



Write Connections

Volume 23 Number 8

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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.

Regular Meeting

Wednesday August 6th at 7pm at the Jan Platt Library located at 3910 S. Manhattan Ave., Tampa, FL 33611.

The August general meeting is Wednesday August 6th at 7pm at the Jan Platt Library located at 3910 S. Manhattan Ave., Tampa, FL 33611. Yes, that's right, we have moved again. The Jimmie Keel Library has too many government functions going on, such as early voting and tax classes that have their auditorium occupied for several months out of every year. And we do not want to have to cram into one of those little meeting rooms again if we can help it. So, out of many, many places—almost all of which were not associated with the public library system—inquired of to hold our meetings over the past two months, the Jan Platt Library appears to best fit our needs. They have a large auditorium and two good-sized meeting rooms. As they are also an early voting center, the TWA general meeting will be in the bigger of the two meeting rooms. Its capacity is 37, which far exceeds the 20 maximum of the meeting rooms at Jimmie Keel Library. At the August meeting, you will hear what Julie Ann Howell and Peppertree Press look for in a manuscript. Here is the description from the Peppertree Press website:

Julie Ann Howell, Publisher/President and Teri Franco, Editorial Director, are proud to introduce to you a company that offers **professional publishing** with a personal touch! Together we have planted the book publishing seed and with great enthusiasm have launched this fine company to aspiring authors who have dreams and aspirations of turning their manuscripts into masterpieces.

Although based in Sarasota, Florida, our authors are coming from all over the globe and embracing this opportunity in both hands and are able to share their untold stories worldwide.

All projects that come to The Peppertree Press are thoroughly screened and evaluated before acceptance and are professionally edited and enhanced by our graphic design team. We are proud of our authors, who have incorporated meticulous research and a passion for writing that shows how they care for their readership.

In addition, each author has a relationship with The Peppertree Press for promoting his or her book through public speaking, book signings, reading festivals, and contacts with both print and electronic media.

We welcome you to go on the grand tour of our Web site www.peppertreepublishing.com and take the first step in turning your manuscript into the next bestseller.

Writing Teacher Needed

The Lighthouse of Pinellas for the Blind/Watson Center needs a volunteer to conduct a two-hour class once a week for elderly blind persons who are interested in writing. The volunteer teacher may select some articles to demonstrate a style of writing. Most are interested in creative writing and have some good writing attempts which the teacher may read for the class and give constructive critique of the articles. The person to contact in the Watson Center is Barbara Rivera 544 4433.



Greetings from TWA President Michael Darling

I have a very important announcement: Please congratulate and thank Warner Conarton for stepping in to take over the TWA Critique Group meetings. As many of you know, he is an excellent planner and organizer. He is officially appointed as permanent critique coordinator. We are sorry that Charles Greenwood had to step down due to health reasons, but are excited that Warner will bring an exciting atmosphere to the critique group!

While the critique group is an outstanding place for TWA authors to test out material, don't forget that you can also get a lot great comments from a novel pod. Basically, a novel pod is a group of four to five members who meet on their own as frequently as they like to review and critique one another's work. A novel pod is a little more personal and fine-tuned to specific writers. What I mean by fine-tuned is that you would want to join a novel pod with writers of a similar genre if you can. Certainly, fiction writers should not be in the same novel pod as non-fiction writers—the two have many different processes and purposes. Fiction is there to entertain, and while non-fiction can entertain, usually its main purpose is to inform. Also, while the Critique Group is as central as we can make it, a novel pod is more localized. I am not knocking the value of the Critique Group here. It has its own advantages over novel pods. For instance, if you have a short story or an article you want critiqued, then the Critique Group would be the wiser choice. A novel pod is more for those writing novel-length projects where the same people who meet are familiar with the story line up to that point. If you are interested in forming or joining a new novel pod, contact me at darling@HopliteRenegades.com and we'll try to hook you up.

Remember to come on and check out the new general meeting location. As you may recall, Peppertree Press is our guest speaker. If you are not sure if you want to come just to see the new location, you should definitely come to listen to Peppertree Press. Bring all your publishing questions. Find out what they look for and what they want out of new authors.

Press Release

Evelyn Ann Romano has won third place in poetry in the New River Poets (a chapter of Florida State Poets Association, Inc.) TRIANNUAL POETRY AWARDS. The winning poem was, " **SISTERS OF THE SEA**". Evelyn is very excited because this is her first win in a national competition. No other Florida poets placed. Congratulations TWA member Evelyn Romano.

Steve Meador's book "Throwing Percy from the Cherry Tree" won a national poetry book contest at a small press in NC, D-N Publishing. It was released in April and is available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble and the publisher's site (which is being updated) www.d-npublishing.com . It has done very well at Amazon, several times falling into the 20,000s in sales ranking. That is somewhat exciting considering they sell millions of books. A second printing is coming soon since the publisher is running low on inventory already. For more info, please contact Steve Meador at meador.poetry@gmail.com So you poetry lovers, please take a minute (or much more) to check out Throwing Percy from the Cherry Tree!!!

Note: Prose, notices, press releases and one time book promotions may appear in newsletter if space permits and you submit to the editor before the 20th of each month.

"A Writer's Life..." by Past President Sandra Kischuk

Clutching Crutches

When my kids were young and learning to ride their bicycles, I put training wheels on until they learned the intricacies of balance. For both children, I never mentioned taking the wheels off, but just waited until they came to me and asked to have them removed. At that point, they were ready and got on their bicycles, wobbled a bit, then took off without looking back.

In my garage, I have a set of crutches which I got for my son when he was playing a pick-up basketball game, jumped, and came down on top of someone else's foot. By the time I arrived, he had a grotesque swelling at his ankle. I've sprained ankles before but this was like nothing I'd ever seen and I was certain he had broken or at least dislocated it. Not the case. The emergency room put him on crutches and we left with a major sprain. Two days later, he had pitched the crutches and was actively hobbling—such is youth.

A number of years ago, I inherited a cane, which I used when multiple sclerosis made my walking less than stable. Learning to handle the cane was a challenge. I had to figure out how to keep it close enough to support me, yet far enough that I didn't trip over it. I set it aside before I ever completely mastered using it.

A few nights ago, I was at a friend's house for dinner. He has always been meticulous. His home office had stacks of paper—on the desk, on the credenza, on the floor—organized piles, but it bothered him. He told me he didn't know how it had gotten that way, and that he had so many other things on his plate, he didn't have the time to get to it. He was worrying over it, and I could tell it occupied his thoughts.

Thinking about and living with his mess was taking energy from him.

I tentatively suggested that, rather than trying to tackle the whole space at one time, he pick one shelf a day so it wouldn't be too overwhelming.

His response was that he had too many projects, that he didn't have the time to do anything about it, and that he might need whatever it was he had.

I dropped the issue. He was arguing for the status quo.

We do that. We hang onto our "crutches" and "training wheels" for as long as we think we need them. Sometimes we let go too early and find ourselves struggling. Often, when we do that, we may find ourselves hanging on a little more the next time. We may become afraid to let go long after the crutches have any use. Our crutches may be old textbooks we learned from, broken appliances we have been promising we will fix (or get fixed) for the past five years, the old spare lawnmower we are saving because our new one may break down some day.

More insidiously, the crutch may be cigarettes or the alcoholic drink we need when we come home after a particularly stressful day at work. It may be astrology, a lucky talisman, or superstition...anything we feel may help us cope or protect us from danger.

These "little things" may not affect your life much, except when they become *required*. When they become *required*, we miss the logic of why we are hanging on to them. If you have to have that cigarette, if you have to have the drink, if you feel you can't go through your day without astrological predictions, if it distresses you to not have your lucky "whatever" with you...the crutch *owns* you. You are limited by something if you believe that you cannot do something without it. If you want something to be a temporary thing, recognize it is temporary and set a realistic date for when it will no longer be in your life.

What are the crutches in your life?

How are they limiting you?

How long do you want to hang on to them?

EXCOM Makes Changes to 2008 Writing Contest

- Multiple submissions will be permitted in every category.
- Members will pay \$5.00 per submission.
- Non-members may enter and will pay \$10.00 per submission.
- All first prize money will be the same regardless of category.
- The Awards Banquet will be free to TWA members who enter the contest.
- The Awards Banquet will not be free to non-members and TWA members who did not enter the contest.
- Winning submissions will not be read at the Awards Banquet.
- Wordsmith will be free to TWA members who enter the contest.
- Wordsmith will not be free to non- members and TWA members who did not enter the contest.
- The floating category will be “Emerging Writers Fiction/Non-fiction. Open only to TWA members who have never won TWA writing contest prize money.

TWA Critique Group – Warner D Conarton, Coordinator

2nd & 4th Wednesday at 7:00 pm. NO MEETINGS IN DECEMBER.

Please e-mail submissions to Warner D. Conarton, warnerdconarton@netscape.com. We accept and critique all genres except 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.

Visitors are welcome to attend, if interested in joining, but only members' works will be discussed, generally 4-5 pieces per session. Works to be critiqued are distributed to TWA members via e-mail approximately two weeks before the next scheduled meeting. The author has a chance to respond after verbal critiques are finished. Emphasis is on constructive criticism. For further information, visit our Website at: www.tampawriters.org

The Poetry Group

4th Thursday of each month @ 7:00 p.m. NO MEETINGS IN DECEMBER.

Yes, the Tampa Writers Alliance has a meeting for poets. We meet at the Barnes & Noble Booksellers (North) just south of Stall Road on North Dale Mabry Hwy. We get together at the tables in the back on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 PM. If you're lucky, all you'll need is a bunch of copies of your work (We average about 15 poets per meeting, plus who-knows-what.) Copies are not even compulsory. You can read yours or sing yours or have someone else do it for you. If you only appreciate poetry, bring your favorite to read. We go round and round the table. If you want critique, ask for it. Otherwise, we're there just to enjoy hearing each other emote and comment. Seriously, something bizarre almost always happens, so be ready. As for that, we always manage to have a lot of fun anyway, yes, in spite of everything. Give us a try. Free admission.

Warner D. Conarton, Tampa Writers Alliance Poetry Group Coordinator

e-mail: warnerdconarton@netscape.com Web-page: warnerconarton.com

Tampa Writers Alliance **Benefits of Membership**

- **Meet and get acquainted with other writers.** TWA hosts two member parties a year. These provide all members a chance to make new friends and enjoy old ones.
- **Educational programs of interest to writers.** Each monthly meeting offers an opportunity to learn something that may help your writing skills grow.
- **Writers critique group.** Two monthly critique group meetings offer members a chance to have their manuscripts evaluated by their peers.
- **Poetry critique group.** Two monthly poetry critique group meetings offer members a chance to have their poetry evaluated by other poets.
- **Eligible to promote and sell books at St Pete Times Festival of Reading.** Each year TWA pays the fees necessary for one or more booths at the one day St Petersburg Times Festival of Reading. TWA members can promote, display and sell their books at TWA's booth.
- **Eligible to join others in judging manuscripts for Hillsborough County Teachers of English annual writing contest.** Each year TWA members are asked to judge manuscripts for HCTE. This opportunity allows our members to apply their knowledge and skills in helping young writers find their talent.
- **Eligible to enter annual writing contest and win hundreds of dollars.** Each year TWA awards over \$2,000.00 in prizes to the best entries in our writing contest.
- **Attend TWA's Annual Awards Banquet.** In January of each year our members gather to recognize the winners of the writing contest.
- **Free copy of Wordsmith anthology.** Each member entering the writing contest is eligible to receive a free copy of TWA's Wordsmith anthology. The Wordsmith contains all the winning entries from the writing contest.
- **Receive TWA's "Write Connections" newsletter with information on events, writing contests, programs, conferences, etc.** Every month our members receive news of interest to writers.

Tampa Writers Alliance **Membership Application**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (_____) _____

Cell Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

To join TWA and receive full membership benefits, fill out the application above and mail it with your check for **\$35.00** (payable to Tampa Writers Alliance) to:

Paul DuBose Treasurer, TWA
501 Royal Wood Court
Valrico, FL 33594

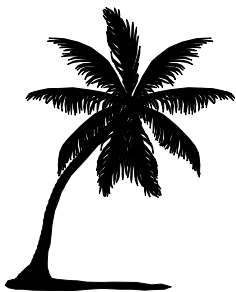
TWA Directory

| TITLE | NAME | PHONE | E-MAIL ADDRESS |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--|
| President | Michael Darling | 813-662-1615 | darling@HopliteRenegades.com |
| Vice President | James Durlacher | 813-770-2346 | onekewlkat@hotmail.com |
| Secretary | Chris Taylor | 813-996-2713 | DesigningChris@tampabay.rr.com |
| Treasurer | Paul DuBose | 813-685-2033 | ppdubose@aol.com |
| Member-at-Large | Charrie Moscardini | 727-726-0814 | charrie-m@earthlink.net |
| Member-at-Large | Marianne Aluotto | 850-206-3228 | m_aluotto25@hotmail.com |
| Poetry | Warner Conarton | 352-588-3228 | WarnerDConarton@netscape.com |
| Write Connections Editor | James A. Young | 813-391-1139 | jayoung@mindspring.com |
| Critique Group | Warner Conarton | 352-588-3228 | WarnerDConarton@netscape.com |
| Wordsmith Editor | Sandra Kischuk | 813-935-7760 | sjkischuk@juno.com |
| Website | James Durlacher | 813-770-2346 | onekewlkat@hotmail.com |
| Publicity/Public Relations | Adele-Ida Walter | 813-932-6902 | adeleidawalter@hotmail.com |
| Contest Coordinator | James A. Young | 813-391-1139 | jayoung@mindspring.com |

TWA WEBSITE

WWW.TAMPAWRITERS.ORG

Stay Cool and **Write On!**



Tampa Writers Alliance
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 c/o James A. Young
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