

KWI Meetings

May Meeting

When: May 28, 2020

Where:

Topeka/Shawnee County Library

Topic: Guest Speaker-
Annette Billings

Future Meetings

When: June 25, 2022

Where: TBA

Topic: TBA

Meeting Format

Program: 10:00am

Board Meeting: 11:00

Critique: 12:00pm

May Meeting/Program

The May meeting will be held Saturday, May 28 at the Topeka /Shawnee County Library. We will begin with a 10 a.m. program. This month we are excited to welcome guest speaker, poet Annette Billings.



From the Slush Pile

Shayne Huxtable provided a link to a great blog on How to Research your Market: An Author's Guide. It can be found at:

<https://blog.reedsy.com/market-research-checklist/>

Members have good things to say about writing courses offered by Holly Lisle. You can find a list of her courses on a variety of topics at

<https://www.hollyswritingclasses.com/courses/>

Reedsy has a helpful World Building Template available for download. Whether your story takes place in a different world, or in a different historical period, I found it useful to flesh out how the characters move through their world and how it affects those characters. It covers all aspects from geography to culture, from relationships to government. You can find the template at

https://share.reedsy.com/reedsy_worldbuilding_template.pdf

Earlier this year we had a program about writing query letters. One of our members provided the following link to Gail Eastwood's Dos and Don'ts: How to Write the Perfect Query Letter.

<http://eclectics.com/articles/query.html>

Financials

April 2022

Beginning Cash Balance:
\$3,796.13

Income: \$0.00

Expenses: \$100.00

Ending Cash Balance
\$3,696.13

June Online Writing Workshops

Thank you to Angela Johnson for providing the following June training opportunities.

Website Tips & Tricks: 15 Lessons to Supercharge Your Author Website

Date: June 1-29, 2022
Presenter: Barb Drosdowich, FMI,
[Fifteen Lessons to Supercharge your Author Website](#)

Where Did I Put Those Tools?

Date: June 2-30, 2022
Presenter: Mary Marvelle, FMI,
<https://fthrw.com/upcoming-workshopsw>

Writing the Cozy Mystery

Date: June 3 – 30, 2022
Presenter: Beth Daniels: FMI
<https://www.rwakissofdeath.org/workshops/>

The Art of Backstory

Date: June 6–19, 2022
Presenter: Jacqueline Congro, FMI
<https://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus2022/#JUN>

Emotional Arc

Date: June 6–24, 2022
Presenter: Tere Michaels, FMI
<https://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus2022/#JUN>

Twitter for Authors

Date: June 6–24, 2022
Presenter: Cassandra Carr, FMI,
<https://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus2022/#JUN>

BOLDLY GOING, LEVEL ONE:

Writing Science Fiction Romance when You Don't Have a PhD

Date: June 6–July 1, 2022
Presenter: Linnea Sinclair, FMI,
<https://ffprwa.com/boldly-going-level-one/>

Sensitivity Reading vs. Editing

Date: June 6-July 1, 2022
Presenter: Ellis Flynn, FMI,
[Sensitivity Reading vs. Editing](#)

Using Your Characters' Emotional Wounds for Character Development

Date: June 16-27, 2022

Presenter: Deborah Bailey, FMI,

[Using Your Characters' Emotional Wounds for Character Development](#)

Setting as Character

Date: June 22, 2022, 6:00 PM-7:00 PM

Presenter: Nan Dixon, FMI

[Setting as Character](#)

May Featured Member

This month we are featuring retired Capitol Police Officer Leonard Richter. Len also worked for a short time as plainclothes officer at the sheriff's office. He credits his success in life to his wife who "took an uneducated high school dropout and made him into the person she saw, even if he didn't."

Q: What prompted you to begin writing?

A: The answer is my older brother used to write in a bound black composition book. I was fascinated by his mystery stories. Later, I guess it's genes, I started writing later in life and I found I really enjoyed it.

Q: In what genre do you write? Tell us why that interests you.

A: I'm not sure what genre? My stories start with the beginning of World War II. I'm Jewish, Anti-Nazi and like to write about dealing with Nazi's in America from September 1939.

Q: Your career was with the Kansas Capitol Police (Kansas Highway Patrol). Are you incorporating your law enforcement experience into what you are writing? Tell us about it.

A: Actually, I had hoped to be an FBI agent when I graduated college in 1973, but I was too short to meet the height requirement. My history in law enforcement has no real bearing on my writing. My stories deal with Nazi spies in the period before America entered World War II, 1939-1941. I suppose it's a fantasy of what my life would have been like had I been a federal law enforcement officer in 1939.

Q: Where are you in the writing process (writing, have a first draft done, published, etc)?

A: I completed a story, about 80 pages, called the Railroad Dignitary Protection Service (RDPS). The new one I have just begun deals with the State Department's (fictionalized) Counterintelligence Office that was formed in September 1939 after Germany invaded Poland. Its job is to ferret out spies inside the State Department in offices across the United

States. I just started this and last week I got some excellent feedback and I've started rewriting the first chapter based on the suggestions I received.

Q: Do you have a technique to get into the groove of writing?

A: Interesting question. I'm a Big Band music fan and I either put on WWII music off a CD or I pick it off the Internet. I turn 80 years old this month (May) and I suppose subconsciously, albeit I am a product of 1955-1956 rock-n-roll era, I would have listened to big band music from birth until 1955. At the expense of sounding maudlin, my mother died in 1959 when I was 16. All the old pictures I have show her in the 1940s at our family store where we lived until 1947 when we moved to a house after my younger brother, Michael (1945-1988) was born. My older brother, Norman, was 9 years older than I. Norman and I never had a close relationship until he graduated medical school in 1964 and went into private practice. I'm adding this information because I came from a dysfunctional family. I think I write about the 1940's because somehow, I believe subconsciously that I would have fit better in that era than this. How many people do you know who can say they lived the life experiences they always dreamed about? I was a high school dropout and no one in my family expected me to amount to anything. And, yet, today, I'm a college graduate, I'm an accountant, a Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) and, I'm retired from the federal government, Department of Homeland Security. I have 39 years as a part-time law enforcement officer with three agencies, the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department, 25 years as a reserve deputy sheriff, 2 years as a police officer with Washburn University Police Department and over 15 years with the Kansas Capitol Police, Troop K, Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP). The time overlaps because from 2005 until 2008 I worked for two agencies. I hold law enforcement retired cards for the Sheriff's Office and the KHP. Hell-of-a-life for someone who flunked out of high school for failing English in his senior year. So, maybe writing spy stories in the late 1930's is the final fantasy that I am living out on paper?

Q: Anything else you want to add?

A: Attending the meetings with the 'real' writers is a special association I really never expected and am so grateful to have. Listening to the 'real' writers is exciting for me and it puts me in with a class of people I never thought or imagined I would ever be associated with in my lifetime. Thank you all.

Kudos

If you have published a book, received a writing award, appeared on a Podcast, or other such reason to celebrate a success, please let Connie know at conniebeckett942@gmail.com. We would love to feature you in an upcoming newsletter.

April Meeting Summary

Present were President Tish Glasson, Treasurer Shayne Huxtable, Newsletter Editor, Connie Beckett, and members Julie Nischan, Theresa Grennan, Angela Johnson, and Leonard Richter.

The program consisted of writing exercises designed to spark the imagination and improve writing skills.

Shayne reported the March financials. She said a \$100 honorarium was sent to the Catholic Charities on behalf of member Carolyn Kaberline who died in December 2020.

The May meeting will be held at the Topeka/Shawnee County Library in the Anton Room. Poet and special guest, Annette Billings will talk about writing and read some of her poetry.

Connie Beckett is done with the Round Robin chapter. Billie-Renee Knight is next, and Connie will forward the chapter and updated summary to her.

Officer elections will be coming up soon. Billie-Renee will be sending members a request for nominations to fill the positions.

Tish asked if there were any Kudos and Julie Nishan announced she is working on edits for her next book and anticipates it will be published in June. The book is nonfiction titled "I Belong to the Country." It will have short stories about her childhood and poetry.

Leonard Richter volunteered for the May Featured Member column.

There was no other business, and that part of the meeting was concluded.

