



The Gabriel Writer

For The San Gabriel Writers' League

www.SGWL.net

September 2010



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Meeting information

SGWL September Meeting

By Robert Fears

Candice Adams on Steps to Self-Publishing

Have you finished writing a book, short story or poem but don't know how to get your work published? Attend the SGWL September meeting and get some ideas from our speaker.

Our quest speaker is Candice Adams, owner and editorial director for EditorMuse. Her topic is "Steps to Self-Publishing" which is aligned with the services offered by her company. EditorMuse is an Austin-based word services firm which specializes in writing, editing and proofreading.

Prior to working for herself, Candice worked in a variety of areas in the publishing industry. After graduating from Dartmouth College and the University of Notre Dame with degrees in creative writing, she began her career working as a copyeditor and interning at DHS Literary in Dallas, TX. Later she moved to Austin and eventually worked as a book consultant for Greenleaf Book Group, one of the fastest growing independent publishers. There Candice learned volumes about the benefits and drawbacks of self-publishing versus traditional publishing. Currently through EditorMuse, Candice works with publishers, businesses, and independent authors to inspire their writing to be its best and to help first-time authors navigate the publishing industry.

Plagiarism and Copyright Regulations

by Robert Fears

Rick Guzman, a Round Rock attorney, discussed plagiarism and copyright regulations during SGWL's August meeting. Guzman presented the Webster Dictionary definition of plagiarism which reads, "To take ideas, writings, etc. from another and pass them off as one's own."

Portions of several websites were read by Guzman to further explain plagiarism. The website titled, "Plagiarism dot.org," states that the following actions are considered plagiarism:

- "Turning in someone else's work as your own
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not"

The website further states, "Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source, is usually enough to prevent plagiarism."

Guzman found many different versions of software on the web that check documents for plagiarism and can be downloaded to your computer. Two or three of these programs were evaluated for accuracy by Guzman and found to be very effective in identifying plagiarism.

Penalties for plagiarism are administered under the United States Copyright Law. Guzman read several passages of this law which are also listed in the website, "Copyright.com: Copyright Central." Much of the information on the website is edited content from the U.S. Copyright Office and based on the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976.

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Minutes for August 2010 meeting

The August 4, 2010 meeting of the **San Gabriel Writers' League** was called to order by **President Sam Holland**.

Sam welcomed 32 members and 5 guests.

Helen Nardecchia read the **Treasurer's Report**.

Sam Holland reminded members wanting pages on the **Website** to email him at (samholland@austinfoam.com).

Newsletter: Carol Menchu asked if other Yahoo users were receiving their newsletters. A couple of Yahoo users had reported not getting the pdf. If you're not getting yours, please let Carol know. Carol also asked members to keep sending words. The deadline for the newsletter is one week after the monthly meeting.

The **Fall Workshop** will be held on Nov. 6 in the room next door. It's an all-day workshop. Price is \$25 for members/\$35 for non-members. You can pay at the meeting or mail in the payment or use Pay Pal online. There will be author/vendor tables available.

Joan Upton Hall reminded members to submit their 200 word story and/or 20 line poem for the **Halloween Flash Fiction challenge**. She has received 11 entries already. Flash fiction should make a point. Joan said, "Don't get frustrated." She had to rewrite hers a dozen times to get it past the "huh? factor." The book will come out October 1. Joan has proposed having a reading on the square around Halloween.

Ross Carnes created a cover illustration for the book and brought it for members to see. Joan said those submitting stories and poems get to include a 40-word biography (including their website). Joan will be asking authors to sign a release form. Double-space entries and send them to JMUHall@aol.com. The deadline for submissions is Sept. 1.

Sam announced there are **2011 open board positions**. We need volunteers for treasurer, secretary, and the new position: publicity chair.

Announcements and Brags:

Sylvia Dickey Smith's new book, *A War of Her Own*, is out.

Joan Upton Hall, Bill Russeth, Sylvia Dickey Smith and **Dave Ciambrone** will be at the **Sun City Book Festival**. Table prices were lowered to \$20.

Jeanelle Bolton finaled in two romance contests. At the Romance Writers of America conference she was asked by an agent to send a partial and synopsis.

Jane Thompson sold herself to the Georgetown View and they wrote an article about her.

Robert Fears introduced the evening's speaker, Rick Guzman, literary attorney who spoke on copywrite laws and plagiarism.

Respectfully submitted, Jaime Roton, Secretary

SGWL Board

President

Sam Holland
512-868-5322
samholland@austinfoam.com

Vice President

Dede Harper
512-864-2828
ddharper@suddenlink.net

Corresponding Secretary and Historian

Jaime Roton
817 507-9770
pugstory@aol.com

Treasurer

Helen Nardecchia
512-819-9763
shnard@suddenlink.net

Program Coordinator

Robert Fears
512.863.6873
robertfears@earthlink.net

Membership dues \$25.00

Carol Menchu
181 Young Ranch Rd
Georgetown TX 78628

Writers' Liaison

Joan Hall
512-869-1833
JMUHall@aol.com

Member at Large

Dave Ciambrone
512-864-9373

Resident Agent

Roger Busfield, Jr
512-930-1396
busfield@suddenlink.net

Newsletter

Carol Menchu, editor
181 Young Ranch Rd
Georgetown TX 78628
254-493-6224
thirdgate@aol.com

Parliamentarian

Website

Sam Holland
webmaster@sgwl.net

Member(s): New and/or Changes

Address change:

Teleph # change:

New Members:

Regular Board Meetings

are held at the Georgetown Texas Public Library at 6:00 p.m. on the day of the monthly meeting. Members are welcome....

Membership: Dues \$25.00 for one \$35.00 for two

Pay at the meeting OR Mail to
SGWL Membership
181 Young Ranch Rd
Georgetown TX 78633

Programs: 2010

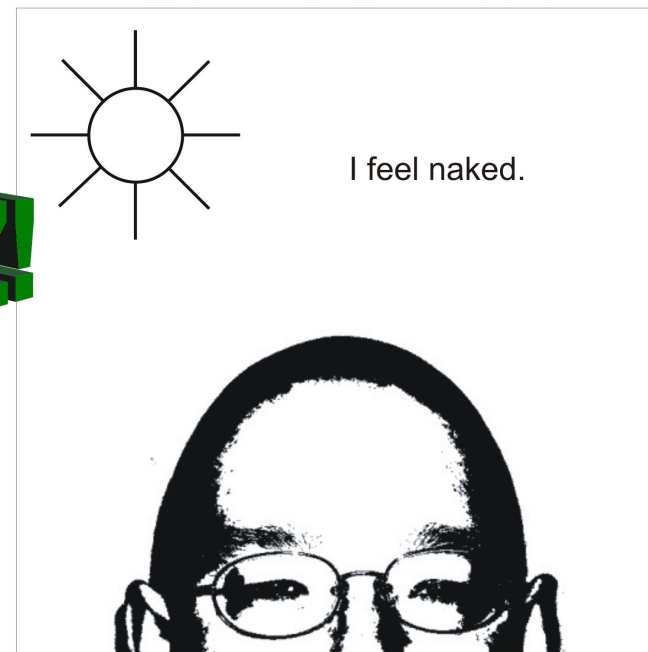
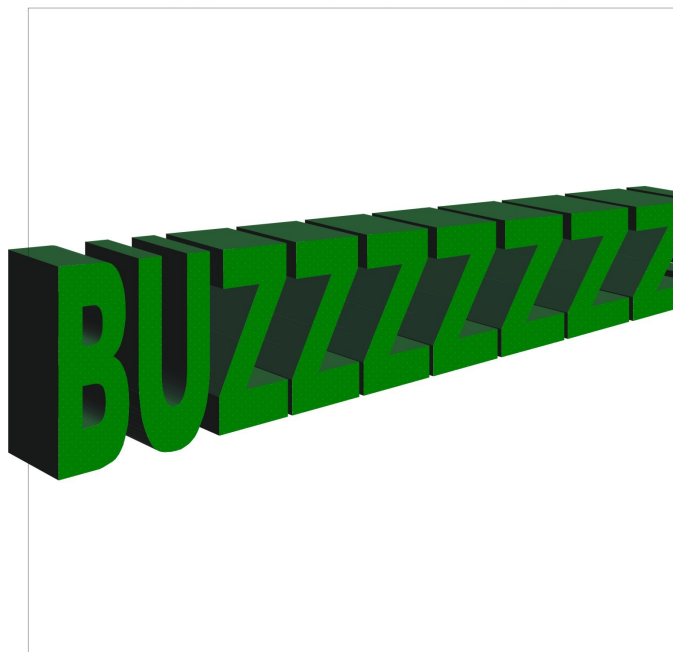
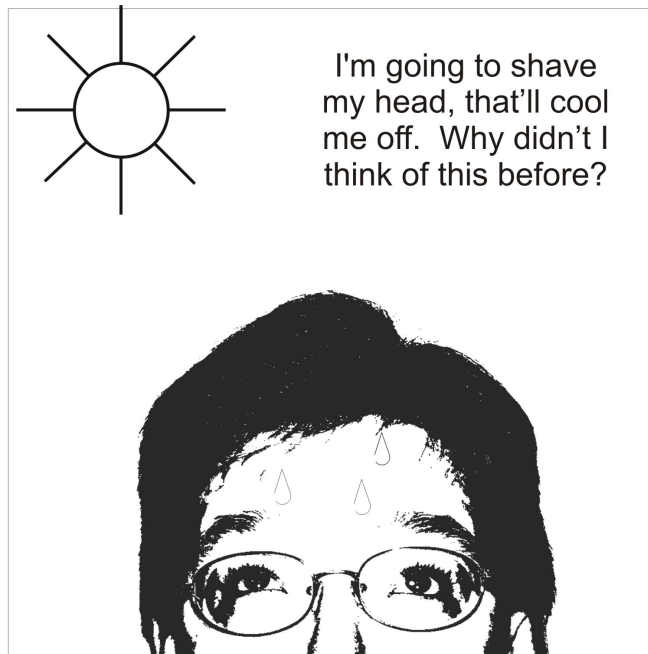
If You have a topic you would like to hear discussed, please email Robert Fears at Robert-fears@earthlink.net

September 2: Steps to Self-Publishing with Candice Adams, editor

October 7: 7 Steps in 7 Minutes to Create Characters That Make Your Stories Sell, Nancy Robinson Masters

November 6: Workshop "So you want to be Published" (Regular meeting cancelled!) Russ Hall, New York editor

December 2: Holiday Party



9 questions to ask your main character by Alicia Rasley from writersdigest.com

Understand your character better by asking him (or her) these questions.

Look at your own POV character—the readers' eyes and ears in the story—and answer whichever of these questions intrigue you. (When I use the word you in the questions, I'm talking to the character.) Freewrite the answers in the character's first-person voice: "I learn best by ..."

- 1. How do you learn best?** Observation? Participation? Trial and error? Rumination and cogitation? Consulting experts? Writing?
- 2. How open are you to new ideas and information?** Do you change your mind frequently, based on what people have told you? Are you a traditionalist, deciding on the basis of what's always been?

- 3. When you walk into a party, what do you notice first?** The mood? The people? The decorations? The things that need to be fixed? The background music? The food on the buffet table? Whether or not you fit in?
- 4. Is one sense more highly developed than another?** For instance, do you tend to take in the world primarily through vision? ("I'll believe that when I see it!") Or are you more auditory? Do you determine if a person is lying by the tone of voice? What about the sixth sense—intuition? How often do you rely on your "gut" and then have your feelings confirmed?
- 5. Do you usually notice problems around you?** What is your response? Do you write an angry letter to the editor? Shrug and move on? Analyze what's wrong and how to fix it? Take it as evidence that the world is falling apart? What

This is a “thank you” to all of you who know what has gone on in my life since Saturday, August 7, and it will also fill those of you who don't, in.

On that day, my # 1 son, Andy, [one of the Cedar Park 3 for those of you who know the joke ...] died of, as it turned out, Coronary Artery Disease. 80% blockage on one side/60% on the other..



He spent the morning with his wife, Lynne, and son, Peter, riding his bicycle on a 4 mile ride while Peter marched/practiced with the Cedar Park High School Band; enjoying the bar-b-que afterward, and driving home in Lynne's “Big Red” Ford 150 to deliver a gift of food to a next door neighbor who has Parkinson's and is also receiving chemotherapy for cancer. He spent a few minutes, his normal, quiet, smiling self, talking with her, giving her a “thumbs-up” and walking around the corner to get back in the truck and go pick Lynne up.

He didn't come, so Lynne got a ride home with another next door neighbor while Peter went to the home of his best friend to spend the rest of the day.

When they got to the house, there was Big Red sitting in the driveway. Lynne tried to peek in the driver's side window, but it was too tinted to see anything, so with the neighbor still there with her, she opened the door and there was Andy, sitting quietly behind the wheel with the keys in his hand and he was dead.

Lynne and the neighbor got him out of the truck, called 911, and tried to resuscitate him and so did the emergency response group—for at least an hour. But Andy was gone.

Lynne was, understandably extremely upset and couldn't bring herself to call me or her father-in-law, so she called # 2 son [one of the Round Rock 4] who had to work very hard to get her to tell him what was wrong. Worried about his dad and me, # 2 son called me to find out if I was home, if I was alone—both answers “yes” and said some people would be coming to the house ... but never got to finish because they did, indeed come to the house and Thomas was telling the world that there were strangers on my porch. I hung up with # 2; put Thomas in his crate, and went outside on the North porch because I do not let strangers into my house.

The strangers were three: a Williamson County Police Officer and two special victim's unit people. So I'm thinking something has happened to # 2's family in some way,

shape, or form and wondering why he didn't just tell me when, after a great deal of encouragement from me and a “Just tell me!”, finally, one of the ladies stumbled out “We're sorry to tell you your son has died.”

Thirty seconds of silence; me standing there with expectation on my face and them standing there with what's wrong with her expressions on their faces when I broke the silence with: “I don't mean to sound uncaring or flippant but I have six sons. Which one are you talking about? (Understand, I had already done the calculation in my mind. I knew it wasn't # 2 because he called; I knew I wouldn't get these people on my porch if it was Dallas, Portland, Clovis, or Fresno, so that it had to be Cedar Park—Andy. And I said “Was it Andy?”

I watched the shock, chagrin, and puzzlement on their faces and then one of the ladies hemmed and hawed that they didn't know, but his wife's name was Lynne.

I figure all three of those people should be grateful that I'm not an hysterical person, but if they'd done that to someone else they could have really had a mess on their hands. I hope this has brought home to them the importance of knowing who they are talking about when they go to tell someone—particularly a parent, that a child has died.

To make a long story short all nine families of us came in from all the nine cities/towns we live in. Made up a slide show, wrote our memories, and those of us who could, got up at the memorial and had the attendees laughing and celebrating my # 1 son. There were people from Austin, Temple, Lubbock, and people from Apple, Inc. where he had been an inside-sales manager for 19 years. They came from both coasts and the upper midwest. (They especially loved the humor in #2's story about his rivalry with his older brother over PCs and Macs long before Apple made the ads for TV. They laughed when # 4 read his poem from his I-pod. Everyone remembered his ‘walk’ and on, and on.)

So we celebrated my son with humor, pictures, his music, and his art and the usual trying to put an octopus into a paper bag—and yes, we are sad, but it is my personal belief that he has done what is necessary here; that he left the appropriate lessons to be learned by those still here, and he has gone on to other things, I believe that life, as we know it here, is but a layover before going on to the next stop.

So those of you who knew, I know your thoughts and unspoken words and I thank you from my heart. And those of you who are just learning, no words are necessary—I know Carol

Member websites

Anna M. Bell

Website: <http://www.annamaebell.com>

Author Blog: <http://annbell.wordpress.com/>

Educational Technology Blog: <http://annamaebell.wordpress.com/>

Margie Boyd

www.margieboyd.com

Ross Carnes

<http://webstarts.com/RHCarnesStoryTeller>

David Ciabrone

www.davidciabrone.com

Mary Fenoglio

www.eggsinmypocket.com

Joan Hall:

www.JoanUptonHall.com

Sam Holland:

www.samholland.com

Melissa Leedom:

www.forgive490.com

Linda Lipscomb:

www.lblipscomb.com

Jason Minor:

www.jason-minor.com

Helen Nardecchia

www.helennardecchia.com

Joy Nord:

www.joynord.com

Jamie Roton aka Lillian Grey blog

<http://lilliangurey.wordpress.com/>

Sylvia Dickey Smith:

www.sylviadickeysmith.com

Jane Thompson:

www.aboutbipolarbook.com

SGWL website:

www.sgwl.net

Plagiarism and Copyright Regulations continued

The website defines copyright as, "a form of protection provided by the government to the authors of original works of authorship, including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic and certain other intellectual works. This protection is available to both published and unpublished works, regardless of the nationality or domicile of the author.

"Copyright protection exists from the time the work is created in a fixed, tangible form of expression. The copyright in the work of authorship *immediately* becomes the property of the author who created the work. It is important to note that mere ownership or possession of a book, manuscript, painting, etc., does not give you the copyright to the work."

The website continues, "Copyright is *automatically* when the work is created, and a work is created when it is fixed in a tangible form, such as the first time it is written or recorded. Neither publication, registration or other action in the Copyright Office is required to secure copyright, although registration is recommended."

Duration of copyright protection varies with the date of creation. Work created on or after January 1, 1978, is protected from the moment it is created and continues through the author's life plus an additional 70 years. Work for hire and anonymous work is protected for 95 years

from publication or 120 years from creation, whichever is shorter. The Copyright.com website recommends that you obtain Circular 15, "Extension of Copyright Terms," from the U.S. Copyright Office for information on works created before January 1, 1978.

Works in the public domain are not protected by the U.S. copyright law. Materials that are either no longer protected or never were protected are considered as public domain. Anything published prior to 1923 is no longer copyright protected.

The Copyright.com website defines fair use as, "a uniquely U.S. concept, created by judges and enshrined in the law. Fair use recognizes that certain types of use of other people's protected works do not require the copyright holder's authorization. Fair use is primarily designed to allow the use of the copyright protected work for commentary, parody, news reporting, research and education."

Guzman also discussed concerns and issues created by electronic publishing. This portion of his presentation will be covered in a future issue of the Newsletter.

References:

http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_what_is_plagiarism.html

My Trip to Shoal Creek by Neil Greene

I don't get out much as I'd like, but they haven't really put me in 'The Home' yet.

Lots of people don't know what the Shoal Creek facility is, but it's still a possibility, long as the insurance holds out.

I was overjoyed! What else could an old man hope for other than have his family want him to enjoy a fishing trip with his two sons on an early Saturday morning. Late Spring, and the weather couldn't have been more beautiful. I had a lump in my throat that kept me from singing aloud, but I was proud of these two boys who thought so much of their old man that they wanted to take him on a trip for the weekend. Time off from their own families and whatever cares they may have needed to attend to, this was no selfish gesture on their part. I brung them kids up right.

I was excited! A weekend get-away for us boys is the epitome of a joyous excursion.

For a fleeting moment I wondered why we weren't towing the Bass boat, but then, "CREEK!" Yeah, if it's a creek then we wouldn't need to be fishing from the boat. No boat to haul, no need to buy gas, just take the rods and bait, landing net, and get on down to the creek. Shoal Creek, it is. Bait, yeah, we need to stop by Winkley's for some minnows and worms. But we didn't stop at Winkley's! Maybe they had already picked up the bait.

We turned off Mo Pac on 45th street and sure enough we came to a street named, "Shoal Creek." Stands to reason, the creek flows through the city and the road following the creek is aptly named. I thought we would park and walk down along the creek, seeking a good fishing hole to try out and take home some fresh catfish or bass for supper. I was already hungry. Biscuits and sausage gravy early this morning was good for the moment, but later I would surely relish fried catfish and bass coated in cornmeal batter and some fried potatoes to boot. Fresh light bread, roasting ears, and ice cold sweet tea, man, you can't beat that! We'd done this before when the kids were smaller and we visited the local lakes whenever we could spare the time. I didn't see the bait or rods or net or anything, but I didn't want to seem to be a worry-wart. The boys are all grown up, fine strapping young men, both Marines, and back home to take care of their old Army man in his declining years.

Younger boy spent several years in high school in the Marine ROTC and after finishing high school, went directly to flight school. The older one went from high school to boot camp in San Diego, Formosa, Beirut, Japan, all the places Marines visit and at the same time trying to avoid the idiots who play with bombs and blow each other up. My boys were lucky, only minor scars, nothing to make them walk funny.

We went through a metal fence and I thought, 'Man, they must want to keep this area free of riff-raff and people that litter everywhere.' But instead of walking DOWN the creek, it seemed like we were going UP the creek. Yeah, this place was named Shoal Creek, sign said so, but we never got near the water! I never saw my rod and reel or bait bucket. There was a large building that you entered from the road, you didn't have to get near the creek. I began to suspect something when they showed me a furnished room and I didn't have my landing net handy. And those burglar bars aren't burglar bars. They are installed so they don't swing out. These weren't the kind you use to keep people out! And the gates in the fence were one-way, opening in only, with a complicated locking mechanism.

I wanted to look at my boy's eyes, search for something to tell me what was going on. They kept looking away, avoiding me. No wonder the wife didn't want to come along, and she used to like to fish.

I may be here the whole weekend. I'm not very hungry . . . for catfish or fried potatoes.

I didn't know Shoal Creek was a one-way destination. I've got to get my thoughts together so I can write more later.



The next step in marketing *Where Love Once Lived* was to prepare and distribute press releases announcing the book. I filled out an online questionnaire from CreateSpace that asked for information needed for the press releases. I won't give all my answers here since that would be too lengthy, but here are the questions. Hopefully the questions might help you with the preparation of press releases.

Are you using a name other than your own for publication? If so, please provide.

What is the full title of your work?*

E-mail Address* (This is the e-mail address that will be used in the press release as a method of contact for the media.)

Phone Number (This will be used in the press release as an alternate method of contact for the media.)

Website (If you have a website, please provide us with it and we will make sure to include this in the release)

Your city and state. Note: Although I live in Georgetown, Texas now, I decided to use Austin, Texas on the press releases. This is because more people know Austin than Georgetown and because the book is set in Austin.

Biography* (The biography provides information to help establish your credibility or further connect you with your audience. Please provide us with some biographical information, such as education and career information, family status, awards you have won, and/or any qualifications that could establish expert status. NOTE: Responsible journalists may choose to verify all members' facts before publishing biographical information).

Who is your target audience? This is what I said: This book is about Christians living, making mistakes, and grow-

ing from those mistakes. I tried not to make it preachy, and didn't align it with a particular denomination. I suspect it would appeal to a more mature audience because the protagonists are in their fifties. However, several younger friends have read the manuscript and said they enjoyed it. I aimed for the same people who read Jan Karon's Mitford series.

Please provide a brief synopsis of your work.

What is your theme and primary message? Here is what I answered: With God's help, it's never too late to find happiness.

Tell us about the inspiration for your work. Note: Surprisingly, there was a lot to be said about the inspiration for *Where Love Once Lived* starting with the idea for a bookmobile story that came to me while driving one back in 1960's to a sermon I heard in 2004 from my pastor, Jeanie Stanley.

Why do you think your work is newsworthy?* (Can you relate your work to any current events? What makes your work different than others on the market)? Note: Here I told about the interracial aspects of the novel.

Provide any additional information you want us to consider for your press release (i.e. reviews, awards, etc.). (NOTE: Responsible journalists may choose to verify all facts before publishing this information). Note: Here, I listed the awards won by *Where Love Once Lived* in manuscript contests plus some other things about me. CreateSpace called and said they would have to verify the contest wins. They wanted me to send them a photo of the certificates. However, I already had them on my website, so they viewed them as we talked on the phone. Here they are if you want to see them: <http://sidneywfrst.com/>

Press Release

Historical Novel Set in 1943 Presents an Engaging Texas Version of "Rosie the Riveter"

By Great Lakes Literary Dated: Jul 27, 2010

In *A War of Her Own*, a historical novel by Texas author Sylvia Dickey Smith, readers can enjoy a captivating tale of a young woman who becomes a "lady riveter" in a shipyard in Orange, TX, and the challenges she faces on the World War II homefront.

Milwaukee, Wis. – In *A War of Her Own*, a new novel from a Midwestern indie press, Austin-area author Sylvia Dickey Smith spins a captivating tale of Bea Meade, lady riveter, and the challenges she faces on the homefront working on the Texas/Louisiana border in a booming shipyard.

The historical novel is set in the summer of 1943 in Orange, Texas, a sleepy little town overrun with tens of thousands of new workers. With jobs galore at the wartime shipyards, the workers are rich with cash, eager for excitement, and looking for a good time.

In the midst of this, Bea Meade, mother of an infant son, finds her life shattered when her philandering husband announces he is leaving her for another woman. To make ends meet, Bea takes a job at one of the shipyards as a riveter.

Life is good for 'most everyone in Orange – except Bea, who has to fight her battles against a no-good husband, the prejudice facing women in the workplace, and the mysteries of her past that keep her awake at night.

A War of Her Own offers a story of wartime passions on the World War II homefront as Bea seeks to discover who she really is.

SYLVIA DICKEY SMITH was born in Orange, Texas, and lived there through her high school years. She now lives near Austin, Texas. She is also the author of a popular mystery series featuring Sidra Smart, private eye, set in the borderlands where Texas and Louisiana meet.

Crickhollow Books is an independent press publishing quality fiction and nonfiction.

For author events, book club discussion guide, and more, visit the book's website: <http://aWarofHerOwn.com/>

A War of Her Own is available in an original trade paperback for \$16.95. To order, visit Crickhollow Books (<http://www.crickhollowbooks.com/>), or order from your favorite bookstore, around the corner or online.



Over the years I have gathered lots of stories. Some interesting; some humorous. But in telling them to anyone under thirty, I have to deal with a huge wall of disbelief.

In my business older pilots are desirable for their experience and stability. But the rest of the company is filled with young men valued for their current education in advanced software integration. Many are the times that I have been holding forth about an old adventure, and a young man would walk over to a computer terminal and Google the facts to see if I am lying.

I am often rewarded with a, "Wow. That really happened!" However, some stories have never been documented, and one young intel analyst was convinced that I made up the stories as I went along.

Stoney (not his real name) and I were ferrying an aircraft over the ocean, and with little scenery and many hours to go, I told the following story:

Back in the '90's I was flying a surveillance contract in Cabinda, a tiny province of Angola. Like Alaska, this piece of land is separated from the main part of the country, and almost swallowed up by the Congo. The northern section has some gold mines. But the real riches came when Gulf Oil Company tapped into a huge pool of sweet petroleum; oil so light that tankers mixed this oil with heavy Nigerian crude to get better prices.

The Angolans hired my company to provide security around the border and the off-shore oil platforms. We flew every night looking for pirates who liked to raid the platforms for equipment and hostages. Occasionally, we went up north to the gold area to catch a smuggler or two.

At that time, Zaire (now the Congo) was ruled by a despot named Mobutu, and he coveted the enclave of Cabinda for the oil, the gold, the port, and control of the mouth of the Congo River. But he feared the Angolan military, so he stayed out of Cabinda; most of the time. He saw his chance to take Cabinda when a guerilla leader arose and put together an army. They called themselves the FLEC,

the Force for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda, and Mobutu poured in money and arms.

Now we had something more interesting than smugglers and pirates. At Angola's request our intel unit went to work, and my company moved in some advisors. Soon we found out several facts about the movement.

The leader's name was Bongo Bongo
His base was the village of Tondo Congo.

At this point Stoney snorted and said, "You're just making this up."

"Could I make up something like this? Let me finish."

The struggle never really got off of the ground. Bongo Bongo gathered men and held training camps. We got some video from our surveillance plane, and processed intel from our agents in the villages.

During one of the training sessions, Bongo Bongo had his entire command staff at a class on Claymore mines. Apparently his demonstration was a bit too realistic. The Claymore exploded killing the class of twenty-five and blowing off both of Bongo Bongo's hands. Bongo Bongo was evacuated to Zaire and lived, but that was the end of the war.

"Dave, you have got an imagination. You don't expect me to believe that, do you?" We finished the long flight in silence.

Several months later, Stoney came up to me at our office.

"Dave, I sat by an older black guy on the Delta flight down to Colombia, and he started telling me about being in Cabinda in the 90's. He told me about a guerilla leader named Bongo Bongo. I stopped him and asked, 'Do you know Dave Johnson?'"

"Dave Johnson, the pilot? Where is he now?"

"So you sat by Will Crager. He was the ground security chief for our operation."

"I guess I owe you an apology," Stoney said. "I just couldn't buy the Bongo Bongo thing. But I guess it's true."

However, he still doesn't believe my other stories.



A Writers' Retreat You'll Want to Attend

by Kayla J. W. Marnach

It's worth the time, it's worth the drive and at a very reasonable cost – it's worth the money. The Writers' League of Texas Summer Writing Retreat in Alpine, Texas is five days of fun filled focused writing in a town that has some great food. Whether you are a beginning writer or a published author, into writing novels, non-fiction or poetry, they offer a range of classes that will strengthen your skills.

I have attended this retreat for the last two years and will continue to for years to come. While Austin was sweltering in heavy humidity, Alpine was blessed with cool breezes, brief showers and no humidity. This climate made for a wonderful morning run through the sleepy town or an exhilarating climb up the hills behind the Sul Ross campus to watch the sunrise.

For the money, staying on campus is the way to go. Each dorm room has two bedrooms, each with a twin bed, and a shared common area and bathroom. A microwave plus a small refrigerator allows you to keep food in your room, so eating out is strictly a choice. Last year I ate lunch in my dorm room, while completing the morning homework

and prepared for the afternoon assignment. This year our class chose to eat lunch out as a group each day. To say we bonded would be an understatement.

Class sizes are generally limited to twenty. This year my class had nine, which made for wonderful personal interactions. Scott Wiggerman, our teacher had the unique ability to get us to pull from a deep place within. As we read our pieces sometimes we laughed and sometimes we cried. Each writing exercise drove us to dig and stretch into a new area and out of our comfort zone. I have never had a better class in my life. Some of the techniques Scott shared I will use for years to come.

So, if you're looking for a retreat with inspiring surroundings and teachers who are vested in your success, then this is the place for you. I'll look for you there next year. Find more information at: <http://www.writersleague.org/>





Chapter III: In which the hero is betrayed.

"Where am I?" Carl's voice is a raspy whisper.

"St. David's hospital." The nurse smiles. She's attractive in a 1940's way. Her long

brown hair is pulled back into a bun and she has sharp blue eyes. "The firemen pulled you out just in time. Do you remember?"

"A little." He wheezes and starts coughing.

"Easy, you sucked down a lot of smoke." She pats his back. "You've also got a minor fracture in your left ulna, a pretty bad gash on your head, and a 2nd degree burn on your leg."

"What about my house?" Carl examines the cast on his left arm. It hurts but he can bear it.

"They said over half of it was destroyed before the fire could be put out. I'm so sorry." She rubs his shoulder.

"Half a home is no home at all." Carl grumbles.

"My father used to say the same thing. But I think he had something else in mind." She smiles. Her kind eyes take him by surprise and he smiles in spite of himself.

"Carl McGavin, it's been a while." Carl looks up and sees two police officers standing by the door. The older one, Carl recognizes, but his partner looks like a rookie. "It's Matt Richards, and this is officer Burke. How ya doin there?"

"I've been better."

"You've looked better, but not by much," Richards smiles.

"I'll leave you guys alone." Margo excuses herself. "Make it quick, he's still weak." She says to Burke on her way out. He ignores her.

"Mr. McGavin, we need to discuss the events surrounding July 2nd and the fire at 2005 Maize Bend Drive. Your home, correct?" Officer Burke says, reading from his notebook.

"Vincent's very professional. He means, what happened yesterday, Carl?" Richards nudges his young partner.

"It's Officer Burke," Vincent glares at Richards. "We just need the facts, Mr. McGavin."

"I don't remember much. One minute I was working in my office. The next, I was lying on my kitchen floor, bleeding. There was an explosion. Maybe a gas main." Carl coughs again.

"So, you were alone then? No one else in the house?"

Vincent rechecks his notes.

"I live alone, officer Burke." Carl says frankly.

"That's not what I asked, sir."

"Now Vincent, Carl's one of us – or was. He knows what you're asking and his word is good." Vincent starts to object but Richards cuts him off. "You've been through a lot there, Carl. We'll check in on you later. After you've had a chance to clear your head. You get better now." Richards pushes Vincent out of the room.

Carl is surprised. That was too easy. Clearly, they suspect something but he's not ready to tell them about the Ellington woman yet. Someone killed her. They tried to kill him. He needs time to think before the police butt in and make a mess.

The nurse comes back with a cup of ice water and some medication. "So, do they know what happened?"

"Not yet. But that rookie's pretty worked up."

"Don't mind Vincent, he's a bit of a hot head," the nurse says dismissively. "And he doesn't much like his partner."

"You know him?" Carl takes the pills from her.

"I never introduced myself did I? My name's Margo Burke. Vincent is my brother."

"Small world." Carl is distant. He washes down the meds with a swallow of ice water. It burns his injured throat.

"Don't worry, Mr. McGavin. Vincent may be a rookie and a little gruff but he's a good cop. He'll find out what happened."

"I'm sure he will."

Carl tosses and turns all that night, too many questions. Did Igor kill the Ellington woman? Why didn't Katarina contact him directly? Does he really have a daughter? And where does he start looking for answers? By morning, he is bleary-eyed from lack of sleep. Around noon, Margo brings his lunch and sets it on the over-bed table in front of him. She checks his IV. "The doctor says you're looking good. You'll be out of here in no time."

"If this stuff doesn't kill me first." Carl eyes his lunch suspiciously. Margo laughs. On her way out, she almost runs into officer Richards. He whisperers something in her ear and Margo give's Carl a sideways glance before leaving.

"I'm not happy, Carl." Richards stands at the foot of the bed, his hands in his pockets. "The forensics boys found human remains in your house. You lied to us old friend." Carl is quiet. They were never friends but he doesn't have much choice now but to confide in Richards.

"You were a rookie when I transferred to Austin, Matt, but I'm sure you heard the rumors about why I left New Orleans."

"I never cared for hearsay." Richards smirks.

"For the most part, the rumors are true. I did get involved with a witness. Her name was Katarina Sereda. Things went south, I got shot up, and Katarina left town. I never saw her again. Then, yesterday, a woman named Martha Ellington showed up at my door. She claimed I have a daughter and Katarina is the mother. But someone must have planted a bomb in her purse to keep her quiet because she blew up right in front of me. Those are the remains you found. It was probably the same guy who shot me in New Orleans. Katarina's husband, Igor Sereda." Carl is winded. This is too much talk for his condition.

"That's one hell of a story there, Carl." Richards rubs his back with his right hand. "You don't have anything else on this Ellington chick?" Carl shakes his head. "Then, it's a dead end? So to speak."

"For now, but I'm going to find out who did this."

"Now Carl, that's how you got in trouble last time. Let us handle this."

"I'm not going rogue again, Matt. I just want to be involved. I might have a daughter out there. I can't ignore that."

A Nursing Tech barges in and closes the door behind her. "Officer Richards, I have a message for you." Before she can take another step, Richards draws his right hand from behind his back. He holds a Walther PPK pistol with a silencer and shoots the Tech in her head. She falls without a sound. Richards pulls a second gun with his left, a police issued 9mm Smith & Wesson, and aims it at Carl.

"You never knew when to let things go." Officer Richards fires the revolver.

To be continued...

Who
"said" ?

"The writer must be universal in sympathy and an outcast by nature; only then can he see clearly." -

answer on page 10

The Building of a Book: SGWL Halloween Anthology by Joan Hall

By the time you read this, some of you may be scrambling to make the Sept. 1st deadline, and I'll be checking my computer to make sure I don't leave anyone out who complies with the guidelines. The fact is, our joint-effort anthology has been under construction for over a month now. The varied talents and imaginations of our fellow writers have kept me, as editor, royally entertained. My worst fear was that the stories would all be alike because how many ways can a ghost or goblin act? Well, gone are those fears—besides we've got everything from cowboy vampires to haunted airplanes and nursery rhyme characters with a vendetta—each story or poem another brick to fit into a unique building.

Very soon now, I'll be handing the manuscript, polished and proud, over to President Sam Holland, who will transform the pages into a bound book, complete with Ross Carnes' beautifully designed front cover.

By October, we'll all be ready to start promoting. Watch the *Williamson County Sun* for a mention of our book in the Library and Book section (we hope). On Saturday, October 16, **Hill Country Book Store** tells me we can have all day if we like, each author reading the piece he or she wrote, and all of us signing our stories and poems as our audience desires.

Early in the month, if all goes as planned (in other words, if I

don't mess up), we'll have an article in *The View Magazine* to herald these events.

And what's the best part? Two of them actually: Contributors will be able to purchase copies at a discount for themselves and their kids. Everybody else will have hours of Halloween fun ahead of them, each piece something like fast food—ghouls to go.

One More Time, Here are the Rules: SGWL HALLOWEEN ANTHOLOGY

Story (max 200 words not counting the title) May be about ghosts, vampires, or anything else that "goes bump in the night"; must have a plot (limit one per person) (Humor okay)

Poem (max 20 lines) Anything that captures eerie feelings of the season (limit one per person) (Humor okay)

- Aim for a general audience (intermediate grade through adult)

- **Deadline Sept. 1, 2010, (midnight)**. Email to manuscript editor: jmuhall@aol.com

- Send as an attached Word.doc (no docx files please). OR Paste into the body of the email.

- You will have an opportunity to approve edits (if any). SGWL as publisher will require one time publishing rights.

- No entry fee, but must be a current SGWL member to enter.

- We hope you will purchase at least one copy of the book (at a contributors discount, of course); price will be released when available.

- You may give a short bio-blurb (about 40 words) plus website listing with your entry.

Target date for release: Oct. 1, 2010



Sisters in Crime and the Georgetown Police Department Crime scene and murder workshop September 12th 2PM

The Sisters in Crime Writers organization and the Georgetown Police Department Are hosting a crime scene / murder workshop for writers, readers of mysteries and the public who love mysteries and crime shows. It will be at the Old Library at 808 Martin Luther King Jr. Street in Georgetown, TX.

The public is invited. The workshop is free to members of Sisters in crime and \$10 for others.

**Come and participate in working a crime scene, interviewing witnesses and suspects
And catching the killer. Refreshments will be served.**



Member News

Just got word this afternoon that I DOUBLE FINALED in a writing contest! That brings my total up to eighteen and thrills me to pieces. I always wanted twins. **Jeanell Bolton**

Ask the Book Doctor: Shifty Characters by Joan Hall

Dear Doc,

Just when I thought I understood point of view (POV), my critique group pointed out that I was "POV shifting." I've poured through your RX... book to gain a better understanding of the subject and found a confusing statement. Under "the main advantage of third person limited pov" (p. 46, # 2, a), you wrote: "If the protagonist can't logically be present in a scene, you can shift to another character, preferably one who has much at stake here."

Can this mean it is all right to use another character's POV after all?

Shifty Viewpoint

Dear Shifty,

Notice we are talking about multiple viewpoint in that statement, which means showing the story through the mind and perceptions of one character at a time in separate scenes. It's an excellent way to draw readers in. Shifting or switching POV in mid-scene, or worse, in mid-paragraph, is what editors call "head hopping" and disorients your readers. Poorly handled "omniscient" [all-knowing] viewpoint has given omniscient POV such a bad name, editors tend to reject new writers who use it. Until you're quite comfort-

able switching roles like this, you probably shouldn't use more than three to five viewpoint characters in the course of a novel.

These would most likely be key characters, though I've seen major authors throw in a minor character for a single scene. The reason for being sure your POV character has a stake in the scene is to keep up the tension. A casual observer would not involve the reader.

Try this cure: BECOME your character while you're writing a scene, and role play her part (show her emotions, senses, and all). This of course would produce a first person POV, but you can change it to third if you like (examples in

book, or ask your critique group to produce some).

Go forth and banish shifty characters!

Doc Joan

Have a question to share in this column? Email me at: jmu-hall@aol.com with "Ask the Book Doctor" as your subject line. If you want to remain anonymous, I'll address you by whatever pseudonym you sign. To see previous issues, go to: <http://www.joanuptonhall.com/books.htm>. Scroll past the book covers and click "Ask Doc" Q&A's.



Loving Trudy

Whose bitsy footsteps have announced

To one and all, that she
—And all of us—are going
Somewhere? Whose but Trudy's?

Whose quick and witty verbiage
Has said what's what and who
Is who in certain terms?
For true, no one's but Trudy's

Whose bright smile and spark of blue
Have lit a room for sure,
and lifted our spirits with verve?
Why, certainly, they're Trudy's

So, now in earnest we feel at heart,
In loving quietude
Of loss, that all we do
Will say, our love is Trudy's

--- Lois Parker

Special Interest Groups

Story Spinners critique group is now closed to membership. When a spot becomes available, we will again have information in *The Gabriel Writer*.

The Williamson County Coroners is a mystery/suspense group and participants must have novels in progress. The meetings are held at the 10:30 a.m. at the Red Poppy Café in the George-town Library.

Last Writes Critique Group—Full

Meets (usually) at 7 PM, 2nd & 4th Wed. each month, at Oaks at Wildwood Clubhouse. Novels in progress, varied genres. Membership currently full. Contact: jmuHall@aol.com

Novel Crafters is Full right now, but welcomes a Waiting List

Meets every other Thursday on the second floor of the Georgetown Library in a private room. Contact is Mary Stafford at marylynn@mstafford.net

Quixotic Quills critique group represents varied interests. Our group writes historical novels, short stories and memoirs. Meetings are usually on the second and fourth Thursday of each month unless we reschedule because of holidays. We meet at 7:00 p.m. at the Monument Café. Contact is Sharon Lyle, 512-639-1162, iwritcozies@gmail.com. Currently, we are closed to new members.

Bard Masters Critique Group—Full

We meet at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays at the Georgetown library. We have 6 members and we feel that 6 manuscripts is all that we can handle and do the process justice. Until further notice Ross Carnes is the contact: graphicsrex@hotmail.com

If you are interested in joining a critique group, contact Joan

Upton Hall (jmuHall@aol.com) or Sylvia Dickey Smith



Who "said" ... Answer ... Julian Patrick Barnes ...

(born 19 January 1946^W Leicester, England) is a contemporary English writer. He has been shortlisted three times for the [Man Booker Prize](#) (*Flaubert's Parrot* (1984), *Eng-*

land, England (1998), and *Arthur & George* (2005)). He has written [crime fiction](#) under the [pseudonym](#) **Dan Kavanagh**.

I would have given my right arm to be Micki Greene, which would have completely invalidated my purpose because Micki Greene lacked for nothing.

Eighteen-year-olds aren't old enough to be called beautiful, but Micki was headed that way. Her eyes were blue slate, her short, coiffed hair riotously blond, and her complexion clear. She had the most adorable way of talking, in excited, almost lisping bursts that absolutely entranced me. There was something vulnerable and charmingly confused about Micki. Perhaps she cultivated it, but it worked.

This was the first time I had encountered an actual person named Michaela, although nowadays, of course, the name is fairly common. But her name was not the only thing that made Micki unique. One way or another, she always made everyone aware of her. I remember how we all laughed when she sneezed thirty-one times in a row from the upper back side of the auditorium during a particularly boring philosophy lecture. The teacher called her down, saying she was deliberately disturbing class, but we knew it was just Micki.

It was a wonder this magical creature and I both lived in Cranfill, the oldest women's residence on campus, but I was there for economy while Micki was there for tradition. Her family was prominent and her father was rich. She wore pearls in her pierced lobes when no one else was wearing earrings. She pledged Pi Phi and zoomed around in a powder blue MG sports car—illegally, of course, since only upperclassmen were allowed to have cars, which only added to the legend. Her handsome father regularly appeared to escort her and her roommate to dinner, and she talked casually of visiting her mother in places like Monaco and Madrid.

Micki may have acted confused, but she was no dummy. She was in the liberal arts honors program, although everyone knew she wasn't destined for Phi Beta Kappa. This was the era when prizes like Micki considered their college time well spent when they left after their sophomore years to marry up-and-coming young lawyers.

I think I ran into Micki on campus once more after our Cranfill stint, and she was as gracious and charming as ever, even remembering my name.

Oddly enough, I was the one who married following my sophomore year, although, after getting my ears pierced for pearls, I did stick around long enough to pick up a history degree, magna cum laude, thank-you very much. Somewhere between the laundry and the senior thesis, I have a dim mem-

ory of reading in the newspaper society section that Micki had married an up-and-coming young lawyer in a lavish ceremony worthy of her.

My husband, who had gone to high school with Micki, said she was crazy.

Ten years later, my next bit of information about Micki came from a friend telling me about a total stranger, a woman named Micki, who had sat next to her in her children's swim class and poured out her breaking heart about her cheating and abusive husband. Micki also said she had hired a lawyer out of Houston who would cut her husband's balls off.

My friend's husband, who had known Micki's mild-mannered husband since childhood, said Micki was crazy.

Ten years further down the line, when my oldest was in high school, I saw Micki again, at a high school football game. Her daughter was a cheerleader and my son warmed the bench. Micki entered the bleachers two rows in front of my husband and me, and I recognized her immediately. Her short silver-blond bob was now a long pewter-blond braid and her slender teen-age shape had rounded out into womanly curves. She was beautiful now, with that same charming aura of fragility and confusion. Going with the current fashion, her skirt was romantically ethnic and she had topped her Mexican blouse with a long, trailing scarf.

Micki didn't have anyone to sit with at the game because by then she was divorced again. I knew this from my friend, who got the lawyer gossip from her husband, and because the year before I had seen newspaper coverage of Micki and her daughter—hard to tell which was which, of course—at Micki's house in a stylishly gentrified area of the city. The photographer and writer were obviously as entranced by Micki as I had been.

The bleachers were crowded. Micki picked her way down the row and finally set down her stadium seat beside some people she obviously knew, expensive people with whom she could make references to old friends and old times. I caught a thread of their conversation now and then, but the couple seemed to tire of Micki and their replies became shorter and shorter. Finally they ceased altogether. At halftime they moved three rows down and across.

All alone, Micki rocked herself back and forth on her stadium seat, lisping softly to herself as she played with her long, trailing scarf.

Micki was crazy.

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- Retail price
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- Where can people buy it? Your website if you have one?
- Any awards this book has won?
- (up to 100 words) Description or synopsis OR blurbs from other writers, publishers, reviewers, etc., and remember to credit these quotes.

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IMPORTANT: to figure out how your submission will fit use Eurostile font—size 10 for body of article
Columns are 3 and 1/4 inches wide.
If you have illustration, send it and I will try to use it

Demystifying Writers' Demons One at a Time by Joan Upton Hall

Do demons bedevil your writing? Similar, confusing words? Grammar, punctuation, or capitalization rules? "The Demystifier" will clear up the mystery (primary reference unless otherwise noted: Garner, Bryan A. *Dictionary of Modern American Usage*. N.Y.: Oxford University Press). Address questions and comments to freelance editor, **Joan Upton Hall, PO Box 179, Hutto, TX 78634**, or email: jmuHall@aol.com. More problems like the one above are demystified in the booklet, *50 Writers' Tips*. Find a few of them at "books, etc." on website: www.JoanUptonHall.com.

Demystifying Writers' Demons©

Be verbs tell instead of show

Fiction writers, don't tell your readers what someone or something is. Show them instead! Help them experience what your point of view character does (and make use of senses). Show other characters' reactions by what they do and say.

Weak: "The afternoon was getting hotter, and Jim was sweating."

Stronger: "Jim wiped sweat from his forehead and squinted at the afternoon sun."

Weak: "Paul is proud his date is a pretty girl."

Stronger: "Paul swells with pride at the admiring looks his date attracts."

Weak: "The smell of Grandma's pumpkin pie had been sweet and familiar, and Meghan imagined she was instantly a little girl again."

Stronger: "As soon as Meghan opened the car door, the familiar aroma of pumpkin pie invited her. She wanted to run inside like a little girl and throw herself into Grandma's ample arms."



The Gabriel Writer

181 Young Ranch Road
Georgetown TX 78628

the
September 2
SGWL meeting
is at the

Georgetown
Public Library

gather at 6:30
meeting
at 7:00 p.m.

SGWL is the right place for the *writer* in you ... do join us