

Oklahoma City Writers, Inc.

President's Message

By Traci Schafer

I'd like to shift gears this month from writing to reading and literacy, because, well, you can't have one without the other.

During the recent Red Sneaker Write Well Sell Well Writing Conference (which was an absolutely wonderful event, by the way), I made a discovery that both shocked and relieved me. During one of our sessions, the instructor didn't have slides and told us to "get ready to take some notes." All right, then. I pulled out my complementary note pad and my complementary ink pen and was ready to take those notes. However, as the session went on, I found myself spending more time trying to figure out how to spell the words I wanted to write down than actually taking notes or even catching what was being said. In this computer age, spell checker usually saves the day for me. When I can't get the spelling close enough for spell checker to save me, then I just pick a different word. Problem solved, move on. I have a book to write. But on this particular day, with no one else around me struggling to spell the word rebel, I wanted answers. Why after fifty-two years on this earth, was my spelling still terrible, my reading still slow, and my reading comprehension still poor? After an enlightening internet search and follow-up professional assessments, I got my answer. I have dyslexia. I cried when I realized I wasn't just dumb. Yes, dumb. With four degrees and a successful career managing career managing multi-million (sometimes multi-billion) dollar contracts, I thought I was doing a damn good job at camouflaging the fact that I had nothing upstairs.

I'd heard of dyslexia before but thought it was only when people saw letters backwards, upside-down, or in a mixed-up order. I could see the letters fine, I just couldn't easily or quickly absorb what those collection of letters and words were trying to say. I'd tell myself nobody's good at everything, so reading comprehension was just not one of my strengths. Neither was spelling, oral reading and pronunciation, remembering certain things like names, associations, right vs. left (or east vs. west)... You see where one would start to feel not so bright?

Symptoms can vary, and, like in my case, may not even include the backwards letters that seem to be what people usually associate with dyslexia. So, I encourage all of you to be aware that there's more to dyslexia than that and to share any posts or information you see on the topic so people out there struggling unaware will realize and get help before they spend their entire lives (or most of it, like me) not reading because it's too much of a struggle.

November Speakers

~~ Sandra Soli & Judith Rycroft

Topic ~~ *Annual Contest Awards*

Certificates and checks for the contest winners will be announced at the meeting.

In the December newsletter, the contest chairs will share their recommendations and thoughts about contests and how to improve your chances of winning.

Coming Soon

Michael Frizell, the December speaker will be presenting the following:

*The Arcane Art of Graphic Fiction:
Writing Comic Books*

Member News

Barbara Shepherd won first place in the Poetry Society of Oklahoma National Poetry Day Contest for her poem "Stripe the Prairie."

Maria Veres presented poetry readings at the Tidewater Winery in Drumright in September, and at the Norman Depot in October. She was the Oklahoma City Writers nominee for Oklahoma Poet Laureate. Maria has written a nonfiction article for Make A Living Writing, HerNexxChapter.org, and Edmond Outlook.

(Editor's note—When I receive member news I drop it into a file and save the original email. If I think an email is incomplete, you will be notified only one time asking for corrections.)

Elected Officers

President: Traci Ison Schafer,

937-760-8446, traci1@hotmail.com

1st VP, Programs: Laci Liter, 702-5042,

lacirai@gmail.com

2nd VP, Membership: Shelley Pagach,

496-8749, sepagach.ocwi@gmail.com

Treasurer: Nelda Paden, 833-2611,

neldapaden@aol.com

Secretary: Lorelei Sawtelle, 317-7845,

lsawtelle@cox.net

Appointed Officers

Newsletter: Inez Phillips, 620-7850,

inezbowman.cox.net

Publicity Chair: Peggy Farris,

203-0284, wwillows@pldi.net

Webmaster: Lorelei Sawtelle,

603-8856, lsawtelle@cox.net

Nominating Chair: TBA

Yearbook Chair: Shelley Pagach, 496-8749,

sepagach.ocwi@gmail.com

Contest Chair:

Sandra Soli/ Judith Rycroft

Historian: Office of the President

OWFI Reporter: TBA

Workshop Chair:

Paulette Henderson, 274-9192,

paulette@hendersonhouse.net

Audio/Visual: TBA, if needed

OWFI Delegates

Traci Ison Schafer, 937-760-8446,

traci1@hotmail.com

Shelley Pagach, 496-8749,

sepagach.ocwi@gmail.com

OWFI Alternates:

Carolyn Leonard

Marcia Preston



Officer Nominations

President _____

Vice President for Programs – Laci Liter

Vice President for Membership – Shelley Pagach

Secretary – Lorelei Sawtelle

Treasurer – Nelda Paden

We need a volunteer to be the 2019 president. You will get lots of help and no one will find fault with the way you do the job. If someone is silly enough to criticize you, we will draft them/her for president next year.

How can you pass up a deal like this?

October Meeting Notes

John Dwyer spoke about some of his experiences as a writer. If you are trying to get your book published, you are not the Lone Ranger. He was the only reader of his first book for seven years and then he found a publisher.

Some John's points includes:

--Look on every life experience as gold.

--Your experiences can you prepare for handling your book.

--Don't be your own worst enemy, Put the time wasters out of your life.

--Pick one thing to work on whether it is booze, food, smoking, loafing

--You have to play for the long game: submit, resubmit, resubmit

--Find someone who will hold you accountable for your writing.

--Join a writing group and go to every meeting, You will always learn something. You need other artists around you to share experiences.

Listen to everyone will lead you to your voice.

--Don't give up. Keep working.

--Figure out what distinguishes you and work on it. For John, it is his cowboy hat.

--John is the first Dwyer male who has survived heart disease long enough to get cancer.

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As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.

~~John Fitzgerald Kennedy

OWFI Notes

Mark your calendars! The OWFI writing contest will open for submissions on December 1, 2018, and will close at 11:59 p.m. (CST), February 1, 2019. For the low cost of \$30, you can enter all thirty-four categories one time each. Challenge yourself to enter a new category. To which new category will you submit?

Full (two-day) and partial (one-day) conference scholarships are available for qualifying applicants. Lodging and extra tickets, lunches, or workshops are not included. Membership in OWFI is not required, but suggested. Application for scholarships must be received no later than **March 1**, with notification of selection by March 15. All candidates must complete this application form

with a statement saying why they would like to attend. Previous scholarship recipients will be considered if funding is available after new applications have been reviewed.

The scholarship application form is on the OWFI website

The OWFI Silent Auction (Basket Bonanza, previously Basket Wars) project raises funds for the next year's scholarship; therefore, each recipient must agree to volunteer at the auction tables during the conference – one hour for a one-day scholarship or two hours for both days. Scholarships do not include hotel room or extra workshops. Failure to show up at appointed time for volunteer work will result in the recipient being ineligible for a scholarship **ever again**.



You may mail your \$25 dues to the treasurer or hand it to her at a meeting. Only dues paid ***after*** September 15, 2018 are counted as **2019** dues.

Nelda Paden, Treasurer
621 NW 32nd Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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How do you want your newsletter? _____ snail mail _____ ema

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

Oklahoma City Writers, Inc.

Saturday, November 17, 2018

Coffee at 9:45 Meeting at 10:00

We meet in the St. Luke's Methodist Church at NW 15th and Harvey, Oklahoma City. Enter through the north door by handicap parking and go to Room 130.

November Speaker: *Sandra Soli & Judith Rycroft*

Topic: *Contest Awards*

