

Norman Galaxy of Writers

Formed in March, 1969

Affiliated with
Oklahoma Writers Federation, Inc.

WriteLine

OCTOBER 13TH MEETING

William Bernhardt, “The Seven Secrets to the Bestselling Books of All Time (So You Can Write One, Too)”

Saturday, October 13, 2012; 10 am—noon
University Lutheran Church, 914 Elm Ave.



In this session, nationally bestselling author William Bernhardt analyzes the ten best selling books of the past century and discusses what they have in common. By analyzing the key characteristics of the megahits of publishing, from *Gone With the Wind* to *The Da Vinci Code*, every writer may learn how to shape and tweak their work to make it more appealing to agents, editors, and readers.

In addition to being the nationally bestselling author of twenty-nine books, most recently *Capitol Betrayal*, William Bernhardt founded HAWK Publishing Group in 1999 and started hosting writing workshops in 2005. HAWK, the workshops, and his small-group writing seminars have educated several authors now published at major New York houses.

He holds a Masters Degree in English Literature and is the only writer to have received both the Royden B. Davis Distinguished Author Award (University of Pennsylvania) and the H. Louise Cobb Distinguished Author Award (OSU), which is given “in recognition of an outstanding body of work that has profoundly influenced the way in which we understand ourselves and American society at large.”

After an incredible eighteen-book run with series character Ben Kincaid, he voluntarily retired the series to pursue other writing projects. He has written plays, including a musical (book and music), humor, nonfiction articles, children books, anthologies for charitable fundraising, and crossword puzzles. He also has published many poems and is a member of the American Academy of Poets. His next novel will be published in the fall of 2013

SPEAKER NOTES - CINDY NOBLE

J. Madison Davis: “Plot Is Not a Four Letter Word”



J. Madison Davis, a professor with the Gaylord College of Journalism and Broadcast, teacher of professional writing, author of eight novels, numerous screenplays, and many other great things, spoke to Galaxy members about plot.

Articles about writing, Davis says, quite often say “snitty stuff” that “books are not about plot, they’re about character” and discussions that look down on “plot-driven” works as second rate. Davis says it’s fine to talk about importance of character, but books without coherent plots are “equally dreadful.” The fundamental pleasure of what you get from a story comes from a combination of plot and character.

Davis says that Aristotle was the original champion of plot. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle outlines six elements to the ancient greek tragedies. All elements are important, but Aristotle says the number one element is plot. Drama is about what the actor does on the stage. What you know about the story is about what you see. For novels, it’s a little different (you can get inside character’s thoughts) but plot is still the spine, the structure, the setup. Without plot the whole thing falls apart.

Aristotle defines a coherent plot as an imitation of an action—not of character, people, or society. Action is a movement from happiness to misery or the reverse. Motion is achieved by the interjection of a problem, which kicks the relatively stable situation presented at the beginning of the story into an unstable state. Sometimes, the driving problem is internal. Sometimes it is external. But in order to solve the problem, the protagonist/characters must overcome obstacles—a series of action-driven causes and effects which take the story from beginning to middle to end. Some endings are tidy. Some are messy and open-ended. But for the ending to be satisfying, it must resolve the central story problem and present a closing of the main conflict.

Last words: What really shows who someone is, is to put them under pressure and then see what they do.

—Article by Cindy Noble

MARKETS BY ANN CHAMPEAU

Get Down to Business

Opportunities for freelance writers are abundant in the large and diverse field where editors are looking for fresh, innovative approaches to business topics. Trade magazines exist for virtually every business market, covering such industries as art, banking, cooking, engineering, fashion, finance, and real estate. Here are a few but many more are in the *Writer's Market* and online under business magazine guidelines.

Family Business Magazine

Their audience is primarily owners and managers of successful, multi generational family-owned businesses. It focuses on the family aspect and business aspect of families. Emphasis is on how conflicts were resolved or how potential conflicts were averted. Contact Barbara Spector, Editor-in-chief, Family Business, 1845 Walnut St., Philadelphia PA 19103 or e-mail: bspector@familybusinessmagazine.com.

My Business

It is a guide to survival and success for small business owners. It is sent to members of the National Federation of Independent Business. These small business owners range from at-home solo proprietors to heads of companies with up to 500 employees. They want pitches for feature stories which fall under one of three categories: own, operate, and grow. Send story ideas to *My/Business Magazine* c/o Imagination Publishing, 600 West Fulton St., Suite 600, Chicago IL 60661, or e-mail to NFIB@imaginepub.com.

Autoinc.Magazine

Autoinc covers every aspect of the automotive service industry, from the latest regulatory information, to nuts-and-bolts technical articles, and sheds light on how to manage a business. Contact the editor at editor@asashop.org.

Vineyard and Winery

Vineyard and Winery Management Magazine, 421 E Street, Santa Rosa CA 95404 or rmerietti@vwm-online.com.

—Ann Champeau, Markets

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Sherry Bynum reminded members to bring writing materials to the workshop, Oct. 6, at 10 a.m.

Member Moments: Robert Magarian shared information about self-publishing.

Speaker: Andrew Horton, Program Chair, introduced our guest speaker J. Madison Davis, "Plot is not a four letter word."

Meeting was adjourned.

Sherry Bynum, Secretary

MEMBER MOMENT BY CINDY NOBLE

Member Moment: Robert A. Magarian: "Experiences in Self Publishing"



Robert Magarian, Galaxy member and author of two self-published novels (*The Watchmen* and *72 Hours*), spoke about self-publishing Print on Demand (POD) services and shared some "lessons of experience" learned between the publication of his first book and his second.

Print on Demand (POD)

POD services use printing technology that allows books to be printed individually and shipped when they are ordered. This is less expensive than the more traditional method of offset printing using plates and storage, and it has revolutionized the world of self publishing. However, in contrast to the older methods of self-publishing, the author maintains less control over the rights and receives a smaller portion of revenue from sales when using POD services.

With POD services, you are not an author entering a contract with a publisher, you are a consumer purchasing a service—and as such, you should not let the POD service companies "push you around." Magarian stresses that you should always read the service agreement carefully before proceeding, and watch out for hidden costs. You want "**Epub conversion**" to always be included as part of the original service fee, for example. It is also important to check a company's legitimacy at places like "Writer Beware" (www.writerbeware.com), and to request and carefully read a company's "published author's guide" to get an idea of their quality of work.

Lessons of experience

Magarian worked with his assigned author advocate for *The Watchmen*. But Magarian took a more active role in every aspect of producing *72 Hours*—from writing promotional blurbs, to designing a professional looking cover, to internal formatting and the placement of blank pages. He did everything he could to produce a book that looked "just like the ones" on bookstore shelves. He also stresses the importance of having outside readers, including a copy editor, go over the work to remove errors. Self-publishing has a stigma that must be overcome. Magarian says, "If you're going to self-publish, make sure the novel is in the best shape. Revise and revise until you're sick of it, and then revise again."

The last word

Magarian chose self-publishing because he didn't feel he had the time to tackle "traditional" route (which can take years to find acceptance and then years more from acceptance to publication). But, Magarian says, "If I live to be 90, I'm still going to be writing whether anybody likes it or not."

—Article by Cindy Noble

BRAG SHEET

Sales, Publications and Acceptances

LINDA TREADWAY: ARTICLES: "Line-X," "Wilshire Pennington," "OU Medical & DaVinci," and "OKC Pickleball Club"; *Edmond Outlook Magazine*; July 2012 issue. "Swiss Cleaners," "Funky Monkey," and "Dr. Diana Kennedy"; *Edmond Outlook Magazine*; August 2012 issue. "Heritage Renovations," "OK Allergy & Asthma," and "Science Fit"; *Edmond Outlook Magazine*; September 2012 issue.

ROBERT FERRIER: PUBLISHED: Video, "Dante Dreams-Inferno, Journal Entry, Gluttony & Greed." (8/21/2012) URL: www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uoZGMU5iDc

STAN SOLLOWAY: PUBLISHED: COLUMNS: "Silliman on Sports" <http://www.sillimanonsport.com> celebrated its 10th anniversary.

KEITH EATON: ARTICLE: "Oklahoma Justice: The Method and the Man, Chief Justice Steven W. Taylor," *Distinctly Oklahoma*, (10/2012).

Contests

KATHLEEN PARK won FIRST place (\$100) in the writing contest Writer's Short Course at Rose State College in the nonfiction category with "Voices of Canyon de Chelly."

KATHERINE WEST won FIRST place (\$100) in the writing contest Writer's Short Course at Rose State College in the fiction category with her novel, "Human Error." Katherine was asked to send the complete "Human Error" manuscript to Trident Media after pitching it to Agent Melissa Flashman.

Professional Activities

ROBERT FERRIER: PRESENTATION: "The Craft of Poetry" to the Oklahoma City Writers, (9/15/2012).

JUDY HOWARD: (9/1-30) Displayed her Quilted Scrapbook Exhibit, Edmond Library. (9/10/12) Ponca City Quilt Guild, Judy's Civil War Quilt Trunk Show Program and Food for Body and Soul Quilt Exhibit. (9/19/12) Program for librarians of four counties in Central OK at the Moore Library. (9/20, 21, & 23 /12) Exhibited her Food for Body & Soul Touring Quilts and 1905 Cookbooks, State Fair Park, Creative Arts Building. (9/25/12).

TOM BARCZAK: Presenter at Rose State Writers' Short Course, (9/15-16/12), Bill Bernhardt, Director.

Member News

LAURA FLOOD, 93, MARY SPAULDING's mother, was a longtime member of Norman Galaxy of Writers. Laura passed away Sept. 10, 2012. She took art lessons at the Firehouse Art Center starting at age 78 and Galaxy considered her their "painter in residence." In her 80s she had an art show displaying her oil paintings. Mary said, "She never spoke a bad word about anyone." Laura will be remembered for her easy smile and good sense of humor. Her memorial service was at the First Baptist Church, September 17, which was attended by several Galaxy members.

MINUTES OF SEPT. 8, 2012 BY SHERRY BYNUM

September 8, 2012 Minutes

Norman Galaxy of Writers met on September 8, 2012 at the Norman Public Library. President Kathleen Park called the meeting to order at 10:05 A.M. Guests were welcomed and introductions were made.

Committee Reports:

The **minutes** and **treasurer's** reports were approved as printed in the *WriteLine*.

Friday Writers: Writers continue to meet at the Norman Senior Center, 329 S. Peters. Individuals who wish to receive feedback from group members are encouraged to bring copies of their work.

Marilyn Fleer announced that our **next meeting** will be on October 13, 2012, at the University Lutheran Church.

Program Chair Andy Horton reported that William Bernhardt will be our guest speaker on October 13.

NAC Roundtable: Helen Duchon suggested that we investigate the pros and cons of becoming a 501 c-3) or Inc. A task force will report back at our next meeting.

OWFI: Bynum, Noble, and Park will represent Galaxy, Sunday, September 9, at the OWFI Board meeting.

Linda Basinger reminded us that Galaxy **dues** are \$15. OWFI dues are \$15 before Dec. 1st; after, increase to \$20.

Ruth Castillo, **NGW 2012 Contest Chair** said the deadline for entries is November 10. The contest rules were in the *WriteLine* and on our website and FB page.

Mini Workshop Chair, Sherry Bynum gave registration forms for "Using the Five Senses in Your Writing," **October 6**, at University Lutheran Church. Presenter

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TREASURER'S REPORT - LINDA BASINGER

PREVIOUS BALANCE: 8/21/2012 **\$ 801.79**
DEPOSITS:

Basinger: GXY & OWFI '13 Dues	\$ 30.00
Bynum, Shannon: GXY '13 Dues	15.00
Castillo: GXY & OWFI Dues	30.00
Champeau: GXY '13 Dues	15.00
Duchon: October Workshop	10.00
Fleer: GXY 2013 Dues	15.00
Horton: GXY & OWFI '13 Dues	30.00
Payne: GXY & OWFI '13 Dues & Oct Wkshp	40.00
Searcey: GXY & OWFI '13 Dues	30.00
Solloway: GXY & OWFI '13 Dues	30.00
Total Deposits	\$ 245.00

EXPENSES:

SPEAKER: J. Madison Davis (ck #1025)	\$ 25.00
Sept. <i>Writeline</i> : Helen Duchon (ck #1026)	14.58
Norman Arts Council '13 dues (ck #1027)	10.00
OWFI: 2013 dues for 6 members* (ck #1028)	90.00
Floral Tribute, Laura Flood (ck #1029)	70.00
Total Expenses	\$ 209.58

CURRENT BALANCE: 9/17/2012 **\$ 837.21**

*Basinger, Castillo, Horton, Payne, Searcey, and Solloway @ \$15 each for OWFI dues

Mea Culpa, “Did-ja-know’s” and Odds & Ends

• *Mea culpa*. My fault. A while back, I made a blunder in telling you that the period may be placed outside the quotation marks. But I failed to distinguish the exact circumstances. To begin with, here is the general rule direct from the *Chicago Manual of Style*: Periods should be placed within the quotation marks except when single quotation marks are used to set off special terms . . .” and it gives references to other rules in the manual, which defines those special terms. They are found in linguistic and phonetic studies. Not in general usage. Sorry.



• Here are some of my pet “Did-ja-know’s.” Did you know that the commonly heard “safety deposit box” is really “safe deposit box”? And “new innovation,” “free gift,” and “close proximity” are all double talk? Innovation means something new. Is there another kind of gift? And saying “close proximity” is the same as saying “close closeness.”

• Here’s another quote from dear old Theodore Bernstein (*The Careful Writer*, p. 347). “Prior to: A faddish affectation for *before*. Would you say posterior to in place of *after*?” [Yes, yes, I know—a few of the latest dictionaries have capitulated. Stay strong, careful writers!]

• In eight years in Oklahoma, I’ve heard only one news reporter pronounce the unit modifier “short-lived” (also “long-lived,” shorter-lived” etc.), correctly. The *i* is long! Here’s why: to form this unit modifier (and others), which works as an adjective, you must add *ed* to the noun. When you do, the *f* in *life* changes to *v*. But the vowel sound does not change. That noun, *life*, does not become the verb *live*. Think of these combinations to prove it to yourself: *sure-* (adj.) *footed* (noun plus *ed*); *light-hearted*, *floppy-eared*, *silver-plated*.

• An even bigger rub is remembering that in the predicate adjective position, the hyphen disappears: “A well-known man” becomes “The man was well known” or “The man, well known for his generosity, arrived early.”

—Kathleen Norris Park, Grammarian

CHANGES IN ADDRESS REQUESTED

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2012 Dues for Galaxy are \$15
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