

Saturday Writers Newsletter

June • 2020

Saturday
Writers



Writers Encouraging Writers Since 2002

A Chapter of the Missouri Writers Guild

A Nonprofit Organization / Corporation

www.saturdaywriters.org • info@saturdaywriters.org

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Karen Sargent

Saturday Writers to Welcome Karen Sargent to Discuss How to Write for *Chicken Soup for the Soul*

On June 27, educator and writer Karen Sargent will share her best tips for successful submissions to the bestselling anthology *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. You have a story to tell and *Chicken Soup for the Soul* wants to pay you for it! *Chicken Soup* publishes approximately twelve books a year, each with 101 stories told by writers like you. Learn what makes a great story, how to write it, and what to expect after you submit. You will leave the workshop with story ideas and helpful resources.

Karen Sargent is an award-winning author and educator who combines her two passions—writing and teaching—to equip and encourage writers to take their next step. A frequent presenter at guilds and conferences, she has a heart for helping writers break into publishing. Her novel, *Waiting for Butterflies*, was named the 2017 IAN Book of the Year and received the 2017 Foreword Reviews Gold for Religious fiction. Visit her at KarenSargentBooks.com.

Award Winning Poet Claire Askew took the Saturday Writers' virtual meeting podium, May 30th, and discussed, "Why Poetry?"

At our May Online Meeting, Claire Askew gave us a fresh, new view of both poetry and poets. She believes that poetry should not be defined by what it is but by what it does for the reader; it addresses what it is to be human. A poet uses imagery and metaphor to express and explore what cannot be fully understood or defined. She spoke of the joy in poetry, an art form that is wonderful, strange, and truthful—wonderful because of its beauty, strange because it offers new perspectives on life, and truthful even when it is not built on facts. Its meaning goes beyond knowledge. A poet need not be an angst-driven clairvoyant spouting riddles that defy solution or understanding. Strong poems reveal new

perspectives on life and illuminate things that are beyond words.

Claire spoke of several tools a poet must consider: Imagery, Form, Music (rhythm and rhyme), Emotional Resonance, and Ambiguity.

Poets must be attentive to both the world that exists inside and the physical world in which they find themselves. Imagery must offer the reader a fresh view of existence that is both familiar and clear. We conclude universal reality by looking at individual objects and moments not commonly experienced by all.

The form of a poem is how the words appear on the page. The

Continued on page 2 - see Askew



Claire Askew

Welcome to Saturday Writers

Due to social distancing, until further notice monthly meetings and other events will be held via Zoom.

Join us on the last Saturday of each month to hear speakers share their knowledge of craft, writing process, marketing, all things writing in all genres.

Leadership is evaluating various ways for us to stay connected. We held our first Open Mic on May 24 and plan more. We're hosting a virtual write-in on June 20th and future virtual critique groups, but are looking for input on whether these would be things you might attend. Email Jeanne.F@SaturdayWriters.org to let her know and share any other suggestions you might have.

- 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.- Regular Meeting VIA ZOOM for business items and our guest speaker.

- Doors open at the Zoom room at 10:45 a.m.

- Visitors are welcome to attend for free at this time.



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From the President's Desk...

No One's Perfect

I just read an interesting bit in *Writers Digest* March 2020 edition. The column by agent Barbara Poelle, "Funny You Should Ask," had a letter from an author who was asked to teach a writing seminar at a conference. This bestselling author was panicking because the writer was terrible at grammar. Barbara's response got me to thinking about how many authors think they have to be perfect to have worthwhile advice, or to be a great storyteller.

Basically, the whole show comes down to the story. Grammar is what editors fix. While they can, and do, also fix aspects of the story (via content/developmental editors), some stories may simply be too bad to fix. However, create an interesting idea with a beginning, middle, and end, and often that is enough to push through to a fantastic story. That's why focusing on story is of utmost importance.

So to all the wanna-be writers out there struggling with penning a perfect tale from the first tap of your fingers on keys or your pen to paper, I say STOP seeking the elusive perfection. It's not going to happen, and you're hindering your writing by thinking it will. Instead, expect that what comes out will most likely be pabulum best served up to a shredder. A bit harsh, you might be thinking? Not at all—on the contrary, releasing that notion can be the most freeing gift you ever give yourself as a writer. Allow yourself to write badly.

Yeah, okay, there was that one writer that one time that someone somewhere heard about that wrote the perfect story, and it didn't even need editing. I heard that one too. Ha! I've filed it under conspiracy theories. Let it go. Your first job is to write the story. Let the story grow and become what it's meant to be before restricting it by making sure every comma is in the correct place, that you haven't overused the dreaded "ly" words, that more is showing and less is telling. Get the story out and onto the paper or screen.

Do all of that, and someday when you're asked to speak at a conference as a bestselling author, you too can panic because your grammar isn't always perfect.

—Jeanne Felfe, President

Congratulations to Saturday Writers Pat Wahler

Pat Wahler's novel, *I Am Mrs. Jesse James*, was just awarded Author's Circle Awards 2019 Novel of Excellence award in historical fiction.



Jeanne Felfe

Askew - Continued from page 1

form can either contribute to its effectiveness or work in opposition to the author's best efforts.

Lineation, use of punctuation, or capitalization can be used to great advantage. New poetic forms such as Rap, "Duplex" and "Golden Shovel" are being added every day to the traditional forms such as sonnet, couplet, haiku, and limericks.

All poetry has rhythm, and there are often rhyme patterns that add to the "music" of the art form. Poetic rhythm is based on the "iamb" which mimics the beat of one's heart. One must guard against forcing a rhythm or rhyme onto a poem, making it trite and "sing-song." A reader's eyes will often be drawn to the last word on a line, adding to its emphasis.

An effective poem carries an emotional impact. So long as it doesn't become manipulative or "soap opera," the emotional imagery helps the reader experience intensely personal feelings of their own. Life itself is often very confusing; poetry offers us a way to face the ambiguity of life without having to understand it all or completely verbalize what we feel.

Claire recommends that all writers should write daily, whether or not they feel inspired. Instead of viewing substandard work as "bad," try viewing it as an "ancestor" of something better which will come from it. The "bay leaf" theory says cutting something from the final poem maybe like removing the bay leaves before serving the dish; its effects were only needed while the poem was cooking. Experiment.

I will certainly look at poetry with new eyes from now on. Watching Claire bubble about the topic and read with such joyful abandon may not get me to write my own poems, but it certainly will remove a lot of the stigma I once carried about poetry and the people who write it.

—By Ken Lee

What's the Big Idea?

Distant Winners but Close to Our Hearts

Another month has sped by while Saturday Writers and the rest of America continue to socially distance. If you were able to join in the May SW online meeting or checked out our website this month, you know we had three contest winners.

Jane Hamilton took first place with her short story, "The Friends Bug," a heart-felt story that reminds the reader COVID-19 isn't the first time a health crisis separated us from our loved ones. "The idea for my Bug Friends story came from my own life experiences. As a child, I lived the polio epidemic of the 1950s. As a senior, I'm living the coronavirus pandemic. Comparing the two, mainly where friends and family are concerned, seemed so appropriate.

After an exciting career as a news reporter, columnist, and editor, Jane joined Saturday Writers and began writing short stories for fun. Her advice to other writers was right on point. "Be true to yourself. Always strive to improve, to develop your writing skills, to learn from other writers. But maintain your style; let your personality come through. Don't be too hard on yourself regarding your writing. It's OK—at least occasionally—to think you've done a good job."

Nick Sweet landed a first-place poetry win for his "Places in 5" entry. Nick is not a member of Saturday Writers and was not available for an interview.

Applause! Applause! Donna Volkenannt scored

first in the Poet Laureate contest with her "wild and absurd" limerick, "Reverend Finn." She also placed second in the same contest with her poem "Silence Invites Wisdom into the Light." She identified the poem as a villanelle. I only dabble in poetry, so I had to look up what that meant. It is a nineteen-line poem with two rhymes throughout, consisting of five tercets and a quatrain, with the first and third lines of the opening tercet recurring alternately at the end of the other tercets and with both repeated at the close of the concluding quatrain. That was my new lesson for the day.

Donna is a co-founder of a long-standing critique group. I asked her how it was for writers to reach out to others for critiques.

She shared, "Just as 'iron sharpens iron,' I believe belonging to a well-rounded critique group makes a better writer—and a better person. In my critique group, writers sharpen my work and catch things I miss after I have edited it several times. If you don't belong to a critique group, consider getting together with a few writers you trust to start one."

I asked if she had any advice for the writer who has submitted entries and not succeeded in being recognized for their work. She had some wisdom of her own to share. "Keep trying! Judging is subjective. I've submitted entries that didn't get any recognition then went on to win. When I'm not successful, I study my submission and ask myself: Did I use clear, concise, and concrete language? Did I paint a picture with words? Did I proofread carefully? If desired, get feedback from judges. But never give up!" Now, that's some great advice from a winner!

—Diane M How



Diane M How

Saturday Writers Meetings Go Virtual

Due to the closures and safety precautions in place from the Covid-19 outbreak our monthly meetings will be held virtually and will be recorded. Recordings will be provided to members via email.

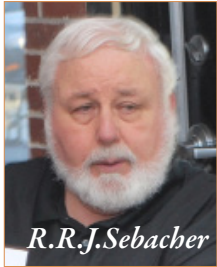
Members will receive an email with access information. Guests are welcome to attend our virtual June meeting for

free. Please email Jeanne.F@saturationwriters.org for access information. Membership is \$35.00 per year. If you are a guest and would like to join, please visit our website www.saturationwriters.org and the Dues & Membership button for the membership form and payment options.

Our meetings are intended for an adult audience. Please email info@saturationwriters.org if you are younger than 18 years old.

Wanted: Writers

Can you write news? Can you write the who, what, where, when, why, and how story? Are you creative? Want to get published? We want you! Each month, our newsletter publishes a recap of the previous meeting and the speaker's presentation. We also need news coverage articles of our special meetings and events. If you are interested, please email us at newsletter@saturationwriters.org.



Critiquing Poetry

Things to consider when critiquing poetry, though not all will apply to every poem. A reader of poetry, unlike a reader of prose, is considered to be an active participant in the process and, therefore, willing to expend some effort in understanding and appreciating a poem. A poet should not abuse this tolerance by their readers in my opinion.

If this was someone else's poem, would you bother to read it or be able to say you did not just waste your time?

Is the metaphor fresh or freshly used?

Has the topic been covered ad nauseam of late and adds nothing to the debate?

Are there old and tired clichés?

Is the symbolism overused – angels for loved ones – cigars for phallic symbols?

Is it obvious plagiarism?

Is there forced rhyme?

Are there awkward words or passages?

Does it use archaic wording or syntax that does not appear to have a valid reason?

Is the symbolism (mythology or biblical reference, for example) something an average literate adult would be familiar with?

Are there too many words not in a normal literate adult's vocabulary? Does it appear that the author is showing off at the expense of the poem? One word that can be figured out by context or root and looked up later is not normally considered to be a fault.

Is the poem socially and historically correct?

Is the poem factually correct?

Is the poem true to its form or does it vary, as modern adaptations sometimes do? Does this adaptation work for you as the reader, or is it lacking in presentation or content? If so how, what, or where is the problem occurring?

Are there too many metaphors that become confused or intermixed (known as mixed metaphor)?

Too much for one poem to carry, sometimes cured by making more than one poem out of the original, this is more common than one may suspect.

The rule “show don't tell” is as applicable to poetry as it is to prose.

Trust your readers. Avoid spelling everything out in too much detail.

Be persuasive, not dictatorial. Don't tell your readers what they should think.

There is a reason for poetic license even in confessional poetry. If the poem needs you to alter the facts of the story, it has precedence.

Punctuation if used should be correct for the authors intent only.

The line between sentimentality and emotionalism or empathy is a fine one. The more it is skirted and played with, the greater the chance for a major poem. If the poet lets the manipulation of emotion become obvious and fall into sentimentality, the poem is ruined. Many poets, such as Louise Bogan, have been praised for never giving any topic more than its due or what was called for. Although her poetry has many additional reasons to be praiseworthy, her lack of emotionalism, in my opinion, dooms her poetry to a high level of mediocrity. For critiquing purposes, the poet needs to know if the poem rings true or seems fake and false. Many times a factual retelling of a story seems stranger than fiction, as the old cliché goes, and might need altering.

Suggestions of better titles or words are always welcomed by poets. Many poems fail for lack of a better title.

Suggestions for different form, line spacing, etc., are generally a help, if an example or detailed corrections are provided.

Numbering lines and/or double spacing can be of help when annotating corrections. I always copy and paste when dealing with e-mails.

Is repetition appropriate? Too much or too little? In need of some variance?

Is alliteration (repetition of consonant sounds) or assonance (repetition of vowel sounds)?

Is meter rhythmic while not being too boring, and is it appropriate to the poem?

Give a brief synopsis of your interpretation of the poem.

Was it stimulating emotionally or intellectually?

Were you able to understand at least one meaning for the poem by the first or second reading? Which one? Was there more than one interpretation possible and did you find it worth your time to read it?

— R.R.J. Sebacher

Reprint from Saturday Writers Newsletter of August/September 2016

Contest Winners

April Prose Contest Winners:

First Place: Jane Hamilton for "The Friends Bug"
Second Place: Joan Leotta for "Books Transport You"
Third Place: Susan Gore Zahra for "Family Threads"
Honorable Mention: Cheri Remington for "Life Without Kenny"
Honorable Mention: Jeffrey Czuchna for "Outside the Wall"
Honorable Mention: Sherry Cerrano for "The Flying Coffin"

February - April Poetry Contest Winners:

First Place: Nick Sweet for "Places in 5"
Second Place: Tara Pedroley for "Just Call Me 'Marilyn'"
Third Place: Heather Hartmann for "Still Wishing"
Honorable Mention: Donna Mork Reed for "The Old Waterwheel"

Poet Laureate Winners:

First Place: Donna Volkenannt for "Reverend Finn"
Second Place: Donna Volkenannt for "Silence Invites
Wisdom into the Light"
Third Place: Billie Holladay Skelley for "Make Your Time Count"
Honorable Mention: Diane How for "The Last One Standing"
Honorable Mention: Susan Gore Zahra for "Temporality"
Honorable Mention: David Reed for "A War I've Flown in Before"

Saturday Writers News—

Pat Wahler received email confirmation that one of her short stories, "War and Peace," will appear in *The Magic of Cats* and another, "In Time of Trouble," in *The Magic of Dogs*, both releasing in July. This brings her total *Chicken Soup for the Soul* publications to eighteen.



John Marcum received notification of another short article to be published in the July issue of *The Sun Magazine*.



Are you about to be

published?

Please share your story with us. Tell us about the hours you've spent writing, the times you submitted and were rejected, the times you rewrote until you got that call of acceptance. Email us at: Newsletter@SaturdayWriters.org.

1st Place Winner in 2019 President's Poetry Contest

Bounded by Circumstance

By Cathleen Callahan

My garden aspires
to be a meadow or dale,
to climb vast hillsides
and dash across
dew-dusted lowlands,

but instead, it is bound
by edging stones and driveway,
its flowers forced,
like crowds at a small town parade,
to vie for space.

Sturdy coneflowers bully their way
across gone-to-seed
leftovers of spring
but are no match for the fat tubers
of once regal iris that refuse
to give way their place.

Pinks and whites,
yellows and oranges,
balloon-flower blues, lavender
spires,
tutu-petaled rose
bouquets – the hybrid splice
having surrendered to its
wild crimson root
summers ago –

stand tall or bend low and sway
beneath midsummer sun
at its perfect, imperial distance,
for which the Goldfinch
have waited,
dropping like bright coins
from the sky
to swing on Black-eyed Susans –
whose colors mirror their own –

fluttering, feeding,
and seeding
the narrow
color-filled realm

bounded
merely
by circumstance.

1st Place Winner in 2019 President's Drabble Contest

Backyard Sanctuary

By Sherry Cerrano

Behind the backyard shed, a girl with a teddy bear just fit between the outbuilding and the fence. Shaking from fear and the cold, the six-year-old waited in the dark. The tight space made her feel safer than the house.

No one ever came looking for her.

Remaining completely silent, she waited long after the yelling ended. Unfolding her stiff legs, she wiggled out. Inside, she slowly crept past her snoring father on the couch and her mother behind the locked bedroom door. The little one slipped under covers to face the monsters under her bed and in the closet.

SATURDAY WRITERS CONTEST DEADLINES

DEADLINE: SATURDAY, June 27!

Everything Children Contest

2020 Contest Theme: Decades

Prose: 2020 Word Limit • Poetry: 50 Line Limit

Begins: 4/25/20

Prose Deadline: 6/27/20 • Poetry Deadline: 6/27/20

Love writing for children? Revved up to try your hand at writing for children? This is your chance! This special Everything Children Contest is for any type of children's writing—picture books (without the art), early readers, chapter, middle grade, and young adult.

These entries will be judged by someone experienced in that genre.

Cost: \$5.00 per entry for members. \$7.00 per entry for nonmembers.

DEADLINE: SATURDAY, June 27!

June Decades Contest

Theme: 1980s & 1990s: IBM personal computer, fall of Berlin Wall, final episode of MASH, CNN launched, NASA Challenger disaster, first surrogate pregnancy, Super Mario Brothers, Wall Street crash, Hubble Space Telescope, internet for public use, cloning of Dolly, the sheep, Princess Diane's death in car crash, Monica Lewinsky scandal, Columbine shooting, Oklahoma City bombing, LA riots, publication of *Harry Potter*, etc.

Prose: 2020-word limit • Poetry: 50-line limit

Began: 5/30/20

Prose Deadline: 6/27/20 • Poetry Deadline: July 25th!

DEADLINE: SATURDAY, July 25!

July Decades Contest

Theme: 2000s & 2010s: 9/11, economic crisis, Hurricane Katrina, text messaging, first iPhone, smartphones, first self-contained artificial heart was implanted, Facebook, apps created, & same sex marriage legalized, Tinder dating app, internet stardom, memes, emojis, Pokémon GO, streaming services, 3D printers, the cloud, *Game of Thrones*, total solar eclipse, new World Trade Center opened, etc.

Prose: 2020-word limit • Poetry: 50-line limit

Begins: 6/27/20

Prose Deadline: 7/25/20 • Poetry Deadline: 7/25/20

Upcoming Events

(Yes! There Are Some!)

Saturday Writers Schedules Zoom Open Mic Meeting

Our first virtual mic went so well, we're having another one!

Open Mic Night—Zoom Meeting Tuesday, June 23, 2020

from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

You are welcome to read or simply be there to support your fellow writers. Here's the plan.

The room opens at 6:45 p.m. Join the Zoom meeting on the link sent to your email address or contact Pat Wahler for details.

If you plan to read, sign up in the chat box. Readers will go in the order they sign up, with a 5-minute limit for each reader.

You are encouraged to bring your own favorite cocktail and snacks. As always, we ask for your patience while we adjust to this new way of staying connected.

St. Louis Writers Guild Goes Online to Continue Its Mission of Keeping the Literary Community Connected

The St. Louis Writers Guild is hosting several online events each month until further notice. Virtual workshops are FREE for both members and nonmembers during this time of sequestering. Virtual Writing Salons are held every Thursday from 7-9 p.m. via WebEx. Everyone is welcome. Curious about what a virtual speakeasy is?

For details and other upcoming events, go to:

<https://www.stlwritersguild.org/events>

Advantages of Becoming a Member of Saturday Writers

- Network with our 100-plus writer-members
- Attend regular monthly meetings with guest speakers
- Participate in our members-only discussion groups & events
- Enjoy discounted fees to our workshops
- Enjoy discounted fees to Missouri Writers' Guild events
- Enjoy discounted fees for our writing contests

Saturday
Writers



How To Join:

Joining Saturday Writers is quite simple. All that is required is a love of writing and an annual membership fee of \$35. Publishing credits are not required, (but feel free to brag about them on your Member Bio if you have them).

Not ready to join? Visit us for \$5.00 per regular meeting and deduct those fees from your membership costs when you decide to join.

We host special youth events from time to time, otherwise our group is intended for writers 18 years or older. (16+ with special approval.)

Contact us at: membership@saturdaywriters.org.

Getting Your Book into Libraries: Digital Distribution

Hopefully, all of you are following the Facebook Saturday Writers Members Only Private Group announcements. If you have, you might have seen the online workshop hosted by Amy Collins and Jane Friedman in May. The minimal cost (\$25) proved to be a fantastic, informative, and valuable opportunity for anyone marketing a book.

Did you know there are 116,867 libraries in the United States? That's an amazing number of venues with the potential to reach enormous amounts of people interested in reading books in all formats. Audiobooks account for 21% of their requests.

While I won't attempt to cover all the power-packed tips in this article, I wanted to share Amy's fresh approach to the challenging task of getting started. Amy shared that she's been successful because she follows a specific formula. She seeks to understand the goals, wants, and needs of a library. This is my version of Amy's method to follow.

Reach out to a librarian: Call or email and ask for a few minutes of their time and explain how it could benefit them and the library.

Engage by showing you understand: It's not just about your book. Libraries need patrons, program advertising, a variety of volunteers, and help with the intense and time-consuming cataloging. Recognize and appreciate the value of the librarian's time.

Assess by asking what the librarian needs: Are they overworked? What's popular now? Is there a shortage of certain materials/books? Then ask what the library needs. Guest speakers? Program materials? Promotion? Listen and decide what you can do to meet their needs.

Demonstrate how you could be helpful. You can promote the library in your newsletters and on social media posts. Volunteer, if practical. Suggest speakers and authors who could fill gaps in their schedules.

For those who took the workshop, Amy provided nearly two dozen resources for participants to save and use when ready. Included with a recording of the video workshop were a starter list of 1300 library-related email addresses, sample cover letters, press releases, templates, and much more.

One of the most important things she shared, which applies to all marketing efforts, is to create a sales sheet with all of your important information. This includes your title, social media links, costs, PCIP coding, wholesalers, endorsements, testimonials, reviews, and contact information. I'm sure I forgot something on the list, but I can go back and access the material.

Keep an eye out for future workshops offered by either of these accomplished women. And be sure to watch the SW FB page for more amazing opportunities!

—Diane M. How

Eight Comma Rules You Should Know And Use

Have you wondered why your contest entries did not win? Do you know that your grammar and specifically you misuse of punctuation might be the reason? Eight comma rules govern whether your writing is accepted or rejected by an editor or a contest judge.

1. Use commas to separate items (a noun, verb, or adjective phrase) in a list of three or more.

Example: My favorite vegetables are sweet potatoes, carrots, squash, and asparagus.

Note: Usage of a comma to separate the second-to-last from the last item is optional and usually used for clarifying the last two items as distinctly different and separate.

2. Use a comma to separate independent clauses (complete thoughts) when they are joined by the following conjunctions: and, or, for, nor, so, but, and yet.

Example: I want to take my family to the Saint Louis Zoo, but they want to go see a movie at the Wehrenberg Mid Rivers theatre.

3. Use a comma to separate a dependent clause (incomplete thought) from an independent clause (complete thought).

Example: If I win the Saturday Writers August Short Story Contest, I will celebrate with my co-writers.

4. Use a comma(s) to separate any word or phrase from the rest of the sentence that is not essential to the sentence's meaning. This phrase usually provides extra information about the subject.

Example: Mary Beth, my wife, is a financial analyst for Monsanto.

5. Use a comma to separate a quotation from the rest of a sentence.

Example: "I need to write at least five hundred words," I said, "before I allow myself to leave my man cave, each morning."

6. Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of a sentence.

Example: Sorry, our Saturday Writers newsletter may have grammatical errors in some articles.

7. Use a comma to separate the name of a city from a country or state.

Example: I have visited Florence, Italy.

8. Use a comma to separate the day of the week, the day of the month, and the year.

Example: I was born on Tuesday, October 21, 1941.

Really, I was born on that Tuesday in 1941. And, like you, I have struggled knowing when to use the comma in a sentence. Hopefully, these eight rules of using the comma will help you in your writing.

—Wesley J. Ginther

Reprint from Saturday Writers Newsletter of August 2017

So, You Want to Write a Novel?

The time is upon you to put pen to paper and write your million-dollar best-seller, the next great American novel, ingenious prose worthy of the Pulitzer-Prize in Literature. You marked your calendar and thought today would never arrive. It is a long weekend devoid of plans, perhaps a summer vacation, or better yet, the first day after the big retirement party. Woo Woo!

Your workspace is prepared for the long haul with pen and paper, sharpened pencils, a chubby eraser, notebooks galore, laptop, and multiple texts of reference materials stacked to the side. You take a mental inventory of nearby creature comforts: a cold beverage, salty snack, sweet snack, swirling ceiling fan, creativity-inducing music playing oh-so-softly in the background. Check, check, and double-check. You dreamed of this day for weeks, months, perhaps years. A lifetime?

Taking a deep breath, you position trembling fingers upon the QWERTY keyboard, imagining the prose to flow like liquid magic as you weave your enthralling, five-star-review-worthy tale.

You are ready to type the first word and . . .!!!

You experience the cold, dead reality of writer's block. Wha?

What word should begin your best-seller? It was dark and stormy . . . no, that has been taken. Once upon a . . . cannot use that, either. Hmmm, you wonder how to find the perfect words to convey the story taking place in your mind. You see the action so vividly, swirling like



Tammy Lough

axon-cyclones on the right side of your brain. How do you make it come alive through the mere written word? You see your story in motion... it is fast, furious,

and flows in brilliant panoramic technicolor. How do you convey the personalities of your characters? Those seemingly living, breathing, talking, moving, action-filled, passion-bursting characters who are real people in your mind, with the mere words in a dictionary?

That is why I am here today. I am going to tell you the ugly truth and help you resolve these issues.

Now get up.

Up, up, up, and out of your chair.

Walk to your medicine cabinet. Yes, I am nodding my head, the medicine cabinet. If you do not find a styptic pencil amidst the bottles of pills, liquids, and loose bandages that abound, put your shoes on and drive to the drugstore. You will buy a styptic in either pencil or powder form. Why do you need this, you ask?

The secret to great writing is this; you will bleed, yes, BLEED, one-by-one the perfect, impossible to convey words onto the page. This is how publishable writing is created. Period. You think it is easy to get the perfect sentences on paper? Sentences that make sense with proper spelling and punctuation? Sentences that move the story forward and entice a reader to turn the pages in anticipation of feeling more excitement, laughter, conflict, terror, and prose that flows?

Actually, you may need a six-pack or family-sized package of

styptic powder. This way, you can sprinkle the white talc all over your QWERTY keyboard to catch the last trickling drops of liquid magic, aka—a vampire's delight.

See how simple writing the next great American novel is going to be for you? Hurry now. The drug store closes in fifteen minutes.

Writer's Write!!!

— Tammy Lough

Saturday Writers Officers

President:

Jeanne Felfe
jeanne.f@saturdaywriters.org

Vice President:

Pat Wahler
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Secretary:

Sarah Angelton
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Treasurer:

Diane How
diane.h@saturdaywriters.org

Volunteers/Chair Positions

Assistant Treasurer: Denise Scott
Children's/YA Author

Critique: Sue Fritz

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Contest Chair: Heather Hartmann

Hospitality Chair: Bob Weismiller

Assistants: Diane How & Ryan Cort

Information Table: Tammy Lough

Membership Chair: Denise Wilson

Members Online

Critique: Susan Moreland

Newsletter Editor:

Susan Gore Zahra

Newsletter Editor Assistant:

Sherry Cerrano

Pre-Meeting Saturday

Works-in-Progress Café &

Creative Writing Salon:

R.R.J. Sebacher

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Rose Callahan

Speaker/ Workshop Chair: Jeanne Felfe

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Website Maintenance:

Heather Hartmann

Assistant: Rose Callahan

Wednesday Works-in-Progress Café:

Jim Ladendecker

Write-in Chair: Brad Watson

Youth Outreach Chairs:

Nicki Jacobsmeier & Sue Fritz

Our meetings are currently being held virtually.

When announced they will return and be held at the Spencer Road Library located at:
427 Spencer Road, St. Peters, MO 63376. Meetings will usually be in Room 240.