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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 9
JULY 2003

July All-Day Workshop

Putting It Together (Even If It Kills You)



**Presented by award-winning novelist
Laura Resnick (aka Laura Leone).**

When: July 26, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Where: St. Moritz Room at the Red Lion Hotel, 314 S. Bijou Street I-25 and Bijou
Cost: \$50 Members, \$75 Non-members (This reflects a substantial price reduction, extended to you as a "thank you" for your support of PPW programs.)*

Join us to learn about story development from dynamic and highly-acclaimed speaker Laura Resnick. Explore plot, plot reversal, theme, character and setting in what Ms. Resnick describes as a "lively interactive session."

In addition, a portion of the workshop will be dedicated to a no-holds-barred Q&A session. Ms. Resnick will answer any question about the business, the market, the craft, or her own writing/career, no matter how specific or audacious, except, of course, for the exact figures of her income. Start thinking of questions now!

Ms. Resnick has two new releases that will be available for purchase and book-

signing at the workshop bookstore: *Fallen From Grace* (Laura Leone), and *The White Dragon: In Fire Forged I*. Both novels are receiving rave reviews. *The White Dragon* is featured by *Publishers Weekly* as a "starred" (*) review. Ms. Resnick rarely does public book signings, so don't miss this special opportunity.

*For this special event, your admission fee INCLUDES breakfast, lunch, beverages and an afternoon snack. To be guaranteed meal reservations, you must register by July 22nd, so sign up early! For registration information, visit us at pikespeakwriters.org or call 719.531.5723.

See you there!



“The two most engaging powers of an author are, to make new things familiar, and familiar things new.”

—Dr. Samuel Johnson

Conference editors, agents, and authors chat during the faculty reception Friday night at the 2003 Pikes Peak Writers Conference. For complete conference coverage, check out pages 4 and 5.

from the editor

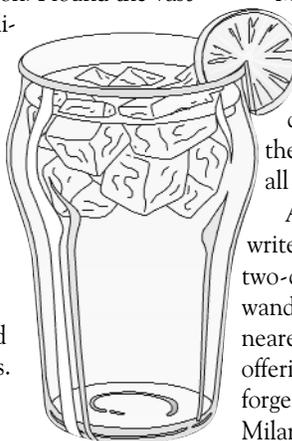


Happy summer! Time again for iced teas out on the veranda, yes? And a good book? Or a good laptop with which to write your book? 'Tis the time to write, and write well. But don't forget to read, and

read well. Consider it luxurious homework. I'm here to report that I fulfilled my end of the conference bargain. Did you? As per our

instructions, I pitched my project to at least two agents/editors. Only made a fool of myself once, got over it, moved on. I found the vast majority of agents and editors at the 2003 Pikes Peak Writers Conference to be friendly, kind, professional, and exceedingly informative. Hope you found the same to be true.

This July issue is packed with conference coverage via photos, and two outstanding features. PPW Director Laura Hayden tells it like it is



with Show vs Tell, and PPW Past Prez Michael Waite cuts to the chase with Making the Most of Your Writing Career. Must reads, both of them.

Be sure to mark your calendar for July's workshop. Not only is the all-day workshop sure to be superb, but there's free food. Count me in. You'll find all pertinent details on this month's cover.

And now, once again it is time, fellow writer, to don your sunglasses, clutch your two-quart-sized plastic iced tea tumbler, wander barefoot out on the grass or to the nearest lawn chair and peruse July's PPW offerings. Oh, and don't forget the Mint Milanos.

Bimonthly NewsMagazine of the Pikes Peak writing community

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PPW video to be sold internationally



Jan C.J. Jones at work behind the camera.

Jan C. J. Jones, Executive Producer for Forest Rose Productions, LLC, and PPW Special Projects Coordinator, is pleased to announce that Global Video LLC (www.globalvideollc.com) through its Teachers Video Company and Teachers Poster Company has accepted *The WRITE Series*, Vol. 1, "Getting There from Here: Getting Published" to be included in several of its fall catalogs. Another distributor, Insight Media, has also picked up *The WRITE Series*. Insight Media (www.insight-media.com) reaches more than six million customers worldwide, targeting teachers, librarians, high schools and university professors and department heads.

In *The WRITE Series*, professionals share their secrets of getting published. Topics range from coping with rejection and criticism to maintaining good health, what elements define a good story to methods of stimulating the imagination, and the value of writing groups and conferences to gaining insight into what editors and agents want in (and from) a writer.

This video features a number of publishing professionals and award-winning

authors, including:

- Dr. David Morrell, novelist, *First Blood* (introduces "Rambo")
- Robert Crais, Emmy-nominated screenwriter, *LA Law*
- Jo Beverly, four-time RITA recipient, author, *Devilish*
- Robert Vaughan, Pulitzer-nominated author, *Andersonville* (adapted to television mini-series)
- Sharon Sala, author, *Snowfall* (her 40th book)
- Ying Compestine, children's book author, *The Runaway Rice Cake*
- Pat LoBrutto, editor including *Zebra*, Doubleday and Bantam
- Michelle Frey, editor, Holiday House Children's Books

The WRITE Series "... is an invaluable tool for anyone who's serious about writing... whether a non-published beginner or a seasoned professional. Humorous, motivational, thought-provoking and poignant," says Bob Garner, Executive Producer-Writer, Director CBS Television Network and Walt Disney Studios, among others.

Global Video LLC is the largest distributor of educational videos in the U.S. and Canada, targeting educational institutions and organizations as well as all libraries (public and academic). The video will be included within their Web site (www.teachersvideo.com) once the video is included in catalogs. The video will also be available through www.ppwc.net and at Author! located at 5975 N. Academy, Suite #206. A portion of video sales will benefit PPWC scholarship fund.

SHOW, DON'T TELL

By Laura Hayden, PPW President

One of the most frequent comments I've made as a judge and seen as a contest coordinator is the admonishment that the writer needs to "show, don't tell." In most instances, it's because the writers are shortchanging their prose as well as their characters when they spend their time telling us how someone feels/acts/reacts rather than showing us.

For example, take this sentence, **Jack was irritated at his wife because she was late.** From this, we get the basic story but it's not a particularly visual one. It doesn't engage the reader's imagination because it doesn't create a specific image in our heads.

We can add more content by changing it to: **Jack was irritated at his wife, Amanda, because she was taking too long to get dressed.** At least we know why he's irritated. But can you see his irritation? Feel it? Understand it? And what about the wife?

Try this.

Jack stood at the foot of the staircase, jingling his car keys in hopes his wife, Amanda, would hear the sound and realize how late they were. When she modeled the third outfit of the evening, Jack paced in front of the door, wondering at what point the maitre d' would give away their reservations.

Now we've turned the word "irritation" into a scene that demonstrates the emotion. We have characters (the husband and his wife), a location (presumably their house), we engage the senses with sound and motion and in this case, we include a passage of time. We could improve the paragraph by adding some dialogue.

"Honey, I'm ready." Jack stood at the foot of the staircase, jingling his car keys in hopes his wife, Amanda, would hear the sound and realize how late they were.

A few minutes later, she stepped out of the bedroom, modeling the third outfit of the evening. "Sweetheart? Does this make my butt look big?"

Jack said nothing, which evidently meant, "Yes dear, your butt looks as big as Wyoming" and she went back for outfit number four.

He paced in front of the door, wondering how long they had until the

maitre d' gave away their reservations.

You can't simply tell us that a character is insensitive or talented or tired or smart. You have to show us. Show us how someone actively demonstrates his oblivion to those around him. Put a character's talents, shortcomings or abilities on the center stage. As readers, we're not willing to simply take your word for it.

Author Dave Swinford has rewritten the "Show, Don't Tell" phrase as "Dramatize, don't summarize." It's a matter of dramatizing how a character feels, looks, or acts, rather than merely summarizing it.

She felt tired, versus She tapped into her last energy reserves for the strength to drag herself up the stairs.

He was handsome, versus He had the sort of stunning features that made women stop in mid-sentence, make eye-contact with him, then turn away, blushing.

He argued with his wife, versus the actual dialogue of the argument combined with the accompanying emotions.

"If you do your job right, the motion picture in your reader's brain will be very close to the one in yours."

And speaking of dialogue, what about those who insist on telling us how a character talks? Novice writers tend to overly rely on their thesaurus to search for alternatives for the word "said" or words to modify "said." Rather than spend copious amounts of time trying to tell us how a character delivers her lines, show us how she reflects her words with her actions. Compare the following:

"Look out!" he said loudly.

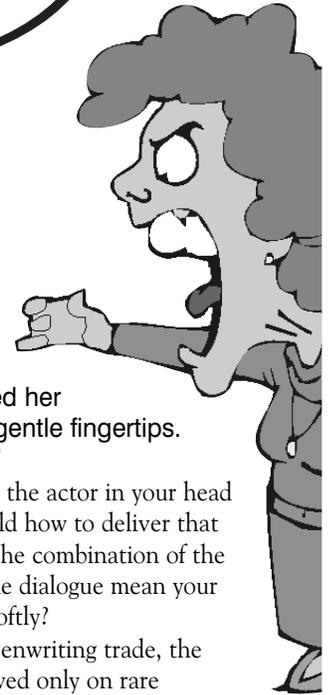
"Look out!" he shouted.

"Look out!" He dove forward, knocking his partner out of the path of the speeding car.

Did you need to be told how he said those words when coupled with that action?

"I love you," he whispered.

"I love you," he said softly.



He stroked her cheek with gentle fingertips. "I love you."

Again, did the actor in your head have to be told how to deliver that line? Or did the combination of the action and the dialogue mean your actor spoke softly?

In the screenwriting trade, the writer is allowed only on rare occasions to instruct the actor how to act by giving them parenthetical directions between the character name and his dialogue such as:

GEORGE

(softly)

I didn't know you were there, Wanda.

The writer's job is to write the dialogue and describe the action and setting. Only the director tells the actors how to act so the writer must make sure that his/her words convey all the innuendoes necessary to lead the actor to reflect the proper emotions.

In the fiction writing game, the reader is the director. To make sure that your reader replicates the scene that exists in your writer's head, use the senses to help your character communicate emotion to the reader as well as to the other characters. Show us the actions that accompany the dialogue or narrative and let us draw our own conclusions as to intent.

And if you do your job right, the motion picture in your reader's brain will be very close to the one in yours. Uh...you did cast George Clooney as the leading man, didn't you? That's who I saw in the role.



Spellbound attendee. A good thing.



Bob Duncan and Sharon Silva, pitch volunteers.



Jennifer Webster-Valant and Garden of the Gods tour.



Contest Coordinator Angel Smits (right), Kirsten Akens (left) and Christine Goff (center).



The beautiful Garden (right)

PPWC 2003



Elisabet McHugh (seated), literary agent.



One of many roundtable discussions



Busy bookstore with volunteers Katie Anarde and Ashlyn Searle (left)

Author Eileen Dreyer, contest winner Elyse Brunner, and author Barry Maher (right)



Conference Registrar Martha Lancaster and PPW 1st VP Charles Rush (left)



Faculty/Staff reception. Charles Rush and agent Mike Farris



PPWC Founder Jimmie Butler and Conference Registrar Martha Lancaster



photo by Susan Rust

Karen Fox, 2nd VP, Pam McCutcheon, PPW Treasurer, and Laura Hayden, PPW Prez and Conference Director



Her majesty, the Peak

photo by Michael Seidman

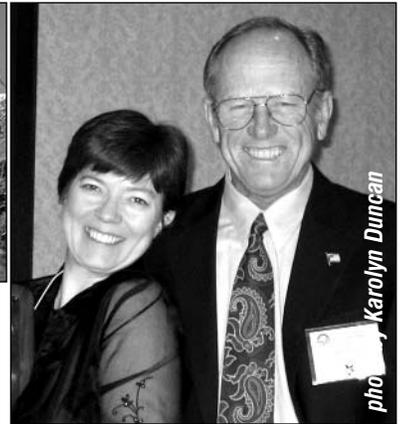


photo by Karolyn Duncan

Laura Hayden, PPW Prez, and Charles Rush, 1st VP



photo by Karolyn Duncan

Barry Maher, Eileen Dreyer, Joan Johnston, Laura Hayden, and Charles Rush



photo by Michael Seidman

Past Director Michael Waite



photo by Karolyn Duncan

Agent Jill Marr and pitch client



photo by Karolyn Duncan

Jodi Beyes (left) and a group of pitch-ready writers



photo by Susan Rust

The art of the deal (writing, that is). Editor Pat LoBrutto and writer Bruce Holland Rogers



photo by Susan Rust

Writer Margaret Coel and friends during Sunday lunch



photo by Pam McGillicuddy

Readaloud session with agent Mike Farris (above)



photo by Karolyn Duncan

Editor Russell Davis and pitch client

2003 PPWC Stats

- Number of people attending: 420
- Number of writers entering the contest: 304
- Number of contest winners: 34
- Number of readalouds: 144
- Number of one-on-ones: 250
- Number taking part in the Pat (LoBrutto) and Michael (Seidman) show: 44
- Number of complaints about the Friday evening buffet: A zillion
- Number of seconds it took to rectify this for next year: Two
- Number of cocktails sold to writer types over the weekend: Confidential

Making the Most of Your Writing Career

Third in a three-part series

By Michael Waite, past director, PPWC

You're busting rocks in the Mines of Literature, working that literary diamond free from the stone, cutting it, polishing it. Then you're going to sell it. Then you're going to do it again. That's the plan. Well, wipe the word dust from your sweaty brow, have a crust of bread and let's talk about that plan, because getting published and doing it some more isn't much of a writing career plan. It's an If It Happens plan. A Cross It When I Come To It plan. A Lame-O plan.

It's not like you're against taking large leaps of faith—after all, you're writing a book on spec. So take a moment and speculate on your writing career.

First, consider what kind of career it is that you're after. And second, consider how you're going to make it happen.

What kind of career? Maybe you're perfectly happy slinging code for Big Software, Inc. by day. Maybe you even own the company. You just want to publish a few books; pop some creative smoke. Such a career vector will be a bit different from the writer looking to quit the day job and write full-time. And for those who aspire to full-timing: there are degrees of glory up in career-writer heaven. Which one do you want?

How are you going to make it happen? With knowledge. Savvy. By studying and playing the entire game board. And by getting that know-how now, not later.

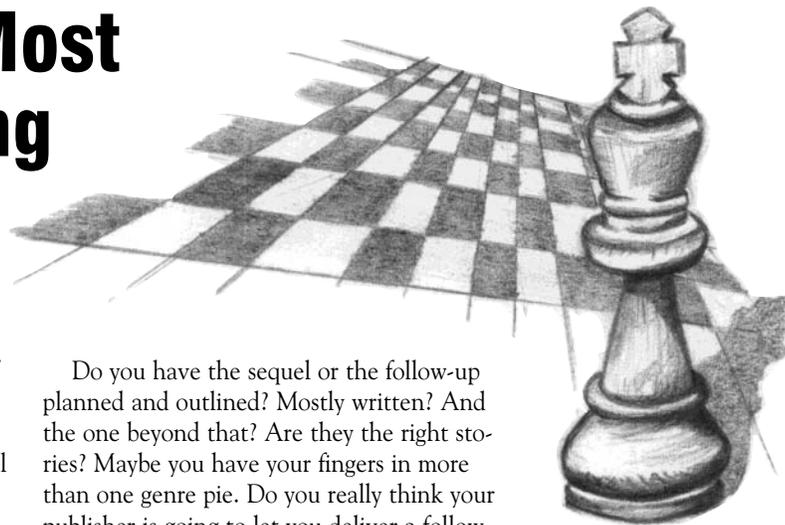


Square One

Look beyond getting published. Peel your focus away from that big front door and study the floor plan of the publishing business. Allow me to load you up with a few questions to stir up your thinking, and where you find knowledge holes, plug 'em.

What's next? After this book—the one you're working on? And can you stand alone? Are you ready? I mean are you good enough to deliver another within a year, or is the book you're shopping the product of five-plus years and untold hours...yours and your critique group's?

6 Pikes Peak Writer



Do you have the sequel or the follow-up planned and outlined? Mostly written? And the one beyond that? Are they the right stories? Maybe you have your fingers in more than one genre pie. Do you really think your publisher is going to let you deliver a follow-up book targeted to a different audience?

Do you know how to pitch your book and do you know what kind of agent you want? Don't settle for the first agent who tells you what you want to hear. Choose the career maker rather than the cherry picker.

“Maybe you're lost in the thick of thin things.”

What kind of publisher do you want? Who publishes what you write? Are they any good at it? Is there any money in it? Really: are you writing up the wrong tree? Can you really forge a career writing what you're writing?

How well do you know the publishing business? Do you know enough to act professional? Do you understand and accept the realities of the business? Are you willing to take them on? Are your expectations realistic? Do you know what is realistic?

Do you know how to market a book? A fiction book? Do you know specifically who your readers are; how to effectively reach them? Are you building a book-marketing war chest? Are you filling it with money, strategy, connections, schemes, contingencies?

A book is a product, and nobody makes money on product until it moves. Many people must buy...and be glad they did. You must understand the book-marketing machinery and do everything you can to grease it for your book.

Do you understand the numbers of publishing—like sell-through, and how it's used to measure your performance as an author?



Square Two

Pay attention to life: the one you currently inhabit. Your job. Your fam-

ily. Your friends. You probably need to make some improvements, free yourself up to do more about your

writing career. Maybe you need more writing friends. Or a less stressful job, one that isn't eating your life, one that has some flexibility. Maybe your spouse and family need a lot more of you so can get more from them in return. Maybe you need to simplify your life, give up some stuff. Maybe you're lost in the thick of thin things. Go ahead. Give yourself a performance tune-up.

Square Three



Determine to pay the price. Get your butt into the chair. Finish the manuscript. Join a critique group and attend faithfully. Study the craft. Hard. Finish another manuscript. Send off those queries. Study that new writing book. Whatever it is you've been telling yourself you need to do, do it.

Square Four



Think several moves ahead. Avoid tunnel vision. Consider the long-term consequences of everything. Everything.

Square Five



Never forget it starts with story. It's ALL about a great story. The best you can possibly craft. And YOU must see to it that the best you've got is good enough to float the writing career you want.

Ready to take your writing career by the horns? I recommend a couple of books by Donald Maass: *The Career Novelist* and *Writing the Breakout Novel*. Eye-opening stuff.

A career plan is like any game plan: it can go up in smoke as soon as the opening moves are made...but the know-how and effort that went into the planning give you the savvy you need to stay in control.

Kaine Workshop a Keeper



Writers who attended the May 7 workshop on Packaging Your Proposal, presented by Charles Kaine of Last Knight Publishing Company had the advantage of hearing straight from the publisher/editor what he wants to receive and what red flags make him return manuscripts unread. Following are your ten gold nuggets:

❖ **First red flag:** Not knowing what the publisher publishes. Do your research. Send only what the publisher requests. Current books they publish, the style, submission requirements, and how they pay. Avoid print on demand.

❖ **Last Knight Publishing** wants a synopsis, a cover (query) letter and three chapters. Kaine reads the chapters first and WRITES A RESPONSE, though it may be short. Don't ever send e-mail, unless specifically requested by the publisher. Kaine deletes them without reading.

❖ A synopsis should be no more than three pages double-spaced. Find a stranger on a park bench and insist on reading it to him out loud before you mail it.

❖ In a query letter the editor is looking for competent writing skills, a thumbnail explanation of what the story is about, and your level of experience as a writer. The explanation should be no more than what you'd find on the fly leaf of the book. Never say you are unpublished.

❖ The query letter should answer the questions who, what, when, where and why. Who you are, what the book is about physically and thematically (look on book covers), why the public will want to read the book, number of pages of manuscript, and how you foresee marketing the book.

❖ In your letter DO NOT start off with Hi, my name is... or To Whom It May Concern, and never apologize for being a bad letter writer. Don't send pictures.

❖ Don't tell why you wrote the story, how you got the idea, how good it is, how everybody likes it or that it is "life altering."

❖ Don't ask for money so that you can quit your job and write the book. Have it completed.

❖ Purchase *Formatting & Submitting your Manuscript* by Jack and Glenda Neff, Don Prues and the editors of *Writer's Market*. Follow their advice.

❖ Join a critique group. Catching others' errors will make you aware of your own. Get better as a writer before you send out your story. Most of what publishers get is drivel.



Robert Murray

Michele Free, Literary Agent with The Free Agency, Ltd., writes, "Robert Murray, who has attended the Pikes Peak Writers Conference and entered the creative non-fiction contest (but didn't place), has published his book, *Legal Cases of the Civil War*, with Stackpole books. It was released this June and is available at all Barnes and Noble bookstores across the country."

Legal Cases of the Civil War traces the history of the war between the states from a different point of view than found in battle history—it describes the issues of the common man (and woman) at the time.

Murray is a Supreme Court-qualified attorney, and is available for interviews, lectures and panels about writing creative non-fiction or history.

We salute you, Robert Murray! For more information, visit The Free Agency, Ltd. at www.thefreeagency.com.

Teresa Funke

PPW member Teresa Funke writes, "If you have room in your next newsletter for news from Pikes Peak Writers members, I thought I'd pass on that one of my short stories was a runner-up for the prestigious Fish Short Story prize out of Ireland and, as such, will be published in the 2003 *Fish Short Story Prize Anthology*. I'm quite excited! Just thought I'd pass it on."

'Course we have room for such great news! Congrats to you, Teresa!

PIKES PEAK WRITERS REGISTRATION FORM

Interested in joining us? If you'd like to become a member of the Pikes Peak Writers, just fill out this form and mail it to PPW, P.O. Box 6726, Colorado Springs, CO 80934, along with your membership dues of \$25 good June 1, 2003 through May 31, 2004. For more information, visit www.pikespeakwriters.org.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone () _____ E-mail _____

Hot Topics

Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who donated books at the conference to Operation Paperback. We sent 195 books to five

locations around the world, including the Persian Gulf, Kuwait, and other locations that pass books on to deployed Marines. Your generosity is appreciated!

Editorial Services Offered by Pat LoBrutto

If you enjoyed your one-on-one with editor extraordinaire Pat LoBrutto, check out his Web site. LaBrutto offers editorial services including manuscript editing and master classes. For more information, visit www.PatrickLoBrutto.com or call 845.339.5499.

Congrats

Congratulations and welcome to Jennifer Webster-Valant, 2003 PPWC Transportation Coordinator who was elected to the PPW Board of Directors at the board's June meeting.

Congrats and welcome also to Olgy Gary, PPWC's new Volunteer Coordinator!

About the Contest

The deadline for entering the 2004 Paul Gillette Memorial Writing Contest is November 1.

We'll keep you posted about September's workshop, which as good planning would have it, focuses on everything you need to know about entering a writing contest in general and the Paul Gillette Memorial Writing Contest in particular. Join Angel Smits, Contest Coordinator, for this two-hour treasure-trove of how-to's.

If you're interested in judging next year's Paul Gillette contest, please contact Angel Smits at AngelWrite@worldnet.att.net. She'll fill you in on judging requirements and details.

Early, Early Registration Discontinued

by Pam McCutcheon, Treasurer

The PPWC Steering Committee has voted to discontinue the \$20 Early, Early Registration Deposit. In the early years of the PPWC, we needed the dollars to use as seed money to fund the conference. However, that is no longer true and it has become a paperwork nightmare. This year, more than 100 people who paid their \$20 deposit didn't send the rest of the registration fee by the required date. This required us to follow up with each person individually to see if they were coming, remind them to pay, then refund their money when they cancelled. Not only did this result in a lot of extra work for our volunteers, but we had to hold the slots until we heard from the early registrants. In the end, 90 of those people never came to the conference. As a result, 21% of our conference slots and editor/agent appointments were held up unnecessarily.

To solve this problem, we are no longer accepting the \$20 deposit, but we will open registration earlier—in January 2004 (though you will still have until March to make the early registration discount). When we announced this at the conference, some people seemed to be concerned that if they couldn't register now, they wouldn't get an appointment with the editor/agent of their choice. This is a misconception. Karolyn Duncan, Chair of the Editor/Agent Pitch Meetings, reports that 95% of all 2003 PPWC attendees received an appointment with their first choice. So, if you don't wait until the last minute to register, you're likely to get an opportunity to pitch to the editor/agent you choose.