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VOLUME III, ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER 2004

Akens Takes on Double Duties for PPW

PPW's Susan Rust recently interviewed newly-appointed Pikes Peak Writers Conference director Kirsten Akens. For a look at what's new with the conference and Akens' double duty as PPWC director and PPW vice president, read on!

What positions do you hold with Pikes Peak Writers?

I am currently the 2005 Pikes Peak Writers Conference director and vice president for Pikes Peak Writers.

Were you appointed or elected? (Which came first?)

I was first appointed to the conference directorship and later elected to the vice president position.

How did you become associated with PPW?

Three years ago I was recruited by the Paul Gillette Writing Contest coordinator to be a judge. After judging, I was asked to help with transportation for the conference and to assist with administrative functions for the contest. Last year I became PPW's Write Brain

coordinator, the conference relax and renew room coordinator, and assisted with miscellaneous tasks at the conference.

Why did you accept these new responsibilities?

I believe that PPW and PPWC provide a needed resource to the Pikes Peak region. I had also heard over

and over again what a great conference we have. I hope to continue the legacy begun thirteen years ago and to celebrate the successes of the past, while offering new ideas for growth and pursuing opportunities for the future.

What is your professional background, and what special qualifications do you bring to these jobs?

I have spent the past eight years working within the local non-profit sector in the areas of fund-raising, marketing, communications, training and conference coordination, and program development. Currently I own my own business, writing federal, state, and local grant proposals, developing fund-raising and marketing materials, and completing other projects for organizations including TESSA, Pikes Peak Mental Health, Court Care, Justice Watch, and the Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team.

What would you like to see happen next with PPW?

I think PPW has an amazing growth potential. I would like to see us build partnerships with local universities and colleges, bookstores, and other local and regional writing and arts organizations in order to support collaborative efforts, share resources, and diversify our membership.

What are the biggest challenges you face as conference coordinator and vice president? Taming ideas?

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On Historical Accuracy in Fiction

By Margaret Brettschneider, aka M. J. Brett



Audible gasps rose from my high school English class as I finished reading a short excerpt from a book concealed in brown paper. The class was composed of sons and daughters of military personnel sta-

tioned in Germany, where I taught for twenty-one years. Most knew Berlin well. They had read volumes about the battles in Europe.

"That's phony," one boy called out. "There weren't any outdoor cafes on Unterden Linden Strasse during the last days of the Battle of Berlin. It was all rubble."

A girl sneered. "Besides, with the

Allies bombing the city day and night, anyone planning a romantic date with her soldier, outside, would have to be crazy."

"And how could her Nazi husband get away from his post during the siege?" came another query.

"Why wasn't that author more careful?" asked another of my freethinkers. "Such bogus stuff couldn't even have happened."

I let my students' indignation rise to

Continued on page 2

"To write is to write is to write is to write is to write."

—Gertrude Stein

From the Editor



Have you noticed that a new guard has been inducted into the Pikes Peak Writers Conference steering committee? Charlie Rush, who led the conference to new heights, remains a cheerleader but has passed the coordinator's job to Kirsten Akens. She is surrounded by a league of young women who may seem quiet and unimposing, but their ideas and actions are stirring like a beehive full of honey makers. Enjoy making Kirsten's acquaintance by reading Susan Rust's interview of her on page one. Then watch for our

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new Web site, now being prepared by Paul Carhart. Click on "volunteers" and join Kirsten in the excitement of planning and working in the 2005 conference.

We also welcome Margaret Brettschneider, author of *Mutti's War*, with a fascinating account of how to assure accuracy in the research of historical novels. Linda Rorhbaugh gives us hints for how to finish a novel once the research is completed and answers writers' questions about con artist agents. Karen

Jenista shows us shortcuts for adding zing to our sentences—in what we expect to be an ongoing column, *Self-Editing 101*.

Finally, in our effort to continue improvements to the *NewsMag*, we have set a new mailing deadline for the first day of each publishing month. Enjoy the holidays and expect your January issue shortly after the New Year begins.

On Historical Accuracy in Fiction

continued from page 1

the level only high school seniors can attain before revealing the author's name and the title of the book. It was a bestseller, but now, they vowed never to waste their time on this author's works again.

Together my students determined their criteria for historical fiction, historical romance, and creative nonfiction writers—accuracy. They felt that if a historical event or setting was being depicted at all, the author had an obligation to depict it correctly. They believed—and rightly so—that such clumsy inaccuracies detracted from the reader's enjoyment of the novel.

Historical fiction allows an author to use existing settings and known events to have his imaginary characters act out his creative story. Whether beginners or published veterans, we owe it to the reader not to make ignorant mistakes. A glance at old photos of Berlin's center during the last days of the war would have made this famous writer aware that her little idyllic climax was ludicrous, even to teenagers.

When these same students urged me to write my novel, *Mutti's War*, about a real woman's trek across Europe during World War II, you can bet accuracy was at the top of my priority list.

Of course, one can still be inventive and ask that famous question, "What if?" That's the basis for all good fiction, and we're assuming the story is one worth telling. For instance, authors still explore what might have motivated the plotters behind the assassination attempt on Hitler at Wolf's Lair. It would be appropriate to imagine the steps taken, the conversations had, and the subsequent escape or demise of those plotters. But if this same attempt takes place in Heidelberg, or Hitler dies and the plotter becomes fuhrer, one has crossed over into fantasy or science fiction time travel.

Mutti's War is essentially oral history, but even if your characters are wholly fictional, the accuracy of your historical backdrop is essential. So what are the problems encountered in creating an accurate historical backdrop for your character's story?

The first problem I encountered was in researching the period—Germans are still reluctant to discuss World War II. Regina, or "Mutti," the central character, naively thought she was protecting her children from bad memories by never telling them what she had done to save them. They'd been too young to remember. She politely changed the subject if anyone asked questions. In such a case, you must ask the journalist's question, one that cannot be answered by a simple yes or no. The query, "When in your life were you most frightened?" brought out her first reluctant anecdote. It surprised me—actually, it knocked my socks off!

At that point, I knew this story had to be told, though she swore me to secrecy until after she died. Mutti would not talk in front of her family, but once she started talking to me, it was as though I'd pulled a zipper on her heart, and all the repressed pain gushed out. **I soon realized she had been hiding a mystifying secret, prompting me to restructure from nonfiction to historical fiction and to change names to protect the guilty.** But that allowed more flexibility than straight nonfiction.

I found myself scribbling anecdotes on the backs of envelopes and laundry lists—whatever I had in my purse on the rare moments when Mutti could talk about her experience. I filled a dresser drawer with such scraps.

(To be concluded in January.)

—Margaret Brettschneider lives in Colorado Springs and is a member of PPW. *Mutti's War* is her first published novel, although she has two others in the making.

Legal Writes



By **Brenda Speer, esq.**

QUESTION: *I want to use part of another writer's work. Is this okay or is it plagiarism? Also, I have heard that I can copy another writer's work, so long as it's fair use. What's fair use and is it different from plagiarism?*

ANSWER: We're all familiar with the concept of plagiarism and learned in school that it is an academic and writing no-no. But what exactly is plagiarism from a legal viewpoint? It is defined as "the act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts or passages of his writing, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind" (*Black's Law Dictionary, Fifth Edition*).

Just last month there was a newspaper article about Laurence Tribe, a constitutional law professor at Harvard, who used without proper attribution or permission a nineteen-word passage from Henry Abraham's 1974 book *Justices and Presidents* in his 1985 book *God Save This Honorable Court*. After this came to light, Tribe released a statement in which he acknowledged the mistake and said his "well-meaning effort to write a book accessible to a lay audience through the omission of footnotes or endnotes—in contrast to the practice I have always followed in my scholarly writing—came at an unacceptable cost: my failure to attribute some of the material." So, even a little bit of copying, inadvertent or not, can land a writer in trouble.

What's considered copying? Obviously,

using the work of another author verbatim is copying. But there is also non-verbatim copying. The legal test for determining if an author's work has been copied or infringed is whether the accused copier had access to the original work and if the copied work bears substantial similarity to the original work. These are questions of fact that are considered in each circumstance of copying. While access may be somewhat easy to determine, a determination of the degree of similarity is made on a case-by-case basis and, unfortunately, is not governed by a definitive rule or test.

What should a writer do to stay out of trouble? Simply stated, a writer should give proper attribution when using the words of another and do so within the bounds of fair use. That is, be sure to place direct quotes in quotation marks and to identify the speaker or writer, and be sure to attribute through footnotes, endnotes, etc., passages and ideas of another. Numerous references are available for guidance on proper attribution and citation mechanics.

"So, even a little bit of copying, inadvertent or not, can land a writer in trouble."

Are there legal consequences for inadvertently neglecting to properly attribute the work of another? Usually, the consequences will be professional embarrassment, rather than legal. However, the concepts of plagiarism and fair use are related to one another and to step outside the bounds of either may expose a writer to legal ramifications.

What is fair use? "Fair use" is a legal construct that allows writers to use original material of others within certain parameters. Under copyright law, there is a bundle of copyrights exclusive to the author of an original work. Regarding written works, these are the rights to: (1) reproduce the work; (2) prepare derivative works based upon the work; (3) distribute copies of the work; (4) publicly perform the work; and

(5) publicly display the work. By default, only the author has the right to copy any portion of his work, which means any copying of an original work by another is copyright infringement. However, there are some exceptions to this general rule.

These exceptions are known collectively as fair use. Limited copying or use of an original work is permitted for the purposes of criticism, commentary, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, or research. Fair use for these purposes is further determined by consideration of several factors, none of which is dispositive nor exclusive: (1) the purpose and character of the use; (2) the nature of the copyrighted work; (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the whole; and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

One should proceed with caution and note that, in and of itself, attribution of the copied, original material does not transform the copying into fair use. Fair use is factually dependent and the totality of the circumstances should be considered when determining fair use of a portion of another's work. In other words, there is no definitive rule to decide whether use of another's material is fair or not—for example copying eighteen words verbatim is permissible, but copying nineteen words is not.

Generally speaking, minimal copying of an original work with proper attribution most likely would not be plagiarism and would be considered fair use. However, if in doubt, a writer has three alternative courses of action—either not to use or copy at all, seek the advice of legal counsel as to whether the usage or copying is fair use, or seek express permission from the author to reproduce a portion of the original work.

DISCLAIMER: Any material provided herein is for illustrative and educational purposes only and should not be relied upon as legal advice, should not be considered confidential, and is not the basis of an attorney-client relationship. Any information and opinions provided by Brenda Speer are solely of her own efforts, making, and responsibility, and are not, nor do they reflect, the work or opinions of PPW.

—Brenda Speer has been practicing law for over fifteen years in support of artists and innovators with an emphasis on intellectual property law (patent, trademark, and copyright). Currently in private practice in Colorado Springs, Colorado, she provides legal services for the technological and creative arts. She is a member of PPW and, when not working, endeavors to expand her writing skills beyond formal, stodgy legal writing and into fiction. You may contact Brenda Speer by phone at (719) 381-1708 or by email at brenda@bbspeer.com.

Don't Be Conned by Agents

By Linda Rohrbough

An article on con artists as agents should always start with a few great horror stories. And I have some winners. One of my friends writes and illustrates children's books. She sent her work to an agent listed in one of those guide books to literary agents. But nothing happened and she started to worry. So she did some checking and it turns out the agent was representing her work as his own. She got the police involved and got her work back.

Dean Koontz, who is famous for horror stories, tells in his book *Writing Popular Fiction* (now out of print) about agents who sign up authors then tell the author they can sell the book with a rewrite and offer to do the rewrite. They sign on with the author as a book doctor, make few (if any) changes, and sell the book to a publisher. They then pay the author only a small percentage of the advance they actually get. They keep doing this over and over with the same authors for years because the authors never find out.

Romance author Deb Stover did an agents workshop at the PPW conference in 2003 and told her horror stories. One was about her first agent, who, like most agents, received the entire advance from the publisher, subtracted her fees and commission, then sent a check to Deb for the remainder. However, the agent's check bounced. Turns out the agent's personal finances were intermingled with those of her authors. Deb says this agent is still working, but not as her agent.

When I was a reporter, I had a colleague who signed with an agent to represent his book for a fifteen percent commission plus expenses. After two trips, one to the East Coast and one to the West Coast, the agent billed my colleague for about five thousand dollars and said he was unable to place the manuscript with a publisher.

These stories are actually the exceptions as scams go. The most common scam is charging a fee to read your manuscript or to present it to a publisher. Laura Hayden pointed out two "agents," Janet Kay and George Titsworth, who operated under seven different business names. Their alleged scam was to take money in exchange for contact with publishers by leading clients to believe their chances of publication were better if they paid "office expenses." One author said she received a glowing letter, signed up for representation, and sent in the three hundred dollars requested. She received a packet from Janet Kay with the names of four publishers she was to send her

manuscript marked "Agented Material" using Kay's return address. Kay and Titsworth were arrested by the San Angelo, Texas police in early September on the charge of theft by deception.

So, what can you do to protect yourself? First, try to connect with an agent at a reputable writing conference like Pikes Peak Writers, rather than pick one out of a list. One trick is to look at the Web sites of groups putting on writing conferences because they usually list the agents attending. Once you have a name and an agency, it's easy to find the address using the Internet. If you can't afford to go to the conference, you can still send your manuscript to the agent listed.

Second, never pay a reading fee. Just don't do it.

"Check on every agent, using the Internet."

Third, avoid paying the agent's expenses, especially up front. There are legitimate agents who ask for a retainer up front once they take on a client, but I wouldn't sign with one. If you do decide to accept such an agent, the retainer against expenses shouldn't be more than one hundred dollars to cover copying and postage.

Fourth, set a cap on expenses in your contract with the agent. I had a very well-known agent send me a contract. After I heard about my colleague's agent spending five thousand dollars, I asked to set a cap on expenses of two hundred dollars. He didn't like it but I felt I could breathe easy because I had a cap on how much could be spent without my express permission.

Tips to Avoid Con Artist Agents

1. Connect with an agent at a reputable writer's conference.
2. Never pay a fee to have your manuscript read.
3. Avoid paying anything to your agent until your manuscript is accepted by a publisher.
4. Set a cap on expenses in the contract.
5. Check the agent's credentials using computer resources.
6. Talk to other writers before you sign.

Fifth, check the agent, using the Internet. The easiest way is to use a search engine such as www.google.com, and to type in the agent's name and agency, and see what comes up. See if the agent is a member of the Association of Author's Representatives (AAR) at www.aar-online.org. You can also check on agents at these two sites, *Predators and Editors* at www.anotherealm.com/prededitors/pealh.htm and *WritersWeekly.com*, www.writersweekly.com.

And my last, but most important tip: talk to other writers. Just ask around, collect advice, tell people what the agent is asking for before you sign up. That'll save you a lot of grief.

—See Linda's bio on page 3.

Akens Interview

Continued from page 1

We have a fantastic committee of enthusiastic and committed individuals who think big. I love taking new ideas and running with them, but I know we have to have focus as well in order to be successful.

Where do you see PPW going say, five years from now? Ten?

Honestly, I'm not sure—which is why I organized a strategic planning session for the PPW board and officers this fall. I have lots of grand ideas myself—I think we all do. But whatever direction we take, I believe strongly in the importance of going there strategically. Our members will be hearing much more about this topic in the next six months.

What is the greatest benefit to be gained from attending the annual conference?

I think there are two top benefits. First, learning. We strive to bring together a top-notch faculty that will offer something for everyone. Second, networking with other writers, with published authors, with agents and editors. Connecting with those in the field is important to our growth (and sanity) as writers, no matter the level we're at.

What do you feel most passionately about, given your new positions?

Doing the most I can to help the conference and Pikes Peak Writers grow while having fun!

Any changes for the coming year with PPW and/or PPWC?

Yes! We're welcoming lots of new faces to our conference faculty this year. We're also trying to build partnerships with local organizations, such as the Rocky Mountain Chapter of Mystery Writers of America, increasing our volunteer base, and developing a specific plan for the future.

Self-Editing 101

by staff writer

You've written your story and submitted a synopsis and sample pages to a contest, perhaps to an editor or agent. Now—besides working on your next project (you are, aren't you?)—you wonder what impression the material is making. In your imagination, that editor, agent, or judge is reading your sample, turning from the first to second page. Then, after a moment, with a tap of the pages against the desktop to straighten the stack, he puts your submission aside and reaches for the next one.

Whoa! Cue the sound effect of needle scraping across a vinyl record.

Rejection happens. Years ago as reader for a publisher, I was assigned manuscripts that I itched to put aside, but since it was my job to read, I *worked* through to the end. Then I filed my reports, intended to point editors to the gems or save them the time of handling unworthy manuscripts. You don't want your work to land in the unworthy pile. What can you do about it?

The short answer is to write a darn good book. The longer answer is how to do that.

In this column, we plan to address some of the problems that cause editors, agents, and judges to toss aside manuscripts. We hope to teach you techniques of self-editing that will make your writing professional.

Take, for example, a simple but common problem that weakens your writing: the adverb + verb construction. The fix is to choose a strong, specific verb that exactly communicates your meaning.

She gently touched the baby's cheek.
She **caressed** the baby's cheek.

He angrily shut the door in her face.
He **slammed** the door in her face.

"Leave me alone!" she said loudly.
"Leave me alone!" she **yelled**.

He walked casually into the room.
He **sauntered** into the room.

You can improve your writing by searching for *-ly* adverbs and replacing most of those adverb/verb combinations with more precise verbs. I'm not advocating the complete excision of adverbs. Sometimes that

adverb is the best way to say what you want to say.

While you're doing this exercise, break out your thesaurus. Some people discourage use of a thesaurus, believing it invites the use of uncommon or pretentious words. But I believe a thesaurus helps you find the precise word. Let's say your character looks at something. You might be tempted to tack on an adverb to tell us the manner in which he looks. Much better to find "look" in the thesaurus and read the synonyms. Here are some of the words listed in my thesaurus: inspect, examine, observe, watch, gaze, stare, glimpse, glance. Which word carries the connotation that conveys the manner of your character's "looking"?

Get the dictionary, too. Often the distinction between two words is a matter of nuance. Look them up. Choose the one that best suits your intent.

Sometimes you'll have to go back and forth between your thesaurus and dictionary to unearth the word you're hunting for. Often that word is hovering in your subconscious. You just need to see it to go "Aha!" Either that or congratulations, you've added a new word to your vocabulary.

All this may seem like a lot of work, but writers build stories with words. You wouldn't construct your dream house of cardboard; you'd want sturdy bricks. Likewise, in creating your written masterpiece, resist those easy-to-reach but ineffectual words and select strong, vivid verbs.

Kane Workshop Inspires Writers

How do you weigh the benefits gained from attending workshops? The answer to this question varies with each participant, but lucky attendees find they return to their work spaces inspired to immediately apply the new knowledge to their own endeavors. This was true following Stephanie Kane's PPW workshop, "From Concept to Novel," held on August 14. The workshop contained ideas and writing methods not found in the how-to books on our shelves.

Wait, Don't Start Yet

Kane began by urging writers to test their concept for a novel before the writing begins. Ask whether the story is substantial enough to develop the concept. Determine how interested you are in the subject.

Brainstorming Exercises

- One of Kane's most creative ideas for forming a plot concept was to juxtapose multiple "what if" questions to find the least likely or most surprising combinations for cause and effect. She used four such questions and showed how combining question one and question two would develop one story, but combining numbers one and three could make for an even better concept.

- Imagine the story from different points of view and choose the most original.

- Reverse clichés. The serial killer could be female.

- Examine your attitudes of sympathy or contempt toward the characters.

- Determine the emotional pull your story will have by asking who, what, when, where, why, and how until you arrive at the deepest levels of emotion inherent in your concept—why a reader should care.

- Finally, burst out of the autobiographical trap by giving your own most admirable characteristic to your villain, and the antithesis of your most admirable characteristic to your protagonist. Can you make each of the characters sympathetic under these circumstances?

Action and Reaction

Kane's workshop was filled with new and exciting ideas for developing your novel. We don't have room to cover her excellent ideas about designing scenes and developing characters. However, her final tip on self-editing should not be overlooked: Every line on each page must describe either an action or reaction.

Conference Clips

Remember that registration for the 2005 Pikes Peak Writers Conference opens January 1, 2005, for PPW members. Conference information and registration brochures will be going out in November, so look for these in the mail. Nonmembers of PPW can register beginning February 1.

PPWC 2005 will see the return of audience favorites Donald Maass, Robin Perini, and Kristen Nelson, plus many exciting, new faces. Don't forget about our editor/agent pitch sessions, read and critiques, roundtables, networking mixers, interview panels, and craft-related sessions. Additionally, the 2005 Conference will have some surprises you don't want to miss. Conference begins Friday, April 22 and runs through Sunday, April 24. Make plans to attend now.

GOLD NUGGETS

At PPW's September workshop, Pamela Jaye Smith presented fifteen mythic themes—taken from ancient Greek stories—which writers use to structure present-day films. The following are gold nuggets gleaned from the workshop:

- Somewhere in every good story is a mythic statement which represents the point of the story. In Aesop's fables, the statements come at the end. In fairy tales, they're often spoken by a wise old person, or they can be delivered by an obscure character.

- A good story contains three essential statements. The thematic statement tells what the story is about. The mission statement is what the hero is supposed to do. The lesson statement is the lesson learned by the hero on his journey.

- Symbolism is often found in the names of characters. For example, **Luke Skywalker**, **Han Solo**, and **Scarlett O'Hara**.

- Mythic themes are often written unconsciously as imagery, such as water, earth and air.

- Our bodies are machines for experiencing the world. Various physical centers cause certain inner drives; for instance, the head center (pineal) is conscious soul awareness. Inner drives create motivation, archetypes, symbols, colors, shapes, materials, clothing, styles of speech, and determine how to align each character with his scene. Using these drives as a guide adds dimension and layers to your characters—a great tool to develop concept and align the supportive details.

- Use mythic structure as a tool to analyze stories. For dynamic tension, a story needs complication, and a heroine needs both opposition, or challenge, and assistance, or allies. This exercise helps you understand who that person is and why.

Todd Fahnestock and Giles Carwyn recently signed with the Donald Maass Agency to represent

Sweet Success



their latest fantasy novel, *Heir of Autumn*. We all remember that

Fahnestock and Carwyn first met Mr. Maass at the PPWC last April. After reading the first three pages of their latest novel, Maass asked to see a few chapters. Two weeks later, he asked to see the entire manuscript. Maass said the novel was the best fantasy he had read in years and quickly arranged an auction among seven New York publishers to sell the rights.

"I knew we had something when we read the prologue in a critique session at the conference last April," Carwyn said. "The whole room got quiet and people were leaning forward in their chairs to catch every word." Both writers thought their fifth co-written novel had a good chance of attracting an agent, but neither was expecting the overwhelming response they have received.

"I wouldn't say it's beyond our wildest dreams, but it's beyond our wildest expectations," Fahnestock said.

After four years and three submission, **Jan C. J. Jones**, **Dr. M. L. Johnson**, and **Dr. Don Dexter**, working through the applicant organization Acanthus, Inc., Fort Collins, Colorado, have been awarded a Phase 1, Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant to develop and test an interactive CD-Rom designed to assist home-based autism remediation intervention, to facilitate the education and devel-

opment of autistic children between the ages of two and six. Incorporating

recognized, successful methods and utilizing other expert consultants and specialists, the test program is slated to be completed within six to eight months.

Jane Guill writes from Illinois that she has found a wonderful agent, who sold her novel, *Nectar From a Stone*, to Simon & Schuster. It will be published in March 2005. Guill was winner of the Paul Gillette Memorial Writing Contest in the mainstream category in 2001 and states that the "nod of approval helped give me confidence to keep on writing. Even when there wasn't much literary joy in Mudville (or Illinois), I remembered that good things do happen and that the harder we work, the luckier we get."

Margaret Brettschneider, who writes under the pseudonym M.



J. Brett, signed books for *Mutti's War* at Borders October 3. She also attended the Read Colorado signing at Invesco Field November 6. *Mutti's War* is a fiction-

al account of her mother-in-law's trek with three small children across Europe during World War II. You'll find the book at Borders. See her article "Historical Accuracy in Fiction" in this issue of the *NewsMag*.

Sharon Silva signed her paranormal romance, *Spirit Dancer*, at Author, Author! on October 9. **Jude Willhoff** signed her nonfiction book, *Interviews With Your Favorite Romance Authors*, at the same event.

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 for one year, and the cost is \$25. For more information, visit www.pikespeakwriters.org.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone () _____ E-mail _____

Hot Topics

Debut Novel

A launch party for Angel Smits' debut novel, *Memory Whispers*, will be held at Author, Author! on Friday, November 12, 6:00 p. m. to 8:00 p. m. The book is a paranormal romance set in Cripple Creek.

Manuscript Exchange Program

PPW is searching for a volunteer to coordinate a new "M4MX Program"—a "Manuscript for Manuscript" reading service. PPW president, Laura Hayden, suggests that we create a pool whereby a member agrees to read a manuscript in return for someone reading the member's. By using a pool of manuscripts, participants won't necessarily swap one-for-one with another member.

Hayden is looking for someone to be in charge of tracking the manuscripts. PPW and its volunteers (1) would not be responsible for comments made, (2) would not house the manuscripts, and (3) would not

cover or reimburse postage costs. This would be a membership benefit which means all participants must be PPW members. Anyone

interested in coordinating this effort? Contact Hayden at lbhayden@prodigy.net.

OUT OF BOOK EXPERIENCE

Who's (...oops!) Whose Grammar Book Is This Anyway?

by C. Edward Good

Are you a grammar geek? Even if you're not, you'll enjoy reading—yes, reading, not just using—this handy grammar book.

How many parts of speech are there? Can you name them? Don't raise your eyebrows. Although writers deal with words all the time, they do sometimes forget even basic grammar concepts and rules. Good assumes nothing in his effort to teach what he considers "the logic of a language." He writes in a clear and entertaining manner on the parts of speech and their functions, style, punctuation, and common grammatical mistakes.

Read *Who's (...oops!) Whose Grammar Book Is This Anyway?* to brush up on your grammar, then keep it on your shelf as a simple-to-understand, easy-to-use reference book.

