

“Learn the rules like a pro, so that you can  
break them like an artist.”  
**Picasso**

# LA PLUME

Official Newsletter of the Writers' Guild of Acadiana

September 2022

## Board Members:

President John Comeaux, Vice President Christopher Fontenot, Treasurer Beth Davis, Publicist Ellen Threatts, Secretary Ed Gauthier, Webmaster & Newsletter John Comeaux, and all past WGA Presidents in good standing.



## Next Meeting: September

**September 27, 2022.** The South Regional Branch of the Lafayette Library, Auditorium. Address is 6101 Johnston St, Lafayette. Start time is **6:00 p.m.** We usually go to 7:15, but we must end by 7:30.

We will have a Door Prize from the books that were donated by authors.

## September Guest Speaker: Randal “Randy” Dupre’

Randy Dupre’ is a published writer of “Paradise Found, Eden Lost” and “You Deserve a Better Life”. He resides in Eunice, LA.

## October Prompt:

“Hidden Treasures”

Category: Fiction

This is a fun competition for members. The prompt **MUST APPEAR** somewhere within the work, and entries must be no longer than 500 words. When the prompt category is poetry, both traditional and free verse poems are acceptable. All entries must be typed and double-spaced. The story or poem must have the word count, title, author’s name, and date of the competition written at the top of the first page, and a paper copy of the winner and runner-up is to be handed in to the president after the judging. Contest participants are not allowed to enter the contest with works that are typed on iPhones or any other electronic devices.

## WEB Page and Facebook

Our web page is here: <https://www.writersguildacadiana.org/>

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/writersguildacadiana.org/>

The Writers' Guild is always willing to share the success stories of its members. Be sure to let us know about your writing. We will put your blurb on our website, on our Facebook page, and on this newsletter. Let's highlight and showcase our writers! Send us a synopsis or your own paragraph about the work you are working on or have published, and how to get it. Send to John at [jpcoman9@gmail.com](mailto:jpcoman9@gmail.com).

### ◆ Member Announcements

**New Feature!** La Plume will allow our authors to submit a teaser or extended passage from their upcoming or existing work, one page or less. Send your submission to [JPComan9@gmail.com](mailto:JPComan9@gmail.com)

Excerpt from: **Director Guy**, by Edward Gauthier

(Note: Von is the main character. There is another voice in his head, shown here in italics)

The group of friends rose and walked [along the railroad tracks] past the caboose and down the path through the forested woods back to Derrick's car, a red Mini Cooper. Von, then Julia and then Charlie piled in to the back seat all squeezed together. Moby got the front passenger seat. Derrick swung his car around and started up a gravel one-lane road that snaked from the abandoned railroad spur to a nearby two lane highway. Because Von sat gazing out the right side back window, I got to see a Louisiana highway 541 sign go by. Shifting through the gears, Derrick got up to seventy mph. We were cruising along when they came to a crossroads where another highway intersected highway 541. A JCT 18 sign went by. Derrick glanced both ways, slowed to thirty-five but then started accelerating again. Von still gazed out the back right window but, deep in his own thoughts, he wasn't responding to what was out there. Luckily, I saw it.

*Truck! Look right!* I screamed in Von's head.

Then Von saw it. "Truck on the right! Truck on the right!"

Derrick's head twisted right and he hit the brakes hard. Tires screamed, everyone pitched forward and Derrick's Min Cooper skidded to a smoking halt. An eighteen-wheeler zoomed past right in front of us, air horns blaring. It missed us by inches.

"Shit!" Derrick yelled hammering his fist against the steering wheel. He flipped on the inside cabin light and turned toward us. "I'm sorry you guys. I didn't even see that thing."

"That was ahhh .. SCARY!" Moby sat with his hands and forehead still on the dashboard.

Julia's head slowly came up off her knees. "Good call, Von. I didn't see it either," she muttered.

Von nodded. For seconds everyone sat silently in their own fear, but then Von spoke. "The voice warned me."

"What?" Charlie leaned forward looking at Von. "Von, man, are you serious?"

"Yes. Totally serious. I wouldn't have seen it in time," Von whispered.

Nobody moved as Von's words sunk in. Derrick and Moby turned in their seats to stare at Von.

Finally Julia spoke. "Maybe someone should tell that voice thanks."

Charlie nodded. "Yea, really."

## ◆ Writing Tips

### 4. What Should You Do When the Book is Formatted?

The next step is to design your cover. This is something you can do on your own. There are free services online you can use to design book covers with free images and templates. And there are also services like 99designs that help design your book cover at a reasonable cost.

What should your cover look like, though? While the look and feel of your book should reflect you, it's also worth making sure your design is in line with other books in your genre. Browse through lists of books that are like your genre to see what's trending and what's popular. Maybe that's a good way to see what you don't like and what's overly used. Really, it's just a way to jog your creativity.

And, keep in mind that readers really do judge a book by its cover. If you are looking to sell your book, it is important that your book looks professional inside and out.

*(To be continued each month)*

## ◆ Research

From our WGA member William Thibodeaux

To the Editor, since our members are writers, authors, and poets, I would like to know if any have read (and used) Alexander von Humboldt's work "Views of Nature". He wrote numerous works, but this one is said to have inspired generations of scientists, artists, and poets. Humboldt "combined elegant prose and vivid descriptions with scientific analysis." Henry David Thoreau read Humboldt, so did Ralph Waldo Emerson, Charles Darwin, Edgar Allen Poe, Walt Whitman, Jules Verne, and countless others. Darwin said he would not have boarded the Beagle "nor conceived of the 'Origin of Species' without Humboldt." Humboldt was known as the "Shakespeare of sciences". He was known worldwide even here in the U.S. Unfortunately, because of his German ancestry, after both world wars, he and Germany became persona non-grata. Nearly everything that was named in his honor was changed or renamed. Before being named Nevada, Humboldt was considered. Renaming the Rocky Mountains to Humboldt Andes was also considered. I am just curious and would certainly appreciate knowing their views on Humboldt. I think he would be a great source of valuable information for any aspiring or current author and poet.

William Thibodeaux

## ◆ Marketing

Avery Silverberg, is a marketing assistant at Scholastic, focusing on middle grade and young adult titles. Here is a recent letter sent to her.

*I just self-published my first children's book. I have a website that I sell it on. How can I get more traffic to my website?*

*Elisa*

Hi Elisa,

Congratulations on publishing your first book! Here are some ideas to help drive up the traffic to your site:

- Your URL should be simple, and consistent branding-wise between each of your social platforms. Use the same headshot for each, as well as the same username amongst all channels.
- Ensure that your website URL is located visibly in every single social media platform you have. Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok all have a URL spot designed specifically for your website.
- Connect your social media platforms to your website.
- Give your readers a reason they should visit your site. This could be exclusive book news, blogs you post weekly, or even a merch store!

## ◆ Publishing

### What gets Published, What gets Rejected

We watched a movie, “The Railway Children” based on the book by Edith Nesbit. Then we read the book, because the movie was so good. The book breaks many of the “rules” of writing novels these days. It has a narrator that addresses the reader directly, and uses terms only familiar to readers of the day (1905). It uses passive voice frequently to speed the narrative along (“presents were opened, cake was eaten...”) It proceeds in a linear form with no flashbacks for backstory. It uses phrases like “I’ll tell you the details in a little while” to the reader. A modern editor might reject the book from reading the first chapter. AND YET, it is a wonderful book, full of adventure and feelings and life lessons. So don’t let the oppressive ‘rules’ and ‘nevers’ stop you from writing the book that is in your heart.

## ◆ Ask Google

I asked Google: “What should I write about?”

### Interesting Things to Write About

- A Life-Changing Lesson You Learned.
- Something You Know How to Do.
- The Life Story of Someone Important to You.
- Something That Makes You Angry or Dissatisfied.
- A Popular Topic from a Different Angle.
- Life Hacks.
- Something Most People Don't Know About Something. ...

## ◆ **Word of the month**

### **Unctuous. Adjective**

1. Excessively ingratiating or insincerely earnest.
2. Containing or composed of oil or fat.
3. Having the quality or characteristics of oil or ointment; slippery.

## ◆ **Events**

**Sales Opportunity!** WGA members have the opportunity to join us at Moncus Park Artisan Market on the last Saturday of the month. We display our books and meet with people to discuss writing and publishing. Usually hundreds of people go by the booth, and our huge WGA banner attracts many to see and meet the authors.

Paid up members who wish to sell their books or other published material must now contact Ed Gauthier to reserve their place at the vending tent. Cell: 337-945-5718  
Email: [eggchess@gmail.com](mailto:eggchess@gmail.com)

Authors attending Moncus park market should arrive by 7:15 a.m. and have table displays and books for sale set up by 7:45 a.m. Customers start to show up by 8:00. Bring your own table (4 ft. or less) and chair.

If you would like to sell your books at the market WGA vending table, here are the qualifications to do so:

- 1 You must be a *paid member* of WGA
- 2 You'll need to confer with the board and arrange a date to sell *a month in advance*. Call or text Ed Gauthier ( 337-945-5718) or email him at [eggchess@gmail.com](mailto:eggchess@gmail.com) to make arrangements.
- 3 As of now, slots are available for September and following months, each being the last Saturday of the month. Contact Ed Gauthier if interested.

### ***Would you like to join or renew?***

Thank you for your interest in the Guild. Submit the form below to register to become a new or renew a membership with Writers' Guild of Acadiana. Annual membership fee is \$25.00. You will receive this monthly newsletter "La Plume", which will keep you informed of events and news of the Guild. WGA annual dues are due January 1st of each year, late after March 1st. When submitting the form, please mail your check or money order to:

**Writers' Guild of Acadiana**  
**P O Box 51532**  
**Lafayette, LA 70505**

Email questions to: [info@writersguildacadiana.org](mailto:info@writersguildacadiana.org)  
Cash payments can be made at the monthly meeting – do not mail.

This form is also online: [writersguildacadiana.org](http://writersguildacadiana.org)

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone/Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you find out about us?** \_\_\_\_\_

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