

The Gabriel Writer

March 2017

a publication of the San Gabriel Writer's League

www.sgw.net

MARCH PROGRAM

A Writer's Life for Me-Lessons Learned with Elaine Norman



Ms. Elaine Norman, author of the book *For Better For Worse*, will be the featured speaker at the monthly meeting of the San Gabriel Writers League. She will speak on the writing lessons she's learned after 34 years as teaching writing. The event is open to everyone and will be held at the Georgetown Library, Room 222 on Thursday, March 2nd. Socializing at 6:30 PM, and the meeting starts at 7:00

Elaine Norman is a native Texan raised near Houston. She was raised on a ranch by loving parents who were very involved in the lives of Elaine and her brother. She was taught to be courteous to others, educated to be a well-rounded individual who was knowledgeable in many areas, and always encouraged to be strong and persistent. During her 34-year teaching career, students nominated her for the prestigious *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* more than ten times. She taught business, English, speech, and science in high school. She won accolades for writing an article on parallel circuits when it was published in a national science publication. She coached UIL state qualifiers in debate and ready writing. When she retired, the senior class asked her to give the commencement address at their graduation. She finished her address to a standing ovation by the parents as well as the students. Based on her personal experiences, Elaine tells her story to help others going through similar situations. She loves God and uses His promises to tell of her walk with Him when she faced trials.

Elaine has two beautiful, talented daughters married to the greatest sons-in-laws on earth. She has a 19-year-old granddaughter and a 12-year-old grandson. She lives in Round Rock, Texas with her husband, Rudy, who is the love her life.

MEETING RECAP- FEBRUARY 2, 2016

Don called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Don explained why the newsletters were not sent out this month. He announced that the Board had decided to hold a writing contest this spring. He also praised those who have joined analysis groups and hoped that others would.

Tom Mitchell said that he is still working on a WWII book and that LSU still seems interested. Dave Ciambone has three books coming out.

Our program was given by Herbert Fulton, author of "No Excuses, Just Results."

He described it as a memoir, and how his life journey started out in all black Newark, New Jersey and how he has slowly branched out into a wider culture. He now lives in Georgetown and mentors children.

Don adjourned the meeting at 7:40

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Here are the known Analysis Groups and the information they have provided. If you want to BLOOM in 2017, I suggest that you either join one of these groups, or speak up and form your own Group!

Analysis Group Name: "Tale Spinners"

Meet every other Monday at 2:30 @ Georgetown Library (small meeting rooms)

Genres: Historical fiction, but open to other genres

Open to Receiving New Members: Yes

Analysis Group Name: (no name yet)

Meet once a month at 2:00 PM @ Georgetown Library

Genres: Historical fiction, and human interest fiction

Open to Receiving New Members: Yes

Analysis Group Name: "Coroner's"

Meet 11:00 AM @ Georgetown Library (small meeting rooms)

Genres: Mysteries, and also SciFi, Fantasy

Open to Receiving New Members: Maybe one more person

Analysis Group Name: "Memoirs"

Meet First and Third Mondays @ 6:30 PM at Wendy's in Cedar Park

Genres: Memoirs, plus Historical Fiction

Open to Receiving New Members: Maybe one more person

More Power to You! --Don Guerrant

WIN MONEY! GET PUBLISHED!

San Gabriel Writers' League

NEW VOICES

fiction writing contest

The San Gabriel Writers' League
is proud to announce a fiction
writing contest open to all
Georgetown High School
students!

Let your voice be heard!

Rules & Guidelines:

1. No entry fee but only one entry per person.
2. Fiction only; complete short story or a chapter from a larger work up to 4,000 words.
3. Subject matter and language are not to be more than what would be presented in a movie rated "PG-13."
4. Prizes: First Place - \$100; Second Place - \$75; and Third Place - \$50; in addition, the winning entries will be published in *The Gabriel Writer*, a publication of the San Gabriel Writers' League.
5. Must be typed (no handwritten submissions), double-spaced in 12 point Times New Roman font.
6. Author's name and contact information should appear on title page ONLY, but not on the story itself in order to preserve anonymity.
7. Submit .doc or .pdf file electronically to: janet-kilgore@austin.rr.com.
8. Submissions must be received by March 31, 2017

PRIZES
1st- \$100
2nd- \$75
3rd- \$50

DEADLINE: 3/31/17

Visit us at WWW.SGWL.NET

ANALYSIS GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWERS

1. How does the setting reflect the emotional meaning of this excerpt? As the reader, could you “see it and feel it” as you read? How entranced were you?
2. What is revealed about each character’s personality? How did the author Show us (versus Tell us) their characteristics? How could they be more interesting?
3. How has each character acted from or revealed his/her core traits?
4. What conflict occurs? External: Who wants WHAT; and what OBSTACLE keeps him/her from getting it? Internal: What is Pushing forward each character (desired goal, motive, want) countered by a Pulling Back (inner fear or wound)? What do the characters want at the end? Is it a “newspaper article” only relating a series of events that happened (Telling) with no subtext or insight into your characters?
5. Dialogue: What examples can you give of how each character speaks with a different and believable voice? (Variety of grammar, vocabulary, metaphors, etc.) If the dialogue is “on the nose,” give some specific examples. How is the exposition disguised?
6. Meaning: How does the writing resonate with the value systems of the characters? What is the meaning of this chapter?
7. Storytelling: How does this chapter tantalize you into having to find out what’s going to happen next? How has the plot advanced?
8. Summary: What is your overall impression? What suggestions for improvement can you offer: “What if...”

Oscar the Grouch

By Sam Holland



“That’ll be me someday.”

I admit it. I’ve said that a time or two. Or three. Or four.

The ‘me’ that that’ll be is, of course, the Oscar winner me. The one that stands up in front a politely applauding crowd and a mildly indifferent television audience and basks in a few strictly regimented seconds of fame before walking into a television break. I’m sure I’m not alone though. Who among us hasn’t preened in front of the mirror holding a phantom Oscar thanking everyone we can think of? Oh, you haven’t, I see. Well, me neither, I was just asking.

I always enjoy watching the writer who wins for Best Screenplay. He (or she) hasn’t had a stable of beauty professionals pruning him for hours, so he has that imperfect human look. And, unlike the winners for Special Effects or even Best Picture where a cadre of imperfect human people crowd the stage, more often than not, he takes the stage alone, which is fitting, is it not? And, more often than not, I’m happy for him.

More often than not. After all, am I not even more imperfectly human than he who won? Obviously so. Ask anyone. So why is it he and not me?

And before you get started, now’s not the time to get into the number of screenplays I’ve finished or my work habits or how much time I spend binge watching *The West Wing* on Netflix. None of that is relevant, not really.

So while I am happy for the winner, I still find it necessary to remind myself that his success is not a house of mirrors reflection of mine, which, if I were less imperfect, wouldn’t be necessary. But as I store my green eyed phantom Oscar back into my trunk of dreams, I look forward to the day when I’m imperfect enough to be the best.

UPCOMING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Check the website for the cost of each class. The SGWL does not endorse or recommend any of these classes, they are provided for your information only.

Writer's League of Texas (www.writersleague.org)

March 4

Establishing and Developing Convincing Characters in Narrative Fiction with John Pipkin

9 am to noon

St. Edward's University, Austin, TX
(Moody Hall 204)

March 25

How to Workshop Your Writing with Stephanie Noll

10 am to 1 pm

St. Edward's University, Austin, TX
(Moody Hall 204)

April 1

Structure in Narrative Nonfiction: Putting the Pieces Together with Michael Hall

9 am to noon

St. Edward's University, Austin, TX
(Moody Hall 204)

June 30-July 2

2017 Agents & Editors Conference:
Members-Only Registration Now Open!

Hyatt Regency, Austin, TX

MEMBER WEBSITES

A recent audit of member websites provided to the Gabriel Writer revealed that many of them were not active. It's possible that the information on hand was incorrect, so if you don't see your website listed, please send your information to kyleholland7@gmail.com and we'll get it in the next newsletter.

Anna M. Bell
www.annamaebell.com

David Ciambrone
<http://www.davidciambrone.com/>

Douglas Derrer
www.douglasderrer.com

Mary Fenoglio
www.eggsinmypocket.com

Linda B. Johnson
www.lindabatenjohnson.com

Janet Kilgore
www.janetkilgore.com

Joy Nord:
www.GlyndaJoyNord.com

Martin "Marty" Shelton
<http://sheltoncomm.com>

Sylvia Dickey Smith:
www.sylviadickeysmit.com

Jane Thompson
www.bipolarhandbook.com

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EPILOGUE

"Plot is no more than footprints left in the snow after your characters have run by on their way to incredible destinations."

— Ray Bradbury, *Zen in the Art of Writing*



You don't have to go it alone...

Join the San Gabriel Writers' League today!