



Nebraska Writers Guild

Excellence in Writing Since 1925

Spring 2009 Conference Coming Right Up!

The 2009 Spring Conference will be held April 24-25 in the basement meetings rooms of the Main Lodge at Mahoney State Park, between Omaha and Lincoln. Friday evening readings will start at 6:00 pm on a drawing basis; free wine, soft drinks and finger foods.

The Saturday speakers include ESPN journalist Eric Buterman on "How to have a Freelance Career ANYWHERE," and University of Nebraska Press Bison Books editor Tom Swanson on "The Necessity of a Good Pitch." The third speaker is to be announced. They will conduct their simultaneous, hands-on workshops in the afternoon. Members are encouraged to bring their books for sale.

You can register via the flier soon to arrive in your mail or on-line at the Guild website under the "Event" heading. \$55 NWG member, \$25 Student, \$65 Non-NWG or late registration (after April 15)

**Pay your dues
and recruit
a member!**

Plan to "Write Across Nebraska" in July

Writing retreats will be conducted on the same weekend of July 17-19 in Brownville with free workshops, while Grand Island and Chadron will host "Write-a-thons" with Brownville (East): \$105 single room per night, meals about \$4-6/each,

Contact Charlie Vogel
Charlie_Mystery_Writer@cox.net

Grand Island (Central) is still negotiating with motel for a discount. NEED facilitator.

Chadron (West):

\$100 for Fri-Sat-Sun campus housing, snacks & meals.

Contact:

Sarah Polack at Sandoz Center
308-432-6401.

Are You Ready to Promote Your Book?

So you've written and published a book! Congratulations on an amazing accomplishment. As much work as it was to write it, you have another huge job ahead of you – promoting that masterpiece to potential readers.

GROW Nebraska is a statewide, non-profit marketing and training program for Nebraska entrepreneurial businesses and the only market access program in the state of Nebraska. The program's mission is to maximize Nebraska's entrepreneurial spirit; create an economically viable and sustainable environment for entrepreneurs; and generate social awareness through promotion, marketing, and education.

This is achieved through a web site, exclusive retail opportunities, an annual print membership directory known as the GROW Book, and low-cost training to advance the marketing skills of Nebraska entrepreneurs – and yes, as an author you are definitely an

entrepreneur. Each member receives a page on the GROW web site which includes a link to their own web site, enhancing their ability to attract the attention of search engines to the site.

Membership is \$150 for a calendar year. Through a partnership between the Guild and GROW you receive a \$25 discount on membership. If you enroll after September 1 your membership is good through the end of 2009, giving you 15 months of benefits.

A full description of the program is available at www.grownebraska.org <<http://www.grownebraska.org>>; Any questions about the program can be directed to sara@grownebraska.org.

Sara Steven-Stehl, Grow Nebraska



Notes From Your Staff

From the President (Sally): Membership growth means an increase in expenses, thus a bigger budget than we have ever encountered before. Every effort is being made to maximize benefits while preventing excesses. Last year was the "Reorganization Year" for the Guild. I see 2009 as "Improved Programming Year." From the "Professional Pointers" column in this newsletter to kick-starting the Mid-Summer Writing Retreats "Write Across Nebraska" to highly motivational conferences, the leadership is working to enhance your membership experience. We only know if we are meeting your needs if you TELL us! Communicate those pros and cons! We still need a Historian to record the tasks being accomplished by members! Think about it.

From the Secretary (Connie): Thanks to those who have already sent in their membership renewals. Please remember to update any personal information if needed. We don't want to lose contact with anyone, because of a move or new e-mail address. Special thanks to those who have sent self-addressed stamped envelopes along with their renewal. Every little bit helps us control expenses.

From the new Treasurer (Rhonda) For the moment, Connie is doing the paperwork and Sally is doing the banking. Our 2009 Budget is a little over \$11,000 with a sizable increase in the conference budgets to improve programming. We are delighted that member Rhonda Hall has agreed to step into the treasurer's role to finish out Lea's term. We understand that right now, Lea's employment has to be the prime directive, but a designated Treasurer is vital to the smooth business management of the Guild. Thanks again, Rhonda. Don't forget to check out the merchandise on Café Press. The Guild gets a small amount of each purchase. Connie is researching grants we qualify for and the Board is considering ads on the website to generate revenue.

From the Vice-President/Programming (Charlie): My committee of board members has the Spring Conference at Mahoney well in hand, just as Carolyn Scheidies and Valerie Vierk already have most of the Fall Conference prep work done. The Guidelines are functioning as a checklist and simplifying everyone's life. My new project this year is the Mid-Summer Writing Retreats for "Write Across Nebraska" July 17-19 in Brownville, Grand Island and Chadron. We still need help in Grand Island.

Contact me if you are interested: Charlie_Mystery_Writer@cox.net). Of course, I encourage you to schedule speaking engagements per the website's guidelines and send me your evaluations. I will also need everyone to report where and when they speak to document that summary in the June BULLETIN.

From the Publicity Chair (Hugh): I nudged KVNO to continue to run our PSA announcements advertising all the Guild has to offer. I will continue to get our name and events into the state's media emphasizing TV PSA's more than newspapers. We voted to again attend the NE State Fair, so plan ahead for that last week in August to give a few hours sharing camaraderie and promoting the Guild in Lincoln. I also wrote a short article on the literary roots of the Guild for the newsletter of the NE Center for the Book. Contacts at writing conferences have resulted in a Guild brochure going into each attendee packet.

From the Membership Chair (Scott): Slowly but surely we are registering new members and are now over 160 with a year end goal of 200 in sight. Connie provided me with addresses of previous members so I can invite them to again check out all we have to offer. Do not hesitate to contact me (spotlucas@hotmail.com) or Connie if you need a handful of brochures for a speaking engagement. If each of our current members recruited just one other person, we would be 320 strong. New writing groups are starting up in Brownville and out at Chadron State College.

From the Webmaster (Andrew): Please check out the new "NWG 2008 Published/Produced" page under the menu "About Us." Updates have been made to the Guild and State calendars, as well. The Spring Conference data should be up shortly. The Board is researching the possibility of ads as another source of revenue. Express your opinion.



As 2007-2009 President of NWG, I promise to actively promote the image and stature of the organization by . . .

2008 GOALS

2009 GOALS

1. Making memberships growth and retention a priority
 - Establish a Recruitment Committee to facilitate growing NWG Exceed 200, old members
 - Establish 1:1 contacts across Nebraska, at least on a quarterly basis Utilize "Reporters"
 - Build and reorganize NWG members Excel spreadsheet as an accessible tool Perpetually update
 - Create "New Member Packet" Get feedback

2. Promoting communications between members
 - Through the recently established closed NWG e-mail list for dues paid members . . . ALL, "No Mail" access
 - Encourage participation in or organization of writing groups Feature in May "Broadside"
 - Encourage interaction between members (Sign-up sheets) 2010 Conference Sunday "Extra"

3. Promoting the professional atmosphere of NWG
 - Spotlight published members, encouraging them to mentor and advise Teen Mentoring, Speakers
 Expert and Q&A on Yahoo
 - Encourage participation in and sharing info from national organizations. "Bulletin" list "Who"
 - Appoint a Publications Team chaired by the editor to redesign look and content of both the "Bulletin" and
 the "Broadside" with absolute publication deadlines Six-page, articles
 - Establish a list of "Broadside" contributors in each genre and other regional reporters to provide material to
 the Editor on a deadline basis Involve reporters more
 - Establish a Publicity Committee charged with advertising NWG TV, Regional, NE Gov
 - Encourage member input to NWG website (bios and links) Published in '08 Links

4. Restructuring the bi-annual conferences for a more professional appeal
 - Choose date, location and Conference Chair six months in advance Evaluate Guidelines effect
 - Within reasonable budget and attendee fee, invite pros to conferences Increase budget
 Research Grants
 - Divide conference into three tracts of Non-fiction, Fiction, Poetry Plan into 2010
 - Request the tract presenters provide two presentations: morning lecture and afternoon hands-on
 workshop Evaluate effectiveness
 - Require historian to provide a display with materials and people from the past Member input
 Mid-Summer Retreats

5. Revising and deepening the content of the By-Laws to more accurately cover the needs of the membership,
 executive Board, and legal needs of the organization Completed
 - Appoint a By-Laws Committee New by-laws accepted
 - Provide guidelines and facilitate the process Committee disbanded

6. Nominating Committee New slate by Aug

---- Sally J. Walker, President



≈ Professional Pointers from Our Peers ≈

"How do you keep writing on a regular basis?"

I always write in parts. I never write start to finish. I layout the topics of my chapters and bounce among them so I don't lose interest in one storyline or topic depending on whether I am writing fiction or non-fiction. It helps with overall continuity. ≈ **Phillip Hubbell.**

I never force myself to do anything. I sit at my computer in the mornings about 9AM, read over what I've done, and start typing. When I enjoy something, it is easy for me to do it. ≈ **Charlie Vogel**

Writing for me is like breathing, I can't stop. So the issue of writing isn't the problem. The problem is finding the TIME to write. So, the one thing that works for me? Laptop + recliner + cup of coffee + 9pm-11pm = WRITING TIME. ≈ **Pam Wallinger**

I am in Green Valley, AZ for the winter months and have two great writing groups here for support and inspiration. The groups are a gathering of diverse writer's from all genre, so they understand all prospects of problems to overcome with solutions.

In the group which meets on the first three Thursdays of each month, the writers are put on notice as to their turn to read and they are strongly encouraged to have new work to present for 15 minutes, including discussion and critique time, when it is their turn (on the average of once a month).

The second group is a chapter of the international Society of Southwest Authors and we have speakers monthly from October through May or June. They present programs from writing, to publishing, to creating characters, etc. The participation is great. Back in Nebraska, I belong to four writing groups and get the same support and encouragement, though not at such an intense level due to not meeting as often.

That works for me as the more I am with writers the more ideas and drive I receive to write. ≈ **Mary Maas**

"Thinking of a Career in Journalism?"

For someone wanting to get into journalism, I'd advise them to learn all they can about the business, including the principles of fairness, the techniques of investigation, Internet Technology and computer programming. That knowledge is highly valuable. They should also prepare to intern a couple years on the job. All that is a good investment. Then, they should team up with other innovators. I believe there will always be a need to investigate and report on events and the news will always be published on the web, in print or television and radio. People love to be informed and published news is vital to a healthy society. Reporting the news is really, really interesting, creative work with a solid future.

≈ **George Lauby, Editor, North Platte Bulletin**



"How to Have a Fulfilling Year as a Writer"

Just like loving, writing is its own reward so . . . consider the power of D-P-E.

Dreaming. . . as in brainstorming, running with an idea, thought-association-after-thought-association. Let your imagination run rampant. Glory in the experience of images, emotion, character, story.

Planning . . . as in set a goal for a specific date. Check your calendar for demands between now and that date. Now, break your project into do-able increments between now and your target date.

Executing . . . as in apply your rear to the chair and DO the work. Commit to it. Make it a priority. Wallow in the joy of creation. Write your material that no one else can! GIVE that piece of yourself to the world! Believe me, writer, your heart will sing and your soul will be lifted. Just like loving, writing is its own reward.

(From *A Writer's Year* by Sally J. Walker) ≈



Past President Dr. Jean Lukesh Featured

An article featuring Dr. Jean Lukesh and her multi-awarding winning book appeared in *Nebraska Life* magazine (Jan/Feb 2009, pp. 50-51). NL Staff writer Kristen Friesen praised *The Nebraska Adventure*, with Jean reporting only one small error, the exact location of her home!

Topp has a New Book

Heritage Books just released *Women at the Reins: Farm memories based on the collection From Mules to Microwaves* by LaRayne Topp of Wisner, NE. The book is a compilation of non-fiction stories about rural life, collected as a special project by the American Agri-Women, documenting rural history from the woman's perspective. Order the book on-line at orders@HeritageBooks.com.

Galloway (Pelegamas) Featured

The Omaha World Herald book column favorably reviewed Marcus Galloway's new book *Skinnners* this month. If you like werewolves, this book's for you.

NWG's Ronica Stromberg at SCBWI

Ronica Stromberg, a multi-published children's author, will be speaking on "Divine Words: Writing for the Inspiration Market" at the March 28, Omaha, NE Conference of the Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators. She will also participate in the panel of "First Page Critiques." Andrew Karre of Carolrhoda Books will also speak. Cost is \$85 to SCBWI Members, \$95 to non-members. Contact Nona Morrison (nonaedit@yahoo.com) for information.

Film Tax Incentives Shelved 'til 2010

For the third year in a row, the Nebraska legislative bill on tax incentives for filmmaking in the state did not make it out of the Revenue Committee. Sponsored by Senator Mello, LB282 lacked enough scope and power to be a truly positive force on the state's economy. A growing number of people associated with the film industry are researching other successful states and working hard to formulate a more effective bill for the next session.

