

News & Views

September 2002

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Questions or Submissions?
Email the Editor at
cdawriters@hotmail.com

Submissions are due to the Editor
by the 25th of the month prior to
publication.

President's Corner

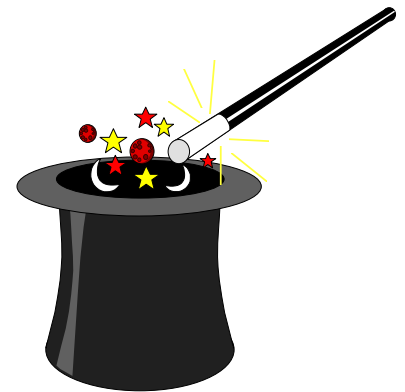
Mary L. Smith

With summer over, we're ready to begin fall with some changes we hope you will like. In our effort to provide programs of instruction that so many members asked for, we drifted away from the other important part of the writing process, sharing our writing. Your board has revived the format we began last winter with the night group. It worked very well at our last night meeting in August and we will structure the September meeting the same way. We will have the first 90 minutes of program and break. The second 90 minutes will be any business, our history moment, and a report on our writing activity. We will then break into small groups of no more than five people with a leader for Sharing and TLF (Tender Loving Feedback). We will **all** have an opportunity to read. If there isn't enough reading activity, the time will be spent talking about writing and reading. We urge **everyone** to bring something to share.

Sharing our writing and getting TLF is how we grow. Others have ideas and comments that lift our writing and make us ponder what we write and how we write it. Even the newest writer is a life-long reader and can give helpful comments from a reader's point of view. If you

don't have something ready to read, then take your time to tell about what you would like to write and why. Everyone needs to be heard, everytime.

See you in September with writing in hand, ready to share and give TLF.



From Patti Dickinson

Everyone planning to attend the workshop on "Hooks, how to write good beginnings," bring a no more than 3 or 4 paragraph hook from a book you've written, one you would like to write, or simply a hook from out of the blue. We will use these in an exercise to see how we can improve them. I want everyone involved so, as they say in football..."Show me something!"

When It's Good To Be Bad

Karen Hayes

I can't remember what famous writer said it but it goes something like this. If you know the rules of good writing, it's acceptable to bend and even break them. If not, not. In fact, literary misbehavior adds interest, flavor, and voice to your work if you're hip to what you're doing. Otherwise, it makes you look like an amateur. Thanks to IWL and critique groups, most of us have some license to commit grammatical hooliganism, and this month, a year after 9-11, who doesn't feel like breaking some rules?

What I hadn't realized until last week is what a blessing, and responsibility, it is to be a writer at this time. I was at a gas station, leaning against my pickup and inhaling fumes while listening to somebody's car radio blaring over the pulse of the pumps. A commentator was reading an essay he'd written about terrorism and the effect it's had on us all, and although he was eloquent and was breaking all kinds of rules, which made him very entertaining, I found myself disagreeing with many of his points. I peered around the waste can to see which car had the radio on and saw a middle-aged man in the passenger seat, nodding his head and pounding the dashboard with his fist as the commentator wrapped up and signed off. The man saw me looking at him and gestured to

his radio. "He's right," he said. He had tears in his eyes, and he looked like someone who'd just had a breakthrough in psychotherapy.

Writing is our therapy. What do people who can't write do with their feelings on this most inauspicious anniversary? They get their therapy from what others write. When, within the confines of our disciplined and compliant workaday personas, we can punch a wall with a few well-turned phrases while our readers nod their heads and mutter "Yeah!", surely we must know, then that we are blessed to be writers.

Somewhere out there is somebody who needs to read what you need to write this month. Go ahead. Break some rules.

BIRTHDAYS This Month

Gwen Summers 9/23

Michael Marsden 9/29

Friends of the Coeur d'Alene Library

Let's Talk About It (books)

Earlier in the summer, the CDA Chapter was asked by the Friends of the Coeur d'Alene Library to help them with this fall's "Let's Talk About It!" Series, a reading and discussion program. The books this fall are the *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, Sept. 17; *Black Elk Speaks*, Oct. 1; *West With the*

Night, Oct. 15; *One Writer's Beginnings*, Oct. 29; *I Know Why a Caged Bird Sings*, Nov. 12. The books are available at the Coeur d'Alene Library. A library card is not necessary. Just ask for the Let's Talk About It books. Choose one or more books, register them, read and come to the Library on Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m. for an hour of book talk and delicious refreshments. We hope lots of you will take advantage of this delightful program. If you have questions, email or call Mary Smith.



September 11th

Special Day meeting

Mary I. Smith

September 11th is also the second Wednesday and we are looking forward to our guest speaker, clinical traumatologist, Barry M. Richards, who is coming to Coeur d'Alene as the keynote speaker at NIC's 9/11-memorial program.

Barry pioneered healthcare strategies of clinical trauma after completing his graduate studies at Arizona State University. Why are we listening to a traumatologist? Because most writing deals with people in some sort of emotional and/or physical trauma. Barry is going to share with us the symptoms of untreated emotional trauma and ways to restore emotional health so that the sufferers thrive rather than merely survive. His message may also be of value to those listening. What he has to say may change your

life. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have Barry Richards for these few minutes. Please mark your calendars and come hear him.

September 19th Meeting

Evening Program

Mary L. Smith

In today's fast-paced world, a writer of fiction or non-fiction has a maximum of three paragraphs to capture the reader. If nothing happens to hook the reader by then, the article, short story, poem, novella, or book is put down, closed forever. Even our newspaper articles start with fiction-like hooks. How to write THE HOOK is the topic Patti Dickinson will teach on Thursday,

Upcoming Events

**Wednesday, Wednesday, September 11, 2002
9:00AM, Jewett House
Cd'A Chapter Day Meeting**

This is the monthly chapter meeting held during the day. Join us to hear special guest speaker Barry M. Richards, clinical traumatologist.

Thursday, September 19th, 2002

**6:30PM, Lake City Senior Center
Cd'A Chapter Evening Meeting**

This is the monthly chapter meeting held in the evening. Remember our new meeting place is the Lake City Senior Center located at 1916 Lakewood Drive.

September 26, 27, 28, 2002

**Snake River Rendezvous
Idaho Writers League
State Conference**

Presented by the Idaho Falls Chapter

Volunteer Writer for October reminder:
Barbara Rostad

Volunteer for Refreshments reminder:
Sept. 11th; April Anderton
Sept 19th; Barbara Rostad
October 9th; need volunteer
October 17th; Anna Goodwin

Who is the Idaho Writers League?

Purpose of the Organization

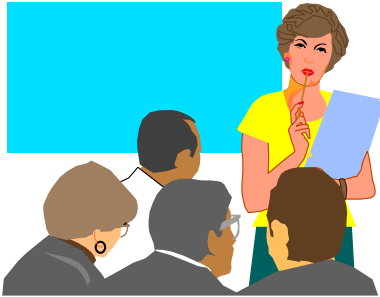
The Idaho Writers League is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, for the promotion of social welfare, including:

- a. To promote and maintain a high standard of literary output and to recognize accomplishments of Idaho writers;
- b. To stimulate public respect and support for the art and profession of writing;
- c. To provide a unified organization for writers and those with serious interest in writing and literary skills;
- d. To encourage new writing talent; to exchange ideas through the League publication and local and state meetings;
- e. To stimulate writing by means of contests and recognition awards;
- f. To encourage regional activity among neighboring chapters.

September 19th. It may be the most important lesson you learn this year. Don't miss it, because without that gripping hook your flawless technique, twisted plots, devoted research, beautiful descriptions, steamy romantic moments, or brilliant detective work won't matter. None but the lonely and your mother will ever read your work.

And without a manuscript prepared for submission in the accepted way, it won't matter that you have a hook to die for. Your work will land in the shredding machine to become hamster bedding. Mary Smith will show you how to keep your work from such a fate.

Come, bring your writing friends, eat delicious refreshments, and share about four pages of your work, then hear TLF (Tender Loving Feedback).



To Write or not To Write

Dottie Maley

To write or not to write? That is the question????? Well shucks folks, it's not even an option. If a writer is what you want to be, then you write, good, bad or indifferent, but you write. If this is what you truly want to do, LISTEN to what you write. Once you realize what you are reading is not as great as you thought it was, write it again. That's when your skill starts to grow.

Insert yourself into your characterizations and conversations, because, who better do we like to listen to than ourselves. It allows us the luxury to be people we never dreamed we could be, do things we would never attempt in real life, and experience emotions we didn't know we had.

While you may not want to give up your day job, a good thing to realize is that writing is a business too. Therefore you need to approach it in a business like manner. Plan your time as though it were costing you money. Discipline yourself.

Learn those pesky rudiments of the game such as correct English and punctuation. Explore the Thesaurus. It can do wonders for your vocabulary. Victor Borge could never have digressed from his music in the comic way he did if he hadn't learned the basics first. Einstein could never have.... Never mind what Einstein could never have.... Those simple skills will enhance the enormous joy and fear you get from sitting down in front of that scary, blank and pristine piece of paper that seems to be daring you to mess it up. Mess away. Think of it as finger painting with words and have a go at it. Who knows, your mess may eventually come to be the next masterpiece on the top ten list.

Quotes:

"Experience is a hard teacher. She gives the test first, the lesson afterward." Anonymous

"I tell my students you have an absolute right to write about people you know and love. You *do*. But the kicker is you have a responsibility to make the characters large enough that you will

not have sinned against them." Dorothy Allison

"I have a sense of these buried lives striving to come out through me to express themselves." Marge Piercy

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(Position Available)

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History Moment

Dottie Maley, Historian

The year---1963. The Coeur d'Alene Chapter of the Writers League continued to shine in its observance of National Poetry day and once again presented its annual writing contest, consisting of poetry and prose, at the local high school. This continues to be a popular and growing event with an ever-increasing number of participants.

Another popular and annual event in which the chapter participated was Children's Book Week held in the public library. Mrs. M. B. Nash, former State of Idaho Historian, member and one time president of the Coeur d'Alene chapter, gave talks to the children and other groups in which she interpreted Kootenai as "Water People," and noted the first county seat was at Seneaqueuten, "Crossing of the Water," serving as the seat of government until Rathdrum (then Westwood) became the County seat.

Mae B. Anderson of the writers league got off a humdinger of a lengthy letter which was published in the Press regarding a proposal to criss-cross and have a circular drive around Tubbs Hill. Once again demonstrating the impact some of the members had on current events. Her opening paragraph went as follows:

"Are you interested in the greatest good for the greatest number for all time? I refer specifically to Coeur d'Alene residents. Tubbs Hill is a

priceless, God-given heritage, which no man-not you-not I- can replace when it is destroyed. We cannot even explore it when the inevitable "No Trespassing" signs appear and increase in number when the so-called improve-ments take place."''' She went on to thoroughly denounce the project in her letter.

Also that year the chapter sponsored an autograph party to honor Idaho's former first lady and wife of U.S. Senator Len B. Jordan. Mrs. Jordan had been named editor of Idaho Reader, a 400-page collection of works by 57 Idaho writers. It was dedicated to two eighty-three year old contributors, Nellie Ireton Mills and Robert J. Newall. Two other contributors to the digest, designed to cover Idaho's development of the last century, were chapter members Mrs. Grace Hayes and Grace Roffey Pratt who was installed as League president that year. Another contributor was former Coeur d'Alene resident Louis Shaddock, executive secretary of the Idaho Department of commerce and Development, who wrote on Idaho's Recreation Riches.

In 1967 the Coeur d'Alene Chapter once again hosted the State Writers Conference. The two-day workshop attracted over 100 people from Idaho and surrounding areas. Presiding at the conference was Richard Renstrom, Caldwell, and president of the Idaho Writers league. The two-day session held work-shops, banquets and luncheons divided between the Desert Hotel as headquarters and the Methodist Church for

meetings and workshops. A tentative boat ride on the lake was to end the conference. I found no further proof the "tentative" ever became a reality.

Contests

For more complete information see the listing at our IWL website (www.idahowritersleague.com)

Atlanta Review

<http://www.bylinemag.com/contests.asp>

<http://cader.com/enter.htm>

<http://www.hemingwaydays.com/shortstory.htm>

JMW Publishing C.-Poetry Contest-Enter Our Free Poetry Contest

Poetry-Contest.com Pen Pushers Publications

World Wide Writers

http://www.writerscourtyard.com/**Links to different contests (Click on competitions button near bottom of the page)

<http://www.writersdigest.com/contests/>

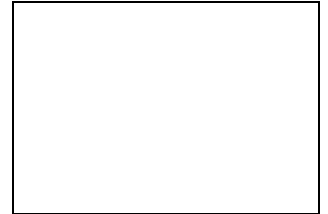
<http://www.writersjournal.com/contests.htm>

<http://www.writersweekly.com/misc/contest.html>

http://www.writing-world.com/contest**Lists many contests by deadline

** Note indicates new listing

Coeur d'Alene Chapter
Idaho Writers League
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
USA



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



