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Lawyer-Turned-Crime-Novelist Tells Her Own Story



By Eric Abrahamson,
adapted for PPW NewsMagazine

When she owned and operated a karate school in Boulder, Stephanie Kane could break boards with her bare hands. Those same hands gestured to the jury a decade later as the black-belt-turned-litigator defended bankers before the bar. Kane was never quite happy as a corporate attorney, but ultimately in the courtroom she discovered a calling for mind, heart, and hands—writing stories to keep readers awake long into the night.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Kane's path to the writing life has followed a number of twists and turns since she came west in 1971. An Italian language and literature student at the University

of Colorado, Kane graduated in 1974, but unlike her peers, who probably went on to careers in international banking, art history, or the diplomatic corps, she became a black-belt entrepreneur. For three years, she operated a karate studio, teaching children and adults how to direct deadly force.

Karate, however, offered too little stimulation for Kane's restless mind. She enrolled and "zipped through" law



Stephanie Kane

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Travel—All in the Name of Research



by Susan Rust

scene that takes place after closing time behind the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe. Your protagonist stumbles in her attempt to escape the clawing hands of her attacker, barely out of his reach as she rounds the corner of a crumbly brick building

So here's the deal: You've brought your reader's tension to a fever pitch in that carefully-crafted chase

known to the locals as Uh oh. What's it known to the locals as? What's it next to? Are there trees around it? Is your protagonist now facing east or south? What shadows are cast by the sun at this time of day in Santa Fe?

Consummate professional that you are and a true stickler for detail, you

decide it's time for a road trip. Gotta do a little research, check out the chase scene for geographic accuracy. You jump in the jalopy armed with your sketchpad, pile of pencils, microcassette recorder, digital camera, and, of course, your trusty traveling companion, one giant "no-doze-driving" espresso-to-go.

All in the name of research. All in the name of fun! Next time you find yourself stymied by detail when creating just the right scene, throw yourself into the story, literally. Fly there, drive there, hike there, cyberskip there. Research is a writer's tool

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“A professional writer is an amateur who didn't quit.”

—Richard Bach

From the Editor



Most organizations measure their yearly accomplishments from January through December. PPW, however, begins its year

May 1, and heaves a sigh of relief the last week of April when it wraps up the writers conference—a major achievement. *Writer's Digest* ranked PPWC the sixth best in the country in 2001. Comments from editors and agents who attended this year's conference

convince us it gets better every year.

You will find in this issue of the newsmag a list of the people who generously volunteered their time and enormous talents to make the conference a success. Why don't you resolve to add your name to that list of volunteers for next year? Work has already begun. Contact Deb Courtney, volunteer coordinator, if you'd like to be a part of the excitement.

This month we welcome the return of Susan Rust to our pages. You know her as founder and first editor of the *Pikes Peak Writer NewsMagazine*. She contributes "In the Name of Research," a lively account of the fun ways writers avoid the library. Check it out.

Karen Jenista, assistant editor of the newsmag, discovered evidence of voodoo activities around several of the 2004 PPWC attendees. Read "Conference Conjures Magic" to discover how it happened. Move over Harry Potter.

Linda Rohrbough has become a regular contributor to our pages. She brings an often witty—always innovative—point of view to subjects of interest to writers. If you missed Robin Perini's workshop at the conference, you will learn her secrets of braiding character and plot from Linda's interview.

Enjoy.

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Lawyer-Turned-Crime-Novelist Tells Her Own Story

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school in Boulder, earning the grades to land a job with a big Denver firm. As a corporate attorney, however, she was still not happy. "I felt strangely isolated and diminished," she says. "I knew I had to break free."

Watching friends struggle with AIDS, she decided to change course, leave the law, and apply to medical school. Her partners predicted failure. "They told me that no medical school would want a female lawyer pushing forty, and they were right." In the end, Kane returned to the law "flat broke" but not cautious. Instead of going back to practice corporate banking, she became a criminal defense attorney. That experience prepared her mentally for the risks of writing and gave her a wealth of material to work with.

Kane wrote three crime novels that were all rejected before her fourth manuscript, *Blind Spot*, was published in 2000. "Rejection is a way of life for both litigator and writer," Kane confesses. For the writer, however, it's more personal.

Since *Blind Spot*, Kane has published two other thrillers: *Quiet Time* (Bantam, 2001) and *Extreme Indifference* (Scribner, 2003). In both *Blind Spot* and *Extreme Indifference*, Kane develops an interesting protagonist—attorney

Jackie Flowers. Good-looking and intelligent, Flowers, nevertheless, is afflicted with dyslexia, a learning disability that makes reading and linear thinking difficult. She hides her disability well, however, fearing that people will discover her weakness. Like many people with learning disabilities, Flowers turns her affliction into a gift. She approaches the world visually, has an acute sense of the context of a situation, and sees solutions holistically. Part of the charm of her character is in her relationship to a nine-year-old adopted Chinese girl who lives next door and is struggling to find her place in the world.

"Rejection is a way of life for both litigator and writer."

Make no mistake, Kane's books are page-turners. *Blind Spot* unravels the mysteries of a serial killer. *Quiet Time* takes readers into the dark shadows of the murder of an aging suburban housewife. *Extreme Indifference* unfolds a horrific scandal when Jackie Flowers' former law professor, now a federal judge, is accused of the sadistic murder of a University of Colorado co-ed. Watch for the latest Jackie Flowers novel, *Seeds of Doubt*, to be released in November.

Kane is presenting the Pikes Peak Writers full-day workshop, "From Concept to Novel," on Saturday, August 14th.

Travel—All in the Name of Research

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of the trade, and it need not be a musty, nose-in-the-microfilm library visit.

Check out the research adventures of four local published writers—Marty Banks, Ann Black, Katie Curry, and Maxine Davenport. Then get out the maps! Visit a story land that piques your interest, since that's probably why you put it in your work to begin with. Plan to hang out with the locals. People-watch in the parks. Frequent restaurants and cafés you don't have at home. Take long walks. Immerse yourself in the local culture, soak up the character of the place, and go home chock-full of fascinating tidbits for your tome.

Where have you traveled in the name of research?

MB. "Taos, Ohio, Mexican border between San Diego and Tijuana; horse auction in La Junta."

AB. "Mississippi and Ship Island for embarkation; New Orleans for the nunnery and museums; Natchez for the site of the massacre and Indian lore; Paris for the Marais district; chateau country for ambience and wine; Amiens for the canals. Museums everywhere!"

KC. "Junction City, Kansas, looking at all the places that were owned by my family there."

MD. "East Pines Ranch near Dove Creek, Colorado. I needed to know what a real ranch near a real town in Colorado looks and feels like."

What's the most fun you've had in the name of research?

MB. "I wrote a nonfiction story about a bar crawl in Fort Collins, from the perspective of a soccer-mom-type character, with a bunch of Hunter Thompson-type experiences. Very fun, bad hangover."

AB. "Becoming my heroine on a small launch going to and from Ship Island, off the coast of what is now Mississippi."

MD. "In real *City Slickers* fashion, I rode a horse named Blackie for five days, following a herd of bawling, smelly, headstrong cows, prodded by a bull or two, from summer pasture along the Dolores River over a moun-

tain pass to their winter spa at Slick Rock, Colorado. Yep, Slick Rock. I love that name."

Why have you traveled for research?

MB. "Accuracy, sense of the real thing."

AB. "Because I decided to write a book that takes place in another time, other lands, and in foreign topics, I had to research! Another nudge: I lived in the very town where the heroine ends up."

KC. "To provide background for the novel I am writing about the lives of women as they moved west in the great emigration of the 1800s."

"The tastes, the smells, the views, the sounds—that's where you have to go ..."

MD. "I was born in a place called Hereford Heaven, Oklahoma. I knew my novel would have an Okie twang and mood unless I replaced what I knew from experience with what was real in Colorado. I was right. My critique group couldn't believe how improved my writing was after I returned."

What's one of the more interesting details you've gone looking for in your research travels?

MB. "How a commune works and the mentality involved. Some very interesting and very ugly stuff—one mom talked about feeling bad, but she just had to have intercourse with her seven-year-old son so sex wouldn't be a big thing to him. I've always wondered about that poor kid. Serious therapy needs! Also, how horse show vets work. Had so many vets to interview and their schedule was so here and there, I finally got my last interview done at 2 a.m. while [the vet] was putting in some stitches."

AB. "Because the Code Noir excluded Jews from entering Louisiana territory and I wanted to treat this subject

with a secondary character, I went to the Jewish museum in Paris. Found a postcard there with the picture of a young bride. Perfect! I'd found my Mirianne."

KC. "I was in the Wisconsin Historical Library working with a librarian in the map room, trying to find property [owned by my family]. We were having difficulty, but she finally went to search for one particular map. I went to a table to wait, and as I perused the room, I looked up at the large map on the wall beside me. There it was—my family name on a section of land."

MD. "I found beautifully colored rock ledges with petroglyphs high on the side of a mountain trail. I discovered flowers and underbrush I'd never encountered. I watched brave dogs nip at the heels of cattle hiding in the underbrush, where no horse or cowboy could reach them. And I learned that one or two bulls mingle with the herd just fine on the trail, but more than two cause chaos. That fact gave me a better understanding of relationships between the male and female species!"

Any words of wisdom to the would-be research traveler?

MB. "Talk to people who've been there before going. Saves lots of time once there."

AB. "I began [my research] before Google. Would I trade my sources for Google? No way! The tastes, the smells, the views, the sounds—that's where you have to go, if you can!"

MD. "Go for the fun of it. Anything you learn will be frosting on the cake."

Susan Rust is a Colorado Springs writer/editor/photographer with a journalism background. Her creative nonfiction manuscript, Flat Landscape, is being shopped around by an agent to whom she pitched at PPWC.





Conference Conjures Miracles

By Karen Jenista

Pikes Peak Writers Conferences have magic. Hokey maybe, but true enough for me. I felt energy during the sessions, a chemistry that transcends reading the same information in a book. I saw the faces of excited and delighted attendees. I heard the comments of praise, the stories of success, and plans made to follow through on possibilities.

Meet attendees who found some of the magic at this year's conference:

Charis James

Charis James is a software quality assurance manager at an electronics distribution firm. Although she has written intermittently most of her life, James began seriously to develop her writing skills five years ago, taking classes, attending workshops and PPWC. James has written short stories, personal essays, and poetry. She also likes to write and illustrate children's stories. She is currently working on her first novel-length project.

James almost missed the conference this year because of a business trip. Because her piece was not completed, she didn't submit it for review. However, her friend Juliette La Chapelle, also an aspiring writer, turned the first couple of James's pages in for the "Simon and Paula" panel review by Pat LoBrutto and Michael Seidman at Saturday's luncheon.

"It took me a few moments to realize I was receiving compliments from Pat LoBrutto and Michael Seidman because the sound of rushing water filled my head and ears, my stomach began rolling and pitching, and the onset of a fever and headache immediately assailed me when I realized they were reading my piece."

After the reading, agent Bob Mecoy of Creative Book Services asked James to call him. Since then, James has contacted Mecoy and agreed to periodically touch base with him to discuss progress on her project.

"The weekend of the PPWC was the most exciting thing that has happened to me in years, and it has been a great boost to my confidence in pursuing my dream of

becoming a published writer," James says.

In such a magical environment, it's no surprise that people can create opportunities.

Todd Fahnstock and Giles Carwyn

Todd Fahnstock works at the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation as an events coordinator for the Walk to Cure Diabetes. At eighteen, Fahnstock determined to write a bestseller and began his journey. Since then he has had two fantasy/science fiction short stories published under his name: *Seekers* and *The Letters of Trayn Minaas*. Additionally, he and Giles Carwyn co-authored *Songsayer* and *True Love, or the Many Brides of Prince Charming*.

"In such a magical environment, it's no surprise that people can create opportunities."

The friends' partnership began at Colorado College when Fahnstock and Carwyn wrote a book based on their role-playing adventures. They complement each other well. Carwyn likes to think up intricate systems and plot twists; Fahnstock loves creating and breathing life into characters. In 1997, the partners ghostwrote the dark fantasy novel *Dark Heart* (for Margaret Weis and her son David Baldwin).

They created magic at the PPW Conference. Because Donald Maass was not scheduled for pitch appointments, Fahnstock knew they ran the risk of offending Maass with an impromptu pitch. Still, at Saturday's luncheon, the partners sat at Maass's table, Fahnstock to his right, Carwyn to his left. "You have to take whatever opportunities you can make for yourself," says Fahnstock.

After the usual chitchit, Fahnstock steered the conversation toward pitches. He got the impression that Maass was open to their queries. He asked Maass what he liked to see in pitches. Maass replied that he liked to see the writing—that was the only real way to judge it. Surprised and encouraged, but with his heart racing, Fahnstock dove in.

"So if I handed you our first chapter, you'd read it?"

Maass grinned, declared the move bold, and

agreed. Fahnstock passed him their prologue.

When Maass finished reading, he handed Fahnstock his card and asked to see more.

Of the experience, Fahnstock says, "I had gotten more than I could possibly have expected. I was gluttoned with satisfaction."

In case you wonder if the magic can last:

Beth Groundwater

Beth Groundwater retired as a software project manager—in which capacity she published numerous technical papers and documents—to become chief cook, bottle washer, and chauffeur for her family. She has been writing fiction for about six years, has placed in five writing contests, one international. Her projects include short stories, a novella, and three novels.

Groundwater recently learned from Karen Duvall of Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers that her short story *New Zealand* was selected to appear in RMFW's anthology *Dry Spell: Tales of Thirst and Longing*. *New Zealand* earned first place in its category at the 2003 PPW Conference.

"Whoopee! I'm not getting any money for it, but this is my first official fiction publishing credit to put in query letters, etc."

These are just a few of the people who found magic at the conference. Maybe you'll find some next year.

Conference Factoids

- 363 attended the 2004 PPWC.
- 1,483 meals were served.
- 31 states were represented.
- 1 foreign country (Spain) was represented.
- 246 editor/agent appointments were scheduled.
- Over 200 books were collected for Operation Paperback.
- 14 organizations participated in the Saturday evening networking mixer.
- 120 took advantage of the read and critique sessions.

Missing for Good Cause:

Wondering why Paul Carhart, popular secretary of PPW, who scheduled the Friday Read and Critique sessions for the conference, was absent most of the time? Well, just four days before the conference, Paul and his wife, Lori, became first-time parents—two months before their daughter, Melody Hannah Carhart, was due. Lots of hospital time for mom and daughter, but we're pleased to announce they are both doing well. Thanks for your hard work, Paul. We missed you.



Thanks to Conference Volunteers

Were you able to attend a number of the workshops, agent pitches, author readings, or book signings at your leisure? Did you stop by the Relax and Renew room for a massage? Or did you have a drink at the bar while you mingled with the conference faculty and guests? Then you owe a big thank you to the following volunteers who may have been too busy to join you:

Volunteer Coordinator: Deb Courtney

Registration Desk: Martha Lancaster, Chris Olson, Jennifer Webster-Valant,

Kirsten Akens, and Candace Paugh.

Transportation: Jennifer Webster-Valant, Chris Mandeville, Chris Myers, Bonnie Hagan, Beth Groundwater, Karen Fox, Laura Pellerin, Frank Dorchak, Pam McCutcheon, Paula Gill, Kirsten Akens, Kate Curry, Jodi Beyes, Olgy Gary, and Morgen Leigh.

Bookstore: Janeen Johnson, Frank Dorchak, Michael Waite, Laura Hayden, Karen Fox, John Richard, Jude Willhoff, Jim and Karen Jenista, Pam McCutcheon, CJ Jones, Ashlyn Searle and Mary Kate Anardie, Robin Searle, Cooper (the dog), and his parents Diane Hoover and husband.

T-Shirts: Laura Pellerin

Agent Pitch Desk: Laura Hayden, Karen

Jenista, and Jim Jenista.

Moderators: Kirsten Akens, Jodi Beyes, Paul Carhart, Tami Cowden, Pamela Cosel, Maxine Davenport, Frank Dorchak, Karen Fox, Michele Free, Paula Gill, Donah Grassman, Beth Groundwater, Pat Gulya, Jené Jackson Hanna, Diane Hoover, Christian Lyons, Michelle Major, Deborah Martinez Martinez, David Moja, Chris Myers, Chris Olson, Laura Pellerin, Susan Rust, Dawn Smit-Miller, and Morgen Leigh.

Relax & Renew: Kirsten Akens, Angel Smits, Judy Carlson, and Jennifer Webster-Valant.

Saturday Networking Mixer: Dawn Smit-Miller.

2004 PPWC — At a Glance



Donald Maass, left, agent and author of *Writing the Breakout Novel*, along with PPW president Laura Hayden, PPWC Director Charles Rush, and Faculty Coordinator Karen Fox.

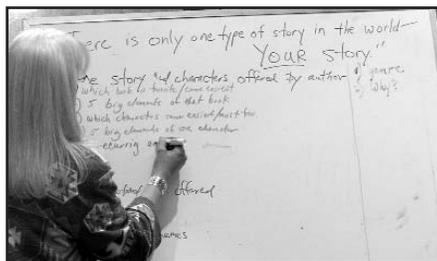


Charles Rush greets attendees at the opening ceremonies of the 2004 PPWC.

Mary Gordon Spence, *Finding Magic in the Mundane*, helped us laugh at ourselves as she emceed the Conference. What a hoot!



Let the show begin. Linda Seger and Jan C.J. Jones discussed show business at the Friday night reception for faculty.



Laura Baker presented "The Suspense is Killing Me."



Craig Nelson gave advice at a Read & Critique session.



"Simon and Paula," aka Pat LoBrutto and Michael Seidman, gave their insights as to what really happens to a manuscript when it reaches an editor's desk.

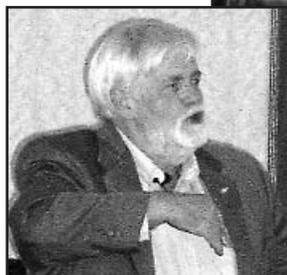
Attendees Nellie Pacheco, left, and Shannon Dyer, right, prepare for their Read & Critique appointments.



Angel Smits announced the winners of the Paul Gillette Writing Contest at the Saturday night banquet.



Congrats to all the winners of the Paul Gillette Writing Contest. Woo-hoo!



Robert Vaughan inspired attendees at the Saturday night banquet with tales from his 46-year writing career.

Robin Perini on

Braiding Character with Plot



Robin Perini

At PPWC this year, I attended Robin Perini's session "Creating Your Story's Backbone." I was so impressed, I became a groupie, and in May, grabbed a last-minute airline ticket to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, where Robin and her cohort, Laura Baker, did an all-day seminar called "Discovering Story Magic." Perini graciously took some time to fill me in on "Braiding Characterization with Plot."

I started by asking, "Where do you begin braiding characterization with plot so that the plot is a natural outgrowth of the characters?" Perini said the way to determine the events that make up the plot turning points is to identify the strongest flaw in your character and find a way in the plot to attack the flaw. This intricately weaves the character and the plot. You don't want a Perils of Pauline situation with one dangerous but meaningless situation after another. "It's about making your characters face their fears or their flaws," Perini said. "Plot is the means by which you put your character in pressure situations and force them to make decisions."

In braiding characterization and plot, your plot changes. The major turns and surprises need to be an outgrowth of the personality and flaws of your characters, according to Perini. She recounted an incident that underlined this for her. "I was on a Web forum and someone said, 'I need some surprising plot turns in my story.' Everyone was throwing out ideas. Then

By Linda Rohrbough

someone asked, 'What are your character's fears or flaws?' No one was asking the right questions until that person came in."

Perini defines turning points in a plot or subplot as jumps—big, emotional scenes and stages—in the development of the character. To make the dramatic changes a character undergoes in the story believable requires tiny, small changes that lead to dramatic and escalating changes. "You have to train your character to face her flaw a piece at a time." She used the movie *LA Confidential* to illustrate. "The character Exley would have flipped totally had he found out he killed the wrong people at the beginning. First thing, he was made to see all cops are not knights in shining armor. There's dirt under there. In the course of the movie he realizes there's a chink in his own armor. Then you can actually take the movie to where he accepts Dudley as the bad guy. The truth is, he never would have accepted Dudley as the bad guy if he hadn't seen all this other stuff beforehand. At the end, he shoots Dudley in the back—something he never would have imagined doing in the beginning."

**"It's all about people,
no matter what
the plot is."**

Perini quoted Lajos Egri in *The Art of Creative Writing* asking, "What should the writer strive for?" Then he answered himself by saying, "Characterization. Living, vibrating human beings are still the secret and magic formula of great and enduring writing." According to Perini, this is a fundamental truth of writing that hasn't changed. She said James Frey focused this idea even further. In *How to Write a Damn Good Novel*, he says, "In fiction, we put one or two aspects of life under our microscope, subject them to an eternal experiment called conflict, and then document what happens. A good dramatic story is a laboratory of human nature. It says something about some aspect of human life that the author believes deeply."

I asked, "What if I want to start with a plot idea?" Perini didn't have a problem with working backwards from a plot idea. "But if you have a situation in your head, you want to look at the emotions that situation is going to evoke. You can start with a proverb like, 'The ends don't justify the means'. You can decide that's what your character learns. But you somehow have to take your idea and extract the character that will be the most deeply affected by that situation."

She added, "It's important to remember that the amount your character cares about her goals is directly proportionate to how much the reader will care. It's all about the people, no matter what the plot is."

I said I didn't notice a lot of writers braiding character and plot. Perini agreed. "The truth of the matter is, there are books out there that don't have these compelling elements. But they don't last. You don't keep a book on your shelf because it has a cool plot. You keep it because it has great characters. In *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* the compelling character is Charlie. In the *Wizard of Oz*, the theme is what you remember."

I said I had braided character and plot without knowing I was doing it, and I wondered if the masters of writing did the same. Perini closed with, "A lot of this is done instinctively. As a writer you pick an antagonist because he is a contrast to your main character. You pick imagery because it works with the theme. But, how cool if you can do it consciously and emphasize it even more!"

Robin Perini is again a finalist in the Romance Writers Association Golden Heart Awards. She's been published in short fiction and was on the committee that produced the LERA Writer's Guide recommended by Writers' Digest Books. She travels the country teaching writing workshops with award-winning romance author Laura Baker and will be teaching a workshop at the Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers Conference in September. Contact her at www.DiscoveringStoryMagic.com.

Linda Rohrbough has been writing about the computer industry since 1989, with five thousand articles, five books, and three national awards to her credit. She is a regular contributor to PPW NewsMagazine. E-mail her at Linda@PCbios.com or visit her Web site www.PCbios.com.



Mark Your Calendars Now

- **July 20**, Write Brain Session, 7-8:30, with Tami Cowden: *Putting Personality on the Page*.
- **August 14**, Stephanie Kane all-day workshop: *From Concept to Novel*.
- **September 21**, Write Brain Session.
- **October 9**, Pamela Jaye Smith all-day workshop: *Mythic Tools for Writers and Creating Characters Through Their Inner Drives*.
- **April 22-24, 2005**, PPW Conference.

For more information about these workshops and other Pikes Peak Writer events, check our Web site frequently: www.pikespeakwriters.org.

If you have questions, please contact the workshop director at workshops@ppwc.net.

Sweet Success

Margaret Aunon says she is overwhelmed to learn that Five Star Mysteries is offering to buy her realtor/amateur-sleuth mystery *Dying to Sell*. This coup follows the sale last January of her three-book mystery series *Berkley Prime Crime*. Margaret describes her status as “off the bench and running like hell down the field.” Sounds like a touchdown to us.

Margaret (what is it about that name?) Mizushima placed second in the short-short fiction category of the Seven Hills Contest associated with Tallahassee Writers Association. Her entry will be published in the *Seven Hills Review*.

Beth Groundwater’s short story *New Zealand*, which took first place in the 2003 PPWC Paul Gillette Writing Contest, has been selected to appear in Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers Anthology, *Dry Spell: Tales of Thirst and Longing*. It will be published this fall. Speaks well for the judging of our local contest, right?

Michele Free, who placed second in the horror division of the PPW Paul Gillette Writing Contest in 2003 with her novel *Inner Fears*, announces that it has been sold. Another coup for PPW Paul Gillette contest judges.

Kathleen Brandt’s novel *Swimming with the Dead* will appear in bookstores this month. This is the second book in a three-part series of mysteries featuring Hannah Sampson, a detective who heads the Denver Police Department’s Dive and Recovery Team. We hear Kathy is off on a five-week Caribbean cruise this summer doing “pesky research” for her third novel in the series. We sympathize with you, Kathy.



Charles Rush’s latest novel, *The Devil’s Chessboard*, is now on bookshelves, and may be ordered online from www.publishamerica.com, Amazon, or Barnes and Noble. Question: How did Charlie have time to write a book while he was planning and directing the highly successful 2004 Pikes Peak Writers Conference?

Stephanie Kane just won the Colorado Authors’ League 2004 Book-Length Genre Fiction Award for her novel *Extreme Indifference*. You’ll want to read it before her PPW workshop August 14.



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, 4164 Austin Bluffs Parkway 246, Colorado Springs, CO 80918, along with your membership dues. All PPW memberships run from June 1 through May 31 of the next year and the cost is \$25. For more information, visit www.pikespeakwriters.org.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone () _____ E-mail _____

Hot Topics

The Creative Underground

If you missed Paul Carhart at the conference, you can catch him on his new college Web radio show, "The Creative Underground," on Wednesdays from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. (radio.uccs.edu). The show features Carhart's lively interviews with artists, writers, musicians, and in-between creatives.

Deadline for Paul Gillette Writing Contest

Don't wait until the last minute to prepare your manuscripts for the annual PPW Paul Gillette Memorial Writing Contest. The deadline for mailing is November 1, 2004.

Screenwriting Workshop

Persons interested in attending a screenwriting-related workshop should contact the Workshops Director at workshops@ppwc.net. Apologies to those who signed up for the June 5 workshop, which was cancelled due to low registration.

Jimmie Butler Presents Workshop

Jimmie Butler's all-day CIPA workshop "Writing Better Fiction" is July 24 in Denver. Check details online at <http://cipabooks.com>.

OUT OF BOOK EXPERIENCE

Immediate Fiction

by Jerry Cleaver

Our culture is programmed to want results right now! Writers are no exception. They suffer if the first stories they create are rejected by critique groups, editors, or publishers. Jerry Cleaver plays to that mind-set in his book *Immediate Fiction: A Complete Writing Course*. Cleaver began his career by enrolling in university creative writing courses. He found them vague, disorganized, and inconsistent, so he developed his own system through the legendary Chicago Writer's Loft course, which he has taught for thirty years. He believes the student should learn not only the craft of story, but also the craft of self—finding what you have and making it work. He promises results if you practice his methods for as little as ten minutes a day. Now what writer can resist that come-on?

