

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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DO NOT SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE EDITORIAL OFFICE.

Linda Apple

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today ~ Robert McAfee Brown

The 2012 Story Weavers Conference is promising to be an amazing writing experience. Once again it will be held at the Embassy Suites in Oklahoma City. Be ready for a big surprise! They have a five-million-dollar remodel underway as I type. From what I've been told, it will be fabulous, and thankfully, finished by the time we get there.

I've been busy inviting agents to join our faculty. So far we have 6 agents (five from New York) who have agreed to come. We have Chuck Sambuchino, editor of *Writers Digest Books* and the *Guide to Literary Agents*. Believe me, he brings *a lot* to the table.

My goal is to have as many genres as possible represented. In each *Report* and on the website, I'll keep you updated on our progress.

Since our theme is *story weaving*, my conference chair, Patty Stith, and I contacted three of the best storytellers in the country. They have agreed to join us and teach the foundational principles of writing a great story. Here is a little bit about them:

Steven James

www.stevenjames.net

I've had the pleasure of hearing Steven on three occasions. He is our

Keynote Speaker and will also teach the Saturday Lunch Workshop on *Three-Dimensional Characters*.

He touches on this subject in his article in the July/August 2011 *Writer's Digest* magazine, *Raise Your Characters above the Status Quo*, page 25.

Every time attended Steven's presentations, I get so engrossed in his presentation I lose all sense of time. He's that good. He ought to be. Steven has a *Masters Degree* in Storytelling!



William (Bill) Bernhardt

www.williambernhardt.com

Most of us know of and have profited from Bill's incredible talents. He has agreed to conduct a 3-hour workshop for us at OWFI. Just think, for what others pay premium-price, we get all inclusive in the price of our conference! Wow! Talk about a deal. He will teach *The Complete Writing Process: Premise, Preparation, and Pitch Perfect Prose*, on Friday afternoon. We will also offer one or two more classes



that same day for those who are interested in another genre.

Jack Dalton,

www.ravenfeathers.com

Patty Stith told me about Jack. She has heard him on multiple occasions and said he is a magical and mesmerizing storyteller. He lives in Alaska and has both Yup'ik and European heritages. He travels the world teaching the art of storytelling.



He will be our Friday Lunch Workshop instructor. He will also teach a class and introduce the 2012 Famous Authors.

Other *new variances* we are implementing are extending class time to 75 minutes with a longer passing time between classes. The majority of our presenters are bringing writing exercises for group participation. So be ready to work! We're also putting together some exciting panels, unlike any we have ever had. Think paranormal. Think social networking—maybe we'll finally figure out why the heck we're tweeting!

Well, I'm out of room, but you can clearly see how excited I am. You won't want to wait until the last minute to register for this conference!

Stay cool under the A/C and keep weaving those stories!

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Read This Book!

THE JEFFERSON KEY

By Steve Berry

Annie Withers, Book Review Editor

The “growl of her motorcycle grew louder as Cassiopeia sped into the hotel lobby.” She saw Cotton “kick the cop in the shin” and raced toward him across “the smooth marble floor and over the soft rugs,” weaving between couches. She slowed just enough for him to jump on and accelerated toward 100 feet of descending stairway. “Hold on,” she said as she downshifted and hoped the stairs wouldn’t shred the tires. With cops bounding down the stairs behind them, Cotton aimed over Cassiopeia’s shoulder and shot at the locked entry doors. Glass shattered and they escaped into the traffic.

There are so many dangerous scenes in this thriller it was hard to pick one, but this is my favorite because it’s so visual – such sophisticated humor yet absolutely outrageous.

Steve Berry, pretty classy himself, uses every nerve in your body to set the mood and draw us into his created reality. This seventh book in the Cotton Malone series, set amidst halls and houses of power along the eastern seaboard, is based on historic power struggles older than the founding of the country.

The Jefferson Key brings Malone out of retirement, from his Copenhagen rare bookstore back to the Magellan Billet, a U.S. government agency where he was a covert operative. In this adventure, he travels to New York City with Cassiopeia Vitt, another investigator he met during a previous project. They planned to enjoy a weekend seeing plays and eating at favorite restaurants after he’d met with Stephanie Nelle, his former boss, the Director of the agency.

As the saga opens, he’s lured into an assassination attempt of the President of the United States, and for the

first of many times in this tale, has to fight for his life while gathering clues.

Underneath all the deliciously slimy characters and hair-raising shoot-outs, is Berry’s love of history. He moves seamlessly from the facts to fiction. But, like any credible historian, he always ends with ‘Writer’s Notes’ where he lays out the place his research stops and his fantasy starts. In this book, he describes a consortium of swash-buckling pirates that came together before 1776. They received ‘letters of marque,’ a contract with the fledgling government to act on their behalf on the high seas before the country could field a navy. So these families become “privateers”, which he calls The Commonwealth and who continue to manipulate power to maintain dominance 250 years later – perhaps not fictitious.

**

Attendees packed the room at the 7 a.m. meeting at OWFI last spring and took notes in a rapid-fire flurry. Berry focused on several main subjects to give us insight into his unique writing style.

First 5% of story:(Act 1) - develop the crucible – protagonist, antagonist, create conflict.

The meat – middle 90% of story (Act 2) - If it’s too linear, it’s dull. Develop complications/subplots. Build pressure to the crisis moments. The human heart can provide the greatest conflict.

Last 5% of story (Act 3) - bring it home.

Point-of-View Characters: He says to have no more than four or five and he has at least that many which he “herds” through their scenes with precision. The code he gave to avoid confusion was that each scene starts with the name of the POV character for that

segment. And he was right – in spite of all the hairpin turns, I never got lost.

Non Point-of-View Characters:

Always called by their name (if he uses POV character’s name after first use in the scene, it’s because he had to).

Subplots: They come out of main plot. Weave them through the story. His characters often have experiences from the past on their minds as they vie for power.

Passive Voice: Get rid of it – it’s the most fatal disease of writing and drives you to other mistakes.

Back story: Dribble it in so no one notices. Always mix information with action.

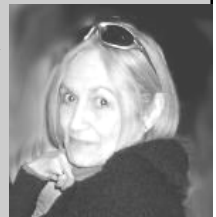
Strong verbs: Certainly, but he also uses visual verbs like an artist’s brush, to set an ominous tone - “two forms *disturbed* the darkness,” or “the vacant lot was *infested* with weeds.” Or my favorite, “wind *molested* the trees.”

If you like crisp, well researched history packed with intrigue and excitement, occasionally approaching stark terror, this book’s for you. You’ll enjoy it and learn something at the same time.

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

Twitter 101

Jen Nipps, Web Review Editor

“I’m on Twitter because my publisher strongly encouraged it.”

I’ve seen that several times by writers of all kinds and members of OWFI and others. The writer typically follows up by saying something along the lines of not knowing anything about Twitter.

I’m going to make a couple assumptions here. I’m going to assume that you are on Twitter so you have an ID. I’m also going to assume you know very little about how Twitter operates.

Here’s your crash course in Twitter basics.

Length:

Twitter limits posts to 140 characters. That includes spaces and punctuation. If you tend to use a lot of words, it will make you either write tight or resort to text-speak abbreviations. I would encourage you not to use “ur” for either “you’re” or “your” or “r” for “are.” If you can’t say it in one Tweet, you have two choices: Break it up into two or more Tweets. Revise it until you can say it in one Tweet.

If you want to include a link in your Tweet, you have to include the “http://” in order for Twitter to recognize it as a link. If you have a long link, providing it’s not past the 140-character limit, Twitter will automatically shorten it for you. Do not put a “#” in front of it. That tells the site it’s

a hashtag and it will cut the link off at the colon.

Hashtags:

Hashtags, those “#”s you see before some words in Tweets, make Twitter searchable. If you see someone talking about tagging a Tweet, that’s what they mean. Some common

writing-related tags are “#writing,” “#amwriting,” “#amediting,” and “#amrevising.”

Tags also make it possible to chat on Twitter.

#journalchat is hosted by Sarah Evans. She describes it as “a SAFE environment where all can freely post questions and answers. Constructive criticism and “brutal facts” are welcome! The qual-

ity of dialogue in each session is only as good as those who participate.

(From “What Is #Journalchat?” on

Jen Nipps is a member of Web

Writing

Women. She is currently working on a book tentatively titled GET TWITTERPATED: A

REAL WORLD GUIDE TO TWITTER. If you have any questions about Twitter and are a member of OWFI, you can e-mail her at jencnipps@gmail.com. Just be aware you and your question might end up in the book.



Journalchat.info, used with permission.)

Other popular chats that use hashtags are #yalitchat for writers of YA and #scifichat, which is hosted by Dave Rozansky, publisher of Flying Pen Press. There are also #writechat and #blogchat. Most of these happen weekly. Search for the hashtag to find out when the chats take place. (Here’s some insider information for you: #journalchat is every Monday at 7:00 Central time.)

Chatting:

While it is possible to chat directly on the Twitter site, it’s awkward. You would have to use the search box and frequently refresh your screen. That’s a prescription for missing about half the chat. I’ve tried it back when I first discovered Twitter.

What good are the hashtags and how do you chat, then?

There are some third-party platforms that use Twitter’s hashtag function to organize Tweets using that tag into a chat format. The three most popular are Tweetchat (www.tweetchat.com), TwitterFall (www.twitterfall.com), and TweetGrid (www.tweetgrid.com). They all work similarly and all require you to sign in with your Twitter account before you can access the chat. You sign in, enter the tag for the chat you want to go to, and the Tweets populate on your screen, most recent first.

To me, TweetChat is the most user-friendly, although there are times it gets stuck. Those are a lot less frequent than they used to be, which makes for a smoother chat experience.

There is more to Twitter than hashtags, linking, and chatting. You can show pictures, send private messages, and share videos. You can also directly link your blog to your Twitter account so you don’t have to copy the link over every time you have a new post. These are somewhat advanced Twitter functions, though. If you want to know more about them, check out the offer in my bio.

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The Doctor is:

In*Out*

Passive-Aggressive Syndrome

Robyn Conley, The Book Doctor

Anyone who has sat in on one of my “Self-editing” workshops knows full well how this doc pushes less passive voice and encourages more active voice in narrative. Less passive means: swapping out those boring (was/is/had been/seems/appears/looked/felt) verbs for more active words, more imaginative descriptions of the action.

When I gave this same lecture last month, the usual question popped up as soon as I suggested using less passive. “But can’t you use too many actives?”

Of course. Your passive can shift to aggressive if ALL the passives are removed. This particular woman said she was sick of reading a person

“strolled, sashayed, skipped” instead of plain old “walked” across the pasture. Me, too.

My emphatic rule is: change a passive to boost the character or plot insight. If your character needs to show a leg or foot ache or pain, then don’t have that person walk, but have him limp.

The point is always to enhance, not over-animate.

Your editor of this fine *OWFI The Report* confessed he relies on too many adverbs. (Ed. Note: Guilty as charged!) We all do in our initial drafts. Why? Because they’re easy.

“I love you,” he said softly near her ear.

“I love you,” he whispered, kissing her cheek.

Which one shows the action/emotion better and implies more insight?

The more insight, the better emotional connection, and a better emotional connection offers a better shot at acceptance in this tough world of publishing. If you anchor your revisions in this undercurrent, you will earn more points with editors and agents.

Practice, practice, practice. First, circle all your passives on each page of whatever you’re writing—articles, novels, short stories, even poetry. Although I’m no poetry expert, I do know imagery and emotion pack the best punch in poetry, whether rhymed or unrhymed, narrative or free verse. And the stronger your descriptive verbs or adjectives are, the leaner and more impacting your poems or stories.

Next, determine if your verbs are

repetitious, and if they are, which ones should you consider changing? Choosing should be obvious once you start examining your sentences in this objective manner. Remember to put yourself in the place of the reader. Would YOU want to read all passives or would you want to read fresher phrasing?

As you choose, you’ll be able to weigh the empty verbs—the ones without much energy or insight—with ones you could insert for better characterization or plot movement. Once you do this, you’ll be on your way to engaging those elusive editors and agents by “pumping up the prose heart rate,” as any good book doc will prescribe.

If you’re still uncertain about your benign verbs, send me a sample and I’ll give you a free examination. As always, I’ll be happy to read and edit the first ten pages of any of your work – IF you send it in Courier font, 12-point, double-space, hard copy with an SASE to: Robyn Conley, P.O. Box 506, Clyde, TX 79510. Let me know if you have any questions: bookdoctor@earthlink.net Website is: www.robynconley.com

“I love you,” he said softly near her ear.
“I love you,” he whispered, kissing her cheek.
Which one shows the action/emotion better and implies more insight? The more insight, the better emotional connection, and a better emotional connection offers a better shot at acceptance in this tough world of publishing.

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. 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*. 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

Prologue Pros & Cons

Marcia Preston, Features Editor

On a panel of editors I once observed, one editor admitted he hated prologues categorically, while two others felt they were sometimes effective but more often clumsy. This came as a shock to me. My first novel had just been published – with a prologue. I went home and cut out the prologue to my work in progress.

Over years of reading and judging contests, I've discovered some bad reasons for writing a prologue, and a few good ones. Let's start with the bad:

(1) Your first chapter feels weak; nothing really dramatic happens. So you rob an awesome scene from later in the story and stick it up front as a prologue. *Ta-da!* An action-packed hook! This is cheating, of course, and it's pretty obvious to your readers. Especially when the high tension falls off into a lame chapter one.

My best writing teacher told me *Don't cheat – unless it's the only thing that works*. Instead, work hard to make that first chapter compelling. Can you begin later in the story and save the explanations until after the reader is hooked? Readers don't need to have *everything* explained up front.

(2) Your book is supposed to be a thriller, so you open with a gruesome, graphic killing that happened in the past. Readers don't know who's being killed, or why, or why we should care. This particular crime may not even figure into the rest of the plot; it's just shock value.

Unfortunately, most readers don't react to out-of-context violence

with an intense desire to read more. They're more likely to feel revulsion, and possibly resentment at being manipulated.

(3) Writer catharsis. Feeling literary, you indulge in some introspective angst, thinly disguised as your viewpoint character. If you need to write something like that to help crystallize the theme in your own mind, that's useful. Get it all down, then hide it in a drawer somewhere.

Are there any *good* reasons for including a prologue? Sure. Maybe a seminal incident occurred years – even centuries – before the actual story starts, and this event set the whole chain of plot events in motion. You could *tell* about this later in the book, but it might be stronger to dramatize the scene in the time and place where it happened. Just be sure the first chapter is every bit as strong.

A skilled writer might use a prologue to define atmosphere, or psychological setting. The idea is to pull the reader into a fascinating, alternate world. In the prologue of *The Prince of Tides*, Conroy evoked the beauty and malaise of the Deep South, setting us up for the sad and horrible things that happened to his

family. In a horror novel, the prologue might reveal a forest where trees take revenge on polluters. For a creepy mystery, we might glimpse the villain's warped world through his own eyes. Atmospheric prologues are rich in sensory detail that's integral to the story.

If your work-in-progress has a prologue, ask yourself the hard questions. Does the prologue perform a specific, valuable purpose or is it just CPR for a lackluster chapter one? When in doubt, leave it out.

My stories run up and bite me on the leg-I respond by writing down everything that goes on during the bite. When I finish, the idea lets go and runs off.

Ray Bradbury



Marcia Preston writes mainstream and mystery novels from her home in Edmond. Her checkered past includes teaching high school English, editing two magazines and freelancing for dozens of others. She's a two-time past president of OWFI. Contact her at

marcia@marciapreston.com

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Summer 2011 Photo Contest

Ed. Note: This is the photo contest winner from the Summer 2011 edition of the REPORT. You can see the photo that this is written about by going to the OWFI web page at www.owfi.org. Enter the Member's Only area (you'll need to register for this) and look at the Summer 2011 REPORT.

Bon Voyage

C. D. Jarmola

Bartlesville Wordweavers

"The Herrington-Smythes embarked today. . ." I began the article. Once again the Herrington-Smythes were off on an exciting adventure around the world and my editor wanted me to do a front-page story about them. Unfortunately, he wanted me to do the typical story about our city's wealthiest family and their glamorous lifestyles. Another fluff piece on the perfect family with the fairytale life.

If only he would let me write the true story. Not about how they give so generously to all the charities, but how the money they are giving is stolen from the people in this town. How their bank gives loans with outrageous interest rates and provides no support if someone

is unable to make all their payments. No mercy. Just foreclosures.

If only he would let me write about the perfect family. Which family would I write about, the legitimate or the illegitimate offspring of Mr. Herrington-Smythe? Do I write of how his wife is having a fling with the tennis pro at the club, or how he is chasing his secretary around her desk everyday? And do I add an addendum on the number of young, naïve, new-in-town secretaries he has gone through this year.

If only my boss would let me write about their true fairytale life, wouldn't the people of our fair city be amazed. Should I tell the real reason behind their son's return a year early from Harvard and why his roommate is no longer welcome at the estate? Or why their daughter really went to spend nine months with Aunt Pearl in England?

But those stories will never be told as long as the Herrington-Smythes are the single largest advertiser of this paper. Instead I'll do as my editor demands and keep my job.

"The Herrington-Smythes," I pound out on my old typewriter, "embarked today on what promises to be a fairytale trip on the maiden voyage of the Titanic..."

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:

wizardwayne@juno.com.

Send it within the body of the email or as a TEXT attachment. **Entry deadline is August December 1, 2011.**

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Book Review

45 Master Characters: Mythic Models for Creating Original Characters,

By Victoria Lynn Schmidt

Reviewed by C. D. Ratliff. Copyright © 2008 by C. D. Ratliff

45 Master Characters: Mythic Models for Creating Original Characters

By Victoria Lynn Schmidt

Published in 2007 by

Writer's Digest Books

ISBN-13: 978-1-58297-522-1

ISBN-10: 1-58297-522-1

This is an amazing book for writers at any stage in their profession. Ms. Schmidt explains her objective is to give writers better-developed characters. The book offers us mythic, cross-cultural models of both male and female archetypes to explore as foundations for our own unique characters. Each archetype includes the villainous side. This is very useful in regards to exploring the shadow aspects of character or to create that antagonist we love to hate.

She gives us examples from popular novels and movies to demonstrate the effectiveness of using these archetypes, and in the end, shows us how to get the most from them in writing. This author goes the extra mile and gives readers a thorough understanding of how to weave these characters into the feminine and

masculine journeys.

The main portion of the 298-page book presents each archetype in a mythic scenario followed by personality traits and details concerning what they care about, what they fear and what motivates them. In the 'Getting Started' section, she defines the master archetypes and the archetypal patterns for thirteen supporting characters. We see the complex character as a combination of archetypes with examples for developing them. We then explore the male and female archetypes separately followed by a section defining supporting characters and their function. The final section explores the masculine and feminine journeys complete with worksheets and tips. I found the entire book both enlightening and helpful.

The first section describes the use of archetype characters and the many ways their driving force keeps your story alive with believable actions and reactions. She describes archetypes as "blueprints for building well-defined characters." This section shows character sketches and questions to answer that will guide us through choosing the best archetype for the story we

want to write. By following the guide in this section, we can easily develop characters that will seem to live and breathe.

Section two explores creating female heroes and villains where sixteen female archetypes with detailed profiles and how they are seen in today's culture are shown. Examples from literature and film are often noted throughout to emphasize modern concerns of the archetype's distinctive personality. The chapters are organized the same for each archetype with segments defining fears, motivations, compatibility with other archetypes and possible character arcs. The presentation of the villainous side of each archetype, while not as well defined, shows the dark traits of the character and is followed by examples of the archetype in action through popular media.

The third section explores creating male heroes and villains using the same format, and also profiles sixteen archetypes in mythic models. We see Apollo as both the Businessman and his villainous side, the Traitor. Ares the Protector with the villainous side in the profile of the Gladiator. You will most likely recog-

(Continued on page 18)

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2012 OWFI CONTEST RULES

2012 OWFI Contest will be open for entries December 1, 2011 through February 1, 2012. See the Winter issue or the OWFI web page for Category Chairs, entry form and cover sheet.

CONTEST ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND ENTRY PROCEDURES

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

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

If you are not yet an OWFI member and wish to join, you must submit the membership form and your dues payment along with your contest entry form, or send it separately to the OWFI Treasurer. (Name and address are on the form).

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

the contest deadline.

1. Entrants must be paid-up members of OWFI or full-time students. Students must provide verification of student status. Membership dues are \$15 per year if paid before November 30th (\$20 if paid after November 30th) for affiliate club members and \$20 per year if paid before November 30th (\$25 if paid after November 30th) for members-at-large.
2. No manuscript that has won a cash prize (1st, 2nd or 3rd) in a previous OWFI contest may be entered again — EVER.
3. Contestants who win first place in an OWFI contest category may not enter that same category the following year.
4. Unpublished entries must be unaccepted for publication at the time of submission. Scripts cannot ever have been optioned. (If accepted by a publisher after entry, the submission will be considered valid.)
5. Electronically published novels for the trophy awards must be hard copied before being sent to the category chair.
6. Judges may not enter contests that they are judging.
7. Category Chairs may not enter category they chair.
8. If entries are co-authored, all members of the writing team must be OWFI members. The team will

be considered a single entrant and must pay a separate entry fee for their co-authored entries apart from any fees they pay for individual entries.

9. Persons, whether entering as a team or an individual, may enter a category only once.

10. No manuscript may be entered in more than one category.

ENTRY PROCEDURES

11. Entrants must pay a \$20 **NONREFUNDABLE** entry fee, which covers administrative costs and awards. This entitles participants to enter as many categories as they want (see #9 above).

12. Manuscripts must be submitted to the appropriate Category Chair.

13. Entries must be postmarked by February 01, 2012. OWFI is not responsible for entries lost or delayed in the mail. The deadline will not be extended due to inclement weather.

14. Mail all entries flat, no folds. Folded manuscripts or entries in envelopes smaller than 9" x 12" will be disqualified.

MS PREPARATION AND FORMAT

15. All unpublished manuscripts must be editor-ready. That means *typed and double spaced* on one side of 8½" x 11" white paper with headers and page numbers. Poetry may be single spaced. Book sample chapters must also be double spaced but "front/back

(Continued on page 11)

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2012 OWFI CONTEST RULES

matter" such as synopsis/ overviews, table-of-contents, and chapter outlines should follow industry standard (double-spaced, single-spaced or combinations thereof). Play, film, or TV scripts should follow industry-standard formats. Use an easy-to-read 12-point font such as Times Roman or Courier that results in approximately 250 words per page (about 25 lines per page). Manuscripts using small print which violate these conditions will be disqualified. Fancy fonts other than italics are not allowed. Clear photocopies or computer printouts (laser, ink-jet, or near-letter-quality dot matrix) are acceptable.

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

- * Number of lines (for poetry entries)
- * Number of pages entered (for book-length prose entries)
- * Word count for short works of prose (short stories, articles, etc.). Calculate using word processor word count or average 10 words per line, 25 lines per page.
- * Specific genre (see category descriptions) in multi-genre categories--optional but highly rec-

ommended

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

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

18. A completed copy of the 2012 Official Cover Sheet must be attached to each submission with a paper clip (do not staple). The sheet must include: Category name, manuscript title, name of club, author's name, address and phone number. If not affiliated with any OWFI club, check Member-at-Large box.

19. All entries must include a self-addressed envelope no smaller than 9" x 12." If you plan to pick up your entries at the conference, you may omit postage, but the self-addressed envelope is required. Use your own name and address for both addressee and return address on these envelopes. Paperclip the return envelope to each entry. Note: Trophy entrants who choose not to pick up their materials at the conference should provide an appropriately sized and stamped mailer for postal return of their published book entry. Entries without the proper return envelope will be disqualified and

destroyed. Entries without return postage, which are not picked up at the conference, will be destroyed.

CAUSES FOR DISQUALIFICATION

* Entries or entry forms/fees postmarked after the February 01, 2012 deadline.

* Contestants or entries fail to meet the Eligibility Requirements (see above).

* Manuscripts folded or mailed in envelopes smaller than 9" x 12" (SEE EXCEPTION for Trophy entries).

* Entries sent to the wrong Category Chair, though authors may resubmit before the post-marked deadline.

* Any manuscript that is not "Editor-Ready"

* Handwritten manuscripts.

* Manuscripts which use smaller type that allows more than 250 words on a double-spaced page (approximate).

* Entries over the maximum length or under the minimum length.

* Entries that contain any author identification (name, pen name, byline, etc.) any place other than the coversheet.

* Entries without the proper return envelope (these will also be destroyed).

* Trophy Award entries with a copyright date other than 2011.

* Any manuscript found not to be the original work of an entrant. The Executive Board or its designated committee will screen all winning entries.



2012 OWFI CONTEST CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

1. Mainstream Novel: Fiction--

A successful mainstream novel tackles subjects of universal appeal, driven by characters and plots that find acceptance in the “mainstream” of readers. This category is large and diverse. Think Jodi Picoult, John Grisham, Harlan Coben, etc. Genre novels such as science fiction, mystery/suspense, romance, and historical should be entered in the appropriate categories. Submit first consecutive chapters including prologue, if any, and synopsis. Complete submission limited to 25 pages (or less).

2. Contemporary Romance

Novel: Fiction-- Contemporary romance novels take place ‘present-day,’ following strong, vivid characters on their journey of discovery and emotional *con-flict* to a shared and satisfying conclusion. No plot point, setting, or current event takes precedence over the one central theme: the relationship between the two main characters. The end must leave the reader believing the protagonists' love will endure the rest of their lives. This category includes romantic suspense and Christian romances. Submit first consecutive chapters including prologue, if any, and synopsis. Complete submission limited to 25 pages (or less).

3. Historical Novel: Fiction--

Historical encompasses novels set anytime in the recent or distant past such as ancient Greece, the Middle Ages, or World War II. These novels are time capsules of an era and/or culture--the setting serves as a character itself. However, “Historical romance” focuses on the *relationship between the two main characters as they fall in love*, not the world events happening around them. Submit first consecutive chapters including prologue, if any, and synopsis. Complete submission limited to 25 pages (or less).

4. Mystery/Suspense Novel: Fiction--

This category is made up of two broad categories. **Mystery Novels** are all about the ‘*whodunit*.’ These books have a strong hook/murder and a cast of suspicious and compelling characters, and readers compete to solve the puzzle before the author reveals the answer. Whether told in first person or third, mystery novels showcase the main character as he/she follows a maze of clues and incidents leading to the Big Reveal. Detective and police procedural, espionage/spies, amateur sleuth, series or stand-alones, a winning mystery novel is a tightly-woven question from beginning to end. **Suspense Novels**

and related **Thrillers** also require a strong hook that often includes a murder/death involving a strong main character and compelling cast. But unlike mysteries, suspense/thrillers more often focus on ‘*how-dunit*.’ The antagonist may be an individual, organization (government), or thing (virus) known to readers from the beginning but often hidden from the protagonist. Suspense novels and thrillers may be first person but more often third person, and often employ more than one viewpoint character. The main character may be the good guy or the bad guy. Whether a medical, psychological, techno, legal, or other sub-genre, the winning suspense novel is action-driven from beginning to end. *Help the judge by noting “mystery” or “suspense/thriller” on your mss.* Submit first consecutive chapters including prologue, if any, and synopsis. Complete submission limited to 25 pages (or less).

5. Western Novel: Fiction--

Novels in this category exemplify the flavor, drama, and resilience of the people who populated the wild frontier of the western United States during the 1700’s and 1800’s, as well as contemporary themes of the modern West today. These novels often feature cowboys, Indians, pioneers, gun



2012 OWFI CONTEST CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

battles, and scenes of ranch life. They can be either epic or intimate in scope. Western novels are time capsules of an era and/or culture, the setting a character itself. Submit first consecutive chapters including prologue, if any, and synopsis. Complete submission limited to 25 pages (or less).

6. Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror Novel: Fiction--This category is made up of three totally different genres: **Science Fiction**, A novel in which futuristic technology or otherwise altered scientific principles *contribute* in a significant way to the adventures. Often the novel assumes a set of rules or principles or facts and then traces their logical consequences; **Fantasy**, Any novel that is disengaged from reality, often set in nonexistent worlds, such as under the earth, in a fairyland, on the moon, etc. The characters are often something other than human or include nonhuman characters; **Horror**, fiction in any media intended to scare, unsettle or horrify the reader. Historically, the cause of the "horror" experience has necessarily been the intrusion of an evil, or occasionally misunderstood, supernatural element into everyday human experience. Any fiction with a morbid, gruesome, surreal, exceptionally suspenseful

or frightening theme has come to be called "horror." *Help the judge by noting "sci-fi" or "fantasy" or "horror" on your mss.* Submit first consecutive chapters including prologue, if any, and synopsis. Complete submission limited to 25 pages (or less).

7. Nonfiction Book: (Any non-fiction book)--This category is made up of an enormous range of divergent genres, which all seek to educate, inform, and/or entertain and sometimes inspire. **Narrative Nonfiction** follows the form and style of various fiction genres (think *The Perfect Storm* and *First, Do No Harm*). Depending on style, biographies and autobiographies or family histories may fall under the narrative nonfiction umbrella, which basically consists of any "true" subject told in a narrative form. The author often has a personal stake or shared experience in the story. This form requires strong viewpoint character(s), story problems and satisfying resolutions. Length of complete work parallels similar works of fiction. **General Nonfiction** more commonly presents technical, self-help, how-to information, inspirational works, or otherwise fact-based material derived from an author's own expertise, author research, and outside expert sources. Style varies

widely but in all cases content must be presented in a pleasing and accessible format. Chapters typically are broken up with sidebars, bulleted lists, photos/illustrations, tables and other value-added materials and may include direct quotes, footnotes, etc. Length of finished work varies widely, from short (under 20,000 words) illustrated gift books to encyclopedia-length reference books over 150,000 words. *Help the judge by noting "narrative" or "general" on your mss.* For **Narrative Nonfiction** submit *first consecutive chapters* (and prologue, if any) with full synopsis. For **General Nonfiction** submit *any representative chapters*, and include a chapter outline *OR* book proposal per industry standard (overview, market analysis/competition, table of contents, etc). Submission limited to 30 pages.

8. Picture Book: Fiction or non-fiction (for ages 1-8)-- Picture books are large art-filled books for children, which are primarily targeted to ages 0-8, but are also appealing to older kids and even adults. They are designed to bring information and/or entertainment to life for young eyes, and the text must be minimal. These books have a beginning, middle, and end. Picture books do not necessarily feature a character, but when they do, he/she/it must solve his or her own problem and the problem should be something significant. Often a picture book portrays a concept such as num-

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(Continued from page 13)

bers, letters, weather, colors, etc. They may also evoke a mood, such as a bedtime story. These books should be engaging and present the topic in a fresh, child-like way. (Show, don't tell). 750 word maximum.

9. Middle Grade Book: Fiction or nonfiction (for ages 8-12)— Same as Category 10, yet written for younger age children. For fiction, think *Hank the Cow Dog*. Submit first chapters, complete synopsis or outline, prologue if any and/or nonfiction proposal (per industry standard). Submission limited to 20 pages.

10. Young Adult Book: Fiction or nonfiction for ages 12 and older-- This category has the same rules as all books: for novels, write compelling stories with beginnings, middles, and ends. For nonfiction, provide accessible and interesting content that informs, inspires and/or educates. For **novels**, think *Harry Potter*; the main character should have an important problem he/she struggles to solve. The story should engage the reader in caring whether the character achieves that goal by story's end. These often deal with the tribulations of growing up. **Nonfiction** should focus on providing information

that educates and informs the reader. Review the various novel and nonfiction book categories for further descriptions. *Help the judge by noting "novel" or "nonfiction" on your mss.* Submit first chapters and prologue, if any, with complete synopsis or outline, and/or nonfiction proposal (per industry standard). Submission limited to 20 pages (or less).

11. Poetry, Unrhymed-Short-- Any theme, any style. Poetry deals with the poet's voice, with images, with ideas, but set in strict forms dictated by poetry conventions/standards and the author's imagination. Poetry may tell a story, present a single idea, paint a picture or feeling with words, etc. In all cases, it is an art form and should go beyond plain prose to evoke something deeper. **16 lines and shorter.** (Epigraphs and spaces are not part of the line count.)

12. Poetry, Unrhymed-Long-- Any theme, any style. Poetry deals with the poet's voice, with images, with ideas, but set in strict forms dictated by poetry conventions/standards and the author's imagination. Poetry may tell a story, present a single idea, paint a picture or feeling with words, etc. In all cases, it is an art

form and should go beyond plain prose to evoke something deeper. **17 lines and longer.** (Epigraphs and spaces are not part of the line count.)

13. Poetry, Rhymed-Short-- Any theme, any rhyming form. Poetry deals with the poet's voice, with images, with ideas, but set in strict forms dictated by poetry conventions/standards and the author's imagination. Poetry may tell a story, present a single idea, paint a picture or feeling with words, etc. In all cases, it is an art form and should go beyond plain prose to evoke something deeper. **16 lines and shorter.** (Epigraphs and spaces are not part of the line count.)

14. Poetry, Rhymed-Long-- Any theme, any rhyming form. Poetry deals with the poet's voice, with images, with ideas, but set in strict forms dictated by poetry conventions/standards and the author's imagination. Poetry may tell a story, present a single idea, paint a picture or feeling with words, etc. In all cases, it is an art form and should go beyond plain prose to evoke something deeper. **17 lines and longer.** (Epigraphs and spaces are not part of the line count.)

15. Short-Short Story (Adult): Fiction-- Same description as a Short Story (see summary in Category 16), but shorter. Not more than 2000 words.

16. Short Story (Adult): Fiction-- A short story is a brief piece of



2012 OWFI CONTEST CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

fiction pointed and more economically detailed as to character, situation, and plot than a novel. They often revolve around a single theme, one climactic event developing a single character in depth. Narrower than a novel, a short story contains these basic elements: characters, setting, plot, conflict, resolution, climax, dialogue, protagonist, and antagonist. All short stories should present the major character with an important problem that the character must struggle to solve, and engage the reader in caring about whether the character achieves that goal by story's end. 2000 to 4000 words.

17. Juvenile Short Story: Fiction-- Same description as a Short Story (Category 16), yet with a subject matter aimed at readers ages 3-7. 600 words max. For readers 8-12, 1000 words maximum. *Must put age range with word count on page one of manuscript.*

18. Young Adult Short Story: Fiction-- Same description as a Short Story (Category 16), yet with subject matter aimed at readers 12-18. Limit 1200 words.

19. Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror Story: Fiction-- Same description as a Short Story (Category 16),

yet with subject matter aimed at readers interested in the three genres represented (see Category 6 for details). *Help the judge by noting "sci-fi" or "fantasy" or "horror" on your mss.* Limit 5000 words.

20. Prose Humor: Fiction or Nonfiction-- Prose humor is exactly that: a piece of writing meant to evoke humor. Everyday experiences can resonate with the reader, or common interest stories when written in a clever and entertaining voice bring forth a smile. The humor piece should also meet the criteria of its form; column, short story, article/feature or essay. Limit 2000 words.

21. Essay (Any subject of contemporary interest.)-- Essays are personal opinion pieces using narrative form to convince the reader of a certain point of view, or at least to better understand that writer's view. There are formal, fact-driven essays (George Will), and informal, lighter essays (Erma Bombeck). Bear in mind the quality and logic of the argument and how well the author uses facts, reasoning, and literary tools such as analogy to convince. Sometimes an opinion can be presented, a point of view expressed, an argument driven home, in a

novel or unusual way: by telling a story or seeming to take the opposite point of view, or a fable with a clear moral at the end. Limit 2000 words.

22. Play, Film, or TV Script-- One, two, or three acts. As in all categories, must be unaccepted, and never optioned or produced at the time of submission. *Help the judge by noting "play" or "film" or "TV script" on your mss.* Format should follow accepted industry standards. Submit 10 to 30 consecutive pages and complete synopsis.

23. Technical and/or How-To Article (Any subject.)-- This category is made up of two different genres that both aim to educate readers in different ways. Each style presents a problem, describes why it matters, then provides the solution--and sometimes offers a call to action.

Technical Articles generally are longer, and cover a narrow but serious subject in great depth and rely on more than one expert (often including the author) to provide information that educates and informs a specific target audience. While the article may be scientific, it should also be readable and easy to understand and absorb. The reader should come away with useful information.

How-To Articles often are shorter info-tainment (1500 words may be too long!) lighter fare that may rely on the expertise of the author alone. These articles not only educate and inform, they

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also provide specific and detailed steps for the reader to accomplish the stated goal (how to bake cookies, make a craft, prepare a devotional, write a novel). A central theme follows through to the end. *Help the judge by noting "technical" or "how-to" on your mss.* Not more than 3000 words.

24. Feature Article: Nonfiction— (Any subject.) These are the articles listed prominently in a publication (magazine, newspaper, online, etc) covering a subject of great interest to that venue's target audience. The article must clearly have a reason to exist and not simply serve as a vehicle for advertising. Nor should it be a vehicle for presenting the author's opinion about a particular topic (For opinion pieces, see the "how-to" or "inspirational" or "essay" category descriptions). More than just-the-facts, a feature article uses a great hook, expert quotes, and a bang-up conclusion to convey its topic. The author's style or "voice" gives the piece life. Not more than 2500 words.

25. Western Article: Nonfiction— Whether dealing with some historical aspect/person, or just the best little dude ranch in Texas, the western article needs

to always retain its distinctive flair. Refer to descriptions for technical article and feature article--and incorporate the western flavor. Not more than 3000 words.

26. Inspirational Article-- Should concern a *personal* experience or struggle, which provides inspiration or hope to others. A profile or personal story should touch the reader in some way and/or impart a valuable message and/or educate the reader in some way. Not necessarily religious in nature, the piece should strive to *inspire and motivate* the reader. It may be a vehicle for presenting the author's opinion about a particular topic that has personally affected him or her, and may also include a call to action. The author's style or "voice" gives the piece life. Limit 3000 words.

27. Mazie Cox Reid Column Award— A column is a reoccurring piece that would commonly run with a byline and photo (think Dave Barry, Hints From Heloise). These are theme pieces—whether humorous, political, or how-to, the overall theme, author's style and column format remains the same for each installment. The column should be consistently useful, and should have a clear reason for existing. Columns usu-

ally are assigned to writers with expertise in the subject, because an author's credentials lend credence to the words. Columnists present a distinctive voice; you should feel you are getting to know the columnist and have a reason to read him or her again and again. Submit three different columns (newspaper or magazine) of no more than 600 words each.

28. Confession Story: First person fiction—These stories usually feature a female protagonist. A traditional confession follows the formula sin-suffer-repent. However, because so many things that once were "sins" are no longer considered shameful, the sin-suffer-repent formula has almost disappeared in favor of the problem story in which a contemporary woman has a problem, strives to resolve her problem, and ultimately--either directly or indirectly--solves her own problem. Romantic plots or sub-plots are common. While all endings needn't be happy, stories often contain a positive message. Above all, *a confession story is a short story* (see Category 16). Beginnings, middles and ends are required. Limit 5000 words.

29. Nostalgic Prose— Short stories that focus on down-home occurrences reflecting the past, these pieces evoke a fond remembrance of a time gone by, or memories of childhood. Common interest is the goal here. 1200 words maximum.

The following awards are trophy

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awards given for books published in the previous year (2011).

30. Best Juvenile Book Award:

Published book of fiction or non-fiction. Ages 1-18.

31. Best Nonfiction Book

Award: Published nonfiction book.

32. Best Book of Poetry Award:

Published book of poetry

33. Best Book of Fiction Award:

Published book of fiction (novel or short story collection)

Creme-de-la-Creme Award: A "best of contest" award, chosen from among the first-place manuscripts in all 29 unpublished categories.

An autobiography can distort, facts can be re-aligned. But fiction never lies. It reveals the writer totally.

V. S. Naipaul

2012 Basket Wars

The 2011 BasketWars brought in nearly \$1,000 for OWFI, part of which is used for scholarships for the 2012 writing conference.

Now is the time to begin planning for the 2012 BasketWars. I give a small token of my appreciation to each winning donor.

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."

The divisions of the competition include winners in categories as follows:

Large Baskets division: Affiliate large basket with highest bid

Large Baskets division: Individual large basket with highest bid

Small Baskets division: Affiliate small basket with highest bid

Small Basket Division: Individual small basket with highest bid.

Guidelines:

1. If people notify me their affiliates, or they individually, are bringing a basket by April 15, 2012, I can have paper work

ready and know how many tables to have available.

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

3. Please be sure that the name of the individual or affiliate is attached to the basket (container) when it is checked in at the conference.

4. The time when the auction will end will be posted by the basket display, but usually all bids must be in by 11 AM, on Saturday.

5. The results of the silent auction will be posted by the tables by 11:45 where the baskets are displayed.

6. Basket must be paid for by 12:15 PM and picked up. After 12:15, anyone may purchase a remaining basket at the highest bid.

7. 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.

8. 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

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45 Master Characters

Book Review Continued

(Continued from page 9)

nize favorite characters in these profiles; I did.

Heroes and villains do not tell the Story alone; section four is where we find the rest of our character list. Here creating supporting characters is defined by well-known archetypes such as the Magi, Mentor, and Best Friend. There you will find rivals and symbol characters such as Shadow, Lost Soul, and Double with the most typical uses for them. I was somewhat disappointed that the trickster archetype was not included; he is one of my favorites as a shapeshifter and enigmatic character.

In section five, "The Feminine and Masculine Journeys," we discover the complete structure of each journey and examples of how various archetypes might approach them. We see the different approaches of male vs. female in topics such as power, support, and perception as well as an overview of the different issues each will face. This section explores areas intended to assist writers in creating gender opposite characters with ease.

In the final chapters, she defines each journey and divides the stages into the familiar three-act

structure. The coping strategies and issues that various archetypes might use in negative situations are included to help writers create a believable character arc. Craft tips follow each stage with suggestions and ideas for integration and support character roles. Finally, the last pages of the book contain charts and worksheets that make idea development a breeze.

Overall, I found the book well structured and easy to use as a reference guide. Seasoned authors as well as new writers will benefit from the vast information covered here. It has a prominent place on my reference bookshelf.

Everything a writer learns about the art or craft of fiction takes just a little away from his need or desire to write at all. In the end he knows all the tricks and has nothing to say.

Raymond Chandler

Upcoming Writer's Conferences That May Be of Interest.

Mystery Writers of America presents
MWA University - New Orleans
- Saturday, October 1, 2011

Location: Hotel Monteleone, Vieux Carre Room, 214 Royal St, New Orleans, LA 70130

Class/Instructor:
After the Idea - Jess Lourey
Dramatic Structure & Plot - Hallie Ephron
Setting & Description - David Morrell
Character & Dialogue - Julie Smith
Writing as Re-Writing - Reed Farrel Coleman
The Writing Life - Hank Phillippi Ryan

We have arranged for a rate of \$159/ per night at the hotel (includes a continental breakfast). The rate will cover the following date range: September 29 - October 2, 2011. Reservations must be made by September 23, 2011. Reservation link to hotel will be available soon.

Link for hotel reservations:

<http://tinyurl.com/3lmbmcz>

Registration Form:

<http://tinyurl.com/3dz53t6>

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COMMENTS FROM 2011 CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Writing classes and Residency Opportunity

Editor's note: These speakers from the 2011 conference were impressed enough with our organization and its conference to send comments for inclusion in the Report

I wanted to extend a hearty CONGRATS to all for this year's conference which was my very first but certainly not my last one! I thoroughly enjoyed how the conference allows for a perfect blending of structured moments and sessions--all highly useful and important--and time to mix, listen, get to know each other! Yes, I did enjoy giving my screenwriting sessions and encouraging many to "give it a try" if they haven't done so yet. But again, I loved the diversity of members, guests and shared experiences, advice and encouragement! Long live OWFI!

Andy Horton

I usually go to three conferences a year, and the OWFI conference is my favorite. We have a greater diversity of writers attending, which is fun. We have people coming from further afield than the length of an ordinary commute. And the rooms are roomy, the food is good, and the company best of all. (Steve Berry was an exceptionally good speaker and all around nice guy.) Dan and Linda and all of the conference volun-

teers put on a really fine conference this year. Hats off to them!

Gretchen Craig

Thanks so much for the fun and warm hospitality in Oklahoma last weekend.

The conference was great (ok not the kidney stone – but other than that – fantastic – haha). The hotel was fabulous, the food was awesome, the speakers were great and the program seemed flawless. I enjoyed it and it sounded as if others enjoyed it as well. Thank you for the invitation and I sincerely hope I can visit again some time.

Happy writing.

Rhonda Penders

A great conference. Linda and Dan did an awesome job and the speakers were wonderful. Thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of it.

Regina Williams

What I most enjoyed about participating in the conference were the people I met. Chuck Sasser served as my shepherd and he ensured that I was introduced to everyone and everything that had a pulse. **(Ed. Note: Chuck never introduced him to me!)** I left Oklahoma knowing that I had gained several friends.

Michael Bracken

Ed. Note: This program is not sanctioned or endorsed by OWFI. This is for informational purposes only.

Spalding University's four-semester, brief-residency Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing combines superb instruction with unparalleled flexibility and offers studies in fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, writing for children and young adults, screenwriting, and playwriting. At the beginning of each semester, students and faculty study together at a 10-day residency (in Louisville or abroad), after which students return home to study independently with a faculty mentor through an exchange of 5 packets of original writing. Semesters begin in spring, summer, and fall. For more information, email: mfa@spalding.edu, call: (800) 896-8941, ext 2423, or see our website: www.spalding.edu/mfa.

Spalding University has been around since 1814 and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The MFA Program is a member of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP). The MFA program began in 2001 and has 363 alumni and 155 students. Our students and alums have published/produced more than 200 books/plays/films. We offer flexible scheduling where students may begin their studies at different times of the year and take up to 10 years to complete the program. The program includes a summer residency abroad (London/Bath 2008; Barcelona, 2009; Buenos Aires, 2010; Rome/Tuscany, 2011; Paris, 2012; Galway/Dublin 2013 . . .)

CORRECTION:

On the back cover of the Summer 2011 issue of the **Report**, Glen McIntyre name was erroneously listed as Glenn MCIntyre.

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Affiliate News

OKLAHOMA CITY WRITERS

Acceptances and Sales

AUDREY STREETMAN had two poems accepted by Crosstimbers for the spring edition: "On Writing Poetry" and "Wanting to Learn."

BERNADINE WELLS sold "God Walks in My Garden" to the Lutheran Digest.

MARIA VERES'S poem "On My Last Morning" was accepted for publication in Kansas City Voices. Her Poem "Pot Faith" was published in the spring issue of Crosstimbers.

SANDRA SOLI had a poem and a short story published in Crosstimbers and two poems in the D-Day commemorative issue of Burnt Bridges.

KIM ROGERS sold two stories to Chicken Soup for the Soul: Just for Teenagers.

Novels and New Books

BETTY HATCHER'S new book "Her Innocent War" is available on Amazon and as a kindle download.

Professional Activities

MARIA VERES was one of 5

poetry judges for the Oklahoma Book Award.

SANDRA SOLI was the keynote speaker and a workshop presenter at the Inspirational Writers conference in Amarillo.

Contest Winnings

SAVANNAH THORN won 4th place in the Jungle Red website "Crime Concept Contest."

SHELLY ANNE RICHTER won 1st Place for an inspirational short story on autism in the Arkansas Writers Contest in June.

Professional Activities

LUCINDA THIERRY spoke at the Bean Juice Coffee House and Urban Roots restaurant in May on writing and publishing.

SANDRA SOLI Read at the University of Central Oklahoma program "Ain't Nobody That Can Sing Like Me: New Oklahoma Writing".

JUDY HOWARD exhibited "Food for the Body and Soul Quilts" and signed her 1905 Cookbook-Food for Body and Soul in July.

NORMAN GALAXY OF WRITERS

Professional Activities

ANN CHAMPEAU judged the Non-Fiction Book category for OWFI.

STAN SOLLOWAY was top scoring joke writer of all time on Kwipster.com.

JUDY HOWARD exhibited for "Food for Body and Soul Quilts" and signed 1905 Cookbook at Barnes and Noble in Oklahoma City, at Kolache Festival in Prague, 45th Infantry Museum in OKC, and toured quilts in Kingfisher Park. She held a Quilted Vacation Diary workshop for teens at Altus Library.

ROBERT FERRIER judged rhymed poetry-long category for OWFI.

Acceptances, Sales, And Publications

KATHLEEN NORIS PARK produced and published *Norman Baha'I cluster newsletter*. Wrote speaker notes and May, June, and July grammar columns for *Norman Galaxy of Writers Newsletter*.

HELEN DUCHON edited and designed May, June and July Uni-



Affiliate News

Continued

versity Womens' Association's Newsletter, Norman Galaxy's Write Line and League of Women Voters' newsletters. She updates the website for Morning Star Spiritual Center and League of Women Voters' facebook.

ROBERT FERRIER had 2 poems recorded by Red Lion Square, "The Violin Maker" and "Glover River." His poem "Front Steps" was published in Oklahoma Today Magazine.

ANN CHAMPEAU wrote the May, June and July marketing columns in Norman Galaxy's WriteLine, and had a poem published in Oklahoma Today, "Oklahoma Prairie."

JOCELYN PEDERSEN had an article, "Women of Substance," published in Silk Magazine.

KEITH EATON had an article published in Distinctly Oklahoma, "J. Don Cook, One Very Hip, Hip Shooter."

ROBBIE LAMBERSON had a novel accepted by Tate Publishing.

STAN SOLLOWAY had on SillimanOnSports.com: Shaq's Retirement and the Operetta Shaqkobe; Defending Chess Boxing – Now a Reality; What's it Like to be Jimmy Goldstein, NBA's Super fan for a Day. His articles that appeared on bleacherreport.com/stan-silliman were: Quote: Loving Shake

Smart Should Love Claka. Quote: Master's To Chris "Boomer" Ber- man. Stay Away, Stay Away; NBA Floppers: To Flop or Not to Flop. Mud Hens Muddied at Fifth Third Field. Articles at bleacherreport.com/stan-silliman.

Contest Winnings:

STAN SOLLOWAY won the Bleacher Report Award for being the highest read Cricket writer among Indian readers (the country India.) His jokes run in the India Times. Scored highest among judges for his round in World Series of Comedy in Wichita, Kansas.

FRANCES SEARCEY won 1st Place for "Phonics for Breakfast and Letters for Lunch," in Arkansas Pioneer Branch – Prose category in Arkansas Writers' Conference contest. Also 3rd Place in Robbi Rice Dietrich Award category for her poem, "Forsythia" at the same conference.

NEAL HUFFAKER won 3rd Honorable Mention for "Bonfire" in the Minute Poem category at the Arkansas Writers' Conference.

MEMBER NEWS

FRANCES SEARCEY, because of her many years leading Friday Writers, the Norman Galaxy critique class, was nominated for Volunteer of the Year for Seniors sponsored by the Junior League and United Way of Norman.

DOROTHY BRINKER celebrated her 90th birthday June 27. Dorothy is one of two original members of Galaxy. (The other is Marilyn Fleer.)

ARKANSAS RIDGE WRITERS

Contest Winnings

DONNA VOLKENANNT: Missouri Writers' Guild President's Award, SHORT STORY: First Place, "Criminal Minds," (4/11).

Novels and New Books

VELDA BROTHERTON: E BOOK: *Dream Walker*, Kindle, (07/16).

DUSTY RICHARDS: (Editor) *Cactus Country Western Anthology, Vol. 1*, High Hill Press (09/11); *The Lost Book Series* and *The Bounty Man and Doe*, Cactus Country Publishing (09/11); *Frank Brothers Series: The Outlaw Queen*, Cactus Country Publishing (11/11); *Texas Blood Feud Series: The Thorns of Eden*, Kensington (04/12).

Acceptances and Sales

VELDA BROTHERTON: ARTICLE: "Hazel's Cafe, A Travelers Haven on Old '71," (03/11); "Riding in the Fifties," (04/11); "An Artist Comes to the Ozarks," (05/11); "Union Point School Reunion Planned," (06/11), *Washington County Observer*, West Fork, AR. **ANN HOLBROOK:** DEVOTIONAL: "The Great Physician," *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Devotionals for Tough Times* (10/11). **DOUG KELLEY:** ARTICLE: "From Rocket Man To Fan Man", @Urban Magazine, (5/11).

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Affiliate News

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JAN MORRILL: SHORT STORY: "Murder on Starr Mountain," *Mysteries of the Ozarks, Volume IV*, High Hill Press (10/11).

PATTY STITH (as CLAIRE CROXTON): CONTEMPORARY ROMANCE: *The Redneck Ex*, The Wild Rose Press (Early 2012); *Santorini Sunset*, The Wild Rose Press (Early 2012); EROTICA SHORT STORY: *Southern Seduction*, The Wild Rose Press (Early 2012).

DONNA VOLKENANTT: ESSAY: *Flashlight Memories Anthology*, Silver Boomer Books, (4/11). ARTICLE: *Missouri Writers' Guild Newsletter*: "Goldilocks, Helper Monkeys and Critique Groups." (06/11).

Honors and Awards

RADINE TREES NEHRING: Chosen as the 2011 inductee into the Arkansas Writers' Hall of Fame. The honor was announced at a luncheon in Little Rock on June 3d.

Professional Activities

VELDA BROTHERTON: BOOK SIGNINGS: Siloam Springs Writers, (07/11); Innisfree Center, Rogers, AR (07/11); Fayetteville Senior Center (08/11); West Fork Public Library, (08/11).

DUSTY RICHARDS: Signed a

contract with Berkeley for two books in the New Chaparral Series.

JAN MORRILL: Signed a contract for representation with Anderson Literary Management, LLC.

BOOK SIGNING: Innisfree Center, Rogers, AR (07/11);

RADINE TREES NEHRING: SPEAKING: July: Appeared on a panel, "How to Get Published" on July 9 at the Rogers (AR) Public Library. August: With fellow authors Janet Dailey, Dusty Richards, Deborah LeBlanc, and Patricia Smith, Nehring taught three days of writing classes, Aug. 18-20, for Ozarks Adventures. Classes were held at Ye English Inn, Hollister, MO; On August 25-28 she took part in the Killer Nashville Writers' Conference in Tennessee; September: Appeared in St. Louis at "Bouchercon," the worlds' largest mystery writing conference, held each year in various cities around the United States.

BOOK SIGNINGS: Eight days of book signings in Harps Food Stores in Northwest Arkansas during June and July, as well as in the Arkansas and Missouri Railway booth at the Jones Center Model Train show on July 2.

DONNA VOLKENANTT: BOOK REVIEWS: *Strings Attached* by Judy Blundell, Teenreads.com (5/11); *Dead by Morning* by Beverly Barton, Bookreporter.com (5/11); *Uncommon Criminals* by Ally Carter, Teenreads.com, (6/11).

N.W. ARKANSAS WRITERS' GUILD

Professional Activities

MARILYN H. COLLINS: PRESENTER: ARKANSAS WRITERS' CONFERENCE: Hall of fame winner: Radine Trees Nehring, Little Rock, AR, (06/11).

LELA DAVIDSON: SPEAKER: SheCon New Media Conference in Miami about how to engage readers using Twitter (05/11); Spoke on panel at Rogers Public Library about her experiences in publishing in Rogers, AR (07/11); LAUNCH PARTY & BOOK SIGNING: *Blacklisted from the PTA* (07/11); SPEAKER: "Social Media Consistency: Skip the Overwhelm and Create a Schedule that Works," WordCamp Fayetteville (07/11).

MAEVE MADDOX: NEW WEBSITE: *BottomlineEnglish.com* for non-academic, non-professional writers, speakers, bloggers, and business owners. The site "offers only the bare bones of the rules of usage that govern correctness in standard English." (nwaarkansaswritersguild.wordpress.com, 08/11).

Novels & New Books

LELA DAVIDSON: *Blacklisted from the PTA*, Jupiter Press, imprint of Wyatt-MacKenzie (07/11).

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Acceptance and Sales

LELA DAVIDSON: Essays and articles published in several regional parenting magazines, including *Chicago Parent*.

RHONDA FRANZ: ARTICLE: "One on the Way: Preparing Your Preschooler for a Sibling"

Peekaboo parenting magazine (04/11); ESSAY: "Country Mom: Oh give me a home where my children can roam," *TODAY Show Moms Blog/MSNBC*

(moms.today.com), (07/11); ARTICLE: "Back to School 101: Transition From Summertime To School Time," *Peekaboo* parenting magazine, (08/11).

FORT WORTH WRITERS

Professional Activities:

OLYVE HALLMARK AB-BOTT: BOOK SIGNINGS AND SPEAKER for: Olyve signed three paranormal book titles, Women's Club, Fort Worth (02/11); "Have You Ever Seen a Ghost," Texas Conservatory at Keller, Keller, TX (02/11); Residences at Manchester Place, Dallas (04/11); Legacy at Willow Bend Retirement Center, Plano,

TX (06/11); Evans Senior Center, Mesquite, TX (07/11).

Books and Novels:

OLYVE HALLMARK AB-BOTT'S novel, *TV-Live—or Dead*, is now available at Barnes & Noble, Amazon, AWOC.com (also Kindle, Nook, etc.) . . . and out of the trunk of her car.

Wins

Darrell Bartell received an editors choice award for his story "An Ace of Mercy," at the Books 'n Authors 'n All That Jazz. Weatherford College, Weatherford, Texas on April 30, 2011. Story was published in the Colleges anthology *Canis Latran*.

Abilene Writers Guild Conference

Marjorie Bixler Abilene Writers Guild contest, first place for adult fiction, "The Stepmothers' Support Group"; First place for flash fiction, "The Good Neighbor"

Dulce D. Moore Short Story Contest

Marjorie Bixler, took first place in the Dulce D. Moore Short Story Contest, "At the Laundromat"

Panhandle Professional Writers contest

James A. Wood took the following places in the Panhandle Professional Writers contest (Amarillo, June 25, 2011): Honorable Mention in the Short Story Category for "The Protector"

1st Honorable Mention in the Science Fiction, Fantasy, Horror, Steampunk Novel Category for

The Odd One.

1st Honorable Mention in the Nonfiction Article or Essay Category for "Private Thought and Public Technology"

TULSA NIGHTWRITERS

Acceptance And Sales:

PEGGY FIELDING: BOOK: Her novel, *Scoundrels' Bargain*, and nearly all her other books have been placed on Kindle.

SALLY JADLOW: ARTICLES: Two pieces accepted by *Focus on the Family* magazine.

JP JONES: ARTICLE: "10 Ways to Improve Your Author Website" (*Writeitsideways.com*).

JIM LAUGHTER: NOVEL: *Apostle Murders*, AWOC.

CAROL SNOW: POEM: "Up to Speed" (*WestWard Quarterly*, Summer 2011).

CARLA STEWART: BOOK: *Broken Wings* (Faith Words 2011); ARTICLE: On writing nostalgia, *Christian Fiction Online Magazine*.

GLORIA TEAGUE: BOOK: Publisher requested sequel to *Beyond the Surgeon's Touch*. Sequel is tentatively titled *Safe in the Heart of a Miracle*.

MICHAEL VANCE: NOVEL: Sold *Global Star* to Pro Se Productions (2012); guest at Trek Expo Media Convention; *Light's End*, Cornerstone Book Publishers.

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Contests:

CAROLYN STEELE: SHORT STORY: 2nd place in Family Story Writing Contest; 1st place in Frontiers in Writing Contest; 1st place in Arkansas Writers Conference FWCA Short Story Contest; Honorable Mention in Arkansas Writers Conference Gale S. Gill contest; CREATIVE NONFICTION STORY: 2nd place in 2011 Oklahoma Genealogical Society. **CARLA STEWART:** BOOK: *Chasing Lilacs*, 2nd place in RWA's Inspirational Reader's Choice Award in Women's Fiction.

Honors and Awards:

JP JONES: RECOGNITION: www.ChristianStoryTeller.com, a Web site designed by JP's company, www.collipsis.com, received recognition from Writer's Digest as one of the top 101 Writer's Resources for 2011.

RADINE TREES NEHRING: named 2011 inductee into Arkansas Writer's Hall of Fame; INTERVIEW: Ozark Harvest Radio Hour on station KTHS, Arkansas. **CARLA STEWART:** NOVEL: *Stardust* (Faith Words, 2012); *Broken Wings* now published in Dutch.

Professional Activities:

SARA SUE HOKLOTUBBE:

SPEAKER: Helmerich Library; SIGNING: *The American Cafe*, her latest release in the Sadie Walela Mystery Series.

J. HOUSTON-EMERSON:

SIGNING: Featured artist and book signing at the Sunflower Festival in Guymon; INTERVIEW: about her life as an artist and writer; SIGNING: Full Circle Book Store, OKC.

BARBARA HOWELL: SIGNING: Grey Gables Bed and Breakfast Inn, Rugby, TN.

SALLY JADLOW: CLASS: "How to Write Inspirational Essays," Whispering Prairie Press's 2nd annual Creativity Writers' Conference; SIGNING: Town Crier Bookstore, Emporia, KS.

CAROL JOHNSON: Accepted to Red Earth MFA program at Oklahoma City University.

JP JONES: GUEST BLOGGER: Blogged live on June 7, discussing book marketing strategy and answering questions.

JACKIE KING: SPEAKER: RWI monthly meeting, "The Art of Writing Terrific Settings."

JIM LAUGHTER: SPEAKER: Kellyville Public Library.

CARLA STEWART: GUEST BLOGGER: *Broken Wings* featured in the character spotlight on Relz Reviewz, a popular Australian blog; SIGNING: *Broken Wings*, Barnes and Noble, Tulsa, and a Twitter party; INTERVIEW: *All Things Southern* podcast and Fox 23's *Daybreak*.

GLORIA TEAGUE: SPEAKER: Fellowship of Christian Writers.

PEN AND KEYBOARD

Acceptances and Sales

MIKE HINKLE: ARTICLES:

"Evil will not be restrained by pity," *The Edmond Sun* (05-11-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x123360580/Evil-will-not-be-restrained-by-pity/print> ; "Cats and knives an unlikely pairing," *The Edmond Sun* (05-19-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x832130505/Cats-and-knives-an-unlikely-pairing> ;

"Columnist solves prison overcrowding problem," *The Edmond Sun* (05-25-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x108200806/Columnist-solves-prison-overcrowding-problem> ;

"Saudi women deserve the right to drive," *The Edmond Sun* (06-01-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x2051362224/Saudi-women-deserve-the-right-to-drive> ;

"Moral counterfeits taint America's image," *The Edmond Sun* (06-08-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1677344989/Moral-counterfeits-taint-America-s-image/print> ;

"Narcissism on the rise," *The Edmond Sun* (06-15-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1110906087/Narcissism-on-the-rise> ;

"Looking for love's role in Soros' generosity," *The Edmond Sun*, (06-24-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x927316397/Looking-for-loves-role-in-Soros-generosity/print> ; "Government

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should never lie to its citizens,” *The Edmond Sun* (07-01-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x652255656/> Government-should-never-lie-to-its-citizens ; “Just how independent are we?”, *The Edmond Sun* (07-08-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1227514715/Just-how-independent-are-we/> ; “Monkey wedding embraces tradition, but violates law,” *The Edmond Sun* (07-15-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x202396247/Monkey-wedding-embraces-tradition-but-defies-law/> ; “Will America heed warning signs from public education?”, *The Edmond Sun* (07-22-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x202402813/Will-America-heed-warning-signs-from-public-education/> ; “Is humanity being diluted?”, *The Edmond Sun* (07-29-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x1443109020/Is-humanity-being-diluted/> ; “Keystone cops parody might sound familiar”, *The Edmond Sun* (08-05-11), <http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/x670920339/Keystone-Kops-parody-might-sound-familiar/> .

Professional Activities

vehoae: Book Signing (06-11-11), Library, Edmond, OK; Book Signing (07-22-11), Holy

Grounds, Blackwell, OK.

Club News

Pen & Keyboard Writers Group has moved to a new meeting location: Edmond Downtown Community Center, 28 East Main Street, Edmond. The date and time of the club’s meetings remain the second Saturday of the month, starting at 10:00AM.

Everyone is kneaded out of the same dough but not baked in the same oven.

Yiddish Proverb

I am convinced that anyone can be a great writer ... if he can only ... tell the naked truth about himself and other people. That, a little technique with words and the willingness to bare heart, soul and body are really all it

Demented Denizens

by Brian Zaikowski
dementeddenizens.com



An awkward moment in the wheat field.

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Upcoming Writer's Conferences That May Be of Interest.

(Continued from page 18)

Tony Hillerman Writers Conference

November 10 - 12, 2011, Santa Fe, NM

Location is the beautiful Hotel Santa Fe

The program opens with a pre-conference workshop with Willa Award-winning author Sandi Ault on the craft of writing. Learn about plotting/planning your book with *New York Times* best-selling author Douglas Preston, and a look at the world of e-books and the business of writing with thriller king David Morrell. Non-fiction guru and Edgar nominee Hampton Sides will also join our faculty this year. And we are delighted that the much published and praised Jo-Ann Mapson will share some of her knowledge and joy with us. Throughout the conference, Sean Murphy and Tania Casselle will meet with those attendees who have requested manuscript critiques. We also will announce the winners of our contests, the Tony Hillerman Prize and our mystery short story at the November conference.

www.wordharvest.com
wordharvest@wordharvest.com

The most durable thing in writing is style, and style is the most valuable investment a writer can make with his time. It pays off slowly, your agent will sneer at it, your publisher will misunderstand it, and it will take people you have never heard of to convince them by slow degrees that the writer who puts his individual mark on the way he writes will always pay off.

Raymond Chandler

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Raymond Chandler



**"I'm sure he's clever...
He's just got nothing clever to say!"**

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Steven James –2012 OWFI Conference Keynote Speaker



Steven James has penned 30+ books spanning the genres of psychological thrillers, prayer collections, dramas, monologues, a nine book series on creative storytelling, YA fantasy, and inspirational nonfiction.

He has received wide critical acclaim for his work including four Storytelling World Honor awards, two Publishers Weekly starred reviews, and 2009 and 2011 Christy Awards for best suspense. His latest thriller, *The Bishop*, was named both Suspense Magazine's and The Christian Manifesto's 2010 Book of the Year.

Steven earned a Master's Degree in Storytelling from ETSU in 1997 and is an active member of International Thriller Writers, the Authors Guild, Mystery Writers of America, and International Association of Crime Writers. He is a contributing editor to *Writer's Digest*, and has taught writing and storytelling principles on three continents.

He lives in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee with his wife and three daughters. When he's not writing or speaking, he's rock climbing, playing disc golf, or (shh....) slipping away to a matinee.

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



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