

# OKLAHOMA CITY WRITERS, INC.

## April Speaker: Charles W. Sasser

### Topic: Magic Steps the Writing Success

Sasser is a full-time freelance writer/journalist/photographer. A veteran of both the U.S. Navy (journalist) and U.S. Army (Special Forces, the Green Berets), he is retired after 29 years active and reserve service. A former combat correspondent, he also served fourteen years as a police officer (in Miami, Florida, and in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he was a homicide detective). His bio is included in WHO'S WHO IN THE WORLD. He is author of more than 60 published books and 3-4,000 magazine articles and short stories. His books have been translated into Chinese, Russian, Serbian, Thai, French, Spanish and other languages.

He has been a contributor for a 12-book series of True Crime Books by Pinnacle, and a contributor for a 12-book series for *Time/Life*, **The New Face of War**. His work has appeared in at least 30 anthologies.

At various times, Sasser has solo-canoed the Yukon; solo-sailed the Caribbean; motorbiked across the continent; raced camels in the Egyptian desert; dog-sledded the Arctic; floated the Amazon River; dived for pirate treasure; ridden horses across Alaska; motorcycled Europe; climbed Mt. Rainier; run with the bulls in Spain; chased wild mustangs; guided missionaries into the Algerian outback; solo-kayaked Canada's Inside Passage; sailed a 40-foot sloop across the Caribbean....

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## President's Message

Shelley Pagach

I'm a bit of a nerd. I can keep up with any conversation that contains Chronicles of Narnia, Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, Star Wars, Marvel movies, and DC Comics TV shows, just to name a few.

One of my favorites right now is DC Comics: Legends of Tomorrow. A group of misfit time travelers must fix anomalies to the timeline, usually caused by themselves. In one episode, the team travels back to the late 60's and accidentally runs into a film student who has the unhappy misfortune to be caught in their futuristic crossfire. Terrified, he leaves film school and becomes an insurance salesman. Two of the main characters lose their powers because George Lucas wasn't there to make Star Wars (the reason Ray became a scientist), and Indiana Jones (the reason Nate became a historian). The rest of the episode is spent convincing George to go back film school. There are some great Star Wars quotes and even a trash compactor scene.

This fun "what if" story line really shows how important inspiration is. I bet you can name five books right off the top of your head that have inspired you in some way. Question is, what kind of person would you be if you had never read them? You might say nothing would be different, but I disagree. Our inspirations are what makes us who we are. Who knows, maybe we wouldn't even be writers. What a scary thought.

## Elected Officers

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**Secretary: Lorelei Sawtelle,**

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### 2016 OWFI Delegates

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**Linda Shelby,** 390-1451,

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**Shelley Pagach,** 496-8749,

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### 2016 OWFI Alternates:

**Carolyn Leonard,** 740-1632,

buffalo234@cox.net

## Basket Wars

Be sure to bring your donations for the Basket Wars to the meeting Saturday. Lorelei Sawtelle has kindly volunteered to put it together. Let's help by bringing something to put in the basket.

## Sasser (cont. from page 1)

In 1986, he was a finalist to fly into space with NASA's Journalist-in-Space Project. In 2001, he set a world's record by making the first transcontinental flight in an ultralite Powered Parachute aircraft. In 2014, he participated in the 2,800-mile "Tour the Divide" Rocky Mountain bicycle race; he climbed Africa's Mt. Kilimanjaro in 2015; he is a member of the WWII Airborne Demonstration Team. . . .

He has been a professional rodeo clown and bronc rider; professional kick boxer; sky diver and SCUBA diver; college professor; newspaperman; anthropologist.... He is a professional motivational speaker, and does dinner theater.

He has also appeared as a guest on national TV in *Good Morning, America; Inside Edition; On The Record; Discovery ID; History Channel; Court TV; Geraldo Rivera; FOX; CNN; America's Most Wanted; Unsolved Mysteries, Greta Van Susteren,* and others.

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Writing, to me, is simply thinking through my fingers.

~~~Isaac Asimov

The two most engaging powers of an author are to make new things familiar, familiar things new.

~~~William Makepeace Thackeray

Always read something that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.

~~~P.J. O'Rourke

A good novel tells us the truth about its hero; but a bad novel tells us the truth about its author.~~~Gilbert K. Chesterton

**Inez Phillips**  
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## **Oklahoma City Writers, Inc.**

**Saturday, April 15, 2017**

**Coffee at 9:45      Meeting at 10:00**

We meet in the St. Luke's Methodist Church at NW 15<sup>th</sup> and Harvey, Oklahoma City.

Enter through the north door by handicap parking and go to Room 130.

**April Speaker:**      *Charles Sasser*

**Topic: Magic Steps to Writing Success**

## OWFI 2017 Writers Conference

The Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc. (OWFI) is celebrating its 49<sup>th</sup> year by hosting its annual writer's conference May 5<sup>th</sup> through May 6<sup>th</sup> at the Embassy Suites on Meridian in Oklahoma City. On Thursday, May 4 nationally known journalist and Pulitzer Prize finalist Ben Montgomery will kick off the festivities with a Pre-Conference Workshop.

Ben Montgomery is an enterprise reporter for the *Tampa Bay Times*. He is the author of the New York Times bestseller *Grandma Gatewood's Walk: The Inspiring Story of the Woman Who Saved the Appalachian Trail* and *The Leper Spy: The Story of an Unlikely Hero of World War II*.

The OWFI conference is a two day event for all writers, regardless of their genre or skill level. "Whether you write fiction or nonfiction, or if you want to publish traditionally or independently, we have workshops to fit your needs. We have a faculty of 23 experts in the writing field, starting with our Keynote Speaker, New York Times Bestselling author Kelley Armstrong. We'll have experts in script writing, song writing, publicity, fiction writing, nonfiction writing, and poetry," said president Jarmola.

The OWFI Conference kicks off Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm with Ben Montgomery's Pre-Con Workshop, *Dirty Little Narrative*, at the Oklahoma City Embassy Suites. For more information and to register for the OWFI conference, go to [www.owfi.org](http://www.owfi.org).

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### March Notes by Lorelei Sawtelle

Regions have their own flavor, geography, language, and ways of conducting interpersonal relations. The SW is very different from the NW. The geography has its own flavor. The south also has its own ugly underbelly.

A novel is like a marriage. A short story is like a love affair. A novel is like a movie. A short story is like an iconic photograph.

Her titles come from the south—and so does she. *Washed in the River* is a phrase that come from baptizing in a river. If the Creeks don't rise refers to warring episodes of the Creek Indians—a little different take than *if the creek don't rise*.

Postcard, flash fiction, and short stories are her forte. Flash fiction rules vary from contest to contest. Sometimes a hundred words, sometimes a thousand, usually somewhere in between. Short-short stories are usually about 2,000 words. Short stories fall in the 3,000-10,000 words range. Again, it depends on the contest.

Postcard fiction is about the length of something that one could put on a postcard. She informed us that (in her humble opinion) postcards are the original Facebook posts.

She read us a few examples of her work. Excellent imagery, intricate characterizations that give just enough information, plots braided seamlessly into southern culture mark her work. She gave us a chance to ask questions. She was quite complimentary about other writers. She claimed she occasionally steals words from Rick Bragg. Every character and plot and scene are composites of people she's known, places she's been, experiences she's had.

"When I set aside a time every day words come faster and better. A phrase I hear or people I meet can inspire me. The process I use to stay alert is to write every day. Yes, sometimes I write on napkins. Write your story from beginning to end then go back and add details, smells, how you feel, etc, revise the heck out of it. Take it to your critique group—don't argue with them." If they don't *get it* maybe you didn't write it right. "Your readers *get it* through the prism of their life experiences." If they aren't "getting it," it isn't their fault.

You may mail your \$20 dues to the treasurer's home or hand it to her at a meeting.

Nelda Paden, Treasurer  
621 NW 32<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

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