



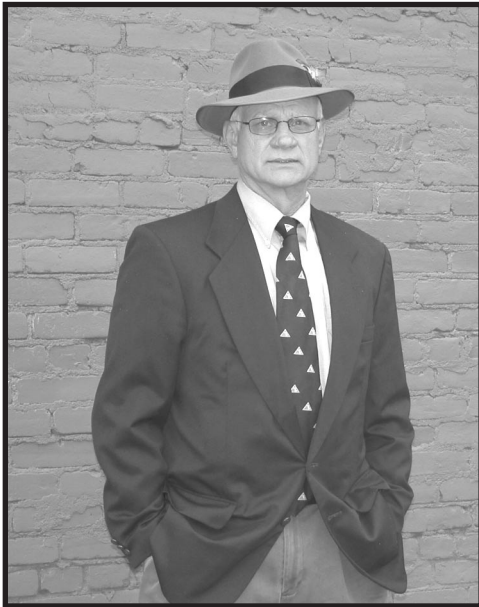
# Writers News

Volume 6, Number 5.....May 2007

May 19 Speaker

## Tom Basinski

*Nonfiction Crime Author*  
**Turning to Crime**



Combining a cop’s sense of humor and a writer’s sense of style, Tom Basinski is a hero’s hero, with an eye for detail and a strong right arm. Whether crafting a true story about an eighteen-year-old turned murderer, or telling the tale of a policeman’s death from cancer, he presents his readers with hard facts given a sensitive spin. Each case is a true case—and old-fashioned police work always solves the crime!

Author, retired peace officer and investigator extraordinaire, Basinski’s biography reads more like a policeman’s version of 007 than the life of a good cop who is also a good writer. But, while pounding the streets of San Diego, Basinski found proof positive that true crime pays real money!

Renowned author of the non-fiction book, *No Good Deed*, Tom Basinski will share heartwarming stories, suspenseful killings and tales of a cop’s beat-on-the-street, when he speaks to the SCWA this month. As fascinating as any flesh-and-blood hero, Basinski will

address topics like: The How’s and Why’s of 125 True Crime Stories; The Top Ten Secrets of Writing for Crime; How to Create Characters that Captivate; and, Successfully Marketing Your Suspenseful Tale.

Learn this and much more at the May SCWA meeting, when non-fiction author Tom Basinski shares bloodcurdling tips about “Turning to Crime!”

*Lynnette Baum*  
VP, Programming  
[therightwriter@cox.net](mailto:therightwriter@cox.net)

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# *President's Message*

## **New "Make a Purchase" web page**

You can now order a variety of items from SCWA, including an audio cassette or CD of a speaker's presentation or one of our great pens with the SCWA name engraved on it. By the way, this pen is a great writing tool if you like to write first drafts on paper. Just visit our website at [www.ocwriter.com](http://www.ocwriter.com) and click on "Make a Purchase."

## **Our New Store Manager**

Judith Wagner has volunteered to help us collect orders from members and guests for audio tapes, CDs, pens or whatever, and ensure they get paid for and are available at the meetings. Judy will make our digital recordings of speakers and make CDs of them. Thank you very much for helping out, Judy!

## **Story Contests**

Your board has planned a series of fiction and nonfiction contests for this year:

1. Submission due June 30: Open theme, short fiction story, maximum 2,000 words.
2. Submission due August 31: Open theme, nonfiction article, 500-1,000 words.
3. Submission due September 30: Theme: End of Vacation, 250-word flash fiction.
4. Submission due also September 30: a single-spaced query letter, 1-2 pages; a double-spaced book synopsis, 1-5 pages; and a double-spaced sample chapter, 10-15 pages. This would be like the package you would send to an agent or publisher.
5. Submission due October 31: Theme: A New Life, 250-word flash fiction.

The first-place winners will receive a free luncheon meeting. Certificates will be awarded to winners of first, second and third place. All winning entries will be published on our Web site.

We need a volunteer to be our Contest Manager to help make these contests come true! (Roy King will not be available for this role as expected.) We also need a volunteer Assistant to the Contest Manager, who will be responsible for removing the author's name from each entry, so the judge(s) will be less biased.

If you'd like to volunteer in either capacity, or perhaps judge a contest, then please let me know as soon as possible, so we can get these very popular contests started again.

## **Assistant to the Treasurer**

We also need someone to help the Treasurer at the registration desk. We've had volunteers at some meetings, but we need someone who will help out consistently at every meeting. This is a great way to meet people and to serve your organization.

See *President*, page 3

# SCWA Needs Your Help

*President*, from page 2

## Meeting Coordinator

We also need a volunteer to make arrangements with Claim Jumper regarding the meals to be served at our meetings and arrange for meetings at other restaurants should that need arise. This position will not take much time.

## Upcoming Presentation

I'll be giving a talk on "Finding the Weaknesses in Your Novel" on Saturday, June 2 in Santa Ana for another writers' group. For more details, see my article elsewhere in this issue or visit my webpage at [www.crayne.com/Events/Speaking-events.htm](http://www.crayne.com/Events/Speaking-events.htm).

*Victory Crayne*  
President  
[victory@crayne.com](mailto:victory@crayne.com)

## APRIL HIGHLIGHTS:

### Sara Lewis: *The Power of Intuitive Writing*

The difference between being enveloped with anxiety while trying to write and writing intuitively may be compared to catching your cat in the backyard, says Sara Lewis, well-known writer and instructor. The more you frantically search, the less likely you'll find the creature. However, if you "let go and surrender," the cat, like intuition, will not only find you but "jump into your lap." Lewis has developed a method that coaxes intuition to come on soft paws to receptive imaginations.

First, what is intuitive writing and why is it precious? Intuitive writing, Lewis explained,

occurs when you're focused and "in flow." "Characters will come alive and have their own will." You may find yourself writing something you had not planned to cover; what's more, it's better. When Lewis's students read their notebooks after flow, they say, "I don't remember writing this" and "I can't believe how good it is." This experience comes about when a writer is focused on his P.I.L., that is, his Purpose in Life. Lewis suspects "we write to experience transcendent thoughts."

Because Lewis had successfully published a few books with Simon & Schuster

and Harcourt soon after leaving acting, she was surprised in a few years to find the Dark Side of writing, corrosive self-doubt, slowly engulfing her. After all, she was "going to be positive all her life." Deciding she needed a Super Vision, she began studying insight but found it doesn't entail dramatic vision or precognition, as she had assumed.

To let intuition surface, Lewis learned to stymie her chattering ego with "Thank you very much for your contribution; now I'm going to do this anyway." She says to question "How does this make me feel?" instead of "Is this good?" Decode the

See *Lewis*, page 7

## SCWA News & Announcements

### NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:

*June 16 – Warren Lewis*

#### ***Working Hollywood from Gutter to Glitter***

Want to know how “From Gutter to Glitter” great writers craft story and promote their works? Attend our meeting in June, and learn at the feet of Warren Lewis, whose screenwriting credits include *Black Rain* (Paramount) and *The Thirteenth Warrior* (Touchstone). Recruited as a writer for most major studios, Warren Lewis has worked on assignments for *Sony*, *Warner Brothers*, and *Fox*, on more than 25 original or commissioned screenplays and numerous re-writes. His recent scripts include a rousing Western set in post-Civil War Texas, called, *The Tale of the Bloodstone Riders*. So, circle the third Saturday in June on your calendar, and spend it with Warren Lewis and the SCWA!

## SCWA Welcomes New Members

Between March and April the SCWA gained 10 new members. Their interests range from nonfiction to children’s literature, and from romance to mystery. We welcome Kimberli Balfour, Mary D. Bradbury, Anne Cominsky, Lois R. Evezich, Barry Gluck, Karin Lisa Klein, Judith Lewis, Linda Shortell, William Shortell, and Tom Strelow. SCWA hopes the new members will take advantage of the services SCWA offers its members, including manuscript critiquing, networking, and the opportunity to display your books on our tables during meetings. And don’t forget to come to the monthly meetings at the Claim Jumper Restaurant for a mouth-watering meal and an information-packed line-up of speakers. Welcome aboard!

*Shelia Cassidy*  
VP, Membership  
[riveme@pacbell.net](mailto:riveme@pacbell.net)

### SCWA Critique Committee Open to Members of SCWA

#### Nonfiction & Fiction

**This position is open.**

#### Poetry

##### **Dr. Joyce Wheeler**

Joyce will critique up to five poems.  
Please mail your work to Joyce at:

**3801 Chestnut Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90807**

### Executive Committee

President ..... Victory Crayne  
VP, Programming ..... Lynnette Baum  
VP, Membership ..... Shelia Cassidy  
Secretary ..... Janet de Marco  
Treasurer ..... Carolyn Smith  
Publicity Director ..... Larry Porricelli  
Webmaster ..... Tony Stoklosa  
Newsletter Editor ..... Mary Michel Green  
Associate Editor ..... Belinda Falk  
Tape Librarian ..... Sharon Walters

#### Membership Information

Shelia Cassidy, VP Membership  
[membership@ocwriter.com](mailto:membership@ocwriter.com)

#### Meeting Reservations

Carolyn Smith, Treasurer ..... (949) 675-4244

# “Finding the Weaknesses in Your Novel”

You’ve had a grand time writing your novel. When you’re done, you intend to sell it. Or you tried to sell it, but all you’ve received are dozens of rejection letters and you’re pulling your hair out. You may even have self-published, but after many book signings and dozens of talks, you still can’t sell enough of your books.

You scream to yourself: **Why aren’t more people interested in my book?!**

- After people read your first page, do they put the book down and say something like, “That’s very interesting”—but they don’t purchase it?
- Are you in the dark as to why you’re having such a hard time getting people to recommend your novel enthusiastically to others?
- You know you’ve written a good story. Now why don’t more people buy it?

Or have you? Could it be that your novel has some weaknesses you’re unaware of?

When writers read their own words, they often see the story they intended to tell, not the one they actually wrote. Others read what you actually wrote. Would you like to be able to analyze your own writing with a more objective eye to find the weaknesses that destroy sales?

You’ll learn how to improve your own writing through self-editing with techniques such as (1) a Personal Checklist, (2) reviewing your own writing of scenes and chapters for common writing weaknesses, and (3) becoming more sensitive to a wide variety of your own writing weaknesses using a **12-point checklist**, which includes the following:

- Opening
- Conflict
- Plot
- Characterization
- Emotion
- Point of View
- And more...

Victory Crayne is a professional independent editor and writing coach who will share with you techniques she uses to help her clients become better writers. Her presentation will include handouts you can use immediately with your own writing.

Victory will speak **Saturday, June 2, at 1 p.m.** at the Orange County Writers Meetup Group in Santa Ana.

To make a reservation, contact Russell Traugher at [russell@russelltraugher.com](mailto:russell@russelltraugher.com). For directions to the meeting place, see [http://www.crayne.com/Events/Town-and-Country-Manor-\(map\).htm](http://www.crayne.com/Events/Town-and-Country-Manor-(map).htm)

You can also visit Victory’s Web site at [www.crayne.com](http://www.crayne.com) or email her at [victory@crayne.com](mailto:victory@crayne.com).



Contact Writers News Editor Mary Michel Green at (949) 361-6581 or [green.mary@cox.net](mailto:green.mary@cox.net).



# Writer's Corner

## The Missing Links to Successful Authorship

### Part III

by Patricia Fry

So far, in the March and April issues we've covered the first six steps to successful authorship 1: **Determine your motivation for writing this book**, 2: **Study the publishing industry**; 3: **Write a book proposal**; 4: **Identify your competition**; 5: **Identify your target audience**; and 6: **Locate your target audience**.

**7: Plan your promotional tactics.** Some people will buy your book just because they know you or know who you are. So start by developing a massive mailing list. List everyone in your personal address book, your Rolodex at work, your class reunion roster, your Christmas card list, and your e-mail list. Add your child's teachers, fellow church and club members, your mailman, neighbors—everyone you know. Collect business cards from everyone you meet. Offer the people on your list a pre-publication discount if they order the book before the publication date. I have managed to pay a good portion of my printing expenses for several of my books through pre-publication orders.

Build a Web site related to your book. List magazines, newsletters and Web sites that might review your book. Outline articles or stories you can write to help promote your book. (Read, "*A Writer's Guide to Magazine Articles for Book Promotion and Profit*" by Patricia Fry.) Obtain a list of civic organizations seeking speakers. Contact bookstores nationwide and plan book signings. Ask local radio and TV stations to interview you. Send press releases to appropriate newspaper editors throughout the nation. Discover many additional book promotion ideas in my books or by John Kremer, Fran Silverman and others.

**8: Build promotion into your book.** For a novel, choose a setting and a topic that will be conducive to promotion. For example, give a character diabetes. If he handles it in a positive way or has something to teach others about the disease, the American Diabetes Association might be interested in helping you to promote your book. For a history or a how-to book, involve a lot of people and agencies. Interview people, quote them and list those people and agencies who helped with your research. They'll all buy books and promote the book to their friends and acquaintances.

**9: Establish your platform.** Your platform is your following—your way of getting the attention of your target audience. The most successful authors are those who establish a platform before they produce a book. If your book relates to conserving California's water, your platform might be that you have been the general manager of a water company for 25 years and on the California State Water Board for most of that time. You have name recognition and credibility in that field.

Maybe your book is on an aspect of acupuncture. Your platform might include the fact that you've studied and taught acupuncture internationally for many years. You've written articles for numerous magazines on topics related to acupuncture, you have a column in a local newspaper on alternative healing practices, and you have a Web site and a newsletter that goes out to 20,000 people.

What if you have no platform? The time to establish one is before you write the book. Maybe you want to

See *Missing Link*, page 7

# Planning in advance is key to a winning writing strategy

*Missing Link*, continued from page 6:

write a book on personal finances after retirement, but you don't have a professional background in finance. Here are some things you can do. Build on the financial background you do have—join organizations, take classes, and become known in financial and senior circles. Involve experts in your book—maybe even share authorship with someone who is well known in the financial field. Join Toastmasters to develop better public speaking skills and start presenting workshops locally for retirees. Write articles for a variety of magazines. Develop a Web site and start circulating a newsletter related to your topic.

If you hope to sell more than just a few copies of your book to friends and relatives, follow each of these nine steps and you will experience the success you desire.

Patricia Fry is the author of 25 books, including *The Right Way to Write, Publish and Sell Your Book*. [www.matilijapress.com/rightway.html](http://www.matilijapress.com/rightway.html). Visit her blog often: [www.matilijapress.com/publishingblog](http://www.matilijapress.com/publishingblog).

## Speaker illustrates how intuition can be cultivated

*Lewis*, continued from page 3:

The difference between being enveloped with anxiety while trying to write and writing intuitively may be compared to catching your cat in the backyard, says Sara Lewis, well-known writer and instructor. The more you frantically search, the less likely you'll find the creature. However, if you "let go and surrender," the cat, like intuition, will not only find you but "jump into your lap." Lewis has developed a method that coaxes intuition to come on soft paws to receptive imaginations.

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To let intuition surface, Lewis learned to stymie her chattering ego with "Thank you

very much for your contribution; now I'm going to do this anyway." She says to question "How does this make me feel?" instead of "Is this good?" Decode the message of those dark feelings, Lewis urges. Maybe they are new insights trying to rise.

Besides surrounding yourself with positive support and community, which includes exposure to and appreciation of all the creative arts, Lewis says in your mental backyard you can encourage the nuzzling of purring intuition in these ways: Ask for it; take what you get first; do not question it; keep asking for it daily; trust the supply; understand that even if subtle, it's right; be prepared to look foolish; understand that the material is what you already know; let go; be there; and surrender to it.

Along with being receptive, you make take these more overt



**May Meeting:  
Saturday  
May 19, 2007**

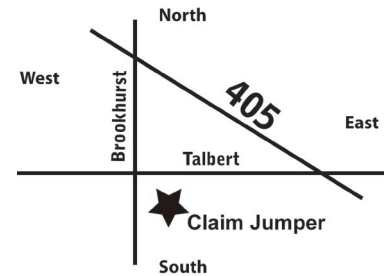
**TOM BASINSKI**  
*Turning to Crime*  
(See inside for more on Tom Basinski.)



**LOCATION: Claim Jumper Restaurant**

Banquet Room Entrance, rear of building  
1805 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, CA  
Restaurant telephone: (714) 963-6711

Registration & Networking:	9:30 a.m.
Meeting:	10:00 a.m.
Lunch:	11:30 a.m.
Afternoon Program:	12:30 p.m.



**HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY**

*NON-MEMBERS & GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME — \$30 AT DOOR; \$25 WITH RSVP*  
*MEMBERS WHO DO NOT RSVP PAY \$25 AT DOOR*  
*MEMBERS WHO DO RSVP PAY \$20*

**RSVP before May 12:** Carolyn Kimme Smith, Treasurer, 630 Harbor Island Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660  
Check must accompany reservation. Make checks payable to SCWA.

**After May 12:** Carolyn Kimme Smith, Treasurer, ckimmesmith@ucla.edu

**BE SURE TO RSVP WHENEVER POSSIBLE! . . . Or register online at [www.ocwriter.com/meetings.html](http://www.ocwriter.com/meetings.html)**



**Writers News**

Mary Michel Green, Editor  
204 Avenida Barcelona  
San Clemente, CA 92672  
[editor@ocwriter.com](mailto:editor@ocwriter.com)