

"No one else sees the world the way you do, so no one else can tell the stories that you have to tell."

*Charles De Lint*

# LA PLUME

Official Newsletter of the Writers' Guild of Acadiana

August 2023

## **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.



## ***Announcement: Newsletter Editor position will be open***

Starting September 2023 the position of the editor of La Plume will be available. If you have a desire to be our next board member and newsletter editor, please apply in person at the **August** meeting, or by email to [JPComan9@gmail.com](mailto:JPComan9@gmail.com). The responsibilities are to inform members of upcoming events and meetings, and to comb the vast amount of information available and distill it for our members.

## ***Announcement: Webmaster position will be open***

Starting September 2023 the position of the webmaster of our website will be available. If you have a desire to be our next board member and webmaster please apply in person at the **August** meeting, or by email to [JPComan9@gmail.com](mailto:JPComan9@gmail.com). The responsibilities are to keep the web pages up to date and refreshed. They are hosted by VistaPrint, and our contract provides excellent phone support if needed.

## Next Meeting: August 29

**August 29, 2023.** All meetings are open to the public. 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.

## August Guest Speaker: Diana Cash Lennon

Diana Cash Lennon comes from a family of published writers and loves to share her gift of writing with others. In her diverse work life, (she's held 20+ jobs in 10+ industries), she has written and edited a variety of material: business communications, website content, advertising copy, educational pieces, Christian instructional lessons for kids, teens and adults, technical works, and speeches, as well as promotional and research materials.

For pleasure, she has written articles for local magazines and newspapers. She also co-created a fundraiser for a local multiple sclerosis charity, Justice Grillin' for MS. She currently works part-time in the legal field, has started a blog on Facebook - LivingLovingLearningLife.

She has a BA in Public Relations from the University of [Southwestern] Louisiana at Lafayette. She has been married for nearly 40 years to Rocky Lennon and they have two daughters, Mackenzie (recently married to Connor Lagneaux of Lagneaux's Restaurant) and Savannah, a Senior at LSU in elementary education. They live in Lafayette, Louisiana, the heart of Cajun food, culture, music and fun.

## Looking Ahead: September Prompt

"Hurricane Watch"

Category: Memoirs or real events

This is a fun competition for members. The prompt **MUST APPEAR** somewhere within the work, and entries must be no longer than 500 words. **The author must be present, but may allow another to read the piece aloud.** 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.

Our September meeting is "Members read" month. Members may bring work that they have created and share with the attendees. It may be a work in progress or a completed work. Five minutes will be allotted for each reader. Singers and songwriters

within the organization are invited to share their work as a cappella or acoustic numbers; however, there is a limit of one song per performer and the song must also be no longer than five minutes.

## 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).

### ◆ Guild News

**Reminder:** The WGA will be participating in the Festival of Words and Acadiana Writing Project. Member Dixie Simon inspired us to seek out student writing competitions in the area, and will be contributing. This competition will be in autumn, and should be an exciting event for all involved.

**Reminder:** WGA is associated with a critique group, and is interested in forming its own. If you need assistance on a piece you are writing, and want to find its strong and weak points, we're here for you. We have plenty we can teach in that area. Genres eligible for critique could be chapters of a novel, short story, poetry, fiction or non-fiction and others. Critique groups usually follow a careful format to develop trust amongst its members. IF interested, contact our secretary by text (337-945-5718) or email at [eggchess@gmail.com](mailto:eggchess@gmail.com)

### ◆ Member Announcements

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)

An excerpt from "Home Place," a short story finalist in the Southern Screen Festival 2022, by John Francois

Inside the car, out in the middle of nowhere, Waldo couldn't hear the mosquitoes, but he knew they were out there, millions of them, tiny female vampires searching for blood. That thought brought forth a long-forgotten memory of the time right after a hurricane had blown through when thousands---maybe millions---of mosquitoes had

swarmed their milk cow, clogging her nose, slowly suffocating the poor animal. He'd watched her thrash madly about, rolling her eyes, shaking her head, kicking and making god-awful strangling noises. He could still see her sides pumping, trying to suck in air.

With this in mind, there was no way he was going to open the door and get into the back of the car to sleep for the night, so he crawled over the front seat and tried not to think of how foolish his idea had been to revisit where he had lived for a time as a child. After all, his childhood here, what bits of it he was beginning to remember, had not been a very happy one.

The earlier memory of his mother on the porch returned and now he remembered a snake had bitten her on the ankle. His father wasn't home at the time, and he didn't know what to do and he'd watched, terrified, as her leg swelled and turn purple around the bite. Later, someone said it was a cottonmouth that had bitten her. A memory of his father crying and hugging him one night. He remembered his father's breath smelled strongly of whiskey. That had been not long after his mother's death. And that was when they moved away.

What was he thinking when he'd decided to come to find the old home place and rejoice in the memories of it? There were no good memories here. Only ghosts. Bad ghosts.

### ◆ **Writing Advice**

*Should you request permission for quoting lyrics of pop songs?*

Yes, the music industry is rabid about collecting use and royalty fees from lyrics. The "fair use" provision will usually not apply in works of fiction or poetry. Consider the case of Blake Morrison:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2010/may/01/blake-morrison-lyrics-copyright>

### **Writing Inspiration** from Jose Carillo

The good writer first feels a word for its heft or weight, quietly lets it roll and slide on his tongue, and listens to its sound with his inner ear; those that do not meet the grade for meaning and tonality, he discards without hesitation. The novice or bad writer simply rummages through his musty storehouse of words and picks up whatever happens to fall on his lap; the result is often banal, obtuse, uninteresting prose.

Full Article: <https://www.manilatimes.net/2023/07/20/campus-press/the-feel-of-english-words/1901460>

### ◆ **Ask Google**

I asked Google: What is a literary device?

A literary device is a tool used by writers to hint at larger themes, ideas, and meaning in a story or piece of writing. There are many styles of literary devices, each serving a different purpose.

*Editor's note: writers.com has a "crash course" on literary devices, well worth your time to read. <https://writers.com/common-literary-devices>*

## ◆ Marketing

### Book Marketing Hack

Secret Amazon categories

When you upload a book to KDP, you are asked to choose two categories. But these don't have to be the ONLY two categories! You can get into a lot more categories with a simple hack. Reach out to KDP Support and ask them to add you to additional categories. Yup, it's actually that simple.

But first, you should research which categories you'd like your book added to. For that, you have two options:

- Head to the best-seller lists for the Kindle store or Books store, and drill down into categories in the right sidebar; or
- Use a tool like Publisher Rocket (\$97, but well worth it if you're also running Amazon ads) to bulk-analyze categories.

Then, just head to KDP Support and select "Update Amazon Categories" in the sidebar. Send only one email per book, and include all the categories you want your book added to.

Important: This is not a numbers game, so don't try to get your book in as many categories as possible! Only include the most relevant ones.

**Reminder:** The Lafayette city Art Walk always occurs on the second Saturday of the month, every month. If you, as an individual, wish to vend your books at Art Walk, free space is available. It begins around 4:00 pm and goes to 8:30 or 9:00 pm. (Or until you are tired) Ed Gauthier recommends setting up on the sidewalk in front of a store that is out of business, or that doesn't charge a fee for being in front of their store. There is plenty of walking traffic, lots of customers.

## ◆ Word(s) of the month

**Recommend** intransitive verb

1. To praise or commend to another as being worthy or desirable; endorse.
2. To make attractive or acceptable.
3. To advise or counsel.

**Insist** intransitive verb

1. To be resolute or firm in a demand or course.
2. To assert or demand (something) firmly or persistently.

*Editor's note: I realize we all know the definitions of these words. I found a word bank of the 1200 most-used words in writing, and 'recommend' was number 1200. 'Insist' was not on the*

*list, but I bet it would have been right after 1200. Perhaps in your writing, you might find 'insist' a more powerful word.*

## ◆ Events

### BOOK Sales at Moncus Park

**Sales Opportunity!** WGA members have the opportunity to join us at Moncus Park Farmers and Artisan Market on the **second and 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.*

You must be a paid member of Writers Guild of Acadiana

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 ( 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. Ed sends out updates to the entire membership list each month. Full details are on that email.

### ***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. 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. Be sure to check your email junk folder if you are not getting the newsletter from [jpcoman9@gmail.com](mailto:jpcoman9@gmail.com) 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?** \_\_\_\_\_

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