Association of University Women. She was owner of Wilson Collins Marketing & Management Consultants in the Washington, DC area and in North Carolina. She is current owner of CHS Publishing ([www.chspublishing.com](http://www.chspublishing.com)).

**Denise McGill** is a contract photographer and writer who has covered five continents gathering images that resonate of the human experience.



She is assistant professor of Visual Communications at University of South Carolina. For three years she was overseas correspondent for the International Mission Board and their award-winning magazine *The Commission*. Major assignments included AIDS in Africa, refugees in Colombia and Muslim women.

She serves as secretary of National Press Photographers Association (NPPA.) She is a member of South Carolina News Photographers Association (SCNPA) and Association of Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC.)

**Mendy Knott's** writing reflects life as a working-class woman who grew up a Southern preacher's kid. She served in the US Air Force and was a veteran po-

lice officer in Atlanta, GA, but is best known for her powerful performance poetry, peace activism, and ongoing support of women's creativity.



Mendy's body of work includes poetry, memoir, playwriting, editing, songwriting, fiction, and screenwriting. Her publications include three poetry CDs and three self-published poetry chapbooks, one of which was nominated for the Pushcart Prize by Naomi Nye. Her book, *A Little Lazarus*, was published by Half Acre Press in 2010. *Across the Ark-LaTex*, a cook book of family stories and recipes was published by Two Poets Ink in 2011. Her screenplay, *Men Only*, won second place in the International Screenplay Contest called "One in Ten."

Knott has been featured in a long list of literary festivals, solo shows, publications, and radio programs. She was selected as North Carolina Poet in Residence to South Africa in 2001, and was chosen as "Asheville, NC's Favorite Poet" by the Mountain Xpress. She has created popular and long-running women's open mic events across the South. She now hosts HOWL, an open mic reading in Fayetteville, Arkansas that cultivates women's voices in prose, poetry and song.

Knott is currently an editor for Limbertwig Press, a publishing collaboration with her partner Leigh Wilkerson. She is working on a memoir, a book of creative nonfiction essays about her relationship with her eighty-something parents, a Southern minister and his lively wife.

**August McLaughlin** is a Los Angeles based writer and journalist with articles featured regularly by LIVESTRONG.com, *DAME Magazine*, *The Nest Woman* and more. Before completing her first novel, *In Her Shadow*, she worked in the fashion, film and

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wellness industries, wearing hats ranging from Parisian runway model to culinary coach. Considering her longstanding passion for thrillers, she wasn't surprised when her attempt at a memoir turned quickly into fictional suspense. She is represented by John Rudolph of Dystel & Goderich Literary Management and loves connecting with readers via her blog, Facebook and Twitter.

**Desiree Holt's** writing is flavored with the rich experiences of her life, including a long stretch in the music business representing every kind of artist from country singer to heavy metal rock bands. For several years she also ran her own public relations agency handling any client that interested her, many of whom might recognize themselves in the pages of her stories. She is twice a finalist for an EPIC E-Book Award, a nominee for a Romantic Times Reviewers Choice Award, winner of the first 5 Heart Sweetheart of the Year Award at The Romance Studio as well as twice a CAPA Award for best BDSM book of the year, winner of the Holt Medallion, multiple winner of the Whipped Cream Book of the Week Award and is published by five different houses. Romance Junkies said of her work: "Desiree Holt is the most amazing erotica author of our time and each story is more fulfilling than the last."

You can find her at  
[www.desireeholt.com](http://www.desireeholt.com)  
[www.desireeholttellsall.com](http://www.desireeholttellsall.com)  
[www.facebook.com/desireeholt](http://www.facebook.com/desireeholt)  
 Twitter @desireeholt.com



**Kendra Bonnett**, Downeast Maine, is an award-winning author of more than 300 magazine articles, editor of three magazines (including the award-winning *Profit Magazine* for IBM), and author/ghostwriter of eight books. She left IBM to assist former Secretary of the Treasury William E. Simon with research and spent 18 months interviewing more than 100 leaders from the worlds of business, finance, government and sports, including President Gerald Ford; Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and George Schultz; journalist Jack Anderson; Wall Street's William "Billy" Salomon of Salomon Brothers among others.



She is the co-author of the award-winning collective memoir, *Rosie's Daughters: The "First Woman To" Generation Tells Its Story*, and the newly released *Writing Alchemy: How to Write Fast and Deep*. When not writing, she teaches and coaches writers. Kendra, a 30+ year marketing executive versed in new technology techniques, brings her insight and knowledge to writers, helping them build successful marketing and publishing strategies for their books as well as writing them.

<http://WomensMemoirs.com>  
<http://RosiesDaughters.com>

**Matilda Butler**, Corvallis, Oregon the other half of Women's Memoirs, is an award-winning author of more than 50 articles, has contributed chapters to several anthologies, including *The New Papyrus* (Microsoft Press), and co-authored the award-winning *Women and the Mass Media*. She is co-author (with Kendra Bonnett) of the collective memoir *Rosie's Daughters: The "First Woman To"*



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*Generation Tells Its Story*, which received a 2008 IPPY national book award as well as three other book awards. The second edition of this book, which includes new interviews, has just been released. She teaches and coaches writers, is a conference speaker, and is co-author of the recently published *Writing Alchemy: How to Write Fast and Deep*. Matilda, an Oklahoma native, is a social scientist and high tech entrepreneur who applies her knowledge to writing, helping people tell stories in new and powerful ways.

<http://WomensMemoirs.com>

<http://RosiesDaughters.com>



**Paul S. Levine** “wears two hats”—he is a lawyer and a literary agent. Mr. Levine has practiced entertainment law for over 31 years, specializing in the representation of writers, producers, actors, directors, composers, musicians, artists, authors, photographers, galleries, publishers, developers, production companies and theatre companies in the fields of motion pictures, television, interactive multimedia, live stage, recorded music, concerts, the visual arts, publishing, and advertising. In 1996, Mr. Levine opened the Paul S. Levine Literary Agency, specializing in the representation of book authors and the sale of motion picture and television rights in and to books. Since starting his literary agency, Mr. Levine has sold over 100 fiction and non-fiction books to at least 30 different publishers and has had many books developed as movies-for-television and feature films.

The fiction which Mr. Levine represents tends to be commercial—thrillers, mysteries, women’s fiction, “soap opera” in the vein of Danielle Steele or Jackie Collins, and literary fiction. The non-fiction which he represents also tends to be commercial—self-help,

how-to, relationships, memoirs, health, women’s issues, pop culture, new age, and business. For both fiction and non-fiction books, his biggest successes have been with authors who originally self-publish their books and then wish to have their books republished by a major publishing house.

For the film screen, he represents a wide range of scripts, from romantic comedies to thrillers to historical epics. In television, Mr. Levine mainly represents writers and producers of true life-story movies-for-television, as well as the subjects of those docudramas. He also represents writers and writer-producers of network and non-network series television, both dramas and comedies, as well as reality shows, game shows, talk shows and the like.

**Linda Apple** is the author of *Inspire! Writing From the Soul*, an instructional guide to inspirational writing, and *Connect! A Simple Guide to Public Speaking for Writers*.

Her personal experience stories have been published in 15 of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series. Her devotions have also been published in numerous devotion magazines and books. Her inspirational novel, *The Journey*, is currently being represented by her agent.

Linda is also an inspirational/motivational speaker. She speaks at conferences, writers' workshops, and women's groups nationwide. She currently serves as the Arkansas Regional Speaker Trainer for Stonecroft Ministries, an international organization.

She lives in Fayetteville Arkansas with her husband, Neal, their five children, four children-in-love, and nine grandchildren.

**Tammi Sauer** has sold over a dozen picture books to major publishing houses. In addition to win-



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ning awards, her books have gone on to do great things. *Cowboy Camp* was developed into a musical in Katy, Texas. *Mostly Monsterly* was selected to be a part of the 2012 *Cheerios Spoonfuls of Stories* program. And *Chicken Dance* was released in French which makes her feel extra fancy. [www.tammisauer.com](http://www.tammisauer.com)



\* 2010 Scholastic Parent & Child Best Book of the Year

\* 2011 Winner of the Oklahoma Book Award

\* 2011 Winner of the SCBWI Crystal Kite Award

\* Scholastic "Time to Read with Just-Right

Books for K-2" Editor's Pick

\* 2012 Cheerios Spoonfuls of Stories selection

\* Scholastic Book Clubs Selection

She lives with her family in Edmond, Oklahoma, with one dog, two geckos, and a tank full of random fish.

**Amy Shojai** has been reinventing herself for years. She's a certified animal behavior consultant, and the award-winning author of 24 best selling pet books that cover furry babies to old-fogies, first aid to natural healing, and behavior/training to Chicken Soup-icity. She is the Puppies Guide at [puppies.About.com](http://puppies.About.com), the cat behavior expert at [cats.About.com](http://cats.About.com), and hosts a weekly half hour Internet Pet Peeves radio show. Amy has been featured as an expert in hundreds of print venues including *The New York Times*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Family Circle*, as well as national radio and television networks such as CNN, Animal Planet's "DOGS 101" and "CATS 101." She's been a consultant to the pet products in-



dustry and a host/program consultant for select "furry" TV projects. Amy brings her unique pet-centric viewpoint to public appearances, writer conferences keynotes/seminars and thriller fiction in her debut novel *Lost and Found* that includes pet "voice"--of course!

**Amy Lillard:** I'm a wife, mother, and bona fide Southern belle. Published author, expert corn bread maker, and Squirrel Princess.

I live in Tulsa, though I was born in Mississippi. I moved to the Sooner State when I was seventeen and met my soul mate and best friend not long after. I've retained a little of my Mississippi accent though most people think I'm from Texas. Rob and I have been married for over twenty years and have a son--a mom proclaimed prodigy, of course! I love home-made tacos, shoes, and romance novels--not necessarily in that order. I'm a big fan of country music, a staunch proponent of saving the Oxford comma, and I'm shamefully obsessed with all things Harry Potter. I believe that God is love. I guess that's why I adore romances. I have always been intrigued with the Amish culture, their gentle ways and slower-paced lifestyle. (And I love, love, love the fact that they stay married for their lifetime.) But until recently I never thought to blend this interest with my penchant for romance. Okay, okay, I'm a bit old-fashioned and even enjoy the gender roles that are present in this culture. I love to cook and take care of my family. Yes, that's me, June Cleaver with a laptop.



I dislike people trying to convince me to read the *Twilight* series (I'll get to it or I won't, either way I'm good with it), gratuitous violence, and strawberry ice

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cream. (I know I'm alone on this last one, and again, I'm good with it.)

Favorite movies--(besides HP) *French Kiss*, *Maid of Honor*, *A Lot Like Love*, *Just Married* and *Sweet Home Alabama*. Oh, and *Miss Congeniality*, *Sabrina* (both versions) and a 1940's movie called *I*. If you haven't seen it, you should! A-dorable. Anything with Doris Day and most all of Marilyn's and Audrey's.

**Alex Miner** is a shadowy figure. No one knows who invited him to OWFI, what his qualifications are, or why he chose to speak. When the man presents in public, he is exceptionally loud, and that is perhaps the only sure data anyone has on him.



Rumors place Miner at the University of Oklahoma from 2004 to 2007 (as a grad student or loiterer, no one is certain), after which he fled the state of his supposed birth to teach English in Seattle, rural Japan, and who knows where else. He currently works for a Pacific Northwest company as a designer of English curricula, but not even his employers know how he got there.

Wherever Miner goes, he starts up fiction writing groups and seems to fancy himself a Johnny Appleseed of workshops. When pressed about his credentials, he spouts off details that change with each telling. Our own interviews with Miner are confusing to say the least; he calls himself an educator and an "aspiring novelist" with three books under his belt, but as far as we can tell, he is simply loud.

Our point is, folks, if you choose to attend his presentations, we can guarantee that you will walk

away with a story to tell, but we can't guarantee what will happen otherwise.

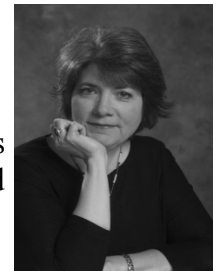
**Madison Woods** is a speculative fiction author who writes micro-flash fiction, short stories, and has a novel nearly finished (and another one ready to begin). Her work is inspired by her connection to nature and her deep philosophical approach to life. Madison enjoys helping other writers navigate the sometimes confusing waters of technology and social networks.



When she's not writing, she loves to ride horses, garden organically and engage in philosophy debates. She likes to dabble in photography, permaculture and website/blog design. To connect with her or to find out more, please visit her website at <http://madisonwoods.com>.

"The secret to coaching is to be a good listener and know when to ask the next right question."

**Romney Nesbitt** is the author of *Secrets From A Creativity Coach*. She is a creativity coach, artist, art teacher, and ordained minister. For over six years she has hosted a coaching column in *Art Focus Oklahoma Magazine*. Romney has presented workshops on creativity and productivity at Romance Writers of America in Orlando, Florida, Jodi Thomas' West Texas Writers' Academy in Canyon, Texas and the Ozark Writers League.



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**Frank Danna** is the Communications Director of a prominent mobile app developer located in Houston, TX called Onseeker Technologies. Frank is



known by many to be both tall and unable to grow facial hair. His passion for communication has allowed him to teach and share his insights throughout the United States with business leaders, authors, churches & ministries and anyone else willing to let him talk their ears off. Frank is married to a woman way out of his league, and together they created the worlds most adorable baby girl. In addition to everything else, he's also a nuanced and masterful bio writer.

## BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND FROM THE 2012 CONFERENCE

Yup'ik Storyteller **Jack Dalton**, A professional storyteller, writer and teacher, Jack has been honored



by the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education as a Distinguished Dignitary, and considered by many people around the world, to be "The Storyteller." He was chosen as one of Alaska's Top 40 Under Forty, one of the top forty business people in Alaska under the age of 40. He's created and produced five theatrical

works of storytelling, written a book, several plays and created curricula used in all levels of education. Performing throughout Alaska and the US, he has also performed in New Zealand, France, Denmark, Australia and headlined the Scottish Int'l Storytelling Festival in Scotland. At residencies in schools across the country, he teaches the importance of sto-

rytelling to the continuation of all cultures and works with students to create their own stories, thus, continuing the tradition.

Social Media Guru (or is it Goddess?) **Lela Davidson** is the author of *Blacklisted from the PTA* (Jupiter Press, July 2011). She is

a regular contributor to the *Today Show Moms blog*, *Brooke Burke's Modern Mom*, and featured parenting blogger for Lifetime Television's morning show, *The Balancing Act*. She is also the Managing Editor of Parenting Squad, a website that receives nearly 100,000 pageviews per month.



She is also a popular speaker among audiences of women, small business owners, and media professionals. Her humor essays have been published in dozens of parenting magazines throughout the United States and Canada, and in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: New Moms* (March 2011).

**Sit down and put down everything that comes into your head and then you're a writer. But an author is one who can judge his own stuff's worth, without pity, and destroy most of it.**

Sidonie Gabrielle

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# Book Doctor

*continued*

*(Continued from page 6)*

blame us when so much of what editors and agents parrot revolves around “marketing/platform/recruiting a following” if we really want to be a success?

I challenge you, however, to ask yourselves if simply self-promoting is good for your overall health. Does it make you feel whole or perhaps a little artificial? You know me well enough to know I’d tell you the truth, as any doc worth her salt will do. So, consider this: to live healthy, consider a holistic approach in all your writing, in all your speaking, and in all your marketing avenues. Give a little, and listen a lot while stimulating interest in your passions.

Let’s scrub a bit behind our ears, enjoy our spring conference, full of wonderful words to write and read, but, please, let’s do mind our manners.

(And yes, I DO realize the blatant promotional list below is a bit ironic!)

To subscribe to the weekly “Writer’s Chat,” please email me at [bookdoctor@earthlink.net](mailto:bookdoctor@earthlink.net)

To download the PDF of *The Healthy Writer’s Handbook*, visit my website at [www.robbynconley.com](http://www.robbynconley.com)

To view the latest writing tips on my blog, <http://robbynconley.blogspot.com>

**The profession of book-writing makes horse racing seem like a solid, stable business.**

*John Steinbeck*

# Book Review

*continued*

*(Continued from page 4)*

Homer.”

One day Bergine, Patricia, and little Buzzy, walked two miles to visit neighbors. Buzzy toddled behind a parked car and fell. The driver, another local friend, unaware he was there, backed over the side of Buzzy’s head and chest as Bergine screamed. The man drove them miles over bumpy roads to get help. “Mother cradled him on her lap; as he whimpered and cried, she patted his broken bones.” He lived but had trouble walking and speaking for several years before he eventually recovered.

Also during the 1930s, the Great Depression shook their banks and small network of businesses, many families losing their livelihoods and homes. The Dust Bowl slapped them down again before they could recover, and even threatened their lives. Meanwhile an unthinkable threat loomed: the government made plans to take their land through eminent domain.

Constant pressure took its toll on Homer and he had a heart attack at age 49. Since they had no phone, Bergine, pregnant with their third child, put the two children and Homer in the car, he on a mattress in the back seat. She drove the 130 miles to Alpine and Homer lived. And just as they arrived in town, her labor pains started and this city girl drove herself to the doctor’s office to give birth. A year later, Homer died in his sleep at the ranch, leaving Bergine with 3 children, the youngest in diapers, a 65,000 acre ranch, and a successful mine to manage alone. I’ll let you read the story for yourself to find out how it ends. As Clothier wrote, “Beauty and risk coexisted in Big Bend.”

After the book was published, in 2004 it won Second Place in the Best Book category of Missouri Writer’s Guild and Clothier enjoys constant feedback. An experienced teacher, she’s asked to talk about this magnificent historical account of the times packed

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## Book Review

with delicious detail. It's sold at Big Bend National Park and throughout Texas. She coordinates presentations when she visits. Recently she learned it's now required reading in the History Department at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas so she has an enviable problem. She needs a new printing.

In 2006, she won Best Middle Grade book at OWFI for *Sun and Silver*, an adventure about lost treasure in a place like Big Bend and is still working on the series.

Clothier's latest project is a book about the people she loves, called *Code of the West*.

The last time they drove the old road, Bergine stopped at the top of Todd Hill to look back at the Chisos Mountains. "All of us gazed at our homeland. I felt like a lost orphan. Mother turned to us and announced, 'I never want to go back again. It's too sad for me. I want to remember it in my heart.'" Clothier continues, "And she kept her promise. But I knew I would come back to this paradise of my childhood someday."

## President's Letter

(Continued from page 3)

I also send out mass e-mails. If you haven't been getting them, check your spam folder. If they aren't there, then go to the website and make sure all your contact information is accurate.

Volunteers. Aren't you proud? I didn't start by begging. We need volunteers to do tons of different things, including registration, door monitoring, judging the poetry slam (no worries, I won't be involved,) moderators, shepherds, agent/editor appointments, bag stuffing...okay, you get the picture. We need volunteers.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in May!

## Web Review

*continued*

(Continued from page 5)

their own. In addition, they provide information about self-publishing options, such as print-on-demand vs. electronic. Of their service, they say, "Writer Beware's mission is to track, expose, and raise awareness of the prevalence of fraud and other questionable activities in and around the publishing industry. We maintain and continually update the Writer Beware website with the latest information on literary schemes, scams, and pitfalls, and the most current information on what writers can do to protect themselves."

Many valuable websites offer services and information to writers. I consider these three to be among the best. I would be willing to hear what you think are the best websites for writers and why. E-mail your suggestions to me at [jencnipps@gmail.com](mailto:jencnipps@gmail.com).

**If an elderly but distinguished scientist says that something is possible, he is almost certainly right; but if he says that it is impossible, he is very probably wrong.**

**Arthur C. Clarke**

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# Premise

Christine Nichols

Just how important is premise? In a recent interview, bestselling writer William Bernhardt said “I’ve seen doors of opportunity close for writers when they pitch a novel. Typically, this is because there is a problem with the writing, or a problem with the premise.”

The importance of a strong premise is further highlighted in *Anatomy of a Story*, where John Truby makes the following statement, “Nine out of ten writers will fail at the premise.”

A highly simplified definition of the premise is the “main story idea.” However, the premise has many jobs. It identifies a main character, a setting, and the issue at hand. In addition, a good premise should contain original elements that attract readers.

In *Writing the Breakout Novel*, Donald Maass identifies the following additional elements of winning premise as “plausibility, inherent conflict, originality and gut emotional appeal.”

With so many factors to juggle in one or two sentences, it’s easy to see why premise creation can be a tremendous challenge for new writers.

What can a writer add to make a story idea fresh and unique? Sometimes the original feel of a work might not come from an unusual aspect. An unusual mix of otherwise traditional elements or subjects can also create a feel of original work.

Crafting a premise, like everything else, takes practice. Writers may wish to try several things when crafting their novel premise:

Examine the premise of a favorite novel. Read a novel and write out several sentences until a fitting premise has been identified. What makes the premise stand out?

Think through how a story might be pitched *prior to writing it*. Write out the pitch before writing the book. Every successful pitch will have a solid premise at anchor.

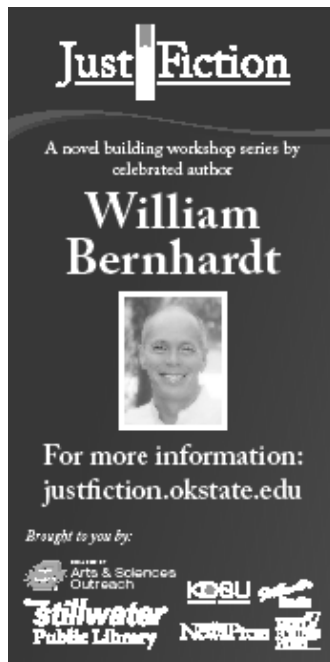
Keep the premise in mind while writing. Write out the premise and tape it in a prominent location.

Attend workshops or network with other writers to learn how to craft a bestselling premise.

In an upcoming workshop, writers will have additional opportunities to learn about crafting a novel premise. To learn more about an upcoming premise

workshop, visit [http://](http://justfiction.okstate.edu)

[justfiction.okstate.edu](http://justfiction.okstate.edu) or call (405) 744-8459.



**Christine Nichols is a new writer from Stillwater. She started her creative writing efforts two years ago. She is a member of the Stillwater Writers, and serves as the group’s webmaster.**



**One of my rules is never explain. A writer is a lot like a magician, if you explain how the trick works then a lot of the magic turns mundane.**

Laurell K. Hamilton

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# Affiliate News

## ARKANSAS RIDGE WRITERS

### Novels & New Books

#### **VELDA BROTHER-**

**TON:** EBOOK: *Wilda's Outlaw*, The Wild Rose Press (12/12); NOVEL: *Wilda's Outlaw*, The Wild Rose Press (02/13).

**DUSTY RICHARDS:** NOVEL: *Chaparral Range War*, Berkley Books, (02/13).

### Professional Activities

#### **RUTH BURKTT**

**WEEKS:** Teaching with the Sisterhood of the Traveling Pen, six weeks creative writing series, Fayetteville Public Library, Fayetteville, AR, Jan. 8 through Feb. 12.

**JAN MORRILL:** Teaching with the Sisterhood of the Traveling Pen, six weeks creative writing series, Fayetteville Public Library, Fayetteville, AR, Jan. 8 through Feb. 12; Book signing and speaking about the history behind her historical fiction, *The Red Kimono*, Kimberling Area Library, Kimberling City, MO, Feb. 2; Reading her essay, "Hyphenated Americans," which was included in the anthology, *Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors*, Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau,

MO, Feb. 13; Speaking on "Interviewing Your Characters" as part of the presentation by the Sisterhood of the Traveling Pen at the Northwest Arkansas Writers Workshop Free Conference, Fayetteville, AR, March 9; Discussion of what she learned about her family history while writing *The Red Kimono*, Edmond Genealogical Society, Edmond, OK, March 18; Discussion of *The Red Kimono* with the University of Arkansas Press Book Club, Fayetteville, AR, April 3.

### Contest Winnings

#### **RUTH BURKETT**

**WEEKS:** Ozarks Writers League Contest, BOOK OF THE YEAR: *Soldiers From the Mist*.

**ANN HOLBROOK:** Art Affair Writing Contests, SHORT STORY: 1<sup>st</sup> Place, "Emma Jean and the Nobbler's Folly."

**PATTY STITH (CLAIRE CROXTON):** Predators and Editors, ROMANCE OF THE YEAR: 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, *Redneck Ex*.

### Acceptances and Sales

**PATTY STITH (LUNA ZEGA):** EROTICA NOVELLA: *Tokyo Tease*, The Wild Rose Press Scarlet Rose, (03/13).

## FORT WORTH WRITERS

### Professional Activities

**OLYVE HALLMARK ABBOTT:** Speaker, "Nostalgia," Keller Conservatory, Keller, TX, 12/12; Program: Spoke on opera and sang for the Baptist Church's annual tea in Mesquite, TX, 1/13.

### Acceptances and Sales

**OLYVE HALLMARK ABBOTT:** Article: "Precious Pets," *Overton Life*, 10/12.

### Professional Activities

**MARILYN KOMECHAK** had several book signings for "Deborah Sampson: The Girl Who Went to War". Locations included Ridglea Country Club, Fort Worth book club, Barlow Book Club, and the Benbrook Library

## MCALESTER'S MCSHERRY WRITERS

### Acceptances & Sales

**MARY ANN KERL:** ARTICLE: "How to Get Ideas and Make



# Affiliate News

Continued

Money! Writing for Dollars!" (11/13).

## Professional Activities

**SHARON ERVIN:** Conducted a workshop for the Eufaula Writers in September. Sharon will be guest speaker at the Wagoner, Oklahoma Friends of the Library noon meeting on Tuesday, November 20.

**NITA BESHEAR, TAMMY HINTON & SHARON ERVIN:** Did a signing at the Our Favorite Place shop in Eufaula, Oklahoma on Saturday, December 8.

**MARY ANN KERL:** Enrolled in Indiana University East and is beginning 20 graduate hours in Composition Studies and Rhetoric.

## OKC WRITERS

## Acceptances and Sales

**DANA SEATON** had an article published in the *Peace Corps Archive* at American University. She also had a devotional published in the Westminster Presbyterian Church Advent Series.

**SAVVY THORNE** had a poem published on Halloween in "Handful of Dust."

**MARIA VERES** had a poem accepted for publication in *Ars Medica*.

**BILL BOUDREAU's** article "Reflection: Long-time U.S. Resident Remembers his Canadian Roots" was published in Jan-Feb 2013 *Aging Horizon Bulletin*.

**SANDI SOLI** sold a poem to *Oklahoma Today* and to *CrossTimbers*. **SHELLEY ANNE RICHTER** sold "Daddy Warhide" to *Mature Living* for April 2013. And with **NANCY VINYARD** she sold a short story "Boot" to *The Lutheran* magazine.

## Novels and New Books

**KATHLEEN GIBBS** first novel, *Cheyenne Warrior*, is now out.

**PAUL JOHNSON** signed a contract to publish "The Visitors" based on 2012 1st Place Short Story "The Watchers."

## Professional Activities

**PAUL JOHNSON** optioned his book *Lethal Knowledge* for a screenplay as a possible mini-series.

**WAYNE HARRIS-WYRICK** appeared on the local NBC affiliate channel talking about the meteorite impact over Russia.

## Contest Winnings

**SHELLEY ANNE RICHTER** won 1<sup>st</sup> Place – Feature Article "Saddle Dwellers", 1<sup>st</sup> Place – Unrhymed poem, "Harold's Helper" and the Bonnie Speer Crème-de-la-Crème Award for

"Harold's Helper" in the Norman Galaxy of Writers annual contest.

## PEN AND KEYBOARD

## Novels & New Books

**EVELYN WILSON-MARTIN** (Pen Name: E. H. McEachern): released *Missing Emma*, Fall 2012.

## Professional Activities

**VIVIAN ZABEL, SHIRL YANCY, JIM MARTIN** (Penname: Joe Seavetti) and **EVELYN WILSON-MARTIN** (Penname: E. H. McEachern): Edmond Authors Book Signing and Reception, Jan. 26, 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Edmond Museum and Historical Center. **SHIRL YANCY, VIVIAN ZABEL, JACQUE GRAHAM, JANET BROWN, JIM MARTIN, and EVELYN WILSON-MARTIN:** Pen and Keyboard Group Book Signing, Barnes & Noble Book Store, University Center of UCO, Edmond, OK. March 4, 2013, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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# Affiliate News

Continued

## PEN AND KEYBOARD

### SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED:

March 9, 2013, Cathy Givins presents "Use Your Website to Market Your Writing".

April 13, 2013: Kathleen Gibbs presents "How to Research for Accuracy in Fiction Writing" Meetings begin at 10:00 a.m. in Mardel's Meeting Room, corner of S. W. 33<sup>rd</sup> St. and Boulevard, Edmond, OK. (Watch for confirmation on meeting site)

**VIVIAN ZABEL:** Featured Speaker/Workshop presenter, Alaska Writer's Conference, hosted by the Alaska Writer's Guild, Anchorage, Alaska, September 7-8, 2012.

**VIVIAN ZABEL, JACQUE GRAHAM, JANET BROWN:** Book Signing, Kansas Book Festival, Topeka, KS. September 15, 2012.

**JANET K. BROWN** interviewed Melanie Robertson-King on her blog, Jan. 12, 2013.

**JACQUE GRAHAM:** Presentation of Monologue of Belle Cobb, subject of her creative non-fiction novel-in-progress; Norman Newcomer's Club, Norman, OK, November 12, 2012.

**VIVIAN ZABEL and JACQUE GRAHAM:** Book signing at "Coffee With the Author", March 16, 2013, Shawnee Mall, Shawnee, OK 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.

### Honors and Awards

**VIVIAN ZABEL**, President and Owner of 4RV Publishing received word that the company had received "Best of Edmond Award" in the Book Publishers Category for 2012

**HORTON DEAKINS:** Named one of five finalists in "USA BEST BOOKS" for his science fiction book, *Time Pullers* published by 4RV Publishing.



## PHOTO PROMPT

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 and give it a title. 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 slice of life, a vignette, 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:

wizardwayne@juno.com.

Send it within the body of the email or as a TEXT attachment. Entry deadline is May 1, 2013.

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**Thursday May 2nd**

5:30-8:00 PM	Registration	Noble Room
7:00- 9:00 PM	Jane Friedman--The Basics of Independent E-Book Publishing Boomer Room	Reading Room from 7:00-8:00

**Friday May 3rd**

7:30- 9:00 AM	Registration								
12:00- 12:30 PM	Registration								
	<b>Room G</b>	<b>Room H</b>	<b>Room I</b>	<b>Room J</b>	<b>Room C</b>	<b>Room D</b>	<b>Boomer A</b>	<b>Boomer B</b>	<b>Noble Room</b>
8:30	Opening Session						Bookstore		
9:00: 10:15	Amie Lillard: Writing for the Christian Market--Amish Phenom	Agent Panel: Carly Watters, Jim McCarthy, Sara D'Emic, Paul Lucas, Jennie Goloboy	Paul Levine--Contracts and Copyrights	Mark Coker: TBD	Social Media Panel: Lela Davidson, Frank Danna, Madison Woods				
10:30-11:45	Marilyn Collins: Write Your Family History: Gather the Rascals, Gather the Saints	Mendy Knott--poetry	Desiree Holt--How Hot is Hot?		Lela Davidson: State of Social Media 2013	Small Publisher Panel: Duke Pennell, Rhonda Penders, Steve Semken, Philip Marin, Lisa Smith?			
12:00- 1:45	Lunch Workshop--Amy Shojai: The Reinvented Writer						Agent/Editor Appointments		Reading Room
2:00- 3:15	Writing Alchemy--Matlida Butler and Kendra Bonnett	Denise McGill--Photojournalism	Jack Dalton: TBD	Alex Miner: The Supportive Critique Group	Madison Woods--Putting Your Short Stories to Work	Jane Friedman: Impact of Google, Amazon, and Apple on Your Career			
3:30-4:45		Jordan Dane: Writing for the Young Adult Market	Ron Fortier and Rob Davis: Graphic Novels 101	Tammi Sauer: Want the Key to Selling Picture Books in Today's Tough Market?	Velda Brotherton: Exposing Yourself on the Internet:	August McLaughlin: TBD			
6:30- 9:30 PM	Famous Author Banquet and Keynote Address--Ballroom: Oklahoma F								
9:30- ???	Buzz Sessions on various topics in locations throughout the hotel								POETRY SLAM

**Saturday May 4**

7:30- 9:00 AM	Registration								
11:00- 11:30 AM	Registration								
	<b>Room G</b>	<b>Room H</b>		<b>Room J</b>	<b>Room C</b>	<b>Room D</b>	<b>Boomer A</b>	<b>Boomer B</b>	<b>Noble Room</b>
9:00-10:15	Ron Fortier and Rob Davis: Graphic Novels 101	Patrick Rothfuss	Marilyn Collins: Spin Your Writing into Magazine Articles or Special Interest Publications	YA Panel: Jordan Dane, Sandra Mitchell, Sonia Gensler	Frank Danna: How You Can Finally Stop hating Facebook and Twitter	August McLaughlin	Agent/Editor Appointments	Bookstore	
10:30- 11:45	Denise McGill	Jack Dalton: How to Write the Perfect Play	Romney Nesbitt: Creative Blockbusters		Lela Davidson: Getting Found Online				
12:00-1:45	Lunch Workshop with <b>Jodi Thomas</b> : Writing the Bestseller: additional fee \$25		Lunch Workshop with <b>Linda Apple</b> : Public Speaking for Writers--additional fee \$25						
2:00- 3:15	Romance Panel: Jodi Thomas, Rhonda Penders, Desiree Holt, Cindy Davis, Amy Lillard?	Sandra Mitchell: Young Adult	Milton Kahn: How to Have Your Book Promoted	Alex Miner: Punctuation, Tense, POV, and Other Landmines	Romney Nesbitt: Don't Shoot Yourself in the Foot--Advice from a Creativity Coach ENDS at 3	Beginner Writers' Workshop--Norman Library			
3:30-4:00	OWFI Board Meeting								
4:00	General Membership Meeting								
4:30-5:30	Autograph Party								
6:30-10:00	Awards Banquet								
10:00	Collect Contest Materials								

THIS SECTION FOR OFFICE USE ONLY. DO NOT WRITE HERE

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

# OWFI 45! Revive! Strive! Thrive!

## 2013 Oklahoma Writers' Federation Conference

May 2 – May 4

Embassy Suites and Conference Center, Norman, Oklahoma

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

STATUS (circle): ATTENDEE, JUDGE, SPEAKER, OWFI OFFICER, SCHOLARSHIP, VEGETARIAN 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 both Friday night and Saturday night banquets)**

Postmarked by 3-15-2013..... @ \$150 each x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Postmarked after 3-15-2013 ..... @ \$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 7:00-9:00 p.m. *Pre-Con Workshop (no meal)* **The Basics of Independent E-Book Publishing** with Jane Friedman of the Alliance of Independent Authors ..... @ \$ 15 each x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Box Lunch Workshop (*meal included*) – **The Reinvented Writer: How Authors Can and Should be Flexible During Their Careers** with Amy Shojai ..... @ \$ 25 each x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Box Lunch Workshop (*meal included*) – **Writing the Bestseller: An overview from finding the timely idea, writing deeper into the heart of the story and selling your novel** by NY Times Bestselling author, Jodi Thomas

@ \$ 25 each x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Box Lunch Workshop (*meal included*) – **Public Speaking for Writers** with Linda Apple

@ \$ 25 each x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total amt. enclosed = \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Name of Credit Card: Master Card p Visa p JBC p Amer Exp p Security Code : \_\_\_\_\_

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Billing Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Refunds granted only if requested on or before April 5, 2013, a \$50 processing fee will be charged.**

Enclose check payable to **OWFI** or pay by credit card (fill out box above). Mail completed form to:

**Barbara Shepherd, OWFI, P.O. Box 54302, Oklahoma City, OK 73154**

HOTEL: Embassy Suites Norman Hotel and Conference Center Phone: 1-405-364-8040

Register **no later than 4-1-2013** for the OWFI rate of \$ 130 for single/double, \$140 triple, and \$150 quad

**Breakfast and Happy Hour included! IMPORTANT: CALL the hotel and tell them "OWFI" to get these rates.**

**WWW.OWFI.ORG**

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



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

**Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc**

All address changes must be submitted to the OWFI Treasurer.

**Barbara Shepherd**, c/o OWFI, PO Box  
54302, Oklahoma City, OK 73154

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

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