

“If there's a book that you want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it.”  
— Toni Morrison

# LA PLUME

Official Newsletter of the Writers' Guild of Acadiana

February 2023

*Time to renew your membership?*

## Board Members:

President John Comeaux, Vice President Christopher Fontenot, Treasurer Beth Davis, Publicist Ellen Threatts, Secretary Ed Gauthier, Webmaster Rhonda Lejeune, Historian Pamela Harrington, Newsletter John Comeaux, and all past WGA Presidents in good standing.



Please read the **new** paragraph on our dues for WGA at the end of this letter.

## Next Meeting: February

**February 28, 2023.** The South Regional Branch of the Lafayette Library, Auditorium. Address is 6101 Johnston St, Lafayette. Start time is **6:00 p.m.** We usually go to 7:15, but we must end by 7:30.

We will have a Door Prize from the books that were donated by authors.

## February Guest Speaker: Lindsey Duga



Lindsey Duga is a Young Adult and Middle Grade author from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Since childhood, she's had a love for enchanting worlds and reluctant heroes and wrote her first novel in college at Louisiana State University while getting a degree in Mass Communication. She pursued her writing career by attending local writers conferences, finding dedicated critique partners, and pursuing online pitch contests. Her young adult novels with boutique publisher Entangled Teen include *KISS OF THE ROYAL*, *GLOW OF THE FIREFLIES*, *ROARING*, and more recently, *STORM CHASER* (October 2022). Her middle grade novels are featured at Scholastic Clubs & Fairs and include *THE HAUNTING*, *GHOST IN THE HEADLIGHTS*, *FEAR*, and *THE REPLACEMENT* (September 2022).

“I developed a deep love for courageous heroes, dastardly villains, and enchanting worlds from the cartoon shows and books I enjoyed as a kid. Drawing inspiration from these fantastical works of fiction, I wrote my first novel in college while getting a bachelor's in mass communication from Louisiana State University.”

<https://lindseyduga.com>

## Looking Ahead: **March Prompt**

“Unfortunately, the truth is never entirely true.”

Category: Fiction

This is a fun competition for members. The prompt **MUST APPEAR** somewhere within the work, and entries must be no longer than 500 words. When the prompt category is poetry, both traditional and free verse poems are acceptable. All entries must be typed and double-spaced. The story or poem must have the word count, title, author’s name, and date of the competition written at the top of the first page, and a paper copy of the winner and runner-up is to be handed in to the president after the judging. Contest participants are not allowed to enter the contest with works that are typed on iPhones or any other electronic devices.

## WEB Page and Facebook

Our web page is here: <https://www.writersguildacadiana.org/>

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/writersguildacadiana.org/>

The Writers’ Guild is always willing to share the success stories of its members. Be sure to let us know about your writing. We will put your blurb on our website, on our Facebook page, and on this newsletter. Let’s highlight and showcase our writers! Send us a synopsis or your own paragraph about the work you are working on or have published, and how to get it. Send to John at [jpcoman9@gmail.com](mailto:jpcoman9@gmail.com).

### ◆ **Member Announcements**

**New Feature!** La Plume will allow our authors to submit a teaser or extended passage from their upcoming or existing work, one page or less. Send your submission to [JPComan9@gmail.com](mailto:JPComan9@gmail.com)

Member **Scott Green** has offered an excerpt of the Preface of his non-fiction book *70 x 7: Forgiving Your Abusers*.

#### PREFACE:

I sat in the sanctuary with my eyes fixed on the charismatic Pastor, tuned into every word as he preached out of Matthew 18. "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, ' I tell you, not seven times, but seventy times seven.'" (Matthew 18:21-22)

I wanted to stand up and scream in response, "But, Pastor, you don't know what these people did to me, not just once, but repeatedly! You don't know how much pain they inflicted on me or how hard I struggled to overcome the emotional wounds. I suffered for years under their abuse, and I still carry the scars of those wounds in my heart. I can never get back what these people stole from me. They deserve to suffer as much as I have. How can I forgive that? How can you stand there and honestly expect me to forgive them? It's not that simple! I can't do it!"

The Holy Spirit immediately answered me as if he had heard my questions. "You still carry the pain and the poison of unforgiveness in your heart."

"How? I already dealt with this. Lord, I gave this to you years ago." And then there was a silence.

"Didn't I, Lord? At least, I thought I did." More silence.

"If I did, why does it still hurt so much?" The tears flowed as I realized I was still suffering from the pain of my abuse and unforgiveness toward my abusers.

## ◆ Contest Announcements

### 2023 Ten Minute Play Festival

We are accepting submissions for our 2023 Ten Minute Play Festival! This year's theme is "Wedding Reception." All plays must be submitted to our e-mail address [admin@spectralsisters.com](mailto:admin@spectralsisters.com) by 11:59 pm on Sunday, March 15th.

Full details here (and it's not a misspelling): <https://www.spectralsisters.com/10-minute-play-festival>

This year we are also offering prizes for the top three plays! The play who wins First Place will receive \$100, Second Place will be awarded \$75, and Third Place will get \$50 as a thank you from us.

Want to direct, act, or assist with the play festival? Contact Spectral Sisters at [admin@spectralsisters.com](mailto:admin@spectralsisters.com) or by our websites [contact form](#).

### The Missouri Review

The 2023 Perkoff Prize is now open, and we can't wait to read your work!

Here are the guidelines, full details [here](#):

All submissions must engage with health and medicine in some way.

All submissions must be previously unpublished.

Poetry: up to 10 pages of poetry.

Fiction and Nonfiction: up to 8500 words, double-spaced.

Winners will be published in print issue of TMR.

All entries will be considered for publication (whether in print, or as part of our Poem of the Week or Blast features).

Multiple submissions and simultaneous submissions are welcome, but you must pay a separate fee for each entry and withdraw the piece immediately if accepted elsewhere.

Current University of Missouri students and faculty are ineligible.

Standard Entry fee: \$15. Each entrant receives a one-year subscription to the Missouri Review in digital format (normal price \$24).

Our mailing address is:

Missouri Review  
453 McReynolds Hall  
University of Missouri  
Columbia, MO 65211

## ◆ Writing Inspiration

### A Writer's Guide to Breaking the Rules

by Sarah Penner from *Writer Unboxed*

All writing advice, I ultimately decided, should be taken with a grain of salt. Writing is art, and *art* doesn't mix with *rules*. Take what works for you as the creator, and leave the rest behind. Below are six conventional writing "rules" I'd encourage writers to think twice about.

#### Rule #2 worth breaking: Write what you know

Ah, an old favorite. We've all been hearing this since the day we first set pen to paper, haven't we? Well, pardon my expression, but I call BS.

I knew absolutely nothing about poison before writing *The Lost Apothecary*. I had a foundational interest in herbs, plants, and cooking, but that's still a long stretch from arsenic, strychnine, and nux vomica. What's a writer to do? Expand what you know. Take the time to do the research. No one will know the difference, as evidenced by the number of emails I still receive from pharmacists who are impressed with the level of detail throughout *The Lost Apothecary*.

I shudder to think of the many aspiring authors who've tossed aside a solid book idea because this rule makes them believe they don't know enough. Writers, knowledge can be gained—and imagination does the rest.

*[ed. note: Future newsletters will continue this theme. Reprinted with permission.]*

## ◆ Ask Google

I asked Google: "What to do After You Finish the First Draft of Your Book?"

Let it rest. This part can be the most difficult. ...

Read it all the way through, once. ...

Revise. ...

Read it through again — out loud. ...

Make any final revisions. ...

Write a synopsis. ...

Write a query letter. ...

Figure out who to send the query letter to and go out on submission.

## ◆ **Helpful Websites**

Here is the in-depth look at what to do after you write your book.

<https://medium.com/the-1000-day-mfa/what-to-do-after-you-finish-the-first-draft-of-your-book-3202637ed57e>

## ◆ **Publishing**

### **How to Publish a Book in 2023: 10 Steps to Success**

Here's the simple step-by-step process to publish a book:

1. Choose a publishing route
2. Edit the draft
3. Get feedback from editors and critique circles
4. Title your manuscript
5. Format your book for publication
6. Design a book cover that converts readers
7. Write a 'publisher-ready' book description
8. Create a book launch plan
9. Publish your book on online retailers
10. Market the book to increase sales

*[editor's note: This simplified list is explained in detail in the full article linked below. Also, the article was written in Feb. 2022. But, close enough, right?]*

<https://blog.reedsy.com/how-to-publish-a-book/>

## ◆ **Marketing**

### **16 Creative Ways Authors Promote Nonfiction Books on Instagram**

By Shailee Shah on Bookbub.com

#### **8. Sharing reader appreciation**

Ashley C. Ford uses her Instagram to share her book journey. She writes personal captions that often address her readers directly. In the image from Instagram she expressed excitement and appreciation for the response to her book, *Somebody's Daughter*.

[Ed. note: this is an excerpt. Full article [here](#).]



### ◆ **Word of the month**

**Hoi polloi** . *Noun*

The masses. The common people.

### ◆ **Events**

**Sales Opportunity!** WGA members have the opportunity to join us at Moncus Park Farmers and Artisan Market on the last Saturday of the month. We display our books and meet with people to discuss writing and publishing. Usually hundreds of people go by the booth, and our huge WGA banner attracts many to see and meet the authors.

Writer's Guild of Acadiana vending table regulations:

The following applies to Moncus Park WGA vending table, *or any other WGA vending event*.

1. You must be a paid member of Writers Guild of Acadiana
2. You'll need to confer with the Secretary of the board (Ed Gauthier) and arrange a date to sell a month in advance.

You do that by calling or texting Ed Gauthier ( 337-945-5718) or emailing him at [eggchess@gmail.com](mailto:eggchess@gmail.com) to make arrangements.

You are not scheduled unless you receive a confirmation from him, via text, email or phone call.

3. Keep in mind that WGA only sells on the last Saturday of the month at Moncus Park. (This will change in March of 2023 when we start selling on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday and the last Saturday of the month at Moncus Park.)

- 4: On March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and thereafter, each scheduled vendor will be asked to pay \$5.00 for each day they sell their books at our vending table. This assists the WGA in defraying our costs (required payments to Moncus Park reserving our sales space).
- 5. Ed Gauthier will periodically send out the reservation list, which will show those that are signed up to sell, and the dates they're scheduled to do so, and which dates are still OPEN for those who wish to sign up. If your name appears on the reservation list, you are definitely scheduled to sell at the WGA vending table. Keep an eye out for it.
- 6: For the Moncus Park farmers Market Saturday morning sale, authors who are scheduled to sell should arrive by 7:05 a.m. and have table displays and books for sale set up by 7:35 a.m. Customers start to arrive by 8:00. Each seller should bring their own table, which should be limited to 4 ft long. (Square card tables are acceptable) Bring a drop cloth to cover the table. Bring a chair for your personal comfort. Please be aware that bringing extra people with you may require them to sit outside the tent area. Scheduled vendors need to have priority to be under the tent to meet and greet customers.

***Would you like to join or renew?***

Thank you for your interest in the Guild. Submit the form below to register to become a new or renew a membership with Writers' Guild of Acadiana. Annual membership fee is \$25.00. **NEW: Your dues are good for one year of remittance. Thus, if you join in mid-year, you are a paid-member through the following mid-year.** You will receive this monthly newsletter "La Plume", which will keep you informed of events and news of the Guild. When submitting the form, please mail your check or money order to:

**Writers' Guild of Acadiana  
P O Box 51532  
Lafayette, LA 70505**

Email questions to: [info@writersguildacadiana.org](mailto:info@writersguildacadiana.org)  
Cash payments can be made at the monthly meeting – do not mail.

This form is also online: [writersguildacadiana.org](http://writersguildacadiana.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about us? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_