

LA PLUME

If you can think it, you can write it.

Official Newsletter of the Writers' Guild of Acadiana

September 2021

Board Members:

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

Next Meeting * NEW START TIME *:

September 28, 2021. 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. The Library currently is limiting us to 25 attendees.

September is members reading month. All WGA members are free to bring written material to share with the group, and five minutes will be allotted for each reader. Singers and songwriters within the organization are invited to share their work as a cappella or acoustic numbers; however, there is a limit of one song per performer and the song must also be no longer than five minutes.

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

Upcoming Prompts:

I'll Never forget...
Category: Memoirs

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 I-phones or any other electronic devices.

August Speaker:

It was a pleasure to hear a talk by Marie Jeannine Coreil. She spoke of her years as an academic writer turned essayist turned author of her book "Rose City Audition."

Looking ahead to October:

Our Guest speaker for October is Alisha Vincent, local author.

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 either Sudie at praisemusicpro@cox.net , or John at jpcoman9@gmail.com .

Our own Beth Davis, writing as **Julia E Davis**, is celebrating her second novel, "**Small Town Love – Emily**". In the novel, Emily returns to her hometown but finds it may be a difficult stay as the lumber mill may close. Mitch arrives to review the stability of the lumber mill but meets Emily and finds his heart competing against the economic reality of the mill. Can the town, or their relationship, survive?

Available on Amazon and other booksellers, published by Page Publishing.

[Request for Donations:](#)

The WGA Board accepts donations of books written by our published authors to offer as door prizes at our monthly meetings. Tickets will be given to all members who arrive before 7:00 PM, and one lucky winner will receive a copy of whichever work has been donated for that month. If you are a published author and would like to contribute an extra copy of one or more of your books, please contact Sudie Landry at praisemusicpro@cox.net.

◆ **Writing Tips**

Plot Twist Story Prompts: What If Scenario (excerpt)

By Robert E Brewer, Writer's Digest

For today's prompt, take something that you accept for fact in your story and think about what it would be like if it weren't that way at all. Maybe there's a super supportive secondary character who is actually rooting (and maybe plotting) for the protagonist to fail. Perhaps the antagonist has been trying to do the right thing all along. Maybe that dream sequence earlier in the story actually happened.

What if, instead of X happening, Y happened? There is, of course, a chance to really twist your story here, but be aware that you could also lose your readers if you use this tactic too frequently. Quite a few TV shows (looking at your *The Flash* and *Once Upon a Time*) take this tactic too far, so that viewers can't work up the ability to be emotionally invested in the characters after they've died (and come back to life) and changed sides (from good to bad and back again) so many times.

On the other hand, some of the best moments in storytelling history have come from learning that the antagonist actually had some good in them. Or that the coward or punching bag was actually the real evil mastermind. And so on.

Once you begin thinking this way, you'll find that the twists are limitless. But remember: With great plot-twisting ability comes great responsibility. So take a hard look at your story and think, what if it were different?

◆ Technical

Can I use copyrighted material in my work?

You might have bumped into the term fair use—what does it mean? And how does it affect writers?

MAY 29, 2021

(Editor's note: I have excerpted this article from an article online. I hope it is allowed under 'fair use'.)

[HTTPS://www.writersdigest.com/contracts-and-legal-considerations/fair-use-rights-101-for-writers-to-use-or-not-to-use-that-is-the-question](https://www.writersdigest.com/contracts-and-legal-considerations/fair-use-rights-101-for-writers-to-use-or-not-to-use-that-is-the-question)

Fair use. I'm sure you've heard the term. Perhaps you've dealt with it in your own writing. Maybe you've heard certain myths about it (like only using a certain percentage of another's work is okay). To help you better understand the mystery that is fair use, below is an introduction to the concept.

Let's start with a brief definition. At a basic level, fair use is a defense to copyright infringement. When you don't have permission to use copyrighted material, certain uses (used in particular ways) are permitted by law.

Fair use is located in section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976. Section 107 states:

"Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 106 and 106A, the fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include—

- (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- (2) the nature of the copyrighted work;
- (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

The fact that a work is unpublished shall not itself bar a finding of fair use if such finding is made upon consideration of all the above factors."

The article continues in the link.

◆ Contests

Personal Essay Awards from Writer's Digest Magazine

<https://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/personal-essay-awards>

ENTER NOW! Deadline: 10/1/2021. Writer's Digest's newest competition, the Personal Essay Awards, is currently open for entries. Think you can write a winning essay in 2,000 words or less? Enter the Writer's Digest Personal Essay Awards for your chance to win \$2,500 in cash, get published in Writer's Digest magazine, and a paid trip to our ever-popular Writer's Digest Conference!

◆ Encouragement

What elements go into a query letter (*Excerpt*)

ROBERT LEE BREWER, SEP 16, 2019

<https://www.writersdigest.com/publishing-insights/how-to-write-successful-queries-for-any-genre-of-writing>

Whether trying to hook a literary agent or editor at a book publishing company, writers need to master the art of writing effective query letters. The reason queries carry so much weight is simple: Time—and the fact that most agents and editors don't have much of it.

The mission of your query letter is to convince an editor or agent that they want to invest time in you and your writing project. In that sense, a query letter is the first impression you make in what will hopefully blossom into a much longer professional relationship.

What Goes in a Query Letter

For all the blood, sweat, and tears that go into query letters, it's actually a pretty straightforward document that consists of an opening pitch (or hook), more (but not all) info on the project, and a little about you as the author. The order of these elements can differ, but I'm going to share the most common structure.

The Pitch: The pitch (or hook) is a concise statement that sums up the essential nature of your book.

This concise statement is usually achieved in one or two sentences, and it gives your audience a sense of what the book is about and why they should get excited about it.

More Info: After a compelling pitch, many successful queries offer up a paragraph or three of evidence that supports that your book project is worthwhile, has an audience, and is worth their time. If your pitch doesn't already include it, then this is a good place to include your book's category (or genre) and word count.

About You: This is a concise statement sharing why you're the perfect person to write this book. It could be that you have personal or professional experience that lines up with the subject of your book. It could be that you have good sales in the genre or an incredible author platform from a blog or YouTube channel. However, avoid stretching the truth to make yourself seem more important. If all you have is an amazing book (and no other credentials), then just say something along the lines of, "This is my debut novel," and leave it at that. If your pitch is on point, your manuscript will get to do the talking when they request more pages.

◆ EVENTS: Book Festival

The **Books Along the Teche Literary Festival**, Celebrating Great Southern Writers and Louisiana Culture in Dave Robicheaux's Hometown, is proud to announce its plans for the 6th annual festival on April 1 – 3, 2022. Featured will be Osha Gray Davidson, the author of *The Best of*

Enemies: Race and Redemption in the New South, which was made into a major motion picture in 2019.

The festival has many events to choose from that will delight fans of Southern Literature, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, theater, and children's books. You can follow James Lee Burke's character Dave Robicheaux through the streets of New Iberia in the Dave's Haunts and Jaunts bus tour. Take a guided walking tour through New Iberia's historic live oaks and visit authors from around the country at the Author's Book Fair. Learn the secrets to good Louisiana cookin' at a mid-morning seafood demonstration, attend a free movie screening of The Best of Enemies, and be a part of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Symposium on James Lee Burke and the Center Stage Readers' Theater featuring one of his chosen titles. There will be a tribute to Ernest Gaines, children's workshops, a Bourée tournament, 5K run, and art exhibits. Two receptions are planned to give you a chance to taste great Southern Louisiana delicacies whilst serenaded by the Bunk Johnson Brazz Band and Terry Huval and the Jambalaya Cajun Band. You can also take a ride down the Bayou Teche with T-Boy's Bayou Adventure Tour and savor the sounds of our free Symphony Sunday in the Park featuring Acadiana Symphony Orchestra. All of these events celebrate our unique literary history, culture, and cuisine that can only be found in Dave Robicheaux's hometown of New Iberia Louisiana.

Mark your calendars for April 1 – 3, 2022 and make your plans to join us as we celebrate the unique history, music, culture and cuisine of New Iberia. For more information and tickets visit our website at www.booksalongthetecheliteraryfestival.com. You can also call 337-369-6446 or 337-519-9233. (Found and copied from Facebook. Ed.)

Would you like to join?

WGA values your membership and we hope that you will give every consideration to renewing it. Membership fee is suspended for 2021. Regular dues of \$25. will resume in 2022. In addition, members receive a monthly newsletter along with first notice for workshops, seminars, and conferences put on by the Writers' Guild.

Write to Writers' Guild of Acadiana, Inc., P.O. Box 51532, Lafayette, LA, 70505-1532.

Name _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone/Email _____

Date _____

How did you find out about us? _____
