



Markings

The Tallahassee Writers Association Newsletter

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For information on the included items and more, please visit www.twaonline.org.

President's Message

Contests can boost your writing career

By Marci Elliott

You've seen announcements of some of our TWA members' winning writing contests from time to time. We're always proud of them and love to see their stars shine.

Winning awards is good for the soul, for self-esteem and for other obvious benefits, including the prize money. But the awards can also be a big boost to your writing career.

It's easier to get a submission accepted or to land an agent if your resume has "Winner of the (fill in the blank) Award for Fiction" or "Gold-Medal First-Time Author" at the top.



Many writers shy away from contests, thinking their work isn't good enough to win or feeling that they should have more work published before they enter competitions. That isn't so. Many contests look for nonpublished entrants and first-time authors, and several winners admit they never thought they'd win – but did.

There's a treasure chest of writing contests in the United States and overseas for writers on every level from beginners to bestselling authors. All you have to do is search "writing competitions/contests" and take your pick.

Of course, I recommend the **Tallahassee Writers Association's Seven Hills Writing Contest**, which is open for submissions now in categories including Short Story, Creative Nonfiction, Children's Picture

Books and Flash Fiction. Deadline is Aug. 31, and details are on our web site, www.twaonline.org.

Writer's Digest magazine is holding its annual Short Short Contest, with a Nov. 15, 2011, deadline. Information is available at www.writersdigest.com/short.

Glimmer Train sponsors monthly contests for new writers, and is always looking for promising beginners. Each month's contest has a different theme. Details can be found at www.glimmertrain.com.

Writer's Market, the so-called "bible" for writers, has an entire chapter on contests. Check it out.

If you're serious about your writing and about your writing career, go ahead – take a risk and enter a contest. Or two. Or more. Don't be afraid. You could be one of those winners who says, "I never expected to win" ... but did.

Program notes

By Marsha Lyons, Program Chair

August 18

Amanda Nalley and **Holly Moore** of the *Tallahassee Democrat* will tell us all about gathering, writing and presenting the news in the newspapers of the digital age.

Multimedia reporter Amanda Nalley's topic will be multimedia reporting and story-telling. Amanda graduated from Loyola University in New Orleans with degrees in English literature and environmental studies. She worked for two years as an environmental education teacher on the Georgia coast and in Anchorage, Alaska.

After moving to Tallahassee, Amanda worked at the Mary Brogan Museum of Arts and Science, then joined the *Tallahassee Democrat* as a news assistant

in 2005. She was drafted to help create the *Northeast Chronicle*, then later became a multimedia reporter. She describes herself as a “newfangled” kind of reporter.

Amanda writes stories and blogs, shoots and edits videos, “tweets” and takes photos.

Holly Moore, the Democrat’s digital communities editor, will speak about the differences between writing for digital consumption vs. print.

Holly graduated from Florida State University and shortly after that joined the Tallahassee Democrat as a web producer. She managed contents on web sites and produced multimedia elements such as shooting and editing video, creating graphics and putting together photos and information to post on the next day’s web sites.

Beginning in February 2010, Holly became the digital communities editor at the Democrat, where she manages content on multiple web sites, coordinates multimedia projects and takes part in leading the newsroom’s social media plan.

September 15

Elizabeth Stuckey-French was featured in the *Tallahassee Democrat* shortly after the *New York Times Sunday Book Review* discussed her second novel, *Revenge of the Radioactive Lady*.

Elizabeth has published a book of stories, *The First Paper Girl in Red Oak, Iowa*, and her debut novel, *Mermaids on the Moon*. She also co-authored *Writing Fiction: A Guide to the Narrative Craft* with Janet Burroway.

Elizabeth’s short stories have appeared in such publications as the *Gettysburg Review*, *Southern Review* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. She went from a master’s degree in English at Purdue University to the famed Writer’s Workshop at the University of Iowa. She and her husband landed his-and-hers positions in Florida State’s English Department in 1999.



October 20

Judy Conlin is the author of a number of romantic suspense novels and is also known as Nurse Judy. Her work has been featured in more than 60 publications and includes articles in all major nursing journals, humorous articles in magazines and newspapers, medical media reviews, children’s stories and novels.

Judy currently writes columns for two local newspapers and her third book will soon be published. She has two previous novels which have been published, *Mystery at Morania* and *Shadows Over Bigalow Manor*.

November 17

Donna Meredith is a freelance writer living in Tallahassee. Her articles have appeared in such publications as *Tallahassee* magazine, the *Southern Literary Review*, *Columbia School Press Review*, and the *Tallahassee Democrat*.



For more than 25 years, Donna taught English, journalism and TV production in public high schools in West Virginia and Georgia. She has also participated in numerous fiction-writing workshops in Tallahassee and particularly at Florida State University.

Donna’s first novel, *The Glass Madonna*, won first place for unpublished women’s fiction in 2009 in the Royal Palm Literary Awards sponsored by the Florida Writers Association and was runner-up in the Gulf Coast novel-writing contest. *The Glass Madonna* was later published.

Donna’s second novel, *The Color of Lies*, will be published soon. Donna has also won first places in the TWA’s Seven Hills short story and essay contests. She served as president of the Tallahassee Writers Association from January 1, 2009, to December 31, 2010.

Her topic will be “Do Your Beats Go On (and on and on)? – Writing Effective Dialogue.”

December 15

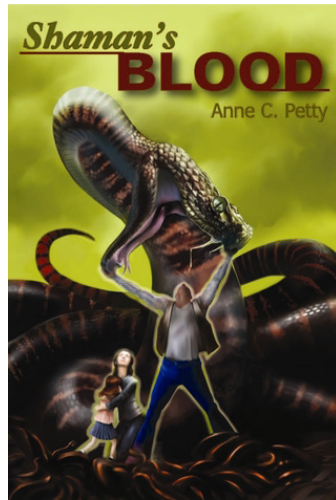
TWA’s annual holiday party!

Names in the news

Anne Petty

New book release

Anne Petty's latest book in her *Wandjina* series is *Shaman's Blood*, released August 5 from JournalStone. \$12.95 (soft cover edition). The book will be available in hardback, trade paperback and e-book at <http://journalstone.com/authors/authors/anne-petty/>.



"The follow-up to *Thin Line Between*, *Shaman's Blood* takes you on an excursion into the realm of terror that arises when everyday reality collides with shape-shifting demons from the Australian aboriginal Dreamtime," Anne said.

Conference/signing:

Anne Petty is on the conference faculty for the Rosemary Beach, FL, Fall Writers' Conference, Sept. 21-24, 2011.

<http://conferenceforwriters.com/>

Anne will be on panels and consultations for poetry, fiction, and memoir. She will also do readings and signings for her new book, *Shaman's Blood* (published Aug. 5).

Susan Womble

Going to Germany

Susan Womble, a TWA member who recently retired from teaching in Leon County Schools, has accepted a teaching position in Hohenfels, Germany. She leaves toward the end of August and will be gone a year.

"I'm pretty excited. Ready for the adventure," Susan posted on Facebook. "Retirement is over-rated."

Susan is an award-winning author who has written two books on children with disabilities. She is a former teacher-sponsor in the Big Bend Writers Guild, a group the TWA sponsored from 2007-10 for high school students who like to write.

TWA to present Margie Lawson

Master Class Oct. 1

The TWA will present for the first time a one-day immersion master class to be taught by renowned writing coach/consultant/therapist Margie Lawson on Saturday, Oct. 1.

Lawson, known nationwide for working with and advising writers in almost every genre, will teach the day-long class on "Empowering Characters' Emotions." It will be held at the Holiday Inn on North Monroe Street with lunch on your own.

Early registration before Sept. 1 is \$55 for TWA members and \$65 for nonmembers. Registration forms are available on the TWA web site, www.twaonline.org, or you may register online at www.submishmash.com.

Margie Lawson has been a college professor, clinical trainer, sex therapist, director of an impotence clinic, hypnotherapist and director of an employee assistance program. She holds a master of science degree in counseling psychology with an additional post-master's specialization in psychiatric counseling and marriage and family therapy.

She is the founder and president of the Lawson Writer's Academy, which teaches online courses in various aspects of writing and editing. She is known by writers throughout the country and specializes in the psychology of writing and the psychological nuances of the writing craft.

The TWA frequently sponsors up to three-hour writing workshops throughout the year, but this is the first time it will sponsor a full-day immersion master class.

If you're serious about writing and want to take your character development to the next level, plan now to attend the October 1 Margie Lawson Master Class.

For more information visit www.twaonline.org and www.margielawson.com.



Annual Seven Hills Writing Contest under way through 8/31

The TWA's annual writing contests, Seven Hills for prose and Penumbra for poetry and haiku, is now open and accepting entries until Aug. 31, the absolute deadline for both.

Submissions for both contests can now be made online through Submishmash, which will be easier and faster for contestants, judges and contest organizers. Save postage, paper and a trip to the post office by submitting online at www.submishmash.com.

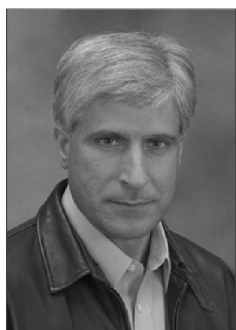
We accept submissions for the 2011 Seven Hills contest of 2,500 words in the following categories: short stories, creative nonfiction, or children's picture books; and 500-word flash fiction. The fee is \$17 per submission for nonmembers and \$12 for TWA members with paid dues.

Prizes for Seven Hills and Penumbra poetry winners are \$100 for first-place; \$75 second; and \$50 third. Haiku winners will receive \$50, \$35 and \$20, respectively. All prize-winners and honorable mentions will get publication in the 2012 Seven Hills Review.

Complete information is available on our web site, www.twaonline.org.

Novelist Steve Berry to headline TWA's 2012 Writers Conference

Best-selling author **Steve Berry** will be the keynote speaker at the TWA's 2012 Writers Conference, scheduled for May 4-6, 2012, at the Holiday Inn on North Monroe Street.



Steve Berry

Berry is best known for several popular novels, including the *Cotton Malone* series. Berry's web site, www.steveberry.org, gives a detailed list of his novels and more information on him and his work.

The 2012 Writers Conference also will feature **David-Matthew Barnes, Philip Deaver, N. M. Kelby, Pat MacEnulty, Jessica Morrell**

and **Mark Mustian**. Speaker biographies and detailed information are available on our TWA web site, www.twaonline.org.

Help the TWA – please! Conference chair, refreshment committee members needed

Are you one of those people who loves the TWA and would like to become more active as a member? If so, the TWA wants you.

We urgently need a conference chair to oversee the 2012 Writers Conference. Most of the planning, scheduling and behind-the-scenes work has already been done by other committee members, but the Conference Committee is in immediate need of a leader to take on the leadership role to orchestrate and keep track of all the tasks committee members have undertaken.

If you are this person, or would like to be, contact TWA President Marci Elliott at (850) 877-3657 or at marci2elliott@aol.com.

We would like to welcome **Ken Frisbie** as our new Refreshment Committee chair. Ken graciously offered to take on this role, but he needs volunteers to sign up to bring snacks and finger-food to our monthly general meetings, which take place on the third Thursday of every month at the American Legion Hall.

You will be very popular and beloved as one of the snack-providers. If you'd like to help, contact President Marci Elliott at (850) 877-3657 or at marci2elliott@aol.com. THANK YOU!

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For announcements, news items or article suggestions to be considered, contact TWA President and Editor Marci Elliott at marci2elliott@aol.com.

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