
East Tennessee **Writer**

Newsletter of the Knoxville Writers' Guild
Volume 10, Number 7, July 2002

Open Mike Program Set for July 11

Still Time to Take Guild's Summer Writing Workshops

It's not too late to sign up for writing workshops offered by The Knoxville Writers' Guild and Pellissippi State Technical Community College.

After a one-week break for Independence Day, the workshops will resume on July 9 and continue until July 25. All workshops are held at Pellissippi State's Magnolia Campus.

July workshops include Breaking the Ten Commandments: *Exploring Taboos in Poetry Writing*, taught by Donna Doyle; *Pilgrimage to Personal Truths and Symbols in Your Life*, taught by Doris Ivie; *Five Mistakes Writers Shouldn't Make*, taught by Catherine Landis; *Short Story Writing*, taught by Brian Griffin; and *Writing for Beginners and Others*, taught by Don Williams.

Workshops are scheduled Monday through Thursday, usually from 6 to 8 p.m. The fee for a two-hour class is \$20 for Guild members and \$24 for nonmembers. Students, faculty, and staff of Pellissippi State pay member rates.

For more information, call John Reaves at 689-2651, or send an e-mail to jareaves@mindspring.com, or visit the Writers' Guild website: www.knoxvillewritersguild.org.

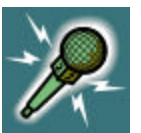
KWG August 1 Program

Catherine Landis will read from her new novel, *Some Days There's Pie*, released in May and already in its second printing.



Want to Show off Your Literary Talent? Open Mike Night is 7/11

Open Mike is the night when the Knoxville Writers' Guild invites members to read from their work in all genres —poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and whatever else they might have invented. This year it falls on Thursday, July 11. **Please note that the date is a week later than the usual meeting because of the Fourth of July holiday.** The program begins at 7 p.m. at the Laurel Theater. The public is invited and refreshments will be served.



**Don't forget the date change
for the July program: July 11
instead of July 4 !**

The Writing News



Getting the Most Out of Critique Groups

By Apryl Duncan



[Join FictionAddiction.NET's Free Critique Group](#)

At some point in your writing career, you should seek feedback on your work. Sure, your mom can look it over. Your best friend can read your new novel. But if you want honest criticism, one of the best sources for critiques is from your peers. The biggest challenges most writers face when

seeking feedback is the act of handing over their work to a group of strangers. But if you follow a few simple rules, you'll find critique groups offer an invaluable service.

Selecting a Critique Group

Critique Groups come in all shapes and sizes. Some are free. Others charge fees. Some meet in person. Others are held online or through regular mail. Choose a critique group that's right for you. Many groups will allow you to sit in on or monitor a session without committing to joining. This will allow you to evaluate the way the group works. Most free critique groups allow you the opportunity to join or leave as you please. This can be especially helpful if the focus of the group changes—or even your own writing style changes and you'd like to seek a more specialized setting. Introduce yourself to the group and get to know your fellow members. This helps break down the barriers that often prevent writers from sharing their work with critical eyes. Once you've introduced yourself and people have had a chance to welcome you, you'll feel more relaxed and know that there aren't a bunch of red pencils waiting to pick apart your work. These are real people, just like yourself, who share their work as well.

Critiques Can Be Wrong

One of the most important factors you must consider is that critiques can be wrong. Even professional editors aren't always right. Always remember, a critique is an opinion. You should take each critique seriously and see if you can apply it to your work. If you think it's totally off the mark, move on. Even ask the group the person's comments. Don't be shy. You're not in the group to make friends. You're here to further your writing career. Someone said they like your work. Great! Then they start to get into a more solid critique. Don't automatically tune out everything after the *but*.

Tell Your Inner Critic to Be Quiet

"They're stupid and don't know what they're talking about." Most inner critics are very protective. If you don't get him/her to be quiet, you'll walk away from any critique group with a bad experience. It's called a critique group for a reason. If the group was just in place to give you glowing reviews, it would be called the "Happy-Fawning-All-Over-Your-Work Group."

Get...But Do Give

Don't expect to walk into a group and ask for critiques for your four short stories, new novel, work-in-progress and 18 poems. Give and get. It's the beauty of critique groups. You're a member of the group now. Respect your fellow writers. **Give feedback for the work other writers have posted.**

I Don't Know How to Give Feedback

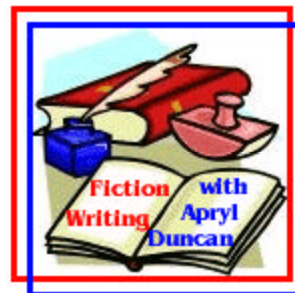
Sure you do. Just as you can spot weak points in your own work, you can also spot weak points in other people's work. More importantly, though, by reading work from other writers, you can help develop an eye for what works and what doesn't. Developing that eye will help you in your own writing and strengthen your work along the way.

Constructive is the Key

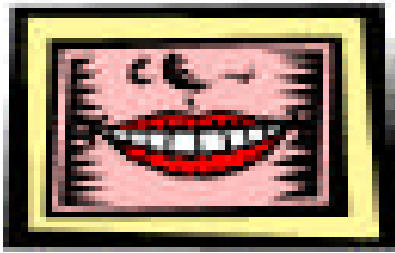
Someone says they hate your work. And that's it. That's hardly feedback and it's certainly not constructive. Most critique groups really frown on this type of comment and simply won't allow it. This could even result in this member being expelled from the group. If this happens to you, shrug it off and let it go. Report it to the person(s) in charge. They'll want to know. This situation hardly ever happens. But it's important to know what to do if it does. Comments like that can destroy a writer's confidence. And that's not what critique groups are for.

Positive and Negatives

On that constructive note, when giving feedback on another's work, why not point out both the positives and the negatives? If the plot line is strong, say so. If the characters need work, let the writer know. Giving the good with the less-than-good together, can do worlds of wonder for a struggling writer—no matter what their level of experience. Whether you're just starting out or you have a few novels under your belt, critique groups can help you get a fresh perspective on your writing. If you're ready to gain a new appreciation for the writing process and network with your fellow writers, then give critique groups a shot. You'll be glad you did.



Subscribe to Fiction Addiction on the Internet for monthly tips and interesting articles. Find the site at www.fictionaddiction.NET



Hungry. . .

. . . for Something Delicious to Read? Try *Literary Lunch*

Coming from the Knoxville Writers' Guild October 10, 2002 is *Literary Lunch*, a food anthology of poetry, essays, short stories, memoirs, and a few recipes thrown in. According to Jeannette Brown, editor, this fifth KWG anthology's call for submissions received over 400 manuscripts from all over the country. Most entries, says Brown, were so good, "It was hard not to nosh as we poured over well-written tributes to Krispy Kreme, grandma's biscuits, fish and cheese grits, fresh tomatoes, sweet corn, and pie—any kind of pie. Several of the offerings dealt with hunger: hunger for lost loves, learning, or some unnamable longing. We read about grandmas who influenced young lives and in-laws who taught cooking skills as cultural lessons. And," Brown jokes, "we took our time reading the most entertaining category—food as metaphor for sex."

A sampling of titles in the book includes "Killing Chickens," "Make Love, Not Sausage," "Never Give a Child an Artichoke," "Memory's Table," "Julia Child's Kitchen," "A Month in Provence with the Teenage Blues," "Hunger in the Swamp," "Bulimia," "The Cat-head Biscuit Woman," and "Godfather II, the Italian Scenes." The longest title was "The Fall of Dorothy Speers (Or: Not All Reductions Occur in a Saucepan.") Want to reserve your copies now?

An international flavor (pun intended) is provided by entrees regarding food and/or relatives from Italy, Germany, Greece, and Kazakhstan. After the blind judging, editors were surprised to have chosen entries from New York City, Los Angeles, Sanford, North Carolina, Tucson, Arizona, and other "foreign" locales. Of course, writers from Knoxville and East Tennessee are well represented. One of our prized submissions is a never-before-published prose poem by Knoxville native Nikki Giovanni.

Literary Lunch also features food-related paintings and photographs by Margaret Scanlan, Emily Taylor, Sarah Kendall, and Lindsay Kromer. "Talk Over Coffee," a fabulous painting by Bristol artist Elizabeth Johns, is the cover art. Dozens of Guild members have been instrumental in putting the anthology together. Flossie McNabb is the assistant editor. Judy Loest, Julie Auer, Marybeth Boynton, Catherine Crawley, Jackie Kittrell, and others have provided varied kinds of assistance. And the guild is grateful to Alcoa and the Arts Fund of the East Tennessee Foundation for providing funding. We hope that, with its strong visuals and sensory evocations, *Literary Lunch* will whet the appetites of readers everywhere.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

AN INDEPENDENCE DAY MESSAGE
BY JULIE AUER

My personality is such that I normally recoil at the slightest whiff of sentimentality. My creative writing is fairly devoid of it. Therefore, it is out of character for me to seize upon a holiday theme in order to comment on a political issue, and furthermore, to dress up my comment in patriotic bells, ribbons and whistles. Here goes.

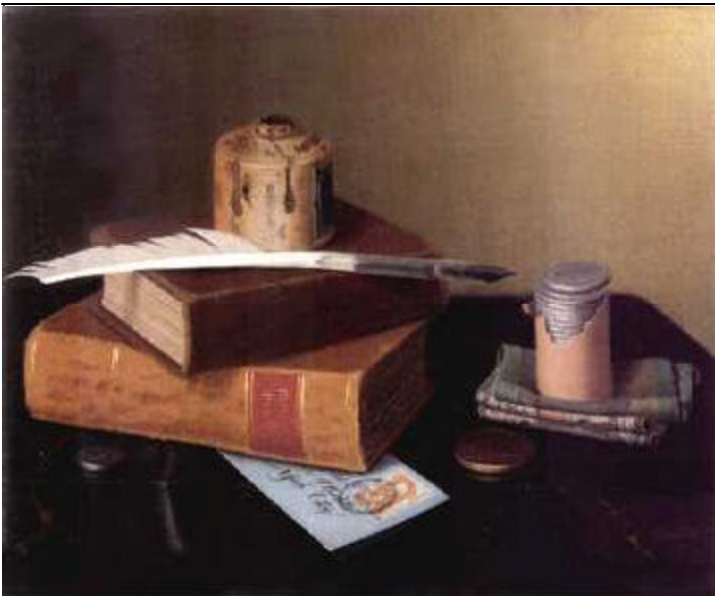


We are, as we approach and pass the 226th year of American Independence, standing in the path of a frightening threat to our freedom. I'm not talking about terrorists. I'm talking about fear, and the ensuing shifting

attitudes within our own borders about the importance of free expression, free speech, free assembly, and a host of other freedoms that give ordinary citizens power over our government. People seem to have lost sight of why the Constitution was written in the first place. It was written to protect us, the citizens, from those who govern us, not the other way around. Though it certainly seems to be turning on us as we allow ourselves to be convinced that we are under a constant stage of siege and must therefore surrender, chunk by chunk, individual freedoms in order to be assuaged that all is secure.

I don't think it's seditious to suggest that the American spirit that drove us to Independence was long ago displaced by a complacency that eventually lulled us into political apathy. We didn't vote much, we didn't know what the issues were, but we were sure the boys and girls in office were taking care of things. The insecurity and fear born out of the horror of 9/11 caught us at a time when our political sensibilities were as atrophied as those of ancient Rome when the Ostrogoths rode in out of a cloud of dust and smoke and began to lay waste to an empire. We can reclaim that latent spirit that drove us to victory two centuries ago as long as we stand firm in our conviction that what gives our country its distinction as a great democracy is its embrace of human rights and personal freedom. Not just from the barbarians at the gates, but from the likes of those in Washington who would don laurels and purple robes and have us a nation of official mouthpieces.

Our job as citizens and as writers is not easy. When we let it become easy, when we sell out the interests of liberty to an imperial agenda, we have begun the process of cultural and artistic decay. My hope is that the principles outlined in the most brilliantly written document in history - the Declaration of Independence - will not falter because of fear.



What's Up with Local Writers

Jack Mauro reports that opening pieces of his new book, *ENOLA'S WEDDING*, will be running for 5 weeks in *MetroPulse*, beginning June 27. The book itself should be available by September.

"Basically," says Jack, "it's three months in the lives of a handful of (fictional) Knoxvilleians. The three months revolve around one girl's brief engagement, with shock waves from it impacting her boss, her best friend, his best friend, her boss' ex, her boss' ex' boyfriend, her parents, the caterers, a visiting journalist who wants to capture love for a Knoxville weekly, his evil editor, and one gloriously psychotic woman who does wedding cakes." Sounds pretty interesting.

The Writer's Workshop is offering the following classes in Asheville this summer. Advance registration is required by calling 828-254-8111, or email:

WritrWkshp@aol.com.

July 17-Aug. 14: WRITING and PUBLISHING THE NOVEL with John P. McAfee

July 20: POETRY WORKSHOP with Catherine Carter

July 23-August 20: JOURNALING THROUGH TRANSITION with Judith Bush

For details, call or write the e-mail address above.

Changing the World One Story at a Time

Submit a Story for *Chicken Soup for the Single Parent's Soul*

By Nancy Vogl, coauthor

As a single parent, everyone has extraordinary circumstances, so we know you have a story! Chicken Soup stories have a beginning, middle and an ending that often closes with a punch, creating emotion rather than simply talking about it. Tell an exciting, sad, uplifting or funny story about something that has happened to you as a single parent or about someone you know who is a single parent. Or perhaps you were raised in a single parent family.

The story should start with action and include a problem, issue or situation. It should include dialogue and the characters should express their feelings through the conflict or situation. It should end in a result, such as a lesson learned, a positive change or pay-off. The most important thing we're looking for are stories that uplift, encourage, support, offer hope and inspiration and lets the readers of each story feel like they are not alone. Above all, let your story come from your heart.

LENGTH: 300 - 1200 words; PAYMENT: \$300; DEADLINE: August 1, 2002; RIGHTS: Author retains rights; REPRINTS: Yes; SUBMISSIONS: Use the submission form at the web site:

<http://www.singleparentsoul.com/big/submit.html> or email to: singleparent@voyager.net

For mailing instructions see Story Guidelines.

GUIDELINES: <http://www.singleparentsoul.com/big/guide.html>

Preservation Foundation

Contest Offers Prize

The Preservation Foundation, a Nashville-based organization, will hold its fifth annual contest for unpublished writers, this one for authors of nonfiction stories between 1500 and 5000 words in length. First prize will be \$100. There is no entry fee. Nonfiction entries will be accepted through December 31, 2002.

The Preservation Foundation, a nonprofit corporation, encourages limited market works, primarily biography or other nonfiction. Most are published on the Internet. However, we now have two books of stories in print. Our purpose is to preserve the extraordinary works of ordinary people. To learn more about us and the 2002 nonfiction contest visit our site at: > <http://www.storyhouse.org>



Lost State Conference Snags Novelist Lee Smith as Keynote Speaker Sept. 26-28

Novelist Lee Smith will be the keynote speaker for the 4th annual Lost State Writers Conference, Sept. 26-28 at the General Morgan Inn in Greeneville, TN, and many other notable writers and editors will also speak, teach seminars, and appear on panels. The list includes New York literary agents, representatives from regional and national publishing companies, and university presses. Writers and artists appearing at the event include:

SHEILA KAY ADAMS - Author of *Come Go with Me*, (UNC Press, Chapel Hill). Adams is a traditional singer and banjo player from Madison County, North Carolina.

RICHARD BAUSCH, author of eight novels and five collections of stories, including the novels *Rebel Powers*, *Violence*, *Good Evening Mr. & Mrs. America* and *All The Ships At Sea*.

ROSS BROWNE, president of The Editorial Department, a book-editing company, is co-author of the upcoming *Dialogue That Dazzles*.

GREG CHAPUT is an editor for HarperCollins Publishers in New York City.

ELIZABETH (BETSY) COX has written three novels: *Familiar Ground*, *The Ragged Way People Fall In And Out of Love* and *Night Talk*. Her stories have recently been collected in *Bargains in the Real World*.

C. MICHAEL CURTIS, senior editor of *Atlantic Monthly*, has edited four anthologies: *American Stories: Fiction from the Atlantic Monthly*, volumes I and II, *Contemporary New England Stories*, and *Contemporary West Coast Short Stories*.

FOSTER DICKSON is Production Manager for New South Books in Montgomery, Ala. He is also a freelance writer, editor, and poet. He founded The Writers' Group at the New South Bookstore and initiated a published quarterly - The Writers' Group Series.

JUDY GEARY is editorial director of High Country Publishers in Boone, N.C.

SUSAN GLEASON runs the Susan Gleason Literary Agency in New York City.

GAIL HALEY has presented workshops, story telling, art demonstrations and puppetry programs in schools and libraries throughout the USA, Canada, England and Australia, and Africa.

STEPHEN MARION is the author of *Hollow Ground*, published this year by Algonquin.

BETTY PAYNE's first novel, *Shine Annie*, has been nominated for the Georgia Author of the Year Awards.

LEE SMITH is the author of ten novels, including *Fair and Tender Ladies*, *Oral History*, *Family Linen*, *The Devil's Dream*, and *Saving Grace*; three collections of short stories; and *Sitting on the Courthouse Bench: An Oral History of Grundy, Virginia*. Her newest novel, *The Last Girls*, will be published in September by Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill.

ALLEN WIER is the author of many short stories, including two collections, and three novels, *Blanco*, *Things About to Disappear*, and *Departing As Air*.

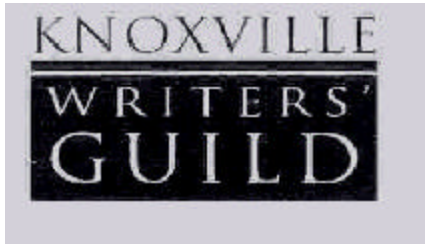
CHARLES WRIGHT has published 16 collections of poetry, including *Country Music: Selected Early Poems*, *The World of the 1,000 Things*, *A Short History of the Shadow*, and *Negative Blue: Selected Later Poems* (2,000), which includes *Chickamagua*, *Appalachia*, and *Black Zodiac*, for which he won the 1998 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry.

To register, go to the web site at <http://loststatewriters.xtn.net> or call 423-639-4031

Knoxville Writers' Guild:

Organized in December 1992 in Knoxville, TN, to facilitate a broad, inclusive and egalitarian community among area writers; to provide a forum for information, support and sharing among writers; to help members improve and market their writing skills, and to promote writing and creativity in the wider community through education, publication, and sponsorship of writing-related public events. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month ~~at the Laurel Theater~~. **Officers:** President: Julie Auer; Vice President: Don Williams; Secretary: Kim Trevathan; Treasurer: Laura Still; Hospitality: Kay Newton; Publicity: Marybeth Boyanton; President Emeritus: Jack Reese; VP Emeritus: Michael Gillespie; **Newsletter Editor:** Jeanne McDonald; **Webmistress:** Jo Ann Pantanizopoulos. **Board Members:** Julia Auer, Marybeth Boyanton, Robert Boyd, Jacqueline Kittrell, Judy Loest, Robert Lydick, Kay Newton, Caroline Norris, Elaine Oswald, Pamela Schoenwaldt, Laura Still, Kim Trevathan, Penny Tschantz, and Don Williams. Dues are \$20, \$15 for students. The KWG does not discriminate against any person because of race, age, gender, handicap or country of national origin. Tel: 531-8855; send e-mail messages to editor, jrd531k@msn.com, or to president Julie Auer at hildegaard@earthlink.com

web: www.knoxvillewritersguild.org



**P.O. Box 10326
Knoxville, TN 37939**

HOW TO JOIN

To join the Writers' Guild, complete the form below and mail to P.O. Box 10326, Knoxville, TN 37939, along with annual dues of \$20. Dues are \$15 if you are a student. Membership allows you to participate in study groups, receive discounts on books and Guild-sponsored merchandise, and monthly issues of the newsletter.



Have a safe and happy 4th of July! Remember our July program change from 7/4 to 7/11!

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| <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>Telephone No. _____</p> <p>Email Address _____</p> |
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