President’s Message
by Dana Seaton

"I am convinced more and more day by day that fine writing is next to fine doing the top thing in the world." So wrote John Keats in 1819. Nearly two hundred years later, at the 47th Annual Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc., Conference, it was clear that fine writing is still a zealous pursuit of writers in all genres. This was my first OWFI conference in several years. Previously I had missed attending due to conflicts with other life events, but this year I promised myself I would be present. Immediately upon stepping into the hotel lobby I felt the familiar thrill of seeing so many fellow writers in attendance. The air crackled with enthusiasm as conference-goers chatted about upcoming agent appointments, speaker sessions and current writing projects. As I listened to the various speakers on such subjects as young adult fiction, writing the psychological thriller, book cover design, revising, the art of formatting, I was impressed with the range of knowledge imparted for the benefit of writers at all levels. With such wisdom at hand, what writer could resist the spirit of fine writing? I came away with renewed vigor for a craft I have at times neglected but which has been a part of my psyche forever. Here's to fine writers and writing everywhere!

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Coming Soon

Pam Foster will speak on sense of place and point of view at our June meeting.
April Speaker
by
Paula Severe, Secretary
Minutes of Meeting
April 18, 2015

The Oklahoma City Writers met in the Circle Book Store meeting room at 10:00 a.m. with thirty-two present including four visitors.

Wayne Wyrick-Harris has a new book coming out titled “If You Swallow That Seed.” John Biggs’ latest book, “Popsicle Sticks” was a finalist in the Oklahoma Center for the Book contest. We celebrate with them.

Dana Seaton, president, announced the sale of raffle of tickets for a donated pre-owned Kindle Fire to be given at our meeting in May, next month. Tickets are $1, or 6 tickets for $5.

She also reminded the group that those attending the OWFI Conference will have a table together at the banquet labeled OCWI.

John Biggs, Program Chair, introduced: OGHMA Publishers, Marketing and Promotion, from Fayetteville, Arkansas, Casey Cowan and Mike Miller. Casey opened by saying that we authors have more power than publishers want us to know. Their firm offers all we might need in the way of our needs for logos, business cards, design for the right book covers, etc. They do e-books, soft back, and hard backs. One can negotiate a contract with them. Then the distribution is through someone like Ingram or Bailey. They print on demand. Mike talked about blogging, saying that it is too time-consuming. We should limit it to once a month, and then use it for getting your pictures and ideas out. Facebook is better with authors being present at book signings and selfies taken with other people. Events are important to readers. They publish only by referral from other authors they have published or personally known.

The members were excited to see some of the books and authors present who had used this publisher.

Save the Date
Short Course on Writing at Rose State College, September 18 -20.

Bill Bernhardt is teaching one-day seminars for the first time, and some of our members have asked me to address these topics, so they might be interested. People can register by visiting his website (or calling.emailing him): http://www.williambernhardt.com/writing_instruction/small_group_seminars.php

All of the meetings will be held in the ParkLawn Office Park, Suite 400C, Midwest City.

May 23-27, 2015
Five-Day Small Group seminar
May 30, 2015
The Secrets of Independent Publishing
May 31, 2015
Writing Episodic Fiction
July 18, 2015
Breaking into Traditional Publishing
July 19, 2015
Creating Character

Member News

Congratulations to Terri Cummings for her first publication. Her poem Grey Abbey, N. Ireland will appear in the literary journal, Red River Review. Her poem, Column Addition, has been accepted by Screamin’ Mamas, a magazine for mothers of school children.

Maria Veres’s poem, Living Sacrifice, was accepted by Kansas City Voices, to be published this fall. Maria’s second poetry chapbook, Wake Up Singing, is now published.

Barbara Shepherd’s won the following in the Kansas Christian Writers Contest: 1st place, Poetry, “In the Land of Make Believe”
1st place, Children’s Nonfiction, “Learn to Write a Haiku Poem”
3rd place, Children’s Fiction, “Francisco and the Mayan King”
3rd place, Adult Fiction, “The Silent War”

Making people believe the unbelievable is no trick; it’s work. … Belief and reader absorption come in the details: An overturned tricycle in the gutter of an abandoned neighborhood can stand for everything.

—Stephen King

If it sounds like writing, I rewrite it. Or, if proper usage gets in the way, it may have to go. I can’t allow what we learned in English composition to disrupt the sound and rhythm of the narrative.

—Elmore Leonard

When your story is ready for rewrite, cut it to the bone. Get rid of every ounce of excess fat. This is going to hurt; revising a story down to the bare essentials is always a little like murdering children, but it must be done.

—Stephen King
Elected Officers

President: Dana Seaton, 376-0762, dana.seaton1@att.net
1st VP, Programs: John Biggs 728-0198
johnbiggs73162@yahoo.com
2nd VP, Membership: Shelley Pagach, 603-3903, shelbell.sp@gmail.com
Treasurer: Ed Doney, 603-3903, eddoney@gmail.com
Secretary: Paula Severe, 943-4338, paula12@cox.net

Appointed Officers

Newsletter: Inez Phillips, 946-0981, inezbowman.cox.net
Publicity Chair: Barbara Shepherd, 478-0919, okcwriters@aol.com
Webmaster: Pam Morgan 401-2019, pamelanred@outlook.com
Nominating Chair: David Severe, 946-4838, dsevere@cox.net
Yearbook Chair: Shelley Pagach
Contest Chair: Inez Phillips, 946-0981
OWFI Reporter: Wayne Harris-Wyrick, 603-6566, wizardwyane@juno.com
Workshop Chair: TBA
Audio/Visual: Bill Boudreau
2015 OWFI Delegates:
Bill Boudreau, 946-6588, bill@billboudreau.com
Linda Shelby, 390-1451, okielas@aol.com
Shelley Pagach, 603-3903, shelbell.sp@gmail.com
2015 OWFI Alternates:
Dana Seaton
Carolyn Leonard

Judith A, Rycroft –
2nd place, Poetry Unrhymed - Short, “Haiku”
1st HM, Poetry Rhymed - Short, “Moonrise”
2nd HM, Inspirational, “Ann”

Lynda Stephenson –
2nd HM, Poetry Unrhymed - Long, “Upon Attending the Funeral of Your First Ex-Husband”

Carolyn Leonard –
2nd place, Essay, “You Can Go Home Again”
3rd place, Inspirational, “The Best Antidepressant Has Four Paws and a Tongue”
3rd place, Feature Article, “Escape from Viet Nam”

Una Townsend –
1st HM, Essay, “The Importance of Reading to the Young Child”

Barbara Shepherd –
1st place, Technical and/or How-To Article, “How to Turn Ninety in Style”

Natasha Tinsley –
3rd place, Short Story Adult, “Chicken Skin”

Marlys Gallagher,
2nd HM, Prose Humor, “Family Reunion at Razor Beach”
3rd place, Essay, What Am I Doing with a Gun”

Shelley Richter –
3rd HM, Memoir/Nostalgia, “Autumn in Eureka”
2 HM, Poetry Rhymed-Short, “Nature’s Best”

Maria Veres –
2nd place, Technical and/or How-To Article,

Brenda Thomas –
1st HM, Short Story Adult, “The Sacrifice”

OWFI Winners

Fall Contest

The essay category did not make in the 2014 contest. Apparently several of our members think the category requires an essay like the miserable five-paragraph assignments we suffered through in high school English classes just hoping to get a passing grade so we could get out of the class. Not so. The best description I could find is the one for the OWFI essay category.

“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) . . . 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.”

When you submit your essay to Oklahoma City Writers, you will get a critique which will help you prepare for the OWFI contest in January. Winning is a fantastic ego boost and, if you place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd, the check adds to the joy.

Membership Directory

Shelley Pagach is busy proofing the final document. It will be ready for the June meeting.

Remember: Plot is no more than footprints left in the snow after your characters have run by on their way to incredible destinations.

—Ray Bradbury

I do not over-intellectualize the production process. I try to keep it simple: Tell the damned story.

—Tom Clancy

The first sentence can’t be written until the final sentence is written.

—Joyce Carol Oates
OKLAHOMA CITY WRITERS, INC.

Time: 10:15  
Date: Saturday, May 16  
Meeting place: Across the hall from  

Full Circle Bookstore  
1900 NW Expressway in  
50 Penn Place  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  

Speakers: Jim Laughter  
Topic: Finding time to write

Inez Phillips  
6200 N. Quapah Avenue  
Oklahoma City, OK 73112