

# THE Penn Writer

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## In This Issue

President's Column .....2

The Great Idea  
Drought: A Tall Tale .....4

Round Robin Critique  
Request .....5

Area 1 Report .....5

Area 2 Report .....5

Pennwriters Online  
Courses .....6

Area 3 Report .....6

Area 4 Report .....7

2010 Conference  
Photo Collage .....8

Market News .....10

Area 5 Report .....11

Area 6 Report .....11

Volunteers Needed ....13

Area 7 Report .....13

Untimely Words .....14

Member  
Accomplishments .....15

Area 3 Writers  
Workshop .....16

## Something to Laugh About

by J.R. Mackenzie, Area 7

Anytime a certain friend of mine has her picture taken, she frowns. This time, she insists she's smiling.

"No, you're not," I said.

"Yes, I am," she insists.

"No, you're not. You look like you've just eaten mice."

It's true. It's also a retort that came to me after our visit, so she didn't have the benefit of the humor I would have so handily bestowed.

As I look back on it, I realize that much of the humor we enjoy is spontaneous, meant to be silly or ironic, creating a sort of creative ventilation.

In the writer's smorgasbord of genre choices, humor is the only thing taken seriously while laughing at the same time. Someone says something funny, we laugh. It happens as we go through our day, with television and radio bits, reading, and we find it in each other.

As any comedian knows, standup or armchair, humor runs the gamut from belly laughs to gentle titters. The consummation of a funny thought actually takes work and practice—and a good ear. If a turn of a phrase gets someone chuckling, that's huge for a writer who has

crafted the bit and exults in its successful deployment.

For the most part, humor should happen without too much effort. But, you have to have the inclination to laugh, because, as a writer, you'll be the first one to do it as you create your material. If you're the type of

person who sees the funny side of things, then you'll have an easier time writing humor as well as appreciating it. I find a good conversation or exposure to humor tends to stimulate my own comedic bent.

That brings me to step one. If you struggle

with humor, but appreciate the comments or humor of others, there's hope. I encourage those who want to write in a funny vein to find people who can tell a good story or joke. They will appreciate your fledgling attempts and help you.

The friend mentioned above has her whole family blessed with the ability to make others laugh. Funny people and those open to humor themselves are key because you can absorb their skill for the setup, how they employ expressions that make people laugh; or, in the case of those comedians who point out ironies, listen for how it all could connect



See Laugh, Page 3

# President's Column

by Carol Silvis, Area 3, President



Thank you for electing me president. I begin this column and presidency on a high note, having had the benefit of the advice and guidance of our past president, Lisa Kastner. Thanks, Lisa, for your years of leadership in which you instituted many fine innovations. Pennwriters has benefited in numerous ways.

I welcome the new vice president, Jade Blackwater. We are excited about bringing you fresh ideas while continuing old favorites. Our goals for the next two years include adhering to the Pennwriters mission of helping writers of all levels improve in their craft by continuing to deliver quality services while containing spending. We also hope to attract and retain members, encourage their involvement, and promote a culture of mutual respect among members that drives the organization. We are committed to continuing to attract quality agents, editors, and keynotes for our annual conference and to maintain the highest level of professionalism for Pennwriters.

I have worked with most of the current board members and chairs for years and can assure you Pennwriters is in good hands. Please join with me in giving the board members and all our volunteers a well-deserved round of applause. They continuously add value to your membership by affording you access to area writing and critique meetings

Have you changed your address or e-mail address? If so, please notify Dave Szymanowski, PW secretary. We need your help to keep our member roster current. Thanks from the newsletter staff.

Notice: Publication herein of articles, interviews, and news concerning markets, contests, seminars, classes, etc., does not imply an endorsement, recommendation or any warranty given by Pennwriters. Readers are urged to determine for themselves the reliability, integrity, and financial responsibility of those with whom they deal.

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and workshops, online courses, social networking outlets, *The Penn Writer* and booksellers newsletters, conferences, and more. Please leverage what we have to offer in order to get the most out of your membership. If you have not done so, join Pennwriters on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and the Yahoo Groups to gain writing tips and camaraderie.

Speaking of volunteers, we have openings on the board for Author Advocate and Area 6 Representative. If interested, please contact me or Jade. In continuing to deliver programs, we need your help. Nothing is accomplished without volunteers.

Having attended the 2010 Conference in Lancaster, I feel energized and renewed in my writing life. The conference broke an attendance record. Thanks to Ayleen Stellhorn and her wonderful staff for providing a stellar lineup of speakers, agents, and editors. Keynote James Rollins gave us professional advice, stories of his personal struggles, and laughs. Elizabeth Kahn encouraged those in attendance with her talk of patient persistence.

If you missed this conference, you will want to make plans now to attend the 2011 Conference in Pittsburgh, where you will hear two best-selling keynote speakers. Jennifer Weiner will be the Friday night keynote, and our own PW member, Jonathan Maberry will be the Saturday keynote. In addition to securing these keynotes, our 2011 Conference Coordinators are working hard to provide informative workshops.

Since the theme of this issue of *The Penn Writer* is writing humor, I feel compelled to tell you I have little writing experience in this area. As a textbook author, I am pretty sure students do not find my writing humorous. When they are laughing in class, I can bet they are on Facebook or Tweeting their friends. I do, however, love having humor in my life. So, to those of you who do write humor, I look forward to reading your work. Have a productive summer but remember to have fun!

The theme of this issue of *The Penn Writer* is "Writing Humor." The theme of the next issue is "The nonfiction market." Please consider sending a submission to editor Lori Morris for consideration. You may e-mail your idea to Lori at lorimorris@verizon.net. You may also submit articles that are not theme-

## Laugh (cont. from Page 1)

with some of your own ideas. If there is a bit about postal carriers and dogs or one of the many things that highlight human frailty with funny consequences, for example, hop on that train to come up with your own material.

It's funniest when humor is least expected. That's where the setup comes in. "Take my wife...please," is funny because, at first, everyone is thinking he means something else. Well, it used to be funny. It's one of those lines that has turned into a comedic cliché, but there's no reason it can't have legitimate offspring!

Watch comedians you enjoy. Don't watch them just because somebody else thinks they're funny. I know that sounds obvious, but if he/she isn't making you laugh, what are you trying to get out of it? What are you trying to learn?

I enjoy silliness. I have surrounded myself and pounded my brain with sitcoms like Frasier, British comedies along the lines of Are You Being Served? and Odd Couple shtick. Like a lot of people who love humor, I can't get enough of it. Find your own brand and what you enjoy. You'll see your

own writing begin to reflect it, your characters engage in it.

Finally, hone your wit by making it a key part of your life as a writer. Jot down funny things you think of that you might like to incorporate into your work. Whatever funny things happen to you, use them in an article or transfer them to one of your characters.

As is said so many times, if you think it's funny, there's someone out there who will appreciate it, too. There are so many humorists who have written columns or books over the years (Bennett Cerf, Myron Cohen, Erma Bombeck, Lisa Scottoline) and it's comforting to know what tickles the funny bone never really gets old.

Humor draws parallels, makes people see things in a new light and even though it may not elicit a belly laugh or even a chuckle sometimes, good humor inevitably finds its target.

Unless you refuse to smile, of course.



*Julie Mackenzie is author of the Temptation Parish series and other writings found at [jrmackenzie.net](http://jrmackenzie.net) and [churchcattom.blogspot.com](http://churchcattom.blogspot.com).*

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**Contact information for Area Reps can be found in area reports within the newsletter.**

## Pennwriters Online: Your Internet Connection

Web site = [www.Pennwriters.org](http://www.Pennwriters.org)

Yahoo Group = <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Pennwriters/join>

Facebook Group = [www.new.facebook.com/group.php?gid=9428111505](http://www.new.facebook.com/group.php?gid=9428111505)

LinkedIn Group = [www.linkedin.com/groups?about=&gid=67420](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?about=&gid=67420)

Twitter Group = [www.twitter.com/Pennwriters](http://www.twitter.com/Pennwriters)

Online Courses = <http://tinyurl.com/PennwritersOnlineCourses>

# The Great Idea Drought: A Tall Tale

by Gerri George, Area 6

The problem is not that writers have too few ideas, author Greg Frost once said, but that they have too many ideas. Writers worth their salt know just what this means. Many suffer what I call UIG - Unmanageable Idea Glut. The mind becomes cluttered with such a huge inventory of ideas the writer cannot function to his or her potential. Unable to focus, works remain unfinished; worse, future readers are denied fine storytelling by talented writers.

But what if the opposite occurred? What if no one could think of any new stories or ideas to write about? This teller of tales imagined such a phenomenon.

On an otherwise pitch-perfect day, wind from the east, known to suggest imminent, unfavorable weather, reached the turbulent brain of every scribe, and new ideas vanished. They never even reached the subconscious level. Writers awoke to an unfamiliar air, dressed, and sat at their computer, and, to their profound discontent, found they had not a single idea. They mumbled gibberish to themselves, stared in the mirror. They took naps, hoping an idea would come in a dream, but even forty-winks were unproductive. They tapped their feet to the beat of their ticking clocks. They learned to differentiate between the sounds of a UPS truck, a Fed Ex truck, and the U.S. Mail truck, such was the flatness and angst of their circumstances. They paced, took walks, to no avail. Their imagination had gone missing.

At one point, a few writers found it soothing not to be molested with brazen attacks of ideas known to strike at any time: during a funeral, for instance, or while making love, or when engaged in an altogether different conversation at a cocktail party.

Spouses and offspring yearning for more quality time with the writer found the drought delightful. And, as expected in any given community, some believed there were enough new ideas already; too many, perhaps. This sudden dullness of originality was a good thing. To what end, after all, was the impulse of new ideas? They brought trouble. But without them, peripheral vision is blocked; a writer's day is grim. To the writer, there is always that nagging sense that more needs to be said.

New ideas had always been like a drug-induced high. Without them, withdrawal pains flayed the afflicted. Their hands shook; some hallucinated spiders with the faces of children; others endured an unquenchable thirst.

Minds, once vibrant, turned to mush. Writers stared at their TV; they watched true-crime re-enactments, reality shows, and dramas with a stale continuing narrative, all of which hammered their ankles deeper into the sand of despair. Many drowned their sorrow slurping pints of warm ale in noisy pubs, and their frown lines froze.

A number went to their doctors, who now held special clinics for the Writer Malady. The docs could find no blood borne infection, no skin lesion to match an allergy to ideas; no headaches or blurred vision to account for the underlying condition. They wrote prescriptions for capsules and tablets to be taken with food.

Solutions were proposed. Contests were held for ideas of imaginary characters, plots and worlds, but no one entered. A wealthy patron of the arts offered huge monthly stipends for a steady supply of ideas, or a flat fee for even one, but there were no takers, not even when it meant writers could quit their day jobs. No one could think up a new idea.

One glum writer, Wilhelmina (AKA Willy), thwarted and confounded from staring at a blank monitor, raised a ruckus in her empty writing room.

"I can't take it any longer," she yelled, hands flailing and cheeks flushed.

The spirited Willy rose from her high-backed chair, took an overdue shower, laced up her hiking boots and donned a hunting vest.

She hoofed it from house to house in the town, knocking on doors, begging for ideas. Nobody had one. Not even the children, who are usually good about such things.

She trekked to the Cave of Knowledge in the foothills beyond the strip mall to see Ida. If anyone could help, Ida could help. She was known to have cured restlessness and the shingles and nobody minded her speech impediment. She was a tough mug and formerly read palms, but the palms no longer told stories, so she became a generic Guru. Willy got in line.

"Ida," she said, stifling a gag from the dank odor of the cave. "All of us have run out of ideas. And humanity needs them. Literary agents need them, Madison Avenue needs them, book publishers need them, and Hollywood needs them, expressed in ten words or less. What should we do?"

"Go to the library," the scented seer said, with a vaporous smoke-like exhalation. "Old books have ideas and don't bother me with such a mundane issue and who cares if the world has run out of ideas and please put the fifty bucks in the urn right over there thank you very much. Next."

Displacing her idea-slump into a frank, enduring search, Willy went to the library. It was open (it hadn't yet been closed due to lack of municipal funds),



and she skimmed the stacks from authors A to Z. Ideas, one after the other; ideas alive and well in the labyrinthine library, a durable site with the pleasing odor of old books, and she began to take notes.

“I’m guessing you’re here to defeat the idea drought,” the young librarian said, eyeing Willy’s staccato bustle through the aisles.

Willy took a labored breath and nodded.

“Too bad you can’t use anything from the shelves.” The librarian tilted her head, a half-smile forming. “Intellectual property, you know. Proprietary. Nothing here is fair game.”

The words stung Willy’s cheek like a slap. She fidgeted. “Yes, of course,” she said, stuffing her ballpoint into her pocket. She had run out of fuel and sacked the trek.

The drought swept its third season. And then, without warning, lightning infused a strange cloudless sky. Wind whisked trash from one neighbor to the next. The sudden squall frightened Willy, who watched the street from her house.

When the wind stopped, nothing moved. There was no rain or fog, no sound outdoors, and ideas flooded Willy and other writers, resuming as suddenly as they had vanished. Optimism soared in the Yahoo groups and in the vast literary community.

There were lessons to be learned and Willy had it in mind to benefit from the disaster. The drought served as a warning that ideas should not be taken for granted; instead, they should be controlled, and that’s what Willy did. She would be a cowgirl and lasso her ideas into the stalls of a barn. When an idea came to her, she wrote it on a small piece of paper, ten words or less, folded the paper, and placed it in one of four labeled manila folders on her desk, each with its own category: Essays, Short Stories, Novel, and Screenplay.

She aspired to withdraw an idea at a time from the queue, work on it intensely in concrete, pre-determined blocks of time, setting goals of pages or words or deadlines. When her concentration drifted, she would go to the next idea, and treat it the same. She kept a steno book diary to track her progress and a detailed calendar.

Go to bed early, she told herself. Rise at dawn. Stretch the legs every few pages, finish your work.

Without ideas, there is no hope for the writer. Too many ideas, on the other hand, can be just as damaging, unless controlled.

## Area 1 Report

by *Todd Main*

*Area 1 Representative*

I would like to take this time to thank Dave Szymanowski for his past leadership and service to Pennwriters, especially to Area 1 as our representative. I would also like to thank my Area 1 brothers and sisters for offering me this chance to continue helping Pennwriters grow and succeed. I have big shoes to fill in Dave and Catherine (my first Area 1 Representative).

*Area One Writing Groups*

1st Saturday from 1-4 p.m. the Meadville Vicinity Pennwriters (MVP) meets at The Tellers Row Coffee Bar @The Bank, 940 Park Ave, Meadville. Contact Catherine McLean: mouserun@certainty.net

2nd Saturday from 1-4 p.m. at The Erie Book Store, Lovell Place, 137 East 13th Street, Erie. Contact Todd at todd\_main@steris.com or tmnc@verizon.net.)

3rd Wednesday at 7 p.m. at Mercy Center for Aging., 444 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, Contact Jean: jjenkins@nwsd.org

4th Saturday from 1-4 p.m. at Barnes & Noble Book Store, Rte. 19, near the Millcreek Mall, Erie. Contact Dave: daveszy@verizon.net

Every Thursday at 7 p.m. the Area One Fellowship of the Quill meets at the Presque Isle Gallery Coffeehouse, 35 Peninsula Drive, Erie. Contact Todd: Todd\_Main@steris.com

3rd Saturday from 1-4 p.m. at the Community Library of Shenango Valley. Contact Catherine: mouserun@certainty.net

Contact Todd at 814-459-8752; Todd\_Main@steris.com also tmnc@verizon.net

## Area 2 Report

by *Katie Yelinek*

*Area 2 Representative*

It was so nice to see many of you at the conference. A special welcome to the new Area 2 members who have joined over the previous few months. We’re so glad to have you in Pennwriters.

The next Area 2 writing workshop will be held from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 11, at the fire hall in Bloomsburg, Pa. Lindsay Barrett George and Maria V. Snyder will speak on “Writing for Children and Young Adults.” Cost is \$35 (\$40 for non-Pennwriters). A bag lunch will be included, and there will be time for the speakers to critique the opening two pages of your work-in-progress, if you want. Contact me with questions or to register. I hope to see you there!

Contact Katie at 570-784-2112; kyelinek@hotmail.com

## Area 3 Report

by Annette Dashofy

Area 3 Representative

Area 3's day-long workshop with Debra Dixon, author of *GOAL, MOTIVATION & CONFLICT: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF GOOD FICTION* will be held on Saturday, Sept. 25, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel-Pittsburgh International Airport. Details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Second Tuesday of the Month Group is currently testing out new venues for its evening meetings. For information on the current meeting location, contact Meredith Cohen at [meredithcohen61@yahoo.com](mailto:meredithcohen61@yahoo.com).

The Pittsburgh South Hills Chapter meets at the Eat 'N Park in Robinson on the last Thursday of each month at 11:30 a.m. So far this year, we've enjoyed talks on grammar with Lori Morris, screenwriting with Mitchell Kaplan, and getting organized with Carol Silvis. For more information about upcoming meetings, contact me.

The Pittsburgh East Writers meets in the first floor conference room at the Monroeville Public Library on the second Saturday morning of each month at 10 a.m. Check [www.EllenSpain.com](http://www.EllenSpain.com) for additional information about monthly programs.

The Critique Group North meets on the second Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. at King's Restaurant off the Wexford Exit of I-79. The piece that you bring to the meeting can be of any length and at any stage of writing. For details contact Madhu B. Wangu at [m.wangu@comcast.net](mailto:m.wangu@comcast.net).

The Squirrel Hills Critique Group meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Starbucks at Forbes and Sandy in Squirrel Hill. We critique writing from one member each month up to 3000 words. For more information contact Christina Cann at [christina.cann@gmail.com](mailto:christina.cann@gmail.com).

A new South Hills Critique Group held their first meeting in May. They will continue to meet on the third Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. at the Barnes and Noble at South Hills Village. Work to be critiqued should be e-mailed two weeks ahead of time. For more information contact Stephanie Claypool at [sclaypool@verizon.net](mailto:sclaypool@verizon.net).

The twice-a-month Area 3 Announcements e-mailing has been cut back to once a month. To receive more immediate meeting and event information, members are encouraged to join the Area 3 Pennwriters Yahoo group by sending an e-mail to [PennsArea3-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:PennsArea3-subscribe@yahoo.com)

Contact Annette at 724-255-7955;  
[annette@annettedashofy.com](mailto:annette@annettedashofy.com)

## Pennwriters Online Courses

by Nate Hardy, Area 6, Internet Activities

Our annual Pennwriters Conference this past May was arguably the best ever. Lots of learning, networking, and improving writing careers. But you don't have to wait an entire year to continue it all. With Pennwriters Online Courses, we're "Building Careers, One Course At A Time" throughout the year. If you're ready to get your great book published, then you're ready for the next online course (visit the Web site below for details):

**CRAFT YOUR FICTION QUERY PACKAGE** with CJ LYONS

Instructor: CJ Lyons

August 2 – September 2, 2010

Course Description: Join national bestseller CJ Lyons, an award-winning medical suspense author, in a highly interactive workshop designed to give you the tools you need to craft a complete fiction proposal, including a query letter, blurb, synopsis, opening hook, and pitch. In this intensive course, you will learn the secrets to pitching, the power of your "blurb," and lessons on how to:

- Create a query letter that sells
- Approach the submission process
- Know if your opening hook works
- Write a short synopsis
- Write a long synopsis
- Craft a high-concept pitch
- Build your brand
- Find an agent

As an added bonus, attendees receive a FREE "Writer's Toolbox"—a list of resources from CJ Lyons! Discover how to avoid the slush pile and get your book sold and published. Limited class size. Enroll now at:

<http://tinyurl.com/PennwritersCourse201008>

Missed the last Pennwriters Online Course? Interested in more workshops? Sign up for Susan Meier's 6-week plotting course, "Journey Steps, Taking The Train To Somewhere," which starts October 1. For details on all online courses, visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/PennwritersOnlineCourse>

# Round Robin Critique Requests

by Catherine McClean, Area 1, Round Robin Coordinator

It goes without saying that Pennwriters is a diverse group of writers representing all writing styles and genres. Because the membership is scattered throughout the state and beyond the state's borders, it's not easy forming a writing-specific group and obtaining feedback. That's where a round robin, or a one-on-one partnership, either by U.S. Mail or e-mail, can benefit a writer.

This year, Round Robin Request Forms were placed in the 2010 Pennwriters conference packets. As a result, several new requests have been made.

Since the number of requests has grown much longer, I have listed them alphabetically. Where applicable, I've added more specifics.

Please spread the word or fill out a Round Robin Request Form so you can participate in a group or partnership.

- Biography/Memoir (seeks one-on-one partnership)
- Children's fiction (ages 5-8, fantasy)
- Christian/inspirational (seeks a

round robin by mail)

- Creative Nonfiction
- Eclectic (writing short in various forms or genres)
- Historical Nonfiction
- Historical Fiction (not romance)
- Literary (novella or novelette length)
- Mystery/suspense (short story or novel; seeks a round robin)
- Romance - historical
- Science Fiction (looking for an advanced writer)
- Science Fiction (beginner looking for a group)
- Science Fiction (middle-grade novel; looking for a group round robin)
- Science Fiction - Alternate History (seeks a round robin)

Request forms are available by e-mail from [mouserun@certainty.net](mailto:mouserun@certainty.net) or by writing to: Catherine McLean, Round Robin Critique Coordinator, P. O. Box 41, Carlton, PA 16311.

## Links to Explore for Humor Writing

Reader's Digest – [rd.com](http://rd.com) – Jokes & Fun Submission Page

Smithsonian – [smithsonianmag.com/contact-us/submission-guidelines.html](http://smithsonianmag.com/contact-us/submission-guidelines.html) (700 word humor column)

Online magazine – [riverandsoundreview.org](http://riverandsoundreview.org)

Saturday Evening Post – [satevepost.org](http://satevepost.org) (anecdotes, short humor)

Christian Science Monitor – [csmonitor.com](http://csmonitor.com) – contributor's guidelines (go to payment) Requests that humor be "gentle."

Article by Larry Tritten at [poewar.com/prospecting-for-markets](http://poewar.com/prospecting-for-markets)

## Area 4 Report

by Mona Papoutsis  
Area 4 Representative

The 2010 conference was a huge success. We're grateful for all the planning and hard work that went into making it happen. Planning has even begun for next year. Already they have booked author Jennifer Weiner as our guest speaker. I recently purchased her latest novel, FLY AWAY HOME, and am anxious to read it. It's exciting to be a part of an energetic and dedicated group, all focused on the same subject – writing. Being together at the conference makes for a great opportunity to meet, network, and enjoy being with peers. If you weren't able to make it this year, perhaps now is a good time to start planning for next year.

Please continue to promote Pennwriters to your friends, neighbors, and fellow writers. Any suggestions on increasing our membership and promoting our workshops will be appreciated.

Once again, please check your e-mail addresses with those listed on the main roster to be sure they're recorded correctly. There may also be new addresses, which I don't have. You could forward any additions or changes to me.

Also, if there is any other interest in starting a Critique Group in your area, please let me know. Area 4 Critique Groups currently active are as follows:

We have a group at Wilson College in Chambersburg the first and third Thursdays of the month at 6:30 p.m. We also have a Works in Progress Writers Workshop in Somerset. Contact Barbara Purbaugh at 814-443-9541 or go to her Web site at [www.barbarapurbaugh.com](http://www.barbarapurbaugh.com). They meet twice a month on Thursdays from 6-10 p.m.

Also, there is the Southern Alleghenies Writers Guild that meets monthly in the Johnstown area (usually the third Saturday of the month at noon). Contact Bob Brawley at 814-539-0169 or e-mail him at [plates@atlanticbb.net](mailto:plates@atlanticbb.net).

Contact Mona at 717-263-1109;  
[monap2005@comcast.net](mailto:monap2005@comcast.net)



# 2010 Pennwriters Conference in Photos



*Special thanks to photographers David Freas, Area 2, and Annette Dashofy, Area 3.*







**Row 1:** Board members Rosie Ugliuzza, Mona Papoutsis and Katie Yelinek kick off the conference at the Thursday evening board meeting. Area 2 member Martha Johnson a.k.a. Marta Perry delivers a workshop. Pennwriters members share tips of the trade during Friday's Networking Lunch. Author James Rollins autographs a book. James Rollins delivers the Friday Night Keynote Address. **Row 2:** Jonathan Mayberry, Area 5, addresses attendees of his workshop. Area 3 member Tim Esaias reviews the notes for his workshop. President Carol Silvis presides over the Saturday morning business meeting. Area 1 member Catherine McLean accepts the Meritorious Service Award. Area 6 member Elizabeth Kann delivers the Saturday Luncheon Keynote Address. **Row 3:** Conference attendees take a short break in the hospitality suite. Author Donna Fletcher presents a workshop. Wicked Witch Lisa Kastner and Wonder Woman Ayleen Stelhorn debate the fate of the musician at Saturday's Masquerade Ball. Area 3 member Paula Matter shows off her query-eating shark costume. **Row 4:** Jackie Werth explains the ins and outs of the raffle drawing. A view of the basket raffle table. Area 6 member Peggy Hauser cleans up on the raffle drawing.



# Market News

by Jim Lee, Area 4, Associate Editor, Market Reports

Paying a minimum of \$500/printed page on acceptance, **Mad Magazine** (1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019) needs visual oriented humor—outrageous, silly and/or satirical. Originality is especially prized. New freelancers' best bet is to break in here with satirical but not topical material. Study the sample copy and guidelines, both online ([www.madmag.com](http://www.madmag.com)), then query. Send a premise with 3 or 4 examples of how you intend to carry it through, describing both action and visual content. Rough sketches desired but not required. For one-page gags, 2-8 panel cartoon continuities at a minimum—very funny. Avoid topics/approaches they've done to death and no previously published material. Seasonal material needs to be in 6 months in advance. They accept e-mail subs, but query first. They buy All Rights.

A monthly humor tabloid, **Funny Times**, calls itself "the Reader's Digest of modern American humor" with a progressive/peace-oriented/environmental/politically activist slant. Send humor pieces, 500-700 words, extremely funny and (funny) interviews with funny people, same length. Essays, opinion, personal experience—pay for all these (on publication) is \$60 minimum. If you have an idea for an ongoing column, query with published clips. They use a little outright fictional humor, too (same length limits, pay range is \$50-150), but ask that you query with clips before sending them. And they pay \$20 for very brief gags. They suggest you send a small packet (1-2 items) of your very best, funniest work. If they like it, they'll ask for more and are very receptive to previously published material (as long as you have reprint rights to sell and it's

"pee your pants funny"). Guides online ([www.funnytimes.com](http://www.funnytimes.com)). Their mailing address is PO Box 18530, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118. E-mail address is [ft@funnytimes.com](mailto:ft@funnytimes.com). And their fax number is 216-371-8696.

The next annual **Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest** deadline isn't till April 2011, but the guidelines are online at [www.winningwriters.com/wergle](http://www.winningwriters.com/wergle). There's no entrance fee and cash prizes (for single, humorous poems) totaled \$3600 this year (including top prize of \$1500). So if you do funny verses, make a note for next year! And even if that's not your thing, check that Winning Writers Web site—for other good-paying contests, covering for all sorts of writing.

Of course, a wide variety of markets that aren't specifically humor-oriented consider and use some, whether as short fillers, as more substantial contributions or both.

Case in point, the aforementioned **Reader's Digest**: All their feature articles are previously published nonfiction—send a 1-page query detailing the article with emphasis on the arc of the story, your interview access to main characters and documents related to the story. Include separate page of your writing credits. They like dramatic narratives, everyday heroes, true crime and adventure pieces. Query to their Web site ([www.rd.com](http://www.rd.com)). As for humor,

it's mostly short/filler type material. Study the magazine's various columns and send to the appropriate category. Their snail mail address is PO Box 100, Pleasantville, NY 10572-0100.

**Cottage Life** is a bimonthly for people who own and spend time at waterfront cottages. Produced in Canada by Quarto Communications (54 St. Patrick St., Toronto, ON M5T 1V1), they have a strong service slant, with lots of how-to journalism. The primary focus is on Ontario, but they also use work concerning the rest of Canada and neighboring US states (Pennwriters along or near the Erie shore take note). Of further interest

considering this month's theme: The editors state that "if you haven't written for the magazine, the 'On the Waterfront' section is an excellent place to break in." This front-of-the-book department uses short news, human interest, service items and, yes, humor, 400 words max, paying \$50-400 on acceptance. Full guides are online ([www.cottagelife.com](http://www.cottagelife.com)). Query with published clips, SASE and IRCs or by e-mail ([editorial@cottagelife.com](mailto:editorial@cottagelife.com)).

**The Almanac for Farmers & City Folk** is an annual of "down-home, folksy material pertaining to farming, gardening, homemaking, animals, etc." No fiction or controversial topics wanted, and no first-person pieces. No queries—send complete mss! They use essays, general interest, historical, how-to, home or garden project and humor articles, 350-1400 words, paying \$45/published page on pub. They also buy a few poems (\$45 for





full page. \$15 for short poems) and use quite a few fillers, 125 words max, \$15 (including humor, gardening hints, anecdotes). Mailing address: Greentree Publishing, Inc., 840 S. Rancho Dr., Suite 4-319, Las Vegas, NV 89106. Web site: [www.thealmanac.com](http://www.thealmanac.com). Annual submission deadline is March 31.

Most of the nonfiction used in *Short Stuff Magazine* (301 E. Harmony Rd., Suite 204, Fort Collins, CO 80525) is staff written. Humor (especially holiday oriented) is the exception. They buy about 30 pieces/year (500-1500 words). Most types of fiction (same lengths) are used, as long as not morbid or pornographic, and humor is especially welcome here too. The same goes for fillers (20-500 words). The idea is “clean stories for grown-ups.” Include cover letter with all subs. Don’t e-mail work, but include your online address (if you have one). It helps them contact you quicker. Pay varies. Guidelines available for #10 SASE.

The deadline for the **Wilda Hearne Flash Fiction Contest** is Oct. 1. The winning short-short, 500 words or less, gets \$300 and publication in Big Muddy Magazine. \$10 entry fee includes copy of mag with the winning piece. Info is at the Web site ([www6.semo.edu/universitypress/hearne](http://www6.semo.edu/universitypress/hearne)). Mail subs to Wilda Hearne Flash Fiction Contest, Southeast Missouri State University, MS 2650, 1 University Plaza, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701.

*Creative Nonfiction* seeks essays (5000 words max) for a book on Immortality. They’re looking for a wide range of viewpoints on this topic (maybe even a humorous take or two?). Examples in the Spring 2010 issue. Deadline is August 6. Guides at [www.creativenonfiction.org](http://www.creativenonfiction.org).

*Conceit Magazine* is doing a contest for love poems—all aspects welcomed (again, a humorous take might work). \$5 entry fee (payable to Perry Terrell) for up to 3 poems. Prizes of \$50, \$30, \$20 for top 3 winners. Additional winners (4th through 6th place) get free subscriptions to the mag. Previously published okay. E-mail entries and queries can be sent to [conceitmagazine2007@yahoo.com](mailto:conceitmagazine2007@yahoo.com). Paypal users pay to [conceitmagazine@yahoo.com](mailto:conceitmagazine@yahoo.com). Deadline is November 30.

The same magazine is sponsoring or co-sponsoring at least 2 additional poetry contests with autumn deadlines, each with their own particular themes and requirements. Check their Web site ([www.myspace.com/conceitmagazine](http://www.myspace.com/conceitmagazine)) for details on each.

The new editor of *Paris Review* is Lorin Stein. Info on this prestigious lit mag at [www.parisreview.com](http://www.parisreview.com).

*See Market News, Page 12*

## Area 5 Report

by *Walt Honsinger*  
Area 5 Representative

My feet have not yet touched ground from the May conference. It was a huge success, and we are thankful to all but especially to Ayleen for the work she did. The agents that I talked to during the conference complimented us on our professionalism. Several of our local authors received encouraging news from agents and are busily preparing manuscripts. The classes were fantastic, and it seemed something interesting was going on all the time.

I made resolutions at the conference, and I’m doing my best to fulfill them. I’d received a proof copy of THE BEACHCOMBER but hadn’t sent my final ok to the publisher. That is now completed. I also decided to read at least two novels a week. Since the conference I’ve averaged three a week. I have one additional novel under contract, and I’m at page 263 on it. Between my regular job, wife, kids and social life, it isn’t easy.

The local writing groups we currently show are in Lancaster, York, Camp Hill, Harrisburg and Carlisle.

Contact Walt at 717-560-9641;  
[walthonsinger@hotmail.com](mailto:walthonsinger@hotmail.com)

## Area 6 Report

by *Jade Blackwater*  
Vice President

Greetings from Seattle, Area 6.

We need a VOLUNTEER FOR AREA 6 REPRESENTATIVE!

Bob Michalsky has stepped down from the Area 6 Rep position, and we thank him for all his support. Yours truly, Jade Blackwater, is back on the case for southeastern PA, which means just one thing...

We are seeking a volunteer to complete the Area 6 Rep term through 2011.

If you’re looking for the chance to connect with writers and support Pennwriters, we want to hear from you. The job is rewarding and the primary duties are simple:

- 1) Serve on the Board of Directors at Pennwriters
- 2) Coordinate Area 6 Meetings
- 3) Act as a liaison and information source for area members and Pennwriters as a whole

Ready to help? Please contact me to today at [area6rep@pennwriters.com](mailto:area6rep@pennwriters.com)



## Market News (cont. from Page 11)

**Outreach Magazine** is a bimonthly that seeks to “inspire, challenge, and equip churches and church leaders to reach out to their communities with the love of Jesus Christ.” As such they use feature length articles (1200-2000 words), entries in various columns (ranging anywhere from

New Area 1 member Terry Dawley is a retired police officer, passionate stone waller and budding writer who is finding many similarities between writing and building walls. “Writing is much like building a wall with stone. You start with a jumbled pile of individual stones, all kinds of shapes, colors and sizes. Each one will add its own flavor and flow to the wall. Starting with the first stone, you skillfully place each stone after it, setting the right stone in the right place. You must follow basic principles of stonework or your wall will collapse; however, every builder has their own unique style. Some days, no matter how hard you try, you just can’t find the right stone. You get frustrated and start forcing stones to fit. You need to walk away from your work and refresh your mind. Other days the stones seem to fly into place, each one fitting perfectly. You’re totally absorbed with the wall. Many times while building, you have to step away and look at your wall with a critical eye. Sometimes you have to tear down a section and rebuild it. If you leave the wrong stone in place because you get lazy or hurried, your eye will always return to it when the wall is complete. Finally, you set the last stone. You step back and look at your work and say, ‘I created this.’”

75-900 words) and fillers (25-100 words) on a range of topics (including appropriate humor). No fiction, poetry or non-outreach-related, however. Pay ranges up to a max of \$600, plus some expenses for writers on assignment. Study their guidelines (listed as “free,” but I’d send a SASE with the request to them at 2230 Oak Ridge Way, Vista, CA 92081) then query with published clips. You also might want to check their Web site ([www.outreachmagazine.com](http://www.outreachmagazine.com)). Sample copy also reported as “free.” They want “tight, bright writing” and show your ability to “interview, research and organize numerous sources into an article.” Queries can be sent by mail (as above), fax (760-597-2314) or e-mail ([lhowry@outreach.com](mailto:lhowry@outreach.com)).

**The Imagination & Place Press of Lawrence, Kansas** needs original essays, poetry & fiction for what they call an “interdisciplinary publication on theme of seasonings.” For a full description and guides, go to their Web site ([www.imaginationandplace.org](http://www.imaginationandplace.org)) and click on “Coming Up.” The deadline is August 31.

**FC2** is an author-run small press devoted to publishing fiction that’s “too challenging, innovative, or heterodox” for the big commercial houses. They’re currently running the Catherine Doctorow Innovative Fiction Prize, which offers \$15,000 and publication. Entries will be accepted August 15-November 1, 2010 and will be judged by Ben Marcus. Guidelines are on their Web site ([fc.2org](http://fc.2org)).

The literary magazine **Main Street Rag** (PO Box 690100, Charlotte NC 28227-7001) is reading short stories for the following themes: “Altered States” and “The Book of Villains.” Details on these and other upcoming

opportunities available at their Web site ([www.mainstreetrag.com](http://www.mainstreetrag.com)) or by e-mailing ([editor@mainstreetrag.com](mailto:editor@mainstreetrag.com)).

And several of our state’s regional magazines include humor (particularly if with a local flavor) in their mix. Rather than detail each one at this time, here’s where to find the submission guidelines for three that express an interest in the funny side of PA living (along with lots else):

**Berks County Living** has its guides online ([www.berkscountyliving.com](http://www.berkscountyliving.com)).

**Main Line Today** says its guides are “free” (send SASE to Today Media, Inc., 4699 West Chester Pike, Newtown Square, PA 19073).

Likewise, a #10 SASE will get you sub info for **Milford Magazine** (PO Box 486, 201 W. Harford St., Milford, PA 18337).

**First Run Publishing** is a small press out of the UK that publishes both electronic and print editions in the US and the UK. Though they publish all genres of fiction, editors are particularly interested at this time in romance, erotic romance and science fiction. Check submission guidelines at [www.firstrunpublishing.com](http://www.firstrunpublishing.com)

**Mulholland Books** is a new crime fiction imprint from publisher Little, Brown, set to launch in Spring 2011. John Schoenfelder will edit the new line, which plans to publish 24 books a year by 201 —one paperback and one hard cover each month. The line plans to publish “crime novels, thrillers, police procedurals, spy stories, even supernatural suspense.” Watch for more information as plans progress.

[Sources of info this time courtesy 2010 *Writer’s Market* (*Writer’s Digest* books), *Poets & Writers Magazine* (*Poets & Writers, Inc.*), *Writer’s Chronicle* (AWP/George Mason University), my inquiries and those of Martha Johnson].

# Volunteers Needed to Fill Web Chair, Conference Coordinator Roles

## Web Chair

Do you like web development and design? Are you familiar with open source web technology? Put your web skills to good use in support of your fellow writers!

Pennwriters is seeking a tech-savvy volunteer for the role of Web Chair to drive improvements and support services at [Pennwriters.org](http://Pennwriters.org).

The ideal candidate has experience with open source web development (esp. Joomla) and is ready to volunteer 10+ hours per month to support Pennwriters web services.

Don't know Joomla but still want to help? We want to hear from you! All Pennwriters with experience in web development, social networking, blogging, and web content management are invited to contribute.

Please contact Carol Silvis/Jade Blackwater at [webchair@pennwriters.com](mailto:webchair@pennwriters.com)

## 2012 Conference Coordinator

Do you have a flare for event planning? Do you love meeting new people, making connections, and organizing fun get-togethers?

Pennwriters is seeking a volunteer Conference Coordinator for our 2012 annual conference to be held in Lancaster, Pa. Our enthusiastic Conference Coordinators are critical to the ongoing success of Pennwriters, and they enjoy the unique opportunity to connect writers of all levels in one friendly space each year.

The ideal candidate will be a Pennwriters member in good standing for at least one year; be organized and know how to manage time well; be comfortable with frequent phone calls, e-mails, and other correspondence.

Responsibilities include appointing a Conference Committee of volunteers; soliciting speaker proposals from both Pennwriters members and non-member writers (final selections made with the Conference Committee); contacting agents, editors, and keynote speakers; and supporting plenty of phone calls, e-mails, and general correspondence.

The Pennwriters 2012 Conference Coordinator will first appoint a Conference Committee of volunteers to organize and support the big jobs (registration, agent/editor appointments, read-and-critique sessions, etc.). The Conference Committee will be responsible for attracting volunteers for the conference, selecting food and menu items, and otherwise supporting the Conference Coordinator for 2012.

If you really, really love event planning, but you're new to Pennwriters, contact us anyway. Consideration will be given to the right candidate.

The 2012 Conference Coordinator does not have to be from the Lancaster area. The Eden Resort Hotel is booked for our 2012 return, and all meeting rooms and blocked guest rooms are arranged. (It will, however, be helpful for the Coordinator to live near fellow committee members so that the Conference Committee can meet regularly.)

Our PR Chairperson and Treasurer are available to support publicity and finances for the 2012 Conference.

If you have outstanding event planning skills and experience, we want to hear from you!

To learn more, contact Carol Silvis: [snax@nb.net](mailto:snax@nb.net)

## Area 7 Report

by *Bobbi Carducci*

*Area 7 Representative*

The Pennwriters Conference in Lancaster was huge for Area 7. Over fifty Area 7s participated. We took the opportunity to meet briefly after breakfast on Saturday. Area 6 joined us to say hello and Lisa Kastner, outgoing Pennwriters President, said a personal hello to each of us.

We now have Area 7 members in 19 states and in Canada. There is now an Area 7 blog (<http://pwarea7.wordpress.com>) called the Pennwriters Area 7 Connector. Please logon and sign up to be notified when a blog post is made. If you send me an e-mail with your name and blog or Web site address, I'll include it on the site so others can find you. Let me know if you have information to share on the site or if you want to contribute an article on writing. Important: I'm looking for a blog manager who is willing to spend a few hours a month updating information on the site. Please help if you can.

Twitter is now an integral part of the business of writing. If you aren't Tweeting, you should be. (More about this coming soon on the blog.)

The Blue Ridge Chapter of Area 7 received approval of the Board of Directors during the preconference meeting on Thursday, May 13. It is my goal to assist members to form more chapters in their geographical areas. Chapter applications must be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval. A Chapter Handbook is available for those looking for more information on how to go about what's involved in getting started. Contact me for details at [bcarducci@comcast.net](mailto:bcarducci@comcast.net).

My main goal as Area 7 Representative is to help you meet your writing goals. Keep in touch and let me know what I can do for you.

Contact Bobbi at 540-338-5064;  
[bcarducci@comcast.net](mailto:bcarducci@comcast.net)

# Untimely Words

by J.I. Myers, Area 5

Words come a-creeping when I should be sleeping;  
Crouching like kittens, they spring to the bed.  
They pounce on the pillows and bounce up the billows  
Of cascading blankets to hop on my head.

Shoo! Go away, Words! It's too late to play, Words.  
Shutter the glowing of those sleepless eyes.  
I need my rest, Words, to be at my best, Words.  
Go chase the moonbeams. Good night!

Words flow with power when I'm in the shower,  
Raining in musical, silvery streams.  
Instruments start to play, choruses join in...Hey!  
Where's the hot water? And who stole the steam?

Shoo! Go away, Words! Turn off the cold spray, Words.  
Ride these wild rapids back up to the hills.  
The singers were wondrous, the timpani thund'rous,  
But who's going to pay the utility bill?

Words parade my way when I'm on the highway,  
Forming a line that is choppy and weak.  
I watch them blunder, but then start to wonder:  
How did I travel so far to the east?

Shoo! Go away, Words! I've gone the wrong way, Words.  
March your procession to some rural route.  
A farmer might fix it, but I've missed my exit.  
I'm going to be late...Here's construction, to boot!

Words enter, teasing, when I'm in a meeting,  
Laughing contagiously, making me smirk.  
I must start wheezing a fake fit of sneezing  
To keep from exploding in untimely mirth.

Shoo! Go away, Words! I must earn my pay, Words.  
Roll with your jesters to some comic stage.  
I'll ask Miss Keating for notes from the meeting  
And stay late tonight to make up for my day.

Words of disaster compete with the pastor,  
Whose sermon on joyfulness should make me glad.  
Mrs. McCranky hands me a fresh hanky  
And wonders why I could be feeling so sad.

Shoo! Go away, Words! It's soon time to pray, Words.  
Bottle your weeping and silence your woe.  
Needless to mention, I must pay attention,  
So, be off! Did you hear me? Go!  
\*\*\*

At last! How exciting to find time for writing—  
Surely I have enough words for a ream!  
Here in the forest (with my thick thesaurus)  
I'll hone and embellish the tales of my dreams.

Sunshine and...look! It's a babbling brook!  
There is a deer shelter...Oh, what a find!  
On this vacation, I'll gain inspiration;  
The mountain-fresh air will enliven my mind.

Come out and play, Words! I'll listen today, Words.  
Here is my paper—It's blank for your jokes!  
Start any time now, with riddles and rhymes, now,  
And fabulous stories to tell to my folks.

How did it go—that legend of woe?  
What was the line that was wrong?  
Let a bassoon play the waterfall tune;  
Sing me that silvery song!

It would be fine, now. Yes, anytime, now.  
Look! I'm asleep! Come attack!  
...I'll just keep reading these notes from Miss Keating...  
Oh, Words! When will you be back?

*Julie I. Myers is unique among the Published Penns: she has achieved most of her credits through the publication of song lyrics. Her original children's piece, "Who Has Heard the Music?" (Colla Voce Music) has been performed recently at various honors choir events; "Give Me a Vessel" (co-written with Stan Pethel, Lorenz Publishing Company) appeared on the "Best of the Best Sacred Choral Repertoire 2009" list of Northwest Musical Services; and her most recent publication, "O Clap Your Hands" (co-written with Ashley Brooke, Shawnee Press/Hal Leonard), has just appeared on J.W. Pepper's 2010 Editors' Choice Children's Choir Christmas and General Anthems list.*

## QUOTES CORNER

"To conquer without risk is to triumph without glory."

- Pierre Corneille

"Tragedy is a tool for the living to gain wisdom, not a guide by which to live."

- Robert Kennedy

*Compliments of [www.AIRequation.org](http://www.AIRequation.org) and Nate Hardy, Internet Activities Coordinator. For more inspirational quotes, visit the Pennwriters online group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pennwriters>*



# A Note from the 2010 Meritorious Service Award Winner

by Catherine E. McLean, Area 1, Round Robin Coordinator

There I sat watching the announcer make her way to the microphone in the court area of the Best Western Eden Resort. She would soon announce the Pennwriters 2010 Meritorious Service Award winner.

My name was among the candidates nominated and there were some awesome members on that list. My husband warned me not to get my hopes up. After all, this was the third year that I'd been nominated but hadn't won.

Maybe the third time is the charm because there was no doubt that, with the speaker's opening words, I realized I'd won. I was stunned, then touched when the speaker said: "As an author who knows that publication is not always a writer's goal, but that writing well is, this year's Meritorious Service Award winner, strives to help her fellow Pennwriters learn and write from the heart." Those were my own words. Words I'd written for my bio when I ran for my first term as Area 1 Representative back in 2004.

The award I received was a wall clock plaque. A long time ago someone told me the clock was appropriate because of all the time a volunteer has given to

the organization. After getting home from the conference, I mounted the clock on the wall in my office. Then I sat in my task chair looking up at its gleaming gold numerals and recalled the years of volunteering I'd done for Pennwriters.

I joined the organization in 1995, but my first volunteer activity was in 1998.



Catherine McLean accepts the 2010 Meritorious Service Award from the 2009 Award Winner, Jackie Werth.

I gave my very first workshop at the local library to promote Pennwriters. I remember that workshop for its minuscule turnout. Yet, I continued to promote Pennwriters with mini-workshops. These have resulted in the formation of two new groups, one in Meadville and one in Sharon.

I've even given workshops at the Pennwriters conferences where more than 40 people filled the room to learn a specific craft element. I've also been asked to present a workshop at the 2011 conference. In 2009 I gave my first online workshop for Pennwriters—and have done more since.

At the Pennwriters conferences over the years, I've been a regular volunteer.

Once I stepped in two days before the conference to run the Silent Auction because a family crisis prevented the auction coordinator making it. I sold many tickets—breaking the \$1,000 sales mark for the first time. Okay, I'll confess, I had way too much fun coming up with ideas why people should buy tickets, especially that invisible line on the floor that if you crossed it, you had to buy a ticket.

I've also volunteered as a room moderator, Conference Penn Pal, and an agent/editor timekeeper. And then there were those conferences that Denise Meyers (then President of the organization) "volunteered" me (okay she asked nicely) to sit in a corner of the hospitality room and listen to members practice their pitches. I remember missing the workshops I had planned to attend but, considering the success stories those members related to me, well, missing a workshop didn't seem that big of a deal.

Most of all, I volunteered at the conference to relieve other volunteers—those in the hospitality room manning the merchandise or auction tables, or at registration—so those folks could have a bathroom or meal break, or attend a workshop.

Currently, I serve as the organization's Round Robin Critique Coordinator. Looking back at the years and reading what I've just jotted down, makes me realize how a little volunteering here and there have added up to years of service. I've also realized the impact that volunteering has had on me. I've grown as a writer and as a Pennwriter, and I'm proud to have become a Published Penn.

As I type these closing lines, I pause to look at the clock on the wall. In my mind echoes, "You're a Meritorious Service Award winner."

Wow. What an honor.

## Member Accomplishments



JANYCE BRAWN, Area 1, won two awards at the St. David's Christian Writers' Mercer Conference: first place for Light Verse with a spring Haiku, and third place for an inspirational article, "A Perfect Peace."

Do you have an accomplishment to share? Send your good news to Editor Lori Morris at [lorimorris@verizon.net](mailto:lorimorris@verizon.net). Please put PW Accomplishments in the subject line. Sorry,

we cannot accept accomplishments submitted by third parties.

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## Upcoming Area 3 Writers Workshop

by Annette Dashofy, Area 3 Representative

Mark your calendar for Saturday, Sept. 25! Pennwriters Area 3 is hosting a day-long "Book in a Day" intensive workshop with Debra Dixon, author of *GOAL, MOTIVATION & CONFLICT: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF GOOD FICTION*.

**Where:** Crowne Plaza, Pittsburgh International Airport, 1160 Thorn Run Rd., Coraopolis, PA.

**When:** 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 25.

**Cost:** \$125.00 for Pennwriters members. \$150.00 for nonmembers (lunch is included)

**About the speaker:** Debra's a bestselling author currently at work on her eleventh book and has served as Vice-President for Romance Writers of America, an organization of over

9,000 writers. In 2003, RWA honored Debra with the national Emma Merritt Service Award.

Her published work has been awarded the Georgia Romance Writers' "Maggie," A Little Romance Magazine's ROMY, Colorado's Award of Excellence, the Kiss of Death Award for best suspense of the year from RWA's Mystery/Suspense Chapter, and she's received a Romantic Times Career Achievement Award for Innovative Series Romance. Her published books have been recognized as finalists for the Virginia Holt Medallion, Romantic Times Best Loveswept, and the National Readers' Choice Award for romance fiction.

In addition to speaking at numerous regional and national conferences, Debra developed and continues to teach a novel writing course for the

University of Memphis as well as one-day writing workshops across the country. In late 1996, Gryphon Books For Writers published Debra's first writing "how-to" book based on her popular *Goal, Motivation, and Conflict* workshop. That book is now in its sixth printing. In late 2002, Gryphon published Debra's second nonfiction book, *WHEN YOU'RE THE ONLY COP IN TOWN*, a writer's guide to small-town law enforcement.

Debra lives in the South with her husband and son. When she's not working in publishing or corporate America, she moonlights as an award-winning quilter.

Registration opens soon. If you would like a registration form, contact Annette Dashofy at [annette@annettedashofy.com](mailto:annette@annettedashofy.com) or call 724-255-7955.

### What is Pennwriters, Inc.?

Pennwriters, Inc. is an independent network of writers with more than 450 members from Pennsylvania and beyond. Established in 1988 as a networking organization for published and aspiring writers of all genres, Pennwriters, Inc. has continued to grow. For more information, contact President Carol Silvis at [snax@nb.net](mailto:snax@nb.net).

### Submitting to *The Penn Writer*

Have a submission for *The Penn Writer*? Contact Editor Lori Morris via e-mail at [lorimorris@verizon.net](mailto:lorimorris@verizon.net) or via mail at 1933 Elmbrook Lane, Pittsburgh, PA 15243. Deadline for the Sept.-Oct. issue is Aug. 1. The theme is "The nonfiction market." The theme for the Nov.-Dec. market is "Pushing Yourself to the Next Level." We always welcome submissions not based on theme as well. We hope to hear from you!