

In Print

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Calendar

November 11, 2010 –
PEG: Who: Writing Characters
That Click (Boulder)

November 17, 2010 –
Cal Luncheon: Putting E-Books
in Your Arsenal (Denver Press
Club)

December 4, 2010 –
CAL Holiday Party (at the home
of Bruce Most, 7400 West Grant
Ranch Blvd. #27, southwest
Denver)

Some Assembly is Required

by Christine Goff

It's now past Halloween and we are full steam ahead toward Thanksgiving, with Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanza just around the corner. Regardless of where you come down on the whole celebration thing, the impact of the holiday season is inevitable—on more than your patience and pocketbook. It's a time when almost everyone—editors and agents included—takes some vacation; a time when relatives—desired and/or dreaded—descend upon your household or, in some cases, worse, you must face the travel scene yourself. There are crowds, meals to be planned, celebrations to shop for and everything takes TIME. Precious time. So, what gives?

In the past, the first thing I let go of was my writing. Everything else took precedence until after the New Year had rung its last bell and I scrambled to tune up my rusty writing muscles, to get back on task, to get back on track. No more! Now, I carve out time for my writing and view everything that happens during the holidays as fodder—a sort of “Chicken Soup for the Writer’s Soul.”

Take, for instance, my last trip to Home Depot. We’ve recently moved and we now face the daunting task of being ready for the family who already plans to descend mid-December and stay a week into January. Picking up some moving essentials, I noticed the store already had Christmas decorations for sale. My first thought was to buy early. Then I paused to watch the other shoppers’ reactions and listen to snippets of their conversations. Most faces registered dismay. Many veered away from the area, as though waved off by the blinking lights on the artificial trees. Comments ranged from, “Man, Halloween isn’t even here, yet.” to “O.M.G., how many more days do I have until Christmas?”

I took notes. It got me thinking of other past holiday seasons and how, over the years, I have gleaned a lot of material and fitted it into my stories.

For example, one year, while waiting at the airport for an incoming relative, the flights were delayed. Groans abounded, like harmony to the Christmas carol playing through the airport muzak delivery system. (Note: I’m old enough to remember when everyone, not just a flying passenger, was allowed into the terminals.) I noticed that some people were prepared—staking out their piece of the floor and building luggage walls to delineate their plots. Blankets and pillows appeared, along with books, magazines and games. One person was left to hold down the fort, while others scattered to stockpile provisions—food, water, snacks, candy, sodas. Another group of people forsook the nesting instinct and headed straight to customer service, forming snaking lines, loudly voicing their complaints to anyone who would listen and growing madder by the minute. Harried customer service reps tried placating them, to little avail.

Curious, I turned to my two young teenage daughters and asked them what they observed. Their answer, “Old ladies wear pink shirts and white shoes.” I started people watching in more earnest then, and, guess what? I discovered that, at least in the Denver airport, in 1983, it was true. A stereotype was born and I took note—never wear a pink shirt and white shoes when over sixty-five.

Eventually, bored with the homesteaders, complainers and with tallying up the wardrobe tendencies of senior citizens, my daughters and I turned to devising stories for people that caught our attention. We decided that the young man

From The President

by Pam Novotny



There's No Escaping It...and That's Why We All Need CAL

I was talking to a writer pal the other day, one who has put aside her very successful writing career to earn a Ph.D. She's in the throes of writing her dissertation and it is giving her fits at the moment. We've chatted often about how lucky she is that she has those years of writing practice behind her. How much easier, if it can be called easy, are the gathering of research and the weaving together of facts for her than for many of her academic colleagues. But we've also been struck by how remarkably similar her dissertation writing process is to mine (wrapping up a mystery novel) and to many others we know of. Same inner turmoil, same terror at the blank page, same fear of failure and rejection. In short, we suffer the same writers' neuroses.

Joyce Carol Oates relates this about her writer pal, John McPhee: "He says every writer has a mini-nervous breakdown some time in the mid-morning but keeps going." Haven't we all felt that? I know I have. Checking in on my friend Hallie Ephron's blog, *Jungle Red Writers* (subtitle of which is *Writing Well Is the Best Revenge* – love that) I found an interview with Dennis Palumbo. He's the screenwriter who did *Welcome Back, Kotter* among others. He left to get a Ph.D. too, and became a psychotherapist helping writers with creativity issues – all the above-mentioned neuroses and more. He even wrote a book about that called *Writing from the Inside Out*. So he gets it, right? Smooth sailing in the writing department for him, yes? Well, not quite. His first mystery novel, *Mirror Image*, just came out and he reports suffering the same obsessions, feelings and worries as he did pre-Ph.D.

So what's the answer to this writer's life that can be so uncomfortable at times and downright crazy at others? First, I think it is to recognize that there's no escaping it. No matter what we write, we are tapping into our creativity and that by its nature leads us to the most vulnerable of our inner landscapes. Second, since that is so, I think we need to do as Dennis Palumbo does and stop hassling ourselves about our writer neuroses. What's the point of that, after all? Third, I love what John McPhee says we all do anyway (at least those of us who *are* writers ...): after the mini-nervous breakdown, we just keep going.

I hope too, that you've noticed a theme in what I've written so far. I've talked to writer friends, and read about other writers who are talking to their writer friends. **That's why we all need CAL.** No matter what kind of writing you're doing, you're bound to hit the bumpy spots. And no matter what kind of writing or bumpy spot you experience, you're bound to find help and camaraderie at CAL.

Hope to see you at November and December CAL events – in the meantime...

Write Well!
Pam

Happy Holidays!

From The Colorado Authors' League Officers and Board Members

The Inside Story: P IS FOR PROLIFIC

by Trina Lambert



Claudia Mills has written throughout her life. In eighth grade, her 100-page-long autobiography *T Is for Tarzan* (named for her nickname then) “was the sensation of the junior high school,” according to Mills. With 43 published books for young readers, the author herself is a sensation. Most recently, last year’s chapter book, *How Oliver Olson Changed the World*, now being translated into Korean and Japanese, was an American Library Association’s Notable Book of the Year. The first 30 years of her career she worked directly with an editor, but this year acquired an agent.

InPrint: How did you become a published author?

Claudia Mills: While I was working as an editorial secretary for Four Winds Press/Scholastic back in 1979, I submitted one of my

own manuscripts to my boss, using a pseudonym, and had to type my own rejection letter. Ditto for my second try. But on my third try, I was asked to write an editorial critique of my own manuscript, and revised it so successfully according to the suggestions that I gave to my pseudonymous self that they ended up publishing it.

InPrint: Your varied background includes a Ph.D. in philosophy and a Master’s degree in library science, as well as careers in children’s book publishing and a decade as editor and director of publications at the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy at the University of Maryland. You have been a professor of philosophy at the University of Colorado at Boulder for almost 20 years. How do all those experiences work into your literature for children?

CM: I’m not sure that they do. They mainly just make my life more rich and interesting—and give me a steady paycheck so that I can focus on my writing for non-commercial reasons.

InPrint: How does your background in children’s literature add a different perspective to the philosophy classes you teach?

CM: I try to incorporate children’s literature into my philosophy classes in various ways. For example, I have my Intro to Ethics students read a children’s novel, *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, for their final exam and comment on Marty’s moral dilemma from the perspective of the various philosophers we’ve studied together.

InPrint: Do you approach writing for your academic field with a different process?

CM: I do. For my academic writing, I write directly on the computer, slopping down a rough draft that I then revise extensively and refine. For my children’s books, even in a rough draft, I write every sentence with care.

InPrint: Your most recent book, *One Square Inch*, was released in September. In the book, a brother and sister create an imaginary world to cope with difficulties in their real world. On your website (www.claudiamillsauthor.com), you state you and your younger sister created magical worlds together. Did you draw on your experiences for this book?

CM: Not directly. But probably indirectly. I certainly know firsthand how vivid children’s fantasy lives can be.

InPrint: The kids in the book are facing a parent’s bipolar disorder. Do many of your books deal with serious issues?

CM: This is my darkest and saddest book; this is the most serious issue I’ve tackled. Usually I write about smaller problems like struggling with the times tables (*7 x 9 = Trouble!*) or being the only kid in the class whose parents won’t let him go to the third-grade space sleepover (*How Oliver Olson Changed the World*). But I think children’s books nowadays can deal with extremely serious issues, unflinchingly.

InPrint: How does an author find time to complete so many books while teaching and publishing in academia and raising a family?

CM: I write for an hour each morning, writing longhand with a pen on a pad of paper on a clipboard, while drinking Swiss Miss hot chocolate. I tend to complete a page a day—not much, but it really adds up.

InPrint: How did giving birth to boys change the types of books you wrote?

CM: It changed everything! I certainly began to write about boy characters, which I had never done before. Now I write more books about boys than I do about girls.

InPrint: With your second son in college, has your writing routine changed?

CM: No. I think I’ll have the same writing routine until the day I die!

InPrint: What parts of your writing career do you enjoy most?

CM: I love the sheer act of writing—putting those words down on the blank page. My hour a day with my clipboard, pad, pen, and hot chocolate is the best part of my life.

InPrint: What is the purpose of your blog? (www.claudiamillsanhouraday.blogspot.com)

CM: It was supposed to be to promote my career by my developing more of an Internet presence, but then it turned into something that was just a lot of fun to do in its own right.

Charting A New Course: The Changing Business Model For Writers

by M. Carolyn Miller



When I began my writing career 30 years ago, the business model for writers was simple. You wrote the book or book proposal and covered research expenses, found an agent who sold the project to a New York publisher for a hefty advance, and used the advance to complete the project and recoup your expenses. Once the book was published, speaking engagements and fame followed. I never applied this model completely—my path went in different creative directions, in part based on financial need—but it still hung heavy in my psyche.

Several years ago, I was contracted to write a book on entrepreneurship. Nearly one year and 50

business books of research later, I completed the project. During that project, I used the research to map a business roadmap for someone like me, a creative person who maps one-of-a-kind methodologies and related curricula and then teaches those curricula in workshops and, eventually, introduces them in books. In all my research, I never could find a viable roadmap. So being the map-maker that I am, I made one.

For the next year, I applied the business principles I'd mapped, determined to be more than a writer who just "makes it" financially. I identified my target population, crafted my message, drafted a sales process, ran basic financials, and more. At the end of that year, I learned two things: 1) it was costing me \$800 to make one \$1,500 workshop sale and, 2) I was using lead generation channels that were not only low on ROI (return on investment) but were labor intensive, exhausting, and not my skill set. So I stopped.

I then turned my attention to selling the book proposal which, according to the old business model, would give me the money I needed to complete the book, recoup my losses and be successful. I applied this model twice in my career but never completed it because of the resources demanded. This time, I was determined.

A good friend and agent guided me through the book proposal writing process. When it was done, I had a solid proposal and the book's first three chapters. My agent friend read the finished project, proclaimed it solid and then stated, in light of publishing industry trends, "I can't sell it to New York because you don't have a big enough platform. You can either build a platform or sell it to a regional publisher but the advance will be tiny." A well-published friend echoed that comment. "You need to be doing the marketing, not just dreaming." I stopped. I've been down this road before, I thought.

I have invested \$20,000 two times over in my creative career attempting to follow its business model. Both times I didn't know what I didn't know. Now, I do but I'm out of resources. I also know authors who have personally invested up to \$100,000 on one book project to build a platform. I don't think that's good ROI. So once again, I stopped. I told myself I would move forward when a new business model emerged. In the interim, I began working with an online learning company to upgrade my skills and replenish my bank account.

Fast forward one year. I am now well-versed in online learning and gaming. And I love the virtual environment. It's the future and offers unlimited potential in audience and capabilities, especially for writers and other "information entrepreneurs," as I've learned I am. It also is part of the new business model I'm mapping.

That new business model is a variation on the original theme. You do your research, run your workshops/pilot programs, and use the book proposal format to figure out what the book is and how to write it, and who your audience is. Then, you map your business path and financial strategy, develop a social media presence to build followers and educate your audience, and identify "for free" and "for fee" content. From that content, you generate income and build a financially viable business. You also build a global platform and buzz.

Publishing the book traditionally is still necessary for credibility and to reach non-online audiences, but not critical to financial success. Fame? Well, it may come but if it doesn't, you're still making a good living doing what you love, which is all I ever wanted to do anyway.

There are two things critical to a creative business' success: 1) a roadmap (I prefer a visual one) so you can chart the strategy and make sure your actions and resources are purposeful, and 2) a business model you can replicate because that's the only way you'll make money. (Think McDonald's.)

As writers, we're never taught business basics. But it's not rocket science. If I can learn it, anyone can. And I'm still learning. In fact, now, I'm out hitting the pavement in search of strategic partners as I wait for a new funding model to emerge. I expect it to because the market is ripe for innovation, and creative people are at the forefront of business growth and social change.

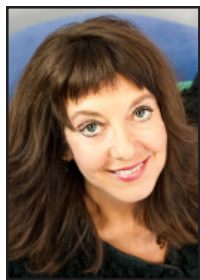
Also, because, well, third time's a charm.

*M. Carolyn Miller publishes creative nonfiction and fiction and leads retreats. Her most recent work is *Entrepreneurship* (McKinley College, 2008). If you'd like to learn how to apply these principles to your business, contact Carolyn for a free 20-minute conversation. cmiller@cultureshape.com*

What's In Store For Fall

PEGs November 11, 2010: "Who: Writing Characters That Click"

Page Lambert (*In Search of Kinship*, Rocky Mountain bestseller, and *Shifting Stars*, Mountains & Plains Book Award finalist) has received numerous literary awards, including the 2009 Orlando Nonfiction Award. Her work appears in dozens of collections; her latest in *Pilgrimage* with a forthcoming essay to appear in *The Manner of the Country: Living and Writing the American West*. A creative coach and book doctor, she has been leading outdoor adventures and retreats for fourteen years, often working in partnership with organizations such as The Women's Wilderness Institute, the Grand Canyon Field Institute, and the Aspen Writers' Foundation. For more information on Page, please visit www.pagelambert.com.



Gail Storey is the author of the outrageously comic, subversively spiritual novels *The Lord's Motel* (called by The New York Times Book Review "a tale of unwise judgments and wise humor") and *God's Country Club* (a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers Selection), as well as stories, essays, and articles in magazines. Her memoir about hiking the 2,663-mile Pacific Crest Trail is currently hiking the publishing trail. She writes two blogs: <http://gailstorey.com> (about the many dimensions of transformation through nature) and <http://amberstorey.com> (about all the trouble transformation can get you into).

When: Thursday, November 11, 2010, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Where: Carol Grever's House, 1800 Bluebell Avenue, Boulder

Price: \$20 for members

RSVP by November 9, 2010 to CALreservations@gmail.com

Luncheon November 17, 2010: "Putting E-Books in Your Arsenal"

In this eye-opening talk, digital pro Chris Snelgrove of Darkfire Productions in Centennial, Colorado will tell you why going "e" is something every writer needs to consider. Chris will talk about overcoming the self-publishing stigma and how to navigate getting your book on eReaders everywhere.



When: Wednesday, November 17, 2010, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Where: The Denver Press Club, 1330 Glenarm Place, Denver

Price for Buffet Lunch: \$16 for members and \$25 for non-members

RSVP by 10 a.m. on Monday, November 15, 2010, to www.ColoradoAuthors.org or to CALreservations@gmail.com.

MORE TERRIFIC SPEAKERS COMING IN 2011...

- **January 26, 2011:** "Economics of the Internet: Blogging - and Beyond - For Profit" at The Denver Press Club
- **February 23, 2011:** "Searching for Story Ideas: Where the Pros Find Them" at The Denver Press Club
- **April 27, 2011:** "The Art of Reviewing: Why You Should Take This Seriously" at The Boulder Cork

Writer's Toolbox...Creative Journaling

by Kent Ira Groff



Even skilled writers may neglect the personal side of our professional development. Returning to basics can rekindle motivation and insight.

Face barriers to journaling. *Don't try to say things "right."* Make only two rules: date each entry; make a mistake in the first one! *Forget skipped days:* aim for four days (or one) out of seven.

Why keep a journal? A journal integrates each isolated *jour* (day) with your lifelong *journey*. It incorporates fragmented pieces of my life to mirror the sacred presence in a broken world—"repairing the universe" (*tikkun olam*) in Jewish kabalistic tradition.

A journal helps me discern before deciding, opens options. It helps me listen to a dream—or a knot in my stomach, integrating "right-brain" intuition with "left-brain" data. It's my "resident psychiatrist" at 3:00 a.m. Or it clarifies issues I need to bring to a therapist or a spiritual guide.

Journaling opens creative ways to reflect on or respond to life: *experiences*—painful, joyous or boring; *conversations*—a friend's affirmation or haunting question; *sacred texts*—from your own faith or another's; *quotations*—lifelong favorites or one today on NPR; *readings, lectures, sermons*—an insight or a puzzlement; *dreams*—fantasies or active imagination; *poetry, art, music*—your own or others'; *nature*—photos or objects like a feather or leaf (glued in your journal); *meditation, prayer*—your own breathing, walking or gestures.

A journal entry from a teaching experience may make it into my writing for publication.

A student burst into class this morning demanding, "What is spirituality?" Turning to the class, we came up with a definition I want to remember, so I asked a student to record it: "Spirituality is learning to respond rather than react to

*Writer's Toolbox...Creative Journaling
continued on page 10*

Bar Codes and Beyond: Writers Who Teach

by Kathryn Winograd

“My job is the greatest.”

My teacher antennae snap to attention. It's break time during poetry workshop at the community college and my students chat.

It's the stripper and the cheerleader.

“Really?!” asks our beatific 16-year-old honors high school student and chronic writer of kitty cat poems.

The black-clad Ruth sidles closer, body piercings glittering like armor.

“Oh, yes,” Ruth says, eyes red-rimmed and dilated. “Flexible hours, own boss, great money. You should try it.”

I waggle my finger at our rosy Kewpie doll. “Can you help me with these papers, Mary Pat?”

Ruth slides back into her chair, picks at the bitten quick of her nails. Tonight, she will read her continuing chronicles of the disembodied stripper and drive another nail through our hearts, and I will lose her, fail her in every way, before the end of the semester, to the “flexibility” of her hours.

Welcome to the world of teaching creative writing. That purported fallback world of “can'ts” and non-doers in an alarmingly shrunken literary world ever eroded by Game Boy devotees and Twitter aficionados.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics cites 151,700 jobs reported by writers and authors in 2008. Seventy percent of those writers and authors were self-employed, 30 percent were salaried, just half of those worked in professional, scientific, and technical services and in publishing (except Internet) industries. Obviously, not many of us are living the New York literary life and business is certainly not a big draw. So what's a Muse-tormented, bill-paying writer to do in a clockwork world of cubicles and paperwork natterings?

To hell with the adages. Teach, of course.

Why? Here's the short list: flexibility of hours, honing of craft (if you don't know it real well, you ain't gonna teach it real well), revelry of class prep (study what you love), professional connections, and a little money. (Okay, sometimes a lot, but, unfortunately, most writers don't come bar-coded. What is the favorite institutional pay most writers should avoid? “Gosh, thank you for doing this out of the goodness of your heart and your desperate need to justify your existence as a writer. How 'bout a Starbucks coupon?”)

In the past 30 years, I have taught everything from MFA programs to kindergarten classes to elder hostels. I have sat at tiny tables in Montessori schools, at shining mahogany conference room tables, and the cluttered tables of private kitchens. I have taught the weeping geologist, the inarticulate 6-year-old drawing the sad moon, the philosophizing ex-nun, and the bereaved mother. I am therapist and priest, nursemaid and taskmaster. I slash and burn, coddle and cajole, elbow and sidestep, wheedle and exhort.

“More,” I say. “More. Always deeper.”

And I watch the crippled soul, (oh, yes, the sentimentality here), leak out of the stuttering pen, the precarious pixel, and am glad.

This gladness is one intangible of the long list I share with writers who teach. “The great part about teaching,” says Martin McGovern, poet and playwright at Regis University, “is reading the amazing novel a student has just written the last chapter for. Reading the poem that just knocks your socks off.”

Lizabeth Netzel, founder of Fresh Ink, has been a writer, editor and coach to authors for 20 years: “Coaching book authors, in particular, supports my own creative writing life—not only financially and emotionally but also in terms of craft. Many times I have seen how to unravel knots (of theme, character or structure) in my own stories after loosening similar tangles in others' work.”

Sounds good, doesn't it? So what's the rub?

Hoads of writers who teach. GradSchools.com, billed as the “#1 graduate school directory on the planet,” lists 299 accredited graduate degree programs in creative writing. Within the drivable Denver area are four MA, MFA, and/or Ph.D. programs. And let's not forget the “enslaved-to-no-geographics” low residency MFA program. How many highly pedigreed, highly motivated, already bony writers are out there right now seeking the Holy Grail^¾ the elusive creative writing class, deemed “boutique” by bottom-line college administrators?

Okay, no despair. Publish, publish well. If academia is your bliss, qualify to teach comp, thrust your steel-toes into the ivory gates, and dig in. Or look into non-credit, continuing education programs. Or go private like Liz. Or Carol Sullivan who teaches a successful “Turning Your Life into Story” class to those over 55. Or be Andrea and Mike of the Lighthouse Writers, say no to the sometimes drudgery of adjunct teaching, and start your own writing institute. Go to the library, your church, your child's school. Do it for free until you have the experience and publications that bring the moneyed teaching world to your door. Advertise, network, schmooze.

Then find your bar code.

Kathryn Winograd, poet and essayist, is a full time faculty member at Arapahoe Community College, core poetry faculty for Ashland University's low residency MFA program, and writing faculty for the University of Northern Colorado's Middle Ground Project, a teaching collaboration with the Navajo Nation.

Local Teaching Opportunities

College or University teaching positions, face-to-face or online: Contact the Chair of the English department or the Director of the Continuing Education department. (Each institution may have a slightly different name for its non-credit continuing education program, but most institutions do have one.) Two examples: Community Education at Arapahoe Community College (www.arapahoe.edu/community-education) and University of Colorado at Denver's CUOnline program (www.ucdenver.edu/academics/CUOnline).

Colorado Humanities: Contact Josephine Jones, Director of Programs & Center for the Book, with resume and writing sample at jones@coloradohumanities.org.

- *Authors in Community:* CH funds author visits to libraries, schools, bookstores and cafés where authors present their own work, usually in a single visit. Most authors selected to serve in this program are Colorado Book Award finalists and winners.
- *Writers in the Schools:* Writers are trained to serve 10-18 week residencies that help students create work in various genres. Each residency culminates in a published anthology and reading in classroom or public venue.

Denver Writing Project: Nicole Piasecki, Director, email Nicole.Piasecki@ucdenver.edu. Hires writers for fall, spring, and summer retreats for teaching/writing development. Looks for writers "whose writings and values align with the DWP's mission of promoting reflective practice and collaborative, active learning." Pays \$200-300 for a three-hour workshop. Writers may sell/sign their books for additional money.

Lighthouse Writers Workshop: Mike Henry and Andrea Dupree, Founders, email info@lighthousewriters.org. Writers hired on their current activity as writers (writing and publishing in their genre) and their dedication to the workshop process. MFA not required. "Currently have 40 instructors on our rosters, so we're not actively looking for more, but that does change sometimes."

Think 360 Arts: Michelle Shedro, Education Director, email: info@think360arts.org. A merger of Young Audience of Colorado and Colorado Alliance for Arts Education that provides K-12 arts education in Colorado. Rigorous application process after which successful candidates are added to a teacher roster, showcased on the Think 360 Arts website, and are considered for short-term teaching positions or residencies in schools statewide. Rosters open every couple of years. — KW

CAL Holiday Party

Celebrate the Season at the CAL Holiday Party!

CONNECT WITH FELLOW CAL-ORADANS & FRIENDS OLD AND NEW

Join other CAL members on Saturday, December 4, 2010, from 4-7 pm at the home of Bruce Most, 7400 West Grant Ranch Blvd., #27, in southwest Denver.

Directions: From West Bowles Avenue and South Wadsworth Boulevard (at the Southwest Plaza Mall) go north on Wadsworth, cross one intersection and turn east at the next intersection, which is Crestline (by Bear Car Wash). Go two blocks to Grant Ranch Boulevard (by Home Depot) and turn right. Go two blocks and turn right into Gray Hawk subdivision. Veer right to #27. Park by house or along Grant Ranch Boulevard.

If you get lost, call 303 972-0268.

Please bring an appetizer or dessert for 8-10 people. Your special guest is also welcome.

RSVP to Mary Young at 303-660-4960 or Mary@MaryTaylorYoung.com (RSVP is just to get an attendance count—please come whether you RSVP or not!)

Some Assembly is Required *continued from page 1*

striking up a conversation with the young girl beside him was a college student on his way home. Daughter number one concludes that he was attracted to the beautiful stranger and predicted they would exchange contact information, stay in touch, marry and live happily ever after. Daughter number two predicted they would flirt, exchange information, promise to stay in touch, then he would toss her information at first chance and fly off, never to call again and thus breaking her heart. Me? I'm a mystery novelist. I know for a fact that he's a serial killer—a Ted Bundy-type of charmer—and either she's his next victim or a beautiful FBI agent sent undercover to bring him down. Or, for a twist, he's the FBI agent and she's an international terrorist. (I'm suddenly glad I wasn't boarding her plane.)

I took more notes.

The point I'm trying to make is that all this note-taking helps to keep my writing skills sharp. By describing settings and establishing scenes, fabricating or documenting dialogue, building characters, plotting scenarios, I am honing the craft of writing.

Further, I sharpened my skills more when I contemplate the personality tendencies of my family and friends in order to select the perfect gift. I make it a point to gather anecdotes, and recipes, for cooking, happiness and disaster.

But, having the pieces without some assembly leaves the project incomplete. A writer must write, preferably every day. Around the holidays, it seems impossible. It's not!

Like most everyone else, my ability to write every day on my normal schedule disappears during the holidays, but I've developed tricks to finding time to exercise my writing muscles:

- **Carry a notepad with you everywhere.** This is good advice whether you want to jot down observations (see above) or craft prose and poetry or record the facts. While I use computer like most writers, I have done some of my best writing in longhand. Regardless, while, like many, I am astute and observant, I have found my memory is never as good as the observation I've jotted down.
- **Take a laptop to bed.** For me, my best work is done in the morning. Enlisting my husband's support, during the holidays, I will get up and write on my laptop in the privacy of our bedroom while my husband showers, reads the paper and starts the coffee. With him deftly fending off those who might ask, "Where's Mom?," I can usually get in an hour (well, maybe forty-five minutes) of writing. Use your spouse. Sure, you'll end up owing him/her one, but paybacks are usually worth it.
- **Call in the cavalry.** When my kids were smaller, there was a house rule that one did not interrupt Mom when she was working (except in cases of blood, broken bones or death). Counting on the old adage (and English proverb) that "old habits die hard," I shorten my hours, schedule them around the activities and make sure my now-grown children know when I plan to be working. Funny how, to this day, my kids will defend my established writing time from callers, solicitors, friends and other family members as if their lives depended on it.
- **Be creative.** We have all heard the story about how John Grisham wrote *A Time to Kill* on the train commuting to and from home to work. We've been regaled with tales of how someone wrote their first novel in a Starbucks or on a pad resting on top of the washing machine or while soaking in the bathtub (you think I'm joking). So then, what's

wrong with writing a few sentence in-between gift-wrapping presents, basting the turkey or taste-testing the Glug?

- **Take vacation.** It only makes sense to set aside some time to spend with family and friends. I schedule a chunk of time off, so I can enjoy the season. By giving myself that luxury, I don't feel deprived of my writing time, or resent those things/people that deprive me, or feel guilty about not working. In fact, I find I am more appreciative and inclined to write during my scheduled hours.
- **Be flexible.** By now you've probably come up with a plan. Note, all good plans get disrupted. I don't know if that's an adage or a proverb, but it's the truth—especially during the holidays. You need to realize that there may be a day when you can't get your writing in. A day when you'll be stuck at the airport picking up Aunt Harriet or in a line at the grocery store replacing the turkey the dog just ate. Go with the flow. Take notes. And, for what it's worth, I'll lay you odds that Aunt Harriet is wearing pink and white and that not everyone will read the directions when some assembly is required.

Happy Holidays!

Christine Goff wanted to be a writer from the time she penned her first book The Haunted Mansion. Well, okay, so it was third grade, and the book was more of a short story. It was still the spark that kindled the flame that fanned a burning desire to one day publish a novel. Several false starts later, she is now the author of the bestselling Birdwatcher's Mystery Series, two of which were nominated for prestigious Willa Literary Awards. Her latest promotional idea—a springtime karaoke tour of Tokyo, will coincide with the Japanese release of her second novel.

Events, Classes & Contests

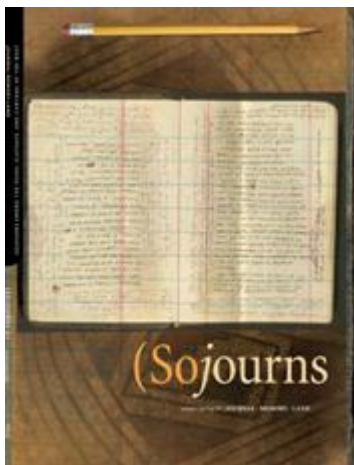
Michael Madigan Book Signing, Thursday, November 4, 7:30 a.m.: Michael Madigan will discuss and sign copies of *Heroes, Villains, Dames & Disasters / 150 Years of Front-Page Stories from the Rocky Mountain News*. Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive, Fort Collins. 970-221-6644 for confirmation.

Medieval Writing Workshops for the Girl Scouts, November 6: In these workshops, led by Cheryl Carpinello (ccarpinello@mac.com), author of *Guinevere: On the Eve of Legend*, girls learn about medieval times, try their hands at writing their own Medieval stories, and earn their writing badges. Times and locations are as follows: Brownie Girl Scouts Writing Workshop, Loveland, Colorado, November 6, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Junior Girl Scouts Writing Workshop, Loveland, Colorado, November 6, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Junior Girl Scouts Writing Workshop, Colorado Springs, Colorado, November 6, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Harvest of Books, Saturday, November 6, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Featuring nine Colorado authors signing their books: Dan Blegen, *Bents Fort: Crossroads of Cultures on the Santa Fe Trail*; Mary Peace Finley, *Midnight Ride of Blackwell Station*; Kathleen Cunningham Guler, *A Land Beyond Ravens*; Joyce Lohse, biographies for young readers; Michael Madigan, *Heroes, Villains, Dames & Disasters / 150 Years of Front-Page Stories from the Rocky Mountain News*; Nancy Mills, *The Knight the Moon and the Stars Got Stuck*; Elaine Pease, *Ghost Over Boulder Creek*; Ravay Snow, children's picture books; John Stansfield, storyteller and author. Molly Brown Summer House, 2690 South Wadsworth Boulevard. For confirmation: Doris Baker, 888-570-2663.

Michael Madigan Book Signing, Wednesday, November 17, 7:30 p.m.: Michael Madigan will discuss and sign copies of *Historic Photos of Denver from the 50s, 60s, and 70s*. Tattered Cover, LoDo, 1628 16th Street.

Sojourn Into the Heart of Writing, Saturday, November 20, 2010: A one-day exploration into the art of writing in living color, with Page Lambert and *Journal.Memory.Land*, an issue of *Sojourns* magazine. This one-day seminar will explore the essays and art featured in *Sojourns* (works by Craig Childs, Scott Thybony, Hal Cannon, Stephen Trimble, Tom Till, Deborah Durban, Raechel Running, Elena Miras Garcia, Jocelyn Cooley, Jerry Jacka, Mary Jardine, Gary Stroutsos, Peter Hassrick, Kanin Routson, Larry Lindahl, Tony Foster, and Patiann Rogers.) You'll discover new ways to sensualize your fiction, memoir, and poetry through the use of sensory details, and do writing prompts from Page's essay "Writing Life" to generate the seeds of new writing. Limited to 10 participants. Mt. Vernon Country Club, Golden, Colorado. Complete details at www.pagelambert.com/retreat_index.html. To register, go to www.pagelambert.com/contact.html.



Writers: Replenish Yourself; Enjoy the Holidays with Gentle Yoga, November, December, January:

Emphasis on relaxation and writer-related issues. Small classes. Individual attention. Drop-ins \$12/session. CAL members get four sessions for \$40. Times are as follows: Saturday November 20, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Saturday December 4, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; Saturday December 18, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; Sunday, January 2, 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. 1740 Marion Street, Denver. Call Gail Waldstein at 303-321-1137 or email gwaldstein@gmail.com to reserve a space.

Manuscript Critique Group, Sunday, January 24, 2011, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., Cherry Creek: 100 pages critiqued in terms of reader expectations by talented group of writers. Memoir, novel, linked stories, creative nonfiction. Limited space. Call Gail Waldstein at 303-321-1137 or email gwaldstein@gmail.com.

Plan Now to Enter the 2011 CAL Awards Contest!

Many of the exciting programs and PEGs scheduled for the 2010-2011 membership year are geared toward helping you become a better writer. So why not take your best work of 2010 to the next logical step and enter it in the 2011 CAL Awards contest?

Later this fall, we will announce revised rules for the CAL awards contest. One important change is an earlier entry deadline. That's why it's a good idea to start thinking now about which of your articles, books, essays, short stories, or other literary gems of the year you would like to enter.

Watch for more information in upcoming newsletters and on the CAL website.

Writer's Toolbox. . .Creative Journaling *continued from page 5*

the events of the world and the circumstances of your life—in a manner that blesses the world and your own soul.”

That's what a journal helps us do: move from *reacting* to *responding*. (I glued the student's handwritten scrap into my journal.) Later I published it in my book *What Would I Believe If I Didn't Believe Anything?*

Be creative yet practical. Try out methods you think are not your natural bent.

- *Draw dream images or sacred parables.* Use markers, pastels or pencils.
- *Write poetically.* Focus on a simple object, then journal whatever comes to mind... writing words or phrases down the side of the page.
- *Use sticky notes.* Jot an insight or a dream fragment during your workday; stick the note in your journal at night. I keep one note labeled “Big Stuff 4 Prayer”—my upcoming writing projects, seminars and retreats, family matters—attaching it a few pages ahead. When I reach that page, I note any signs of progress. Once an event happens, I insert a smiley face. After several are complete, I rewrite the list.
- *Write back to front* (like the Hebrew Bible). I keep sections in the back: Centering Prayer “mantras,” movies I've seen, art.
- *Import nature.* Once while conversing with a friend, a tiny oak leaf fell between us; I picked it up. The next morning I glued it in my journal, and later that day wrote a prayer poem. I offer this as my longing for you to experience the great Mystery: reflecting on negative experiences and finding positive growth.

*The cracked acorn of my soul oaks its way into seeing,
rooted all ways, always in the Ground of my being.*

Kent Ira Groff, CAL member living in Stapleton, Denver, is a spiritual guide for other journeyers and a retreat leader in the U.S. and abroad. Dr. Groff has authored several books including *Writing Tides: Finding Grace and Growth Through Writing*, *What Would I Believe If I Didn't Believe Anything?*, and *Facing East, Praying West* (2010), a poetry journal from his sabbatical in India. *E-mail:* kentiragroff@comcast.net *Web:* www.kentiragroff.com

Inside Story: *continued from page 5*

InPrint: You are a prolific writer in several areas of children's publishing—how do you decide which topic to pursue and what level that resulting book will be?

CM: I do a lot of groping. I mine childhood memories, mine my boys' childhood trials and tribulations, and pay attention when I visit schools. Once I have my character and his or her problem, the format/level of the book follows from that directly.

InPrint: Do you know what your next project is and are you working on it yet?

CM: I've been working feverishly on a three-book contract for Knopf/Random House, about a curmudgeonly boy and his hyper-enthusiastic best friend. I'm about to tackle revisions on book three: *Mason Dixon: Basketball Disasters*.

Mills' busy lifestyle allows little promotion time, though with *One Square Inch*, she has targeted support organizations for families dealing with mental illness. Plus, she signs copies of her book Tuesday, November 9, at 6:30 p.m. at the Boulder Bookstore. Come November 10, she will be awake before dawn, warm mug in hand, ready to set pen to paper for one golden hour of her day.

Trina Lambert writes essays, articles, and commentaries and served as editorial advisor/coach on *Kinship*, by Roger L. Kinney. Her blog, “*Going the Distance*,” can be found at: <http://trinalambert.wordpress.com>.

Obituary: Adeline McConnell

By Jeanne Varnell

Adeline McConnell, a long-time CAL member, died of cancer on October 17, 2010, in Fort Collins. She was born October 12, 1923, in Montclair, New Jersey, and is survived by her partner, Ken Callaway, and her sons, Rob, Ross and Doug, and their families.

Many years ago, Adeline's husband was killed when the bicycle he was riding was hit by a car, leaving her a widow with three young sons to raise. She then moved her family to Denver, where she taught elementary grades in the Denver Public Schools for 18 years. In addition to teaching, she was active in volunteer events. Notably, she joined the March for Peace Disarmament Protest, walking in an army marching cross-country from Denver to Washington, D.C. The Journey lasted from March to November.

As a member of CAL, Adeline freelanced nonfiction articles on subjects, such as Alaskan sled dogs and her family in New York City. She joined The Colorado Mountain Club to cross-country ski and climb, and also played competitive tennis with three groups.

A few years ago, Adeline moved to Fort Collins to be near her son, Ross, a professor at Colorado State University, and her grandchildren. In Fort Collins, Adeline has been active in the Poudre Wilderness Volunteers to help the Forestry Department maintain and police nearby mountain trails. She also enjoyed her membership in “The Serious Thinkers;” a women's group, a book club, and continuing her freelance writing.

Member News

Carolyn E. Campbell received two Special Merit Awards by the *Comstock Review* for two poems: “When You Turn Around” and “The Collectors.” They will be published in January 2011.

Peter R. Decker has a novel coming out in early November, *Saving the West*. For more information about the book, please go to: www.westernslopepress.com.

Art Elser’s poem “Death at Tollgate Creek” was recently published in the *Clark Street Review*. He has two poems soon to be published: “Peace in a Violent Place” in *Harp Strings Poetry Journal* and “To Interpret Nature Is...” in *Legacy Magazine*.

David L. Erickson was the author and editor of *The United States District Court for the District of Colorado*, a history of the federal court and profiles of the deceased judges. It was published in the spring by The Tenth Judicial Circuit Historical Society. David’s article “Two Alternatives to Litigation: An Introduction to Arbitration and Mediation” was republished this fall in the *Handbook on Mediation, Second Edition* by the American Arbitration Association. David just completed the 27th annual update of his 2,000 page business law book, *Colorado Corporate Forms: Legal and Business*, published by Thomson Reuters. A third edition of the book is planned for the summer of 2011.

Kimberly Field’s feature on Denver’s historic Mayan Theatre appears in the November, 2010 issue of *Denver Magazine*.

Dan Guenther’s new book, *The Crooked Truth*, a collection of poems, is due out in November from Redburn Press.

Linda LeBlanc just signed with an agent, Scott Treimel, one of only 23 listed as “Highly Recommend” in *Preditors and Editors*, for her YA novel.

Joyce B. Lohse and several other Filter Press authors will be featured at the Harvest of Books 2010. Sponsored by Filter Press, this book sale will take place at the Molly Brown Summer House, on the NE corner of Wadsworth and Yale in Denver, on Saturday, November 6, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Admission is free.

Thomas J. Noel, a longtime CAL member, writes a column every other Sunday in The Denver Post and appears now and then on Channel 9’s Colorado & Company as Dr. Colorado. Tom has just published his 39th book, *Mile High Tourism: Denver’s Convention & Visitor History*, with co-author Debra B. Faulkner.

Phyllis J. Perry’s newest picture book, *Panda’s Earthquake Escape*, illustrated by Susan Detwiler, was named a finalist in the children’s fiction category for the National Best Books 2010 Award by USA Book News in Los Angeles. Phyllis will be signing this book and two adult books about Rocky Mountain National Park, at the JAX Outdoor Gear store, 1200 N. Highway 287, in Fort Collins, on Saturday, November 13, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. One hundred Colorado and Wyoming authors will be taking part in the event which will benefit the Poudre River Library District. Free popcorn and balloons for kids will be offered, and readings by authors will take place every half hour. Free Christmas gift wrap is available.

Joey Porcelli is excited to announce that her short film “Condemned” will screen at the 33rd Starz Denver Film Festival on Saturday November 6 at 7 p.m. and Sunday November 7 at 1:45 p.m. at the Starz Film Center, Tivoli. Twenty-one years after the disastrous Exxon Valdez oil spill, BP’s blowout contaminated the Gulf of Mexico. With urgent messages from Jacques Cousteau’s son (1989) and grandson (2010), Joey’s film asks, “Will we learn to protect our oceans and wildlife or will we continue to repeat our mistakes?”

Gary Raham, hosted by The Friends of Dinosaur Ridge, will sign his new book, *The Dinosaurs’ Last Seashore*, at the Lutheran Church of the Master, Alameda Parkway & Jewell, November 30, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. This graphic story about a Cretaceous time traveler in search of the “creatures that transformed a world” features his black and white artwork and text that honors the style of naturalist Loren Eiseley. Raham will also participate in Local Authors’ Day at JAX Outdoor Gear, 1200 N. College in Fort Collins, November 13, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Irv Sternberg will discuss and sign his historical thriller, *The Persian Project*, at the Fireside Books and Café, Englewood, on Saturday, December 4, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Irv’s novel was inspired by his experiences in Iran in the years leading up to the Revolution. *The Persian Project* is the prequel to his series featuring Special Ops veteran Clint Jagger.

Sandra Ford Walston, The Courage Expert, released her second book, *STUCK: 12 Steps Up the Leadership Ladder*. This is the follow-up to her first book, *COURAGE: The Heart and Spirit of Every Woman*. *STUCK* can be purchased at www.sandrawalston.com/book/stuck-12-steps-up-the-leadership-ladder.

Kathryn Winograd’s essay, “Unearthing *Leetso*: Yellow Monster beneath the Four Corners of the World,” on the Navajo Nation and the legacy of its uranium mining appears in the current edition of *River Teeth: A Journal of Nonfiction Narrative*.

Newsletter Submissions

InPrint Welcomes Your Submissions

Do you have a new book or article coming out? Perhaps you won an award or have a book signing coming up. Share your news with CAL by sending the details (100 words or less) to InPrint co-editor Doug Kurtz at doug@writelife coaching.com. Include "InPrint Member News" in the subject heading. Please italicize book titles and publication names and place in quotes article and short story titles.

InPrint would also like to hear about upcoming events, classes and contests that may be of interest to CAL members. Send to doug@writelife coaching.com and put "InPrint: Event Listing" in the subject heading. Be sure to include the name, date, time and location of the item along with a brief description, cost and registration and/or contact information.

You may also send member news and event listings via regular mail to Doug Kurtz, 2820 Colby Drive, Boulder, CO 80305. For questions, please call Doug at 303-499-0519 or InPrint co-editor Pam Kramer at 303-933-3392.

Photos of authors, events, book jackets are welcome. Please attach a JPEG file to the email or send a color or black-and-white photo by regular mail.

The deadline for the next issue is **Friday, December 17, 2010.**

Advertisements for *The InPrint* are welcome: a 3-inch-by-5-inch display ad is just \$35. Contact the editor for other sizes or additional information.

CAL Service Directory

Change of address, phone number, or other information:

To change your name, contact information, e-mail address or writing specialty, please visit the CAL website at ColoradoAuthors.org. Under the Members Only section, click on My Account, then click on Edit Account Information. If you have questions or do not have Internet access, please contact web chair Doug Hawk at dhawk0948@aol.com or 303-373-1718. This information is printed in the Who's Who Directory.

All CAL members are automatically set up to receive notifications, including luncheon postcards and the InPrint newsletter, via e-mail. (The Who's Who directory is sent via postal mail.) If you receive notifications via postal mail and would like to receive them via e-mail only, select the save a tree option at ColoradoAuthors.org. Under the Members Only section, click on My Account, then click on Edit Account Information and scroll down to Miscellaneous Information. Place a check mark in the box labeled "Send all CAL Notifications by e-mail only."

New member questions/applications:

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