

NightScripts



July 2023

Connie Palmer Dodson, Editor

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Writing Prompt:

Does this scene inspire a story for you?

Write a short story of 1000 words or less and get it to me by July 31st 2023. I'll print my favorite in the August issue. One entry per member.

You can also just use the image to spark a scene or a story.

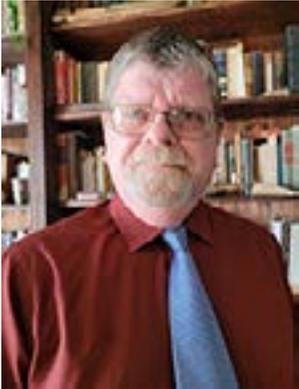
If you submit it to me don't forget to title your story. Put Writing Prompt in the subject line and submit it to: editor@tulsanightwriters.org



WRITE ON

The First Time

By our President, Merle Davenport



We all had to endure writing reports for school. Yuck! At some point, we tried our hand at writing something that wasn't assigned. Do you recall your first attempt at writing?

I was in the fifth grade. We were studying the pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving. I was inspired by the images of a new world filled with men and women traveling for months, surviving a harsh winter, and building a unique community with the help of Native Americans.

In my basement was an old Royal typewriter that sat on a desk, begging to be used. It was the kind that you had to punch the keys to the floor to make them work. I had watched my parents use the typewriter from time to time, so I had an idea of how to load paper and punch the right keys to make letters appear on the page. So, I sat down and stared at the keyboard. Why weren't the letters in alphabetical order? Weird!

Without any further instruction, I used the "hunt-and-peck" method to begin writing. An hour later, I typed right off the edge of the paper. "Well, that didn't work!"

My mother helped me understand how to use the long, silver lever to return the carriage to the beginning of the next line. It was cumbersome, but it worked. So I started re-writing the same line I wrote before.

After spending most of a Saturday morning writing, I ran out of paper again. This time it was at the bottom of the page.

"MOM!"

She helped me change the paper and even showed me how to make a light pencil mark at the end of the page to tell me when to change the paper. Two weeks later, I finished my script (five whole pages of brilliant writing).

Being a young boy who loved watching Westerns on our black-and-white television, my Thanksgiving play had to have a gunfight. This wasn't really in keeping with the spirit of Thanksgiving, but that didn't matter. It was awesome.

I took my treasure into my teacher and was informed that we didn't have time to produce the play. She encouraged me while still shielding the rest of the class from my amateur attempt. As I think back on it, I must admit that she saved me from a great deal of embarrassment.

On the other hand, I was writing. I had made my first attempt at developing a story. It had no real plot, no character development, and was filled with typos, but it was a start. If I had decided to write the great American novel, I would have never started. That was too much for me then.

As time went on, I continued to write. Sometimes I wrote on a typewriter, and other time I scribbled it out by hand. The more I wrote, the more I learned about writing.

Years later, I had a series of ten books of lesson plans for history and geography published. I thought they were fantastic at the time. Now, I would love to rewrite all of them.

The point is that we need to keep writing. It doesn't have to be perfect. We just have to do it. Learn all you can and keep writing.

The reason Tulsa NightWriters began is to help us improve our writing. So just keep writing.

THE WRITE TOUCH

CURE FOR WRITER'S BLOCK

By our Vice President, Kathryn Helstrom



There is no such thing as writer's block. You can always write something. It may not have anything to do with your poem or manuscript. It can be grandma's recipe for carrot cake. It can be back stories of your characters. It can be a rant about politics. It can be a commiseration about the pain you are feeling. It can be quips about your family or pets.

It can be simply copying text from a book or poem. Does that sound crazy? It's not. Some authors recommend this heartily. Pick your favorite book and just start typing (or writing) exactly what is on that page. Warm ups work in athletics, and they work in writing, too.

When you are composing your first draft, it will have some awful stuff in it. We are terrible critics about our own work, but hold off on any judgement until later. Your drafts will be coarse and driveling. Embrace it, love it, and accept it for what it is—your rough draft. You have to put words on paper. As Nora Roberts says, "You can't fix a blank page."

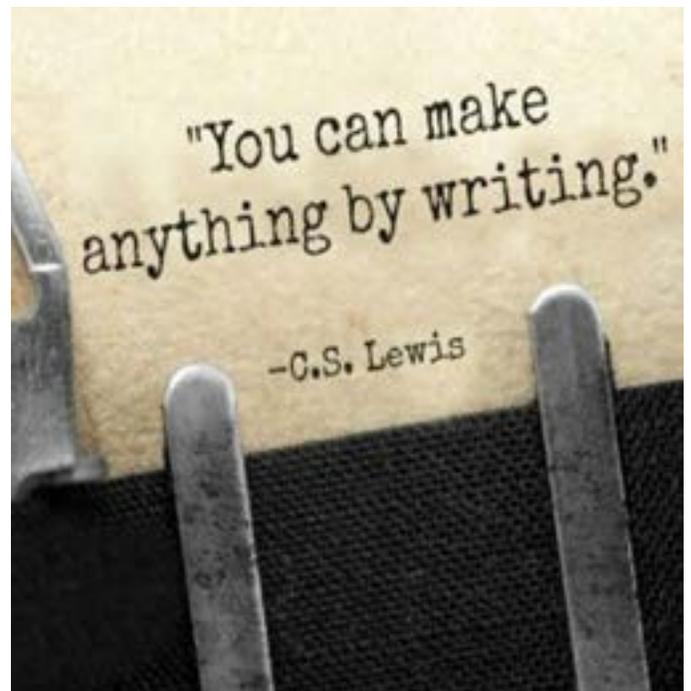
If you draw, your outline sketch is a few lines and may not look anything like the final product. If you sculpt, your first throw or chisel doesn't resemble anything at all. If you run or play ball, your first time out on the field is pathetic. But you must start. Thinking is overrated. Write.

Some of your creation will be fabulous, engaging, poetic. Then, the next passage will be

anemic and colorless. Push through the messy dross and climb up that rubble strewn slope to the summit of the last chapter. The best part of it? Nobody is going to know about it except you.

Now you can look back and see what needs to be cleaned up, rearranged, built up, or torn down. That is when the professional goes to work on the creation. Until then, it is not much more than a scheme, maybe with a few brilliant highlights, but mostly a muddle. You have to slap that junk down onto the manuscript before you make it great. Only then can you correct those scene structures, build up the descriptions, delete unnecessary verbiage, mark your beats with definitive twists and turns, and polish the dialog.

Any writing will break the block. I took Charles Bukowski's advice to heart with this article. He said, "Writing about a writer's block is better than not writing at all."



Flash Fiction Contest is underway!

[It's online Click Here for all the details.](https://tulsanightwriters.org/flash-fiction-contest/)

Or use the following link in your browser:
<https://tulsanightwriters.org/flash-fiction-contest/>

What does your brand say about you?

Saturday, August 19th, from 9am to 1pm

In this four-hour workshop, you'll learn the importance of your brand as an author – from what it means to have a brand to what it says about you to agents, publishers, and even the public who buys your work. You'll learn your brand is more than just the look of your website and your social media posts, but also your finished work – down to the layout, editing, and cover design of your book.

Be sure to bring your laptops for the interactive portion on social media, where you'll learn some of the basic design principles which will help your posts garner more attention.



[GET TICKETS HERE](#)

Cost:

General Public \$25

Tulsa NightWriters Member & Students \$20

Presenters

The team from Zealot Branding, a Tulsa-based full-service branding and marketing agency, will lead this hands-on workshop.

Welcome Wagon

Give a big Howdy to our new members.

Elizabeth Gore, Glenpool
Cheyenne Pauls, Broken Arrow
Elizabeth Morgan, Tulsa



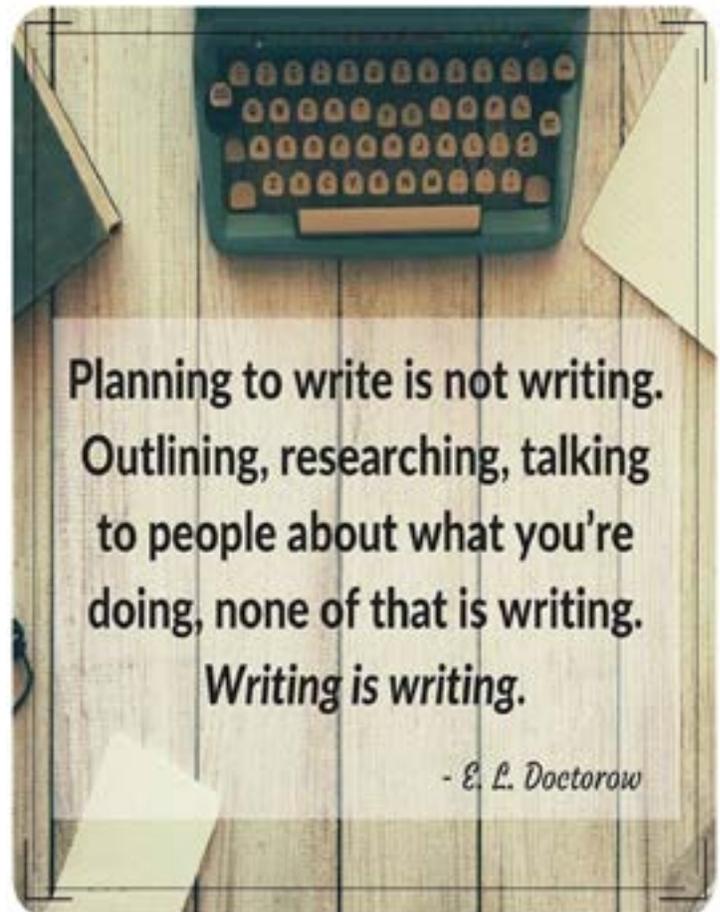
July Speaker

Bill Wettermann

July 18, 2023, 7 pm

Tulsa NightWriters Hall of Fame Member, Bill Wettermann, is an author of Thrillers and Christian non-fiction. He is a speaker, trainer, editor, and publisher. He won the Mystery, Suspense, Thriller contest at OWFI in 2011 and placed in the top seven in the Writer's Digest and Armchair Interviews Short Story competitions, where over 11,000 entries were judged. Bill has also won several Flash Fiction contests.

Bill will cover the steps necessary to get noticed by the literary world, Mentors, Conferences, learning the Craft, Making Contacts with Nationally known authors, publishers, and agents. And most of all, writing exceptional, quality work.



**Planning to write is not writing.
Outlining, researching, talking
to people about what you're
doing, none of that is writing.
Writing is writing.**

- E. L. Doctorow

COVER PROMPT WINNER

REACTION

BY JAMES R SYBRANT

The chair was empty, silent, relaying nothing it had witnessed. Even the small table off to the side didn't betray its secrets. Nonetheless, their testimony wasn't needed; there was evidence enough to answer the question they couldn't. The length of frayed rope, and the shinning tooth in the center of a pool of blood on the floor, told of the torture that occurred in the small room.

"This is what you call success?" Disgust showed on General Atwood's face. He was looking down on the body of a soldier, the face swollen, with blood drying at the ears, nose and mouth.

"Yes, sir," answered Dr. Casey.

"The result of your unsanctioned experiment; a dead man, and an escaped subject, is not what I would call success."

Dr. Casey was smart enough to not speak.

It was 1972 and Russia was using men and women with ESP to spy on America's government from their home country. So, as a counter to that threat, Project Star Gate was established. The goal was to find and utilize American citizen for the same purpose.

"And what were you trying to achieve by torturing that man?" Atwood asked, his voice heated.

"Sir, we need more than remote viewers to spy on the commies, we need weapons; human weapons."

"So you beat that man within an inch of his life?" He couldn't understand his reasoning, but waited for an explanation.

"Sir, we hoped to bring out more of his psychic abilities through physical pain."

"So, are you telling me it worked?" He was skeptical such abuse would have that kind of an effect.

"Sir, yes. We were trying to trigger his fight of flight response, and since he was restrained, he would have to use his mind to fight his aggressor. It finally worked, but he was much more powerful than we hoped for, or anticipated."

"Clearly."

"Sir, we need to contain him."

"You mean, so you can control his power, for the country."

"Yes, sir, for the country."

General Atwood knew that wasn't the truth, and that he was just excited to prove that there was more the human brain could do beyond thinking and reasoning.

"He must still be on base," Atwood said.

"Surely he won't be that hard to find."

"I would think not, sir, since he's beaten and bloody. Also, he's in civilian clothes, not a uniform. I already have men out looking for him, but an order from you to find him would be more motivation than my word carries."

"What if he does this to more men?" he asked, gesturing at the dead man.

"I don't think he will, as long as he doesn't feel his life's in danger. I'm sure the promise of medical attention will ease his mind; making him less of a threat."

"Well, I hope the men you sent after him know to not point guns at him."

"Yes, sir, but I did send a few with tranquilizer guns with the instruction not to shoot unless they couldn't be seen."

There came a knock on the door and a man poked his head inside before either man bade him to enter.

"What is it?" Atwood barked.

"He's been spotted, sir, by the east gate," he said, looking from one man to the other.

"Let's go," Atwood ordered. "I hope we can get him to calm down and return to the lab."

"I don't know how likely that is to happen; him returning to the lab, but it would be best for our research."

"You've a cold heart," Atwood replied. "We are talking about a man, not a rat."

"With what I do, I need to be dispassionate toward my subjects."

When they reached the east gate the man, face blooded and swollen, was surrounded by soldiers.

(Continued on page 7)

Reaction (continued from pg 2)

He was shouting a warning at them, revealing a gap where a tooth was missing.

“Stay back, I don’t want to hurt anyone else.”

He thrust his hands out and a bubble of psionic energy, barely visible as ripples in the air, pushed the soldiers back.

“His abilities are far more varied than I would have hoped for,” Dr. Casey said with excitement.

“Do you really think you can talk him down, and come freely without causing any more harm?” Atwood was as surprised as the men under his command at what they were seeing.

“I have to try.” He stepped forward and the man caught his motion.

“Stay back,” he warned again, turning to face him. “There’s too much power,” he said,

struggling with his newfound abilities.

“Please, just calm your thoughts and concentrate,” Dr. Casey pleaded.

“I can’t.”

They watched in wonder as the man through his arms out the sides, screaming as his body began to waver; like heat rising from a hot road. Then, to their horror, his body started glowing, shimmering from the inside out until it flared brighter than the sun. Just as quickly, the light faded; the man was gone.

“What just happened?” Atwood asked, clearly confused.

“If I had to guess, I would say it was psychic overload.”

General Atwood shook his head in amazement. “If we could harness that kind of power, we could put an end to the cold war.”



Our Annual Craft of Writing is coming up October 21st and we are looking for sponsors! There are various levels of sponsorships from being our lunch sponsor to a simple ad for the program. View sponsorships levels online here: <https://tulsanightwriters.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/TNW-Conference-Sponsorship-Package-Options.pdf>

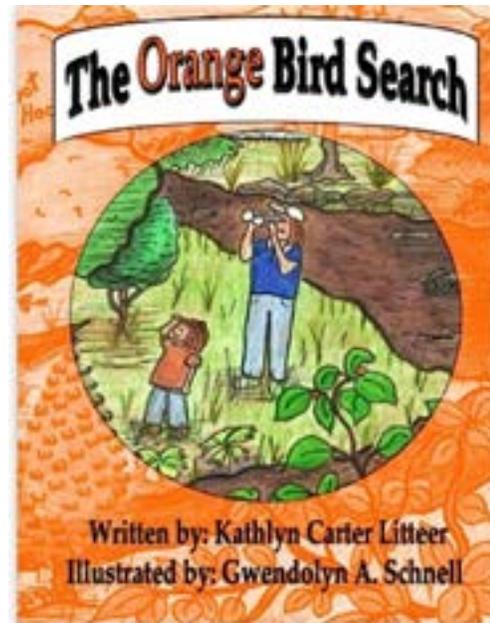
or

[Click Here](#)

BULLETIN BOARD



Kathlyn Smith published her first children's picture book. Audience 3-7 yrs. Find it on Amazon under Kathlyn Carter or use the link below.



[Available Here on Amazon](#)

Brag

The Lyric accepted two of Carol Lavelle Snow's poems for publication: "Serenity" and "Before Dawn." The editor invited Carol to make changes in another of the poems she submitted ("Autumn Years") and submit it again.

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Contact Julie Kimmel-Harbaugh

juliekh314@gmail.com

918-720-4866 (cell)

NightScripts Submission Guidelines and Wants

From Members: Currently accepting ads (for books and services), articles, short stories (100 - 200 words), poetry, and event information.

Submit To: editor@tulsanightwriters.org
Deadline: 5th of the Month
Specifications: Please format your text as follows:
Times New Roman, 12 pt
Single Spaced
Attach as a doc or pages
Attach graphics and / or photographs

From Non-Members: Paid Ad Space Available,
contact editor@tulsanightwriters.org

**\$10
Entry**



**\$10
Entry**

Fifth Annual

La Viness Short Story Writing Contest

www.jespiddlin.com/writingcontest

**First Place - \$100
Second Place - \$75
Third Place - \$50**

Submissions accepted July 1st through August 31st.

2023 TNW Board & Meeting Information

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Tulsa NightWriters will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 18, 2023, location information below.

July Speaker Bill Wetterman

on

From Novice to Published Author

See page 5 for additional information about this month's topic & speaker.

Directions

Take the I-244 to downtown Tulsa, and exit on Detroit. If you are coming from the west, the exit for the OSU campus is on the LEFT.

From Detroit Ave., turn right onto JH Franklin Road. You will see the Auditorium and Conference Center (North Hall) on the left. You can park in Lot E (first parking lot on left), or across the street in Lot D. We meet in Room 153. Look for signs posted at both entrances.

Parking is free and open to the public. It is a very short walk, and handicapped accessible. Campus security patrols the parking lots regularly.

