



Writers News

Volume 7, Number 1.....January 2008

January 19 Speaker

Elizabeth Yost

VP, Development and Original Programming
The Hallmark Channel & The Hallmark Movie Channel



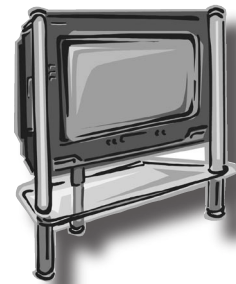
Writing for and Selling to Television



A frequent recipient of prestigious CAMIE (Character And Morality In Entertainment) Awards, Elizabeth Yost stands at the Golden Gate of television programming as the primary reviewer of proposed TV movies for The Hallmark Channel and The Hallmark Movie Channel. A member of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences as well as Women’s Entertainment Network, Yost served as executive producer for EMY Entertainment, an independent production company and as an associate producer for Hearst Entertainment before being recruited to Hallmark.

Instrumental in supporting the channels’ legendary brand as a high-quality family-friendly environment, Yost drives ratings and ensures the channels’ position as a Top 10 network by selecting projects that attract talented stars, including Doris Roberts, Shelley Long, Shirley Jones, Patrick Duffy, Stacy Keach, Richard Chamberlain and Steve Guttenberg. Responsible for the production and development of all network original programming, including movies, mini-series, specials and series, Yost oversees all scripting and casting of the network’s productions.

This month, Elizabeth will speak to us about how to write for and sell to television. Many secrets of the trade will be shared, as well as tips on how to make your writing stand out from the pack...tips which all writers can use! So,



join us in January and start your New Year with a bang!

Lynnette Baum
VP, Programming
lynnette@the-right-writer.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

<i>January Speaker.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>President’s Message.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>December Meeting Highlights.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Critique Committee.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>SCWA News & Announcements.....</i>	<i>4 & 5</i>
<i>Writer’s Corner.....</i>	<i>6 & 7</i>

President's Message

Annual dues renewal time

It's that time of year when we ask you to get out your checkbooks or visit our Web site to pay your dues via PayPal. At only \$30, your dues go to help us provide you with:

- a monthly newsletter
- monthly luncheon meetings
- speakers who are experts in their fields, such as having written best sellers or winning scripts, or are agents, editors, or publishers
- our Web site where you can obtain information on upcoming meetings, past newsletters, and purchase recordings of past speaker presentations
- opportunities to network with other members and learn more tricks of your craft, whether you write fiction or nonfiction
- vitally needed support in your dream of success as a writer. As you know, writing is a solitary activity. Membership and attendance at meetings of the Southern California Writers Association is an excellent way to rekindle that beautiful flame of your dream. Don't let it die. Renew today!

Paying your dues

You have three ways you pay:

1. Pay with a check or cash at the next luncheon meeting.
2. Mail your check for \$30 made out to "SCWA" to SCWA Membership, Post Office Box 3192, Huntington Beach, CA 92605-3192.
3. If you have a PayPal account, visit our Web site at www.ocwriter.com, select the Membership link, and select PayPal. One option with PayPal is to use your credit card.

Pay your dues now while you are thinking of it!

Your volunteer staff members are working hard to provide you with excellent speakers and services. Stay with us for this next year. Keep your dream alive.

Edy Gautschy is our new VP, Membership

Shelia Cassidy resigned as our VPM and we were fortunate in that Ms. Edy Gautschy volunteered to fill her place. Thank you, Edy, for stepping up to the plate when we needed you.

Thanks to three officers

Carolyn Smith ends her service as your Treasurer after serving you for a year and a half. Carolyn was instrumental in forming our first budget in years and in ensuring that your board received monthly reports on our financial assets. This tall, gentle lady was a pillar of practical advice and support during a busy year and we shall miss her.

Shelia Cassidy ends a year of service as your VP of Membership. Thank you, Shelia, for keeping our membership records up to date and accurate. Yours was a vital role and you did it well! Your volunteer efforts on our behalf are much appreciated.

Janet DeMarco ends more than a year of service as your Secretary. Month after month, Janet was punctual in providing up-to-date and accurate minutes of our board meetings, whether we held them in person or via e-mail. She also maintained our list of officer contact information so board members could quickly contact each other as needed. I especially liked the fact that Janet almost always voted "yes" on my proposals to the board. (grin)

See *President*, page 5

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS:

Lynnette Baum: *The Glories of Ghostwriting*

“Do I want to be married to this person for the next several months?”

Lynnette Baum asks herself this when considering a ghostwriting job. Baum elucidated how a ghostwriter, while leaving no fingerprints, must write in the client’s voice after absorbing his or her life experiences, reactions, and viewpoints. She revealed how extensive and lucrative this specialty is even though the writers cannot publicly acknowledge their work.

To ghostwrite, a writer must be experienced and flexible. Baum’s extensive experience has been in such diverse fields as the arts, architecture and construction, marketing, and health care in the formats of articles, press releases, and infomercials. In December she completed on contract her third ghosted book, a 50,000-word fantasy for adults from the viewpoint of an animal, expanded from a 1,500-word children’s book.

Why are ghostwriters needed? Because many people with fantastic experiences or knowledge “aren’t verbal—certainly not in writing” or do not have the time or focus for all the seat time. Even well-known authors of series may in time contract for a ghostwriter because they still have viable ideas but not the stamina. Although he denies it, Ted Sorenson is quietly reputed

to have written John F. Kennedy’s *Profiles in Courage*. Hilary Clinton’s *It Takes a Village* was supposedly ghosted as was work by William Shatner. Alan Dean Foster probably wrote at least part of *Star Wars* for George Lucas.

Ghostwriting jobs usually do not come via writers’ referral groups. Those clients are generally “looking for cheap, not quality. But if you’re a beginner working cheap, that’s OK.” Business connections yield more genuine opportunities. “Give it away for a year; it’ll feed you for life.”

Baum says to choose your clients “because you have a passion for what they do.” For example, she attends nutritional conferences and approaches the CEO’s about writing articles and books. You need a solid portfolio, a Web site, an original business card with a logo that “reflects your view.”

Be alert when considering your potential client. “Some give you freedom; some micromanage.” You must see if you can “get inside the person’s head and heart.” (Baum warns that “people often confuse attention with someone giving them love.”) Can you find the person’s essence? What are the client’s boundaries regarding disclosure? “You don’t want conflict between secrecy and advertisement.”

The contract must be spelled out. The average ghosted book charge is \$15,000-50,000. “If they

argue rates, I don’t want to work with them.” Baum emphasizes that a ghostwriter is hired “as the writer, not the editor, which is a whole different breed.”

Clarify when your job ends. Is it “when you give them the manuscript or after he and his friends make changes” which may take another 6-8 months. She prefers not to work by the hour. Ideal for her is “an umbrella price.” She may include “a limited number of edits, previously agreed on.” The good thing is that the ghostwriter is paid first whether the book later sells or not. However, even the less known clients have usually “approached a publisher, or agent, before hiring a ghoster.”

During the process, you must be an interested and conscientious interviewer to ensure client satisfaction. You are an “intellectual private investigator” and must employ intuition and organizational skills. “Fingerprint your client’s voice” and write his or her exact words. In the first two interviews, mirror the person in a neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) manner: “Interject with the words they use—unique to them.” Baum related the thrill she felt when two big tears rolled down one client’s face as he realized she had captured his core.

Ghostwriting does entail emotional intimacy. However, during the process, Baum said,

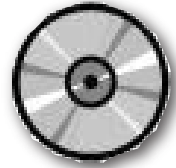
See *Highlights*, page 4

SCWA News & Announcements



Don't Forget to Shop!

You can buy recordings of previous speakers on both cassette tape and audio CD for the member price of only \$5 each! This is such a valuable resource if you miss a meeting. Our Southern California Writers Association pens are also available for only \$7.50. Just go to ocwriter.com and click on "Make a Purchase."



Baum Gives Up Ghosting Facts

Highlights, from page 3

"You vet the person's personality. After that, it's *your* truth."

See more about Lynnette Baum at www.the-right-writer.com.

Glenda Brown Rynn

Member

grynn@cox.net



Contact Writers News Editor Mary Michel Green at (949) 361-6581 or green.mary@cox.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
Co-VP, Programming Lynnette Baum
Co-VP, Programming Kathy Porter
VP, Membership Edy Gautschy
Secretary Linda Shortell
Treasurer Darlene Quinn
Publicity Director Larry Porricelli
Webmaster Tony Stoklosa
Meeting Coordinator Brennan Harvey
Newsletter Editor Mary Michel Green
Tape Librarian Sharon Walters

Membership Information

Edy Gautschy, VP, Membership
membership@ocwriter.com

Meeting Reservations

Brennan Harvey, meeting@ocwriters.com
or message (714) 395-5275

New Board Installed

President, from page 2

Welcome to our new officers

Kathy Porter begins her term as Co-VP, Programming. Kathy will focus on obtaining the very best speakers for you for the second half of 2008, while Lynnette Baum puts her finishing touches on scheduled speakers for the first half of the year.

Darlene Quinn begins her term as your new Treasurer, bringing lots of experience as treasurer of other organizations.

Linda Shortell begins her term as your new Secretary. You may remember her when she helped out at our registration desk at many meetings.

Thanks for all our continuing officers and volunteers

A big hug of appreciation goes to Lynnette Baum (VP, Programming), Larry Porricelli (Publicity Director), Mary Green (Newsletter Editor), Tony Stoklosa (Webmaster), and Brennan Harvey (Meeting Coordinator). I reserve special appreciation for three volunteers who have served silently: Judy Wagner (Store Manager), who also makes digital recordings of our speakers, Shari Walter (Tape Librarian), who has served for many years making audiotape recordings of our speakers, and Glenda Rynn, who writes up such excellent summaries of our speakers' presentations in the newsletter.

I tell you, fellow members of SCWA, I couldn't ask for a better team to work with than all the folks I mentioned above. They have been great in donating their time and efforts on your behalf. They all deserve a round of applause. Clap! Clap! Clap!

Victory Crayne

President

victory@crayne.com

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKERS (TENTATIVE):

February 16

Tracy and Laura Hickman

Award-winning veteran writer Tracy Hickman, along with his wife Laura Hickman (co-creator of the *DragonLance* series) are tentative speakers for February 2008. With the publication of multiple book series and their new collaboration the *Bronze Canticles* at their backs, they will share what it takes to write a best selling series and walk it through the editorial/publication process.

Lynnette Baum

VP, Programming

lynnette@the-right-writer.com

Writer's Corner

Build an Author's Platform That's Within Your Comfort Zone



By Patricia Fry

Question: What do these words have in common with successful authorship?

- Fame
- Notoriety.
- Recognition.
- Expertise.
- Connections
- Exposure.

Answer: They represent what you need in order to sell copies of your book.

The more involved you become in the world of publishing, the more you realize what it takes in order to succeed. The truth is that no matter what publishing option you choose, you are responsible for marketing and promoting your book. Even before you decide on a publishing option, you should be working to establish your platform—your following, your way of attracting readers. In order to interest a traditional royalty publisher in your project, you must have a platform. If you decide to self-publish or go with a fee-based POD publishing service, you will still need a platform.

If you're like most new authors, however, you are not widely known and you're not sure how to become known. You may have a book in the works or even in your hands, but you are at a loss as to how to get readers.

Are you too timid to go public with your book? Is the very idea of building a platform intimidating? Then, how do you expect to land a publisher or to sell enough copies of your book to recoup your publishing fees?

If you find it distasteful or uncomfortable to do what it takes to land a publisher or to sell books, all is not lost. There are still aspects of the platform that you can do without compromising your level of comfort. Here are a few ideas:

- Hire someone to help you with it. This might be a publishing coach, a friend, your spouse or someone else. If you can't afford the fees, consider bartering. Maybe your book is on office and

See *Platform*, page 7

Constructing Your Marketing Plan

Platform, from page 6

closet organization and you know a marketing expert who would love to hire you to organize her space. Perhaps you're a caterer with a book featuring buffet recipes. What talented ad executive or book publicist wouldn't love to trade his services for a month's worth of home-prepared meals?

- Submit articles or stories to appropriate publications and Web sites. Add your bio at the bottom. Be sure to include your book title and ordering information. For help with the process of submitting articles or stories, read Patricia Fry's book, "*A Writer's Guide to Magazine Articles*" www.matilijapress.com.
- Establish a huge mailing list of friends, associates, e-mail pals, relatives and people you meet at church, writers' conferences, business meetings, your children's schools and so forth. Keep adding to your list. Use it to announce publication of your book, offer discounts, remind people to purchase copies of your book for special occasions and inform people of media coverage for your book.
- Become known by leaders, editors and hosts for organizations, publications and Web sites related to your topic or genre. Spend a lot of time volunteering, sharing and otherwise participating with these key people. Once your book is out, attempt to get it reviewed by these professionals, ask if they'll feature it in their magazines/newsletters or at their sites and/or see about getting a key role as a columnist, discussion group leader or in some other capacity that will provide exposure for you and your book.
- Develop an interactive Web site where your potential readers can go to learn more about your topic or genre, enter contests, respond to quizzes, ask questions, see videos related to your book and so forth. For a nonfiction book, use your Web site to position yourself as an authority in your field. For fiction or a memoir, demonstrate your writing/storytelling talent. Start talking about your book and giving previews at your site early so visitors will know it's coming.

Not every writer relishes in-your-face book promotion techniques. Yet, in order to sell books, it is imperative that you make yourself and your book known. If you're not an extravert—if you just can't bear the thought of facing your public in person—at least do what you can to create a buzz from the sidelines. Use these five ideas to establish your platform and you will sell more books.

Patricia Fry is a full-time freelance writer and the author of 27 books. Her hallmark book has been revised and updated. Order your copy of "*The Right Way to Write, Publish and Sell Your Book*" and the accompanying "*Author's Workbook*" today. Order at www.matilijapress.com/rightway.html. Patricia also works with other authors toward the success of their publishing projects. Follow her informative blog: www.matilijapress.com/publishingblog.





**January Meeting:
Saturday
January 19, 2008**

ELIZABETH YOST
Writing for and Selling to Television
(See inside for more on Elizabeth Yost.)

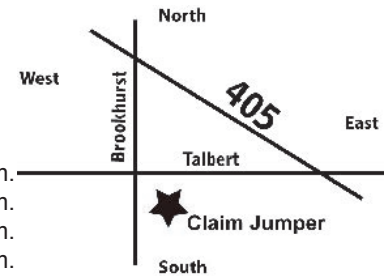


*Come in out of the rain - join us
at the meeting this month!*

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.



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 January 11: Darlene Quinn, Treasurer, 1310 E. Ocean Blvd., #1703, Long Beach, CA 90802
Check payable to SCWA must accompany reservation, or pay via PayPal online.

After January 11: Brennan Harvey, Meeting Coordinator meeting@ocwriter.com or message (714) 395-5275
BE SURE TO RSVP WHENEVER POSSIBLE! . . . Or register online at www.ocwriter.com/meetings.html



Writers News

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