

LLOYD'S BEACON



Off the Rails by Joshua Danker-Dake

President

www.nightwriters.org

The last two months, I've written about writing more and writing flexibly. Let's say you've been at least a little bit successful at doing those things—setting aside more time for writing, finding ways to use that time more efficiently, and so forth. Outstanding! But what do you do when it goes off the rails?

There's an old boxing adage: "Everyone has a plan until they've been hit." It's been my experience that life hits everybody at one point or another—some harder than others, but without exception. It happened to me a couple of weeks ago. I got sick. Then I got better and my two-year-old got sick. Then she got better and now I'm sick again. It's nothing unsurvivable, but it's been bad enough that writing was one of the first things to get dropped from the schedule. That's life; these things happen. But the long and short of it is that I haven't done any writing in about three weeks after having made some decent progress earlier in the year.

What to do about it, going off the rails like that? I don't know about you, but my natural impulse is to be frustrated. Then if that goes on for too long, I fall into despair that I'll ever write anything meaningful again—why am I still trying to grind away at this, and what's the point of it anyway? From the outside looking in, that seems excessive, but if you're a writer, odds are you know where I'm coming from.

One of my interests, and one of the things I've written extensively about in the past, is health and fitness. One of the keys to long-term success—not just weight loss, but better habits for a permanently healthier lifestyle—is to be gracious with yourself. That is, to forgive yourself when you didn't do what you wanted to do yesterday, to not beat yourself up, to focus on putting together a good day today, to resolve to do better tomorrow. Well, every bit of that is true for writing, too (and for a lot of other aspects of life).

It's not always easy for me, but I'm trying to take my own advice. To do what I can, when I can. To take it

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Oops!

When the winners of the annual Flash Writing Contest were announced, we only announced the first, second and third place winners. Below is the complete list of winners, including those who received honorable mentions.

First Place:

"The Tipping Point" Marion Grace

Second Place:

"Breathe" M. Carolyn Steele

Third Place:

"Practicality" Marion Grace

First Honorable Mention:

"The Best Closer" Julie Kimmel-Harbaugh

Second Honorable Mention:

"Speaking to a Stranger" Michael Koch

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LLOYD'S BEACON (CONT.)

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one day at a time (yes, that's a cliché, but like most clichés, it's absolutely true). Yes, my writing is off the rails right now, but I'm going to try to be gracious with myself and get back to it—just as soon as I can breathe through my nose again, anyway.

* * * * *

One more thing: a couple of weeks ago, we sent out a short survey about the club's annual Flash Writing Contest. If you filled it out already, thank you! If you didn't, please take just a couple of minutes to give us

your two cents, whether you've entered the contest before or not. The board will be crunching the numbers soon to determine what changes, if any, we can make to improve the contest.



You can find the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YDT8MDX>.

RAMBLING REX



Micro-Tension by Rex Griffin

Vice-President

www.nightwriters.org

What is micro-tension? It is the subtle, borderline subliminal itch the reader feels when things aren't quite right. Micro-tension keeps your readers on the edge of their seat, turning pages, reading for answers to questions they may not even realize they have.

A wife is angry with her husband. Maybe she caught him cheating on her. She threatens to leave him forever, packs her bags, calls an Uber, walks to the door, opens it—and just stands there. In the back of their mind your readers are pleading for answers: “Why don't you leave? What are you waiting for? What's holding you back?” And they'll keep reading to find out. Micro-tension in *action*.

coffee, looking out over a mountainside of thick oaks and tall pines. He inhales the freshness of the mountain air, watches the red blaze of a cardinal streak through the forest of green, hears a woodpecker tapping at a hole somewhere down the valley. A half dozen does, shy and skittish, weave in and out of the woods nearby. The father thinks, *it's almost perfect*. And your readers ask in the back of their minds, “What's not perfect about it? What is wrong here? What's really going on?” They read on, eager to find out. Micro-tension in *exposition*.

A couple of friends are spending a day shopping. At a certain high class boutique, they are in adjoining

dressing rooms, talking over the partitions.

“So, how did your date with Maurice go?” I held my breath, awaiting Judi's answer.

“It was great. He took me to that new steakhouse, *Tenders*. Soft light, warm music, the best wine. It was so romantic. And he's so funny. It was great—except. . .”

I knew I shouldn't, but I couldn't help myself. “Except what?”

Your reader repeats in the back of his/her mind, “Except what? What went wrong? Why couldn't she help herself? Why did she hold her breath in the first place?” And wild horses can't hold him/her back from reading further to find out. Micro-tension in *dialogue*.

You see what's going on here? Micro-tension is subtle, almost subliminal. The readers might or might not consciously catch these little bumps as they appear in the

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RAMBLING REX (CONT.)

Continued from page 2

fast-paced flow of your story, but somewhere in the back of their minds they will not only catch them, they will trip over them. And once they do these micro-tension bumps will be a burr under their subconscious saddles, driving them to read on until they relieve the irritation.

Put another way, micro-tension is the moment-by-moment tension—the electric current—that keeps your reader in a constant state of suspense over what will happen, not in the overall story, but in the next few pages.

So where does this micro-tension come from? Easily understood but often hard to do, micro-tension comes not from the plot or the



characters or the setting or the dialogue or the words themselves. Like practically all other tension and conflict in fiction (and perhaps anywhere), its roots are in *conflicting emotions*. Like wisps of smoke above a volcano, micro-tension is the subtle, telltale signal to the reader of a bubbling emotional cauldron underneath, one perhaps set to explode.

But micro-tension is more than that.

It is very much the net that supports your story, especially the sagging middle. It is the fuel that fires your readers. And it should be a fundamental instrument in your Fiction Toolkit.

The speakers' schedule for 2019 is about full, but we still need to identify subjects and find speakers for our 2019 Fall Mini-Conference. If you have any ideas, please see me at the next meeting or e-mail me at rexgriffin@aol.com. (Yes, I am a computer dinosaur.) Please put "Nightwriters" in the e-mail subject line so it won't go to my spam folder.

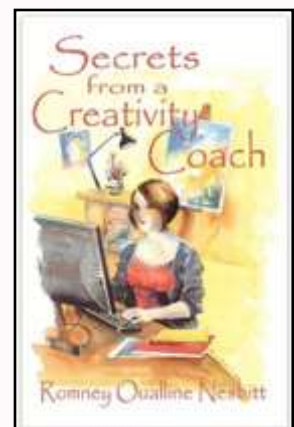
April Speaker Preview (Rescheduled from February)



Romney Nesbitt: "Secrets from a Creativity Coach"

You want to write, but finding the time and motivation to get started and stay on track isn't easy. Join Romney Nesbitt, Creativity Coach, to learn easy tricks to help you shift the way you use your time to match your circadian rhythms, evaluate requests for your expertise (nice ways to say "NO!") and make decisions based on your inner wisdom.

Romney has facilitated workshops on creativity for artist and writers groups regionally and at Romance Writers of America's annual conference. Copies of her book, *SECRETS FROM A CREATIVITY COACH*, will be available for \$15 following the meeting.



OUR MARCH MEETING

March 19, 2019

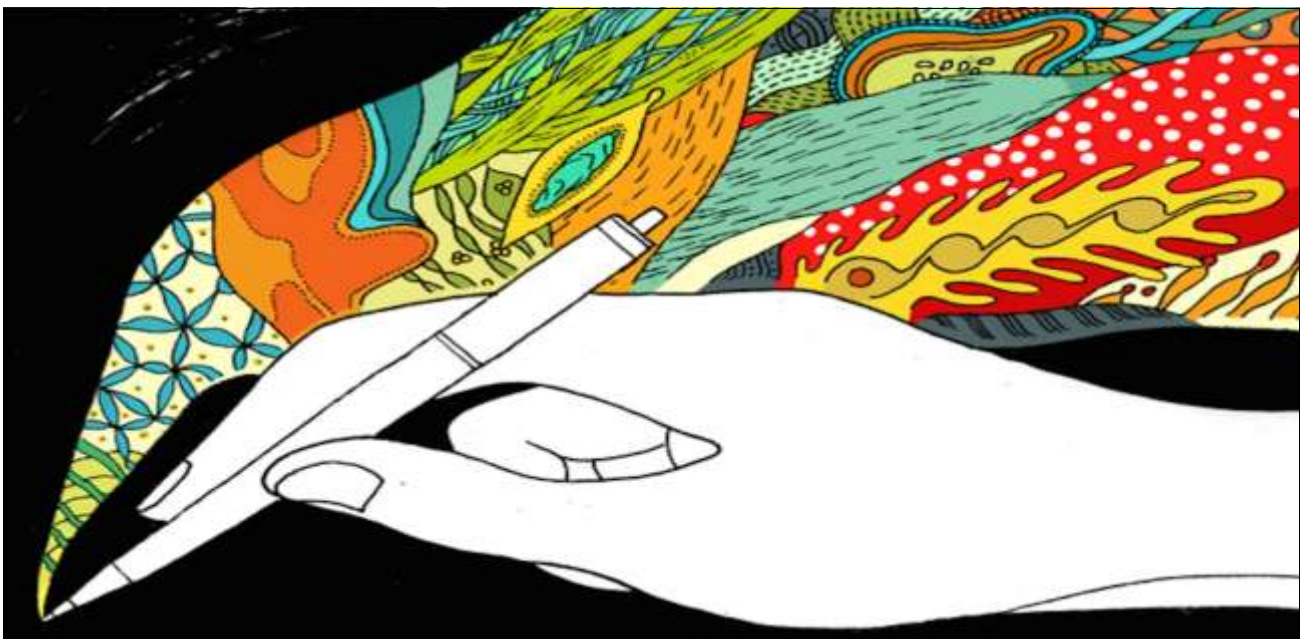
7:00 p.m. to 8:20 p.m.

Martin Regional Library Auditorium, 2601 South Garnett Road, Tulsa, OK

This event is not affiliated in any way with the Tulsa City-County Library.
The Library neither sponsors nor endorses this event, the speaker(s), nor the organization.

The Program—Word Artistry

Phetote (Fee toe tee) Mshairi (Em shah ee ree) is a renowned spoken-word artist, poet, author, performing artist, poetry slam champion (in several nationwide competitions), teaching artist, social and environmental activist, actor, song and jingle writer, playwright, curator, MC, mentor, philanthropist, substitute teacher, and moderator from Tulsa, Oklahoma. Phetote has been writing ever since he was a young man-child wielding a pen as a Word-smith's apprentice. He has B.B.A. from Langston University, with a major in Business Management. Phetote is on the Spoken-word/Poetry Committee at Living Arts of Tulsa. Phetote Mshairi appreciates the power of words and he lives poetically. He will be speaking to us about Word Artistry.



FEATURE ARTICLES

WRITING BY THE RULES



Using Commas, Part 3

by Carol Lavelle Snow

Restrictive Clauses

Restrictive clauses are those that are necessary to the meaning of the sentence.

I'm sure that I like him.

Never use commas to set off restrictive clauses. "That" always introduces a restrictive clause. If you left out "that I like him," no one would know what you were sure about.

The man who stole my necklace has been arrested.

If you left out "who stole my necklace" no one would know which man you were talking about.

The only test **which** I took yesterday was easy.
or

The only test **that** I took yesterday was easy.

The first sentence is correct for British English but not for American English. You'd have to change "which" to "that" because in American English "which" is only used for non-restrictive clauses and those clauses must be set off by a comma or commas. The second sentence is correct.

**Books
Authored and
Coauthored
by Carol Lavelle
Snow**



About the Author

Carol has an M.F.A. in drama from OU but got into the habit of teaching English instead—at Ohio University, TCC, ORU, and Spartan. She has acted in many plays and directed a few. Her scripts have appeared on the Narrative Television Network and at Spotlight Theater. She's published two novels and several short stories. You can find her poetry online in magazines like *Songs of Eretz* and *StepAway Magazine*, and in print in several journals, including *The Lyric*, *Harp-Strings Poetry Journal*, and *Crosstimbers*.



FEATURE ARTICLES



Deniece Adsit

I'm writing a memoir (currently untitled) about my cancer, the difficulty of obtaining a diagnosis, and challenge of finding effective treatment, which I hope to finish this year. I'm about 10% complete on this one.

I plan to finish "The Bear Creek Murders" under my alter ego, Lori Ellis. I'm about 1/3 of the way through this one.

I am working on multiple submissions to Chicken Soup for the Soul. I have submitted one this year, and plan to submit at least two more. My goal is to have at least one of them accepted for publication.

I plan to attend at least one conference this year.

Derek Bullard

Writing as Ira Amos: To finish and publish the second Arcadia Vyne mystery novel, "The Day Nobody Died," before the end of the year.

Writing as Derek Bullard: Complete at least a rough draft of the fourth Jordon Journal, "Set the Moon on Fire," by the end of the year.

I'd like to be able to set monthly goals, but I find I have to work on novels in between editing/publishing books for other writers. When those intervals arise, I often find it difficult to get back up to speed.

Joshua Danker-Dake

I'm trying to get this novel written that I've been trying to do for the last three years.

Rex Griffin

Find representation for my novel, AUTUMN OF THE WOLF.

Research and write my next novel, TIME TO STRIKE.

Learn more about the writing craft. There is so much I don't know.

Donna Jones

My 2019 goal is to complete revisions on my thriller, "Beautiful Bait." After revisions are complete, I will send the book to an editor. While the editor edits, I will plan the book launch and give feedback to the cover artist. If all goes as planned, the book will be published in November.

Julie Kimmel-Harbaugh

This year, my goal is to finish writing two children's stories that I've had on back burners. One is a folktale, which has required a significant amount of research. The other is the third in a somewhat autobiographical series. I'll enter the folktale in a contest and look for a publisher for the series.

Carol Snow

OBJECTIVES 2019

- 1) Write two poems a month.
- 2) Send poems to at least 5 different journals.
- 3) Publish a book of poetry.

M. Carolyn Steele

Simply put, my goal is to keep up with edits and look forward to digging out my second Civil War book for critiquing with hopes of finding a publisher for it.

Many thanks to these members for sharing their goals for 2019. I feel like I know them better, and I'm inspired as well. It's not too late to have your goals published in the newsletter. My email is: cindy-rose@cox.net

OWFI NEWS & INFORMATION

51ST ANNUAL
OKLAHOMA WRITERS' FEDERATION CONFERENCE

MAY 3 & 4, 2019

AT THE EMBASSY SUITES BY HILTON
1815 SOUTH MERIDIAN
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73108



March 15th is the deadline for the early bird discount for attendees to register for the 2019 OWFI May Conference. Attendees will save \$25 if they register before March 15th. Here's the link: <http://www.owfi.org/register> . The OWFI member price for the conference for \$200. Non-member price is \$250. Non-members can join OWFI through Tulsa Nightwriters Club for \$25 or be charged \$30 at the door.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT THIS LINK:
<https://www.owfi.org/conference2019/>

FROM: Vinita Eggers
2019 Honorary Lifetime Membership Committee Chair

The 2019 OWFI Honorary Lifetime Membership Committee is looking for nominations.

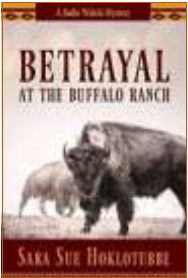
Please send your nominations to 2kwl2bagirl@gmail.com before March 30, 2019.

In your nominations, please include the person's full name, his/her contributions to OWFI and why you think he/she should be awarded the 2019 Honorary Lifetime Membership Award.

OUR MEMBERS HAVE BRAGS



Carol Lavelle Snow has won The Roberts Memorial Prize of \$100 for her poem "That Magic Spring" which appeared in the Spring 2018 issue of *The Lyric*.



Sara Hoklotubbe is happy to announce that **BETRAYAL AT THE BUFFALO RANCH**, the latest in the Sadie Walela Mystery Series, is a finalist for the Oklahoma Book Award in the Fiction category. Winners will be announced on April 12, 2019, in Oklahoma City.

Famous Writer Quotes

It's none of their business that you have to learn to write. Let them think you were born that way.

– Ernest Hemingway

People on the outside think there's something magical about writing, that you go up in the attic at midnight and cast the bones and come down in the morning with a story, but it isn't like that. You sit in back of the typewriter and you work, and that's all there is to it.

– Harlan Ellison

Tulsa NightWriters Club **Hall of Fame**



Peggy
Fielding

Romance Author
and Writing Instructor



Charles W.
Sasser

Freelance Writer,
Journalist,
and Photographer



Jackie
King

Cozy Mystery
and Short Story Author



Deborah
Camp

Romance Author



M. Carolyn
Steele

Journalist, Genealogist,
Author of Historical
Fiction and Nonfiction

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EDITING SERVICES

- * Proofreading
- * Copy Editing
- * Developmental Editing
- * Summary

Contact Julie Kimmel-Harbaugh

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Thank you,
JOHN TAYLOR
AND
TULSAJAZZ.COM,
 for supporting local authors
 on your website's
Local Author's Corner!

tulsajazz.wordpress.com

The Local Author's Corner was created to encourage the Jazz and the writing community to collaborate in promoting Tulsa-area talent. You'll find many Tulsa NightWriters showcased here.



Tierney James

Authors Wanted for

Sizzle in the Kitchen Blog

I have started a new blog series concerning where authors cook. I would so love for you to share about your world through your kitchen and cooking. One author will be featured each week. Share pictures, recipes, your books and genre, etc., anything that will make you shine (or *sizzle*). This is meant to be fun, light, and insightful to your world. It's a great way to get some new readers and much deserved attention. I will let you know when you will go live so you can promote on social media. I will do the same. Interested?

MEET THE PUBLISHERS!

The 5th annual **MEET THE PUBLISHERS!** event, presented by Renee' La Viness, will be from 2:00 to 4:30 PM on Saturday, March 30th, at Martin Regional Library, in Tulsa. Six publishers from Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Missouri are on the roster. Find more information at <http://jespidlin.com/publishers> or email Renee' at meet-the-publishers@jespidlin.com

We'd love to welcome you as a member!

If you'd like to join Tulsa NightWriters Club, please contact our treasurer, Marion Grace, at jmgrace@att.net

FROM YOUR EDITOR

NightScripts Submission Guidelines

- Deadline: 1st of the month (January-December)
- Specifications: Please do not format your text. Times New Roman, 12pt Single-space Attach graphics and/or photographs
- Send To: Cindy Rose cindy-rose@cox.net

CURRENTLY ACCEPTING ARTICLES

Do you have an idea for strengthening Tulsa NightWriters Club?

Send any ideas, speaker recommendations, etc., by e-mail, to the officer of your choice.

GENRE FOCUS GROUPS

The Genre Focus Groups program is an opportunity for NightWriters who write in the same genre to connect on an ongoing basis to support each other, exchange ideas, talk about marketing, read each other's work, and offer feedback. If you'd like to be listed for a genre or to connect with other writers, let us know—we'll be glad to help.

WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.NIGHTWRITERS.ORG



Click on these links to connect with TNWC on Facebook:

[TNWC Facebook Group for Club Members Only](#)

[TNWC Facebook Page \(public\)](#)

Please note: Only Tulsa NightWriters Club members may join our TNWC Facebook group. Our public Facebook page is open to non-club members.

Visit the [TNWC website](#) for club membership information.

FOLLOW TNWC ON TWITTER

You can follow TNWC on Twitter: [@TulsaNightWrite](#)
Please tweet our meetings and other events, and we will do our best to retweet your writing-related tweets.

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- Consulting Editor, Newsletter: Carol Snow
- Flash Writing Contest Chair: Marion Grace
- Newsletter Columnists: Carol Lavelle Snow
- NightWriter of the Year Award Assistant: Kathlyn Smith
- Thursday Thoughts (Facebook): Donna Jones
- Tuesday Tips (Facebook): Deniece Adsit