

# PIKES PEAK WRITERS

NewsMagazine

official publication of the pikes peak writers

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VOLUME III, ISSUE 2  
MARCH 2004

# WORKSHOPS for Members Only

By Kirsten Akens

## Write Brain Sessions

What are Write Brain Sessions, you ask? They are free, interactive, members-only workshops. A way for you to do some hands-on learning from local writers who will be sharing their expertise in the areas of craft, business, and creativity. The sessions will also provide an opportunity for you to meet regularly (every other month or so) with PPW members for networking, socializing, and support.

Now that you know what they are, join us for:

### Write Brain 2004-Session 1

**When:** Tuesday, Feb. 24, 7-8:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Village at Skyline, 2365 Patriot Drive, Colorado Springs, CO  
**What:** If you need synopsis help, Karen Fox, published romance author, will show you how to write a short synopsis for any genre based on Christopher Vogler's *The Writer's Journey*. You'll be working with your own material so bring it along.

As a side perk, *Author, Author!* will gladly offer PPW members a 25 percent discount on *The Writer's Journey* by Christopher Vogler during January and February.

### Write Brain 2004-Session 2

**When:** Wednesday, April 7, 7-8:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Village at Skyline, 2365 Patriot Drive, Colorado Springs, CO  
**What:** A prep course for the upcoming Pikes Peak Writers Conference, which is only weeks away. Wouldn't you like to be prepared (or better prepared) this year? We invite newbies and oldies alike to join us for a short Q&A session about the conference. After everyone's questions have been answered, we'll talk pitches—of the editor and agent sort. Included will be the how-tos, the how-not-to's, and, if you're game, a little practice. Bring your own material to work with—we're prepping you for the big league!

Please note that this Write Brain Session replaces a formerly announced workshop for March 9, which has been cancelled.

*Kirsten Akens is the workshops assistant/Write Brain coordinator. She is the owner of Calliope Communications, a Colorado Springs business that works with nonprofit organizations. If you have a suggestion for potential Write Brain Session topics and speakers, please contact her via email at WriteBrain@ppwc.net.*



By MaryAnna Clemons

**“If we had to say what writing is, we would define it essentially as an act of courage.”**

—Cynthia Ozick

The secrets of writing have been granted to me in increments. It has taken years of time, patience and hard work, but I've finally earned a portion of what I need to know to write with

earnest. The way I arrived at my present state is the same route that any person must travel to become better in a profession.

Yesterday, as I was cleaning my office to insert a new bookcase, I ran across the first three chapters of what I had considered a mystery. As I lifted the pages I recalled the first writer's conference I ever attended: The Pikes Peaks Writers Conference. When the time came to turn in a sample of my writing, I turned in these pages. The instructor, a well-known man in his field, was leading the attendees by reading our submissions out loud. Stupidly, I raised my hand when he asked if the author was present. He



then proceeded to rip my writing apart, finally ending with, 'I can't go on, it's that bad.'

If embarrassment were a disease, I'd have died on the spot. I didn't write fiction again for two years. My ideas were not bad—I knew that from the three business cards I garnered at the same conference. Rather it was

continued on page 4

## From the Editor



Good manners your mother never taught you, and additional shopping tips for purchasing a printer that will live forever—well, almost. Those

are two of the subjects we cover in this month's *NewsMag*.

Mom didn't teach us the polite way to write e-mails because she didn't have a computer. However, it is imperative that we learn the rules

because e-mails are becoming the accepted way to contact agents and editors. After receiving Linda Rohrbough's proposal for the article, "E-mail Etiquette," I promptly sent her an e-mail in which I capitalized the DEADLINE she must meet, because it was IMPORTANT. Mistake number one. I won't embarrass myself by revealing the other mistakes I've made, but many of you know, because I've hit "reply" too many times to count. I determined to clean up my act after reading this article.

We added another discourse on printers because several of you commented on Frank Dorchak's excellent article from last month,

asking for more information on printers tough enough to spit out long manuscripts. Again, Linda Rohrbough came to the rescue.

By the way, if you want to explore with other PPW members questions raised by articles in the *NewsMagazine* go to [pikespeakwriters@yahoo.com](mailto:pikespeakwriters@yahoo.com). You may also reach me directly at [maxdav@adelphia.net](mailto:maxdav@adelphia.net).

Thanks for your comments. Keep them coming.

Bimonthly *NewsMagazine* of the Pikes Peak writing community

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# 2004 Conference Clips



## Mary Gordon Spence—PPWC 2004 Emcee

By *Charlie Rush*

The Pikes Peak Writers are adding a little spice to this year's conference program. We will have a new emcee. Mary Gordon Spence is well-known in Texas as a public radio personality, humorist, public speaker, and emcee for many events of the Writers' League of Texas.

A lady of diverse talents, Spence (whose first name is double—Mary Gordon) was raised in a small town in Texas. She has lived in Latin America, taught school in grades kindergarten to college, written history book materials, drafted state legisla-



tion, directed statewide environmental programs, contributed regularly to an Austin public radio station, and worked for a former President. She has received kudos for her public speaking from such organizations as National Women in Communications, the Texas Press Association, and the California Workforce Association. The Writers' League of Texas had this to say about her: "Mary Gordon has been called a 'raconteur.' And it is an appropriate description for a woman who is a delightful conversationalist, a teller of tales, a narrator, a person who makes you laugh, really laugh."

Spence is also a writer. She is a regular contributor to the *Texas Co-op Power Magazine*, and she has almost completed her book of humorous stories, *Finding Magic In The Mundane* (also the title of her commentary segment on Austin's public radio station).

I predict there will never be a dull moment when Mary Gordon Spence holds the microphone at the 2004 PPWC. Make sure you are there.

*Charlie Rush is director of Pikes Peak Writers Conference and first vice president of Pikes Peak Writers. He has written three novels and published short stories.*

# Donald Maass is PPWC Keynote Speaker



By Jude Willhoff

Wonder-agent Donald Maass is the keynote speaker for the Pikes Peak Writers Con-

ference which opens Friday, April 23, 2004. Additionally, on Saturday he will offer an intensive two-hour hands-on workshop introducing key techniques for construction of larger scale and highly memorable fiction. For those of you who have a completed manuscript, this is a class you won't want to miss.

Maass started his agency and his fiction writing in 1980. Fiction supported him for nine years during which he wrote fourteen novels. By then his agency was a going concern, and he came to a fork in the road: Should he be primarily a writer or primarily an agent? He chose agent because he loves the profession, and it gives him time to write.

"I'm glad I made that choice," Maass says. "Today my agency is bigger than I ever imagined, with three other agents working

with me. We've just finished a record year."

However, he's glad he wrote those books. "They taught me a great deal about plot construction and also about how it feels to be an author. That changed the way I talk with my clients."

When asked if he's torn between his love for writing and being an agent, he says, "While I've written two nonfiction books in the last ten years, *The Career Novelist* (1996) and *Writing the Breakout Novel* (2001), I've not returned (yet!) to fiction." Maass's workbook for *Writing the Breakout Novel* will be published in August 2004 by Writer's Digest Books.

Maass describes his agency as follows: "I, Jennifer Jackson, Andrea Somberg, and Rachel Vater handle over one hundred novelists. We sell more than one hundred titles per year to publishers here and abroad, and that's been true for several years running. I was one who pioneered the editorial side of the agency business back in the 80s. Today we do a great deal of developmental work with our clients, new and old. Indeed, that's a primary reason authors come to us: We are experts at story development."

Maass describes the largest advance he has obtained for a client as "mid-seven fig-

ures, but this was for a brand-name mystery author who didn't have to write a single paragraph to get the deal. More typical is someone like Greg Keizer, an Oregon journalist who sent me a high quality but incomplete WWII thriller—a first novel—in the fall of 2002. I worked with him for five months to build the story, then turned around and sold it for six figures to G.P. Putnam's Sons. It's called *The Longest Day* and is coming out next August. Big money sounds easy when you tell it around the bar, but believe me, there's a lot of work behind those six- and seven-figure deals."

Maass admits he never imagined reaching the level that he's attained with his literary agency. "It simply boggles my mind, especially on payroll Fridays! My work is fulfilling, of course, but what's interesting is this—I'm still not satisfied. I've got further to go, more to do. I keep learning and growing. I think that's why I love this profession."

The best advice Maass would give to a new author looking for an agent is "Keep your query letter brief and businesslike. So easy to say, so hard to do!"

*Editor's Note: This is the second of three features in which Jude Willhoff interviews speakers for the 2004 Pikes Peak Writers Conference. Willhoff writes contemporary romance and nonfiction.*

## CONFERENCE PRIMER

By Karen M. Jenista



You can't attend the pre-conference prep session, but you want to get the most out of the PPW Conference?

Here's a quick primer for before, during, and after any conference you attend.

### Before

- Determine your mission. Why are you going? Write it down.
- Set goals that will help achieve your objective. Three to five will be produc-

tive without being overwhelming.

- Study all the conference literature—layout, agenda, speakers.
- Further research any editors, agents, or authors of particular interest to you. Make a prioritized list of who you'd like to meet and what you'd like to attend. Don't ignore exploring new areas.
- Make note cards for practicing and remembering what you want to say or ask agents, editors, and/or authors.
- Pack comfortable clothes. Include things with pockets for keeping important items—business cards, note cards, pen—on your person.

### During

- Check your conference packet for any changes of speakers, locations, or times.
- Physically familiarize yourself with conference areas—meeting/event spaces, restrooms, telephones.
- Carry as little as possible. Be prepared without being encumbered.
- Mingle, network. Pass out and collect business cards. On the back of each card, make notes about the person and

any important points of a conversation.

- Collect whatever materials are made available—hand-outs, guidelines, samples, brochures.
- Be open and flexible. Yes, you have your goals, but you don't have to be slave to them.
- Budget downtime into your schedule.

### After

- Evaluate the experience. What did you like/dislike? What worked/didn't work? How could you be better prepared or get more out of your next conference?
- Organize notes and materials for future reference. Add contact information to your files.
- Send any material you were invited to submit as soon as possible. Mark the envelope "Requested Material."
- Write thank-you notes to anyone who was particularly helpful. Follow up on any offers of correspondence, either given or received.

Jenista is assistant editor of PPW NewsMagazine.

# Story from the Front Lines

continued from page 1

my mechanical application of the words. Reading through my old submission, I psychically cringed. It was mortifying to look back on what I had considered worthy.

Fortunately, I persisted. I've read almost every book on writing that's ever been written. I've supported various bookstores for years. I can always be counted on to buy the table displays at conferences and workshops. My current writing credits are newspaper related, academic, personal essays and some magazine articles.

I still strive to create fiction, but it is a struggle. Should this go here or there? Is this too much info in a short time span, or not enough? Would my character really do that? The great thing is, I know that I should answer these questions now. I can also take a bulldozer view of my work. If it doesn't fit, I destroy it—right there—right then. I save nothing on the computer that I have discarded, either. Not enough bytes to keep it all. And you'd be hard-pressed to make me cry over anything that has to do with my writing.

One of my peeves with published authors, who speak at conferences, is the mantra, "If I can do it, so can you." That

isn't true. We can't all do it, and thank the Lord for that. Can you imagine what it would be like if everyone who attended a writer's conference really could "do it too?" I struggle with putting my thoughts into words. It has always been this way, and it always will be this way.

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**"You'd be hard-pressed to make me cry over anything that has to do with my writing."**

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Some of us take years to understand what others might understand in a week. While there is nothing intrinsically wrong with that, it proves that not everyone will make it as a writer. Not everyone is mentally able to wrap her consciousness around the colossal world of writing. I am prepared to never "make it" in fiction. I am also prepared to keep trying. But I find it erroneous and slightly condescending to be told, "if I can do it, you can do it too." That published author, however well accomplished, hasn't an inkling of what I can or cannot do.

Every secret I've learned has come from

a book written by another writer who struggled. Those books hold a special place in my heart because the authors were honest enough to say how hard it really was; how much of their early dysfunctional life played into why they write; how much it really takes to succeed, and why it's not the right path for everyone. *Lessons from a Lifetime of Writing* by David Morrell is one of those books.

However, some books are read before the reader is ready to understand the message. For example, I read *The First Five Pages* by Noah Lukeman a couple of years ago. Nothing—nada—right over my head. Then, as I'm cleaning, the same day I ran across the horrible story I subjected other people to, I see her book again, and I start to read it. How could I have not understood this book when I first read it? Now the chapters scream at me, "this is the common sense you've missed."

Time and maturity as a writer and a person make all the difference in being able to wrangle words that sing instead of croak. I wasn't ready for that book a couple years ago, and now I am. Just one more secret of the writing life that has been granted, and just one more book that has furthered my obsession with writing.

*Clemons is a master's level student of criminal justice. Her freelance credits include newspapers, essays and the Internet. She is a stay-at-home mom with two children, five cats, three horses and two birds. She may be reached at maclemons@earthlink.net.*



Conference is upon us, and once again it's time to ask for your help in putting on one of the best conferences in the United States.

Pikes Peak Writers Conference depends on its volunteers to provide conference attendees the very best experience possible. If you are registered for the conference, and have a few hours to spare, we have a variety of volunteer spots that need filling, from bookstore assistance to session moderators.

E-mail [debcourt1@att.net](mailto:debcourt1@att.net) for further details.

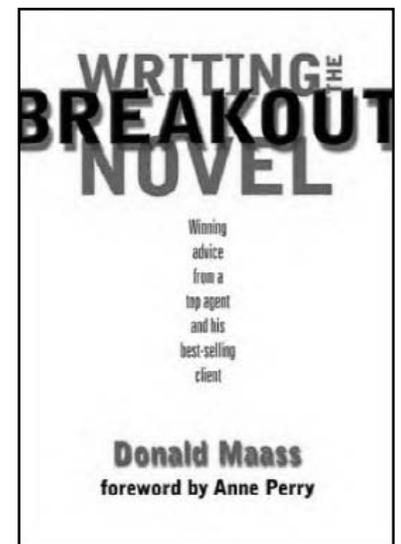
## OUT OF BOOK EXPERIENCE

### *Writing the Breakout Novel*

By Donald Maass

"Trials and tests are the stuff of character building, of conflict. Ask yourself, who is the one ally your protagonist cannot afford to lose? Kill that character. What is your protagonist's greatest physical asset? Take it away. What is the one article of faith that for your protagonist is sacred? Undermine it. How much time does your protagonist have to solve his main problem? Shorten it."

With such practical advice as this (on raising the stakes) and handy checklists, Mr. Maass details the elements of breakout novels so you can take your stories to the next level, where they stand out and succeed.



E-mail is very personal stuff because of its relationship to our bodies. In fact, I believe cyberspace is “personal space”—an intimacy zone, if you will, due to close proximity with the monitor, intense eye contact, and instant response. Think about how many people you allow twelve to eighteen inches from your body while you look them straight in the eye.

If you assume, as I do, that e-mail takes on a personal nature, then it makes a big difference how you relate to someone using this medium. In the business of talking to and querying agents and editors via e-mail, there is such a thing as an e-mail “voice” and it matters. It’s easy to be inconsiderate or offensive without meaning to. Let me give you some examples.

I get many e-mails from people who clearly don’t know how they come across, like full of SHOUTING!!!! Or all lower case with no punctuation like, “i’m afraid of my own shadow.” I often get e-mails with the last twenty messages dragging along, or ones where the list of other recipients is longer than the message. Or forwards nested ten deep. Not to mention preachy little stories that I have to send to my closest friends, otherwise I don’t love God. Or ones where a claim is made that Microsoft tracks this particular e-mail and will give money to me or a charity if I forward it. (Not). Especially annoying are photographic backgrounds or a bunch of cute animated icons, because they take much longer to download.

Of course, I recommend you avoid doing all the things I listed above. But here are a few more tips which apply especially to writers. The first thing to keep in mind is that on a slow day most agents and editors get one hundred or more e-mails. They scan the subject line to pick which to look at. Therefore, say something short and meaningful in the subject line, such as the word “Query,” or if you’re referring to a project, the name of the project.

Remember, you’re selling yourself as a writer, so avoid writing in all upper case, all lower case, or with misspelled words or jargon. By jargon, I mean those electronic short cuts for commonly used terms like <g> for “grin,” LOL for “laugh out loud,” and IMHO for “in my humble opinion.” Don’t assume your agent or editor knows what you mean, and even if they do, such writing is inappropriate and unprofessional.

Editors and agents frequently cut and

# E-MAIL



paste text from your e-mail into

another e-mail, or into documents they’ll use to pitch your project. Make it easy for them. Use generic fonts such as Courier, Arial, or Times New Roman. Avoid colored fonts and use standard sizes such as 12 point. To demonstrate how this sort of thing can be problematic, I cut and pasted part of the text from a white text on blue background e-mail into a document I created. The text didn’t show up. I realized right away I couldn’t see the text because it was white on a white background. I changed the color of the font. But an editor might decide to take your name in vain, if she has to spend thirty minutes trying to figure out why your text won’t show up. Worse, the editor may hit the delete button.

In your e-mail identify yourself and talk in a friendly, conversational tone using the pronoun “I.” Be super considerate of the other person’s time and energy. For example, ask before you send that picture or attachment. Avoid photos, colored backgrounds, graphics or animations because they are distracting and take more time to download. Keep your message clear and to the point. Tell them who you are, how you met them (especially if they requested what you’re inquiring about), and identify what project you have in mind. In my experience, an interested editor or agent is as likely to pick up the phone as to hit reply. So make sure to include your telephone number in your contact information.

If you are responding to a message, it’s easy to hit reply, but that copies their entire e-mail back to them along with all the routing information. It is cleaner and more professional to quote the pertinent text you’re

addressing inside chevrons, then answer. Chevrons are made by holding the shift key and pressing either the comma or the period. Here’s an example:

<<Can you have this to me in two weeks?>> (the request from the editor)

Two weeks works for me. I will have it there by May 14th.

It’s always safe and considerate to assume your recipient is pressed for time. Be sure to thank them for their time and attention. After all, this may be the beginning of a long and profitable relationship for both of you.

*Linda Rohrbough has written about the computer industry since 1989 and has more than 5,000 articles and five books to her credit. Her work has been honored three times by the Computer Press Association. A broken back as a result of a car accident motivated her switch to fiction, and she is currently at work on a techno-thriller novel. E-mail Linda at Linda@PCbios.com or visit her Web site www.PCbios.com.*

**By Linda Rohrbough**

## *E-mail Etiquette*

### **Do:**

- Be friendly, but respectful.
- Keep it brief and to the point.
- Talk in a conversational tone, using the pronoun “I.”
- Ask before you send an attachment.
- Use standard fonts.
- Include your telephone number in your contact information.
- Quote the text you are referring to inside chevrons << >>.
- Put the word “query,” or the name of the project in the subject line.
- Check spelling and punctuation.

### **Never:**

- Use all capital letters.
- Use all lower case letters.
- Use jargon, slang or abbreviations.
- Just hit reply and send back the entire e-mail along with your answer.
- Send the same e-mail to many editors or agents where the distribution list shows.
- Send attachments without asking.
- Send cute stories, photos, or animated pictures.

# The Manuscript Printer

By Linda Rohrbough

The manuscript printer—is there such a thing? Yes and no. Any printer can be a manuscript printer, depending on how much pain you're willing to suffer.

What do I mean by pain? I mean dutifully feeding the printer paper twenty pages at a time; swapping ink cartridges three or four times during a print job; waiting for the darn thing to cool; and dealing with wrinkled, shredded, or ink smeared pages. The ultimate agony, of course, comes when the large manuscript job causes a mechanical failure.

I've experienced all of the above, except the last. I buy Hewlett-Packard (HP) Laser Jet printers. So while I've had a slow laser jet, I never had a broken one. My previous Laser Jet IIP lasted for fifteen years. I replaced it after twelve years, and my husband used it for three more. When it quit, I gave it a quiet funeral.

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**“For a guide to manuscript formatting before you start printing, see Pam McCutcheon’s Web site, under the heading ‘Writing Tips’”**

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I have experienced the pain of watching my fingernails grow during print jobs. It took a week of ten-hour days to print a manuscript with artwork on the IIP. I hated it. The year after I started earnestly writing

books instead of articles in earnest, which meant I was submitting 300- to 450-page manuscripts, it didn't take a knock on the head to send me looking for a faster HP Laser Jet.

I know plenty of people who are willing to plop down \$300, or even \$400, for a printer. I saw one business in particular that bought six—and I'm not kidding—six printers, from all-in-ones to another brand of laser printer (besides HP). Every one of those printers needed repair within a month.

Which leads me to my next point: everyone prints more than they think they do. They say, “Oh, I don't print that much,” and buy the printer that'll handle how little they think they print. The printer ends up back at the store very shortly.

What does a printer that will handle manuscript printing cost? Ready? About \$1,000. For me, the price tag meant I had to deal with pain for a while. But the minute I could afford it, nearly seven years ago, I bought the HP Laser Jet 4000. Now HP offers the Laser Jet 4200, the older sibling of my 4000, still \$1,000.

A thousand dollars doesn't sound cheaper than \$400, does it? But it is. If I divide that \$1,000 by seven, I have \$143 a year into the printer. My cost goes down every year. Let's say you get two years out of the \$300 printer. That's \$150 a year. I have yet to see someone who is serious about manuscript printing get two years out of a \$300 to \$400 printer. And laser printers of any brand have a lower operating cost per printed page than ink jet printers.

Not only do I spend less, my life is easy and painless with my Laser Jet 4000. It holds a ream of paper and prints at seventeen pages per minute. It works every time. Now I print a manuscript in one morning, instead of a week. Plus, it does a beautiful job on envelopes, and I can buy toner for it just about anywhere. I love it.

Bottom line for manuscript printing is this: If you want a reliable printer, and want to spend less in the long run, buy an HP Laser Jet 4200. You'll be glad you did.

*Linda Rohrbough has been writing about the computer industry since 1989 with 5,000 articles and five books to her credit. She's received three national awards. E-mail her at [Linda@PCbios.com](mailto:Linda@PCbios.com) or visit her Web site [www.PCbios.com](http://www.PCbios.com).*



Terry Banker is happy to announce that Tor Publishing has purchased his contemporary love story, *Flash and Dazzle*. It's a story about two best friends confronting the challenges of their careers in the craziness of Manhattan's P.R. world. When one of the men is diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer, their lives will never be the same.

*Flash and Dazzle* will be out in the winter of 2005.

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# GOLD NUGGETS

In January, PPW members filled the Village at Skyline conference room for the all-day Crime Scene Investigation workshop which featured our region's most talented experts. We predict that mystery writers will be demanding a repeat of this popular event. If you didn't go, you missed out on the forty-two-page booklet that every mystery writer should have as a reference tool before starting a novel.

These gold nuggets, gleaned from the workshop, should send you into a writing frenzy:

## Lynda Sandoval

- It is important that a writer begin writing by focusing on the story first.
- Plot the story and write the scene before you do your research.
- Then call your expert.



Lynda Sandoval

## Peter Klismet

- Criminal profiling helps to narrow the range of suspects in a criminal investigation.
- Profiling is not a cure-all nor a panacea.
- The profile is not always right, it is not a psychic insight, and it is not mystic knowledge. It is an educated attempt to



Peter Klismet, left, and Patricia McFarland, right.

define the "type" of individual who might have committed the kind of crime you're writing about.



Bob Duncan, left, and Lt. Ken Hilte, center, talk with Eric Olson.

## Lt. Ken Hilte

- A criminal's "calling card" is the psychological signature that a serial killer leaves at each crime scene.
- Most homicides are committed by people with whom the victim is familiar—either a friend, relative, or acquaintance.
- The motive for crime is most commonly money, sex (love) and/or power (status, respect, humiliation).

## Drs. Daniel L. Segal and Frederick L. Coolidge

- Ninety to ninety-five percent of criminal defenses based on mental illness fail.
- Writers should not be afraid to do research using academic or technical sources; it greatly helps to provide more accurate portrayals of personality disorders.
- Anti-social personalities are the most dangerous. Their essential feature is a pervasive pattern of disregard for, and violation of, the rights of others that begins in childhood or early adolescence and continues into adulthood.

## Bob Duncan

- A crime scene reconstruction expert measures and photographs the scene. He prepares the attorneys for trial, prepares the courtroom presentations, and gives expert testimony.
- Expertise is needed in mathematics, physics, computer-aided drawing, land survey, photography, engineering, building construction, guns, and analysis.
- There is a difference between "accuracy" and "precision." Know it.

## Kimberly Bjorndahl, SCSA

- A crime scene technician goes to the scene of homicides, officer-involved shootings, suspicious deaths, and aggravated sexual assaults.
- She locates, photographs, collects, and preserves evidence; makes rough sketches; takes measurements; and processes fingerprints, among other things.
- Don't believe what you see on television. Technicians don't capture perfume odors in a bottle.



## Bob Duncan

- Only point guns at what you want to destroy.
- Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction; always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot; and always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.
- Careful writers might glean the following advice from Mr. Duncan's handout on weapons: Set your sights; keep your power dry; don't rely on silver bullets to solve your conflicts; don't go off half-cocked or jump the gun; stick to your guns finish the whole shooting match; keep your writing of high caliber; don't play Russian roulette or be a flash in the pan; bite the bullet; and son-of-a gun—finish that novel. (We told you the handout was indispensable.)

# 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 cost is \$25. Those new members joining PPW on Dec. 1, 2003 and later, have two options. They can join for the remainder of the 2003-2004 membership year for \$25 or they can pay \$40 and extend their membership through May 31, 2005.

For more information, visit [ww.pikespeakwriters.org](http://ww.pikespeakwriters.org).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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# Hot Topics

## Cancellation Notice

The previously announced workshop, "The Writer's Life," scheduled for March 9, has been canceled in order to bring you a special pre-conference Write Brain Session in March. See the announcement for this Session under "Workshops for Members Only" on page 1 of this *NewsMagazine*.

## News Release

According to a Heart of Denver Romance Writers news release, PPW's Pam McCutcheon was a featured speaker at their workshop held January 24, 2004. She led a session titled Brainstorming for Writers. Pam is a local award-winning author of romantic comedies, fantasies and nonfiction. In addition, she is co-owner of the bookstore *Author, Author!*.

## *NewsMagazine's* May Issue Will Arrive Early

Expect to receive your May issue of *PPW NewsMagazine* in late April so that we can get the latest conference news to you before that big happening. Deadline for copy remains the same: March 20, 2004. Put that date on your calendars if you write articles for us or have announcements.

## Evite

Pikes Peak Writers announces the recent addition of using Evite.com as a way to keep our members updated on free Write Brain Sessions. A few weeks prior to each free workshop, PPW members who have given the organization their e-mail addresses will receive a personal e-mail invitation through Evite.com. Each invitation will be clearly identified as coming from Pikes Peak Writers. Evites are a great way for us to keep you informed and for you to easily RSVP for Write Brain Sessions. We hope you find this system as beneficial as we have!

If you 1) would like to be added to the PPW Evite Invitation list, 2) change an outdated e-mail address, 3) do not want to receive Evites from PPW, or 4) have questions, please send a note to our Write Brain Coordinator at [WriteBrain@ppwc.net](mailto:WriteBrain@ppwc.net).