



Write Connections

Volume 21 Number 5

May 2006

The TAMPA WRITERS ALLIANCE is an organization of adult writers—amateur and professional, beginning and advanced—who share a keen interest in improving skills and resources. Its members, who number about 100, create works of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry; as well as stage and screenplays. In addition to its monthly general meeting, the TWA conducts workshops in specific aspects of writing, provides free assistance to scholastic and literary groups, sponsors an annual writing contest open to all writers, and publishes a yearly anthology.

Next TWA General Meeting

Wednesday, May 3rd, 7pm, at John Germany Tampa Library



Promote Yourself on the Internet

The Tampa Writers Alliance would like you to welcome our very own Wendy Boucher for the May 3rd meeting. Wendy is a published travel writer and novelist. Her first novel, "Parvenue Throws A Party," was published by her own publishing company, Hoyden Press. Her stand-alone sequel, "Teacup Travels," has just been picked up by an agent in New York and is currently making the rounds at the publishing houses. Wendy will be speaking about self-promotion on the internet with some basic instructions for starting a blog. She will also answer any questions that you might have about book promotion in general. Please join us in the auditorium of the John Germany Tampa Public Library, 900 Ashley Street, downtown Tampa. Parking is available on the street or in the garage parking (City Fees Apply). Open free to the public.

KIRT DRESSLER....You'll Be Missed!

It is with deep regret that I inform our members of the death this past weekend of Kirt Dressler, the leader of our critique group. Kirt gave so freely of his immense knowledge of writing, and worked with our members to help them toward creating publishable and marketable work. He ran a unique writing business, Superior Writing Services, which he started in his home and expanded to a storefront operation offering resumes, fiction and nonfiction editing, business plans, ... anything that had to do with writing. Kirt was a successful creative writer, poet, ghostwriter, editor, and playwright. ! We will all miss him.



SKIP ALLEN RESIGNS AS VICE PRESIDENT

The Tampa Writers Alliance EXCOM deeply appreciates Skip Allen's hard work and commitment as Vice President, and regrets his decision to leave his position due to other demands. In his short tenure, he brought many new ideas and a refreshing outlook to the organization. Yes, Skip will still be around. Tell him thank you when you see him!

The Tampa Writers Alliance EXCOM is looking for a member who would be interested in serving as Vice President. He or she would attend monthly board meetings, help steer the organization, and coordinate special projects. There's a Vice President out there...and the EXCOM will be appointing someone, but it would be great if we knew who...

"A Writer's Life...Calendar and Notes" from TWA president Sandra Kischuk

TWA Calendar:

MAY

- May 3: General Meeting, 7 p.m., John Germany Library...Wendy Boucher, author: *Parvenue Throws A Party*, and *Teacup Travels*, "Starting a Blog to Promote your Book."
- TWA 'Floating' Contest category decided: to be published in May
- May 20: Awards luncheon for HCTE judges
- May 20: Write Connections articles due

Wordsmith 2006

I am assembling the Wordsmith 2006 publication.

Receiving a free copy requires that you were a current member of TWA on December 31st of 2005, and that you actively select to receive a copy. We print based on demand so that we don't spend your money for unwanted copies. If you were not a member, but want to pay for a copy, indicate 'nonmember.'

Sign up at the general meeting, at the new member's party, or by sending an e-mail to James Young, Treasurer, jayoung@mindspring.com.

Wordsmith 2007

We are starting to select judges (non-members) for the 2006 writing contest. If you have suggestions, please forward them to James Young, Contest Coordinator: jayoung@mindspring.com, call him at **813.391.1139**.

The prize structure will be:

\$100 for 1st place in each category

\$75.00 for 2nd place in each category

\$50.00 for 3rd place in each category

\$25.00 for Honorable Mentions place in each category with no more than 1 out of every 10 entries

Our "floating" category this year is *Children's Literature* (age to 12, no adult themes, 2,500 word maximum). So get busy with your writing. We will be judging fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scripts, science fiction/fantasy, novel, Ed Hirshberg, and children's literature.

The revised rules will also reflect that all contest entries are with the condition that the entrant currently is or must become a member of TWA.

Here I go with a newsletter message, reminding you to *write*, which I almost forgot to do.

Life is like that. It pushes things onto our already full plates. I know I find myself working nights and weekends, not very effectively because my morning hours are best and beyond that, I never know. There is only so much I can get done in that two or three creative hours I have. I used to have more, but the M.S. that decided to visit 27 years ago took a lot of that away...which isn't to say that I don't intend to do everything I can to steal it back.

We all have our own challenges, whether it is health constraints, the demands of a job, raising children, or a spouse that does not understand that writing is not a luxury for the writer, it is a necessity like breathing.

Recent studies have shown that writing is important to help people process their lives... and that those who write down their days have a deeper and better understanding of where they are going. In corollary is the research that showed that those college grads who *wrote* clearly defined goals had a better chance of having achieved them twenty years later. Cheers then to Tom Valeo, our March speaker, who talked on the 'existential memoir.' His presentation was a reminder to write more often.

In coaching individuals through life transformation, I recommend that people write down their objectives and read them out loud. The same with your writing. When you read it out loud, your ear may tell you what your eyes do not.

I have three major TWA issues to work on this month, a speech to prepare, 30 or so pieces I need to critique for someone, and a house and garage still torn up from a kitchen remodel. In the meantime I have two novels, two nonfiction newsletter compilations, and an anthology of my own to edit. I would have thought I would have had at least one ready for the printer since it has been almost a year. I keep using the excuse that the work is still 'in edit' as a reminder that it is still on my plate.

In edit means I read it out loud. If I'm editing someone else's work, I read it out loud.

It's just hard getting through all the other stuff.

Sandra Kischuk

May 1, 2006

Membership renewal time for...

Vee Dayton, Gerri Almond, Kenneth Clanton, Usman Chani, Karen McKinney, Bryan Meckley, Michael Molony, Stephanie Moore, Brian Randall, Thomas Reciniello, Lynn Rothman Venus, Wade Wetherington

Members may bring their \$25 annual dues to the next General Meeting, or mail it to:

Jim Young, 2826 Keysville Rd East, Lithia, Florida 33547

Members receiving *WC* via the US mail, your renewal date is on your label.

Writer Weblinks

TWA is linking to member's websites. E-mail your name and web address to our webmaster, James Chaplin, at **jpcflorida@hotmail.com**, so we can link up with you and people that find TWA can find you! We may also set up a TWA blog. Your thoughts and input would be appreciated.

Book Raffles

Got a book you published that you want to donate to the TWA? We will raffle one or two off at each general meeting...which gives you the opportunity to present and promote your book and get it in the hands of the TWA readership!

Thought for the month:

When you read it out loud, your ear may tell you what your eyes do not.

ATTENTION

Interested in being in a NOVELPOD! Now is the time is now to make your interest known. Contact Jim Young immediately at jayoung@mindspring.com

Note: Jim has spamblocker so you'll have to confirm your e-mail isn't spam to get through.

TWA Critique Group –

Have you found other critique groups wanting? If so, the Tampa Writers Alliance Critique Group may be for you. Here's our process: Writer's email their work to me and 12 days before the next meeting, I email the pieces to all group members. This gives members ample time to evaluate each story. At the meeting, we read a little of the piece being considered, then each person gets a chance to comment. After everyone has had his or her say, the author gets the last word. We generally do four pieces per meeting.

All genres are welcome. We accept short stories, novel chapters, and even poetry. The group meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month from 7-9 PM in the right rear of the Barnes and Noble bookstore at 11802 North Dale Mabry Highway (next to Piccadilly cafeteria). That's just south of Stall Road. If you see Borders, you're too far north.

WORD OF THE MONTH

vendetta • \ven-DET-uh\ • *noun*

1 : a feud between different clans or families : blood feud

***2** : an often prolonged series of retaliatory, vengeful, or hostile acts or exchange of such acts

MEMBERS IN MEDIA

Information for this feature needs to be sent
to the editor by the 20th of each month at: mectampa@tampabay.rr.com

Angie Jones' personal essay "Cosmic Dust" was runner-up in nonfiction in the 2006 Mount Dora Festival of Music and Literature.

Evelyn Ann Romano was the 3rd place winner in the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System's 4th annual LitWit Poetry Contest. The winning poem was "Ode to Summer Fruit".

Author's Opportunity to Write a Non-fiction Book

John Wojtowicz died on January 2, 2006. You probably never heard of him... but you most likely have heard of the movie and book, "Dog Day Afternoon" starring Al Pacino. It is based on the real-life stick up of New York City bank by John and his accomplice, Sal, who held several hostages at bay for most of an afternoon in August of 1972. John's motivation? Money for a sex-change operation for his friend. Although married with kids, John was quite gay. John spent several years in prison – Sal was shot and killed by an FBI agent during the escape attempt. Living in Tampa today is a long-time friend of his, we will call him Michael. He is a man in his mid-fifties, also very flamboyantly gay and quite outrageous, who has a story to tell about his relationship with Wojtowicz as well as several other high profile gay, lesbian and transsexual friends in the 80's and 90's. Michael has been on the Phil Donahue program, Sally Jesse Rapheal's show among others and experienced a small smattering of notoriety at that time. Michael is not a writer. What Michael needs is to work with a writer who will weave his life's story into a book. The project will entail getting to know him, hearing his stories and putting them into an interesting captivating sequence. Michael has a good deal of documentation and photos to back up his story. I have seen them and they are for real. The project will probably take six to nine months to put together, perhaps even less time for a fast working writer.

You can get some basic information about the John Wojtowicz part of the story by going on line and putting in 'John Wojtowicz.' There is much more than the Wojtowicz adventure than Michael has to tell.

If you have an interest in writing Michael's book, e-mail me (Jim Chaplin) at jpcflorida@hotmail.com Please just put 'Michael' in the subject line. In the body, tell me a bit about your writing experience and why you would want to take on this project. Include your phone number. As it stands now, the agreement with Michael is that all net revenues from the book will be split 50-50 with the author.

The Poetry Group

The Tampa Writers Alliance Poetry Group meets on the 4th Thursday of every month except December. We meet at the Barnes & Noble Booksellers North, at 7 PM around a table way in the back of the bookstore. The store is located on North Dale Mabry, (west side of the street) just south of Stall Road, which is the first major intersection south of Fletcher Avenue. (Borders is nearby. Don't go there.) Bring your poems or your songs, printed, spoken or recorded. Bring copies if you can so we can read along. We have fun and try to offer lots of encouragement and no tough, unrewarding criticism. We expect the same from you.

Warner D. Conarton, coordinator warnerc@quixnet.net



NEXT
MEETING
IN
May 25th



It's the competition's 75th year, and we're celebrating by giving away more than \$30,000 in cash and prizes! Log on to:
<http://www.writersdigest.com/contests/annual/75th/>

Grand Prize: \$3,000 cash and an all-expense paid trip to New York City. That's right, *Writer's Digest* will fly you and a guest to The Big

Apple, where you'll share your winning work with four editors or agents!

1,001 winners will be chosen in all! Just be sure to send us your best by the **May 15, 2006** deadline.

Don't wait — enter the 75th Annual *Writer's Digest* Writing Competition today!

Plus, reserve your copy of the **75th Annual Writer's Digest Writing Competition Collection!** This exclusive book published by **Outskirts Press** will contain the Grand Prize-winning manuscript, the First Place manuscript in each category, and the names of all 1,001 winners of the 75th Annual Competition.

Entry Fee: Poems are \$10 for the first entry; \$5 for each additional poem submitted in the same online session. All other entries are \$15 for the first manuscript; \$10 for each additional manuscript submitted in the same online session.

Add \$2 per manuscript to all entries postmarked after Monday, May 15, 2006. Entries postmarked after Thursday, June 01, 2006, will not be accepted.

Compete and Win in 10 Categories!

- ❖ Inspirational Writing (Spiritual/Religious)
- ❖ Memoirs/Personal Essay
- ❖ Magazine Feature Article
- ❖ Genre Short Story (Mystery, Romance, etc.)
- ❖ Mainstream/Literary Short Story
- ❖ Rhyming Poetry
- ❖ Non-rhyming Poetry
- ❖ Stage Play (* submission by mail only)
- ❖ Television/Movie Script (* submission by mail only)
- ❖ Children's/Young Adult Fiction

AN INVITATION Here's your chance to HAVE FUN and HELP A GREAT CAUSE!! **SUBMIT A STORY FOR OUR UPCOMING DOG BOOK!!**

I'm seeking stories from dog lovers for an upcoming book, "Lessons We Learned From Our Dogs." You can tell the world about your beloved dog and (hopefully) look forward to having your story published.



To submit a story for consideration, just follow these simple guidelines:

- (1) **Begin your story** by describing the details of some situation involving your dog, then end it by stating the lesson it taught you. Examples:
 - * A gentleman writes about his dog sensing fire late one night and barking frantically until he had awakened the entire family. Lessons learned: "Dogs have a sixth sense; pay attention!"
 - * One woman tells of watching her dog dig determinedly for a buried bone. He dug and dug without result. He would stop, rest and start again. He kept digging until his prize was uncovered. The writer's lesson learned was: "If you want something badly enough, go after it tooth and nail, and don't give up."
 - * Another lady describes her dog, Frisky, in detail: "He has the reputation of being the ugliest dog in the world. Every day is a bad hair day for him. But he loves me!! After 81 years of never allowing a dog on my bed, I have relented and he snores right along with me! Even with his starved appearance, I find myself believing he is handsome." Her lesson learned: "Yes, indeed, beauty is in the eye of the beholder."
- (2) **Your story may be anywhere from 500 to 1,250 words.** We prefer to receive your copy via e-mail. Be sure to include your name, postal address, plus your e-mail address.
- (3) **Deadline for submissions is May 15, 2006.**

SPECIAL NOTE: Proceeds from the book will benefit the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc. – a wonderful charity you can take pride in helping. E-mail your "lesson learned" story to me at: billtoulouse@aol.com. Or, send it regular mail to: Bill Toulouse, 108 South Main Street, Cranbury, NJ 08512. **If you need writing tips or have questions, use these same addresses for answers. Thanks!**

-- Bill Toulouse, Editor
 Retired national magazine publisher

Writing a novel??? A TWA Novel Pod can make your job easier.

As of October, 2005, the Tampa Writers Alliance has seven active novel pods.

For more information, or if you are interested in starting a novel pod in your area, contact Paul May at paul@paulrmay.com. The novel pods are sanctioned by the Tampa Writers Alliance. As such, all who participate should be TWA members in good standing.

Location	Facilitator	Email Address	Status
Carrollwood	Wendi Christner	ForWendi@aol.com	Closed to new members
Carrollwood	Lark Underwood	the1lark@hotmail.com	Closed to new members
Carrollwood	Brian Thometz	bthometz@tampabay.rr.com	Open for 2 nd draft projects
Citrus Hills	Lou Kiefer	kiefers@digitalusa.net	Open
South / Central Tampa	Sarah Byrne Greenwood	sarakali@tampabay.rr.com	Open for book-length fiction or novella collections
South Tampa	Sandi Scionti	sciontis@verizon.net	Open - *Nonfiction
South Tampa	KC Lucchese	kclukz@earthlink.net	Open

Each Novel Pod is limited to just a few writers who are actively creating a novel-length book of fiction. Authors read each others work-in-progress offering beneficial ideas and positive critiques. Is what 'you've' written clear? Is what you're attempting to convey coming through? A TWA Novel Pod can help you write a better book.

PINAWOR (Pinellas Authors and Writers Organization)

This writers' group meets each Saturday, 9:30 am to noon, at the Highlands Recreation Center Complex, 400 N.

Highlands Avenue, Largo. Contact **Elenora Rose Sabin, 727-345-3376** or elanora36@yahoo.com

GENERAL FYI

- 🌸 TWA meets each calendar month on the 1st Wednesday at the main Tampa library. The only exceptions are those first Wednesdays coinciding with a holiday, in which case the membership is notified in the newsletter of the alternative date/day several months in advance.
- 🌸 The February meeting is a staged reading of the winners of the Script category from the previous year's writing contest. February is also the month—every 2 years—TWA elects its new ExCom.
- 🌸 The writing contest Awards Banquet is held in January to avoid the holiday crush & allow us better venues and prices. It is usually scheduled for the latter part of the month.
- 🌸 To receive your free membership copy of THE WORDSMITH, our annual anthology, you must have been a member in good standing (paid up!) by the 31st of December of the previous year (i.e to get the 2005 WORDSMITH, you must have joined by 12/31/04) and you must have "actively selected" to receive one. Contact Lark Underwood and "actively select" your copy. We only print a few archival copies beyond what we need for members, so if you do not let us know you want one, when it comes time, you'll have to either regret your lack of attention/effort or pay for a copy—if any are left.

Lifelong Writers, the membership arm of the *Florida Center for Writers*, meets 7pm to 9pm the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the MMH building at USF. Open to all writers and aspiring writers.

Contact **Martha Lakis**, at 813-974-8021 or mglakis@admin.usf.edu for more info.

PASAWOR (Pasco Authors and Writers Organization)

This group meets the 1st & 3rd Mondays, 12:30 to 3:00 pm, at the Pasco Art Council-5744 Moog Rd in Holiday, FL. Contact Barbara Harrington at bshadowbooks@ij.net or call 727-572-6345.

TWA Directory

TITLE	NAME	PHONE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
President	Sandra Kischuk	813-935-7760	sjkischuk@juno.com
Vice President	Skip Allen	813-975-0254	Efa451@aol.com
Secretary	Cathie Astl	813-994-5455	cathieastl@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Jim Young	813-737-1688	jayoung@mindspring.com
Member-at-Large	Eugene Orlando		tpg@eugeneorlando.com
Poetry	Warner Conarton	352-588-3228	warnerc@quixnet.net
Write Connections Editor	Lisa Coleman	813-662-5115	mectampa@tampabay.rr.com
Critique Group			
Wordsmith Editor			
Website	Jim Chaplin	813-835-4255	jpcflorida@hotmail.com
Publicity/Public Relations	Position open		
Event Coordinator	Position open		
TWA WEBSITE			WWW.TAMPAWRITERS.ORG

On producing your monthly Write Connections...

This newsletter is several days late. My only excuse is TIME. Orders have been pouring in at the Sign Shop and I haven't seen a day off in weeks. I hope you will all forgive me for the tardiness.

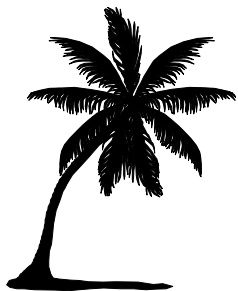
I will keep this short, but this month gives us a holiday that many do not take at face value...**Memorial Day**



Let's remember those who are fighting for our freedoms, those who have done so in the past and those who will continue to do so in the future. Let us remember those who have led the Tampa Writers Alliance and are no longer with us.

Have a Safe Memorial Day and **Write On!**

Lisa Coleman - Write Connections Editor



Tampa Writers Alliance
Write Connections

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