

# Writers in the Sky



## Creative Writing Services

Volume 4 ~ Issue 12

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December 2008

**Whether you are a published author or a writer-wanna-be, this e-zine is for you. Here, you will find articles, announcements, book reviews, poetry, and information about the craft and business of writing, publishing and book marketing written by our readers. Our goal is to connect the writing and publishing community through networking that benefits both. Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think may enjoy it.**

### AUTHOR'S CORNER BY YVONNE PERRY

I was out of my office for eight days, and had over 1,000 emails when I returned! My grandmother, who lives with my parents, fell and broke her hip and arm on Friday, November 7. I headed for Atlanta that same day. At 92 and facing surgery, I wasn't sure I would see Nanny alive again, but as it turned out, she did fine with the surgery to repair her hip. She was released the following Wednesday and I continued to stay to help my mom care for her mom at home. Nanny went back into the hospital by ambulance the following Wednesday because her oxygen level was low. An x-ray revealed pneumonia in her left lung. However, thankfully she was back home for Thanksgiving and I got to see her and the family again.

I have enjoyed promoting my new e-book and folks are saying how much they are being helped by the material about online book marketing. If you haven't got your copy yet, head to [www.OnlinePromotionMadeEasy.com](http://www.OnlinePromotionMadeEasy.com) and see what all the buzz is about. The blog has a lot of free tips to stir your imagination and give you fresh ideas to help you promote your book!

Be sure to suggest to forward this newsletter to others who would enjoy our articles about writing, reading, editing, publishing, and book marketing. New subscribers get a free e-book Tips for Freelance Writing.

**Yvonne Perry**

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**Are You An "As-oholic?"**

By Marci Baun

Addicted to “as”? You are not alone. This addiction is very prevalent among authors these days. (Heck, I’ve been known to show some of that addiction myself. Grin) Sometimes, they are used in similes, but the most common usage is as a conjunction—linking actions. Recently, I’ve had authors complain that they felt they were exchanging one addiction for another (“and” vs. “as”), so I thought I would share other methods to mix things up and not rely strictly on “and” all of the time. While “and” is much more invisible than “as”, it pays to have a full toolbox. Switching out with while, when, once, and after is not the answer. Why? Because this turns you into a while-aholic, once-aholic, after-aholic, or when-aholic, which is just as bad as being an as-aholic.

To rely heavily on any one grammatical device weakens the prose, keeps you contained inside a box that doesn’t really reflect your abilities, and often suppresses any growth you may strive for in your writing. One would hope that the more you write, your prose becomes tighter, your toolbox larger, and your storytelling more compelling. You can’t grow, however, if you aren’t willing to give it up. Besides, with the depth of the English language, why limit yourself to just one device when there are so many to choose from?

You will see “as” used in similes. This is okay, unless the similes are frequent and close together. Any time you overuse a device, your story suffers. (Watch for overuse of “like”, too, as in “like the redolent smell of rose”, etc.) You have to find alternatives. Comparison is great, but there are many ways to make comparisons without actually using a simile.

When working to change the instances of “as”, there are a number of options open to you beyond while, when, once, and after. I have listed just a few below to inspire your own muse into creating new, grammatically correct ways to “show” your story.

#### **Breaking sentences in two:**

From: As it opened, frigid air cooled John’s heated flesh. •

•

To: The door swung open. Frigid air cooled John’s heated flesh. •

•

Breaking the sentences in two works for this sentence because the only way John could be struck by the air is if the door opens, and you know when you open a door, the air of either outside or the interior will strike you. This option will work for some, but not others.

#### **Changing “as” to “and”:** •

•

From: As it opened, frigid air cooled John’s heated flesh. •

•

To: The door swung open, and frigid air cooled John’s...

This works as well. You won’t want to do this for every sentence.

#### **Rewriting to a modifying phrase:**

From: Stephanie’s mouth fell open as she stared at the size of his hands.

To: Stephanie’s mouth fell open, a common reaction to the size of...

You could also use “and” in the place of “as” in this instance. It’s a matter of deciding/making a choice of which you think fits best.

#### **Another modifying phrase example:**

From: As a level two initiate, Lorelei wouldn’t even know about the magical spheres...

To: A level two initiate, Lorelei wouldn’t...

*Or using a participial phrase (also a modifier):* Being a level two initiate, Lorelei wouldn’t...

(Note: Like any other device, participial phrases can run amok, but it’s okay if you use them judiciously.)

#### **Another modifying phrase example:**

From: Her emotions were always unpredictable, pushed as she was into the darkest edge of her soul...

To: Her emotions were always unpredictable, the darkest edge of her soul ever present in her life...

#### **Sometimes, it takes rearranging the syntax, like so:**

From: She killed in a hot passion of anger as her dark side took over.

To: Her dark side took over, and she killed in a hot...

**And finally the prepositional phrase:**

This is another example of turning the “as” phrase into a prepositional phrase—“with”, “to”, and so on. Sometimes, it’s as simple as replacing the “as” with “in”, “to”, etc.

From: His voice came out as a whisper. To: His voice came out in a whisper.

**Or a complete rewrite:** He whispered. Here you have a complete rewrite of the sentence. Simpler can be better.

Another prepositional phrase example that requires a complete revision:

From: She bounced jauntily as she walked away. To: She walked away with a bounce in her step.

The above examples are just a few possibilities. There are many, many more. You’ll discover that once you start stretching yourself, the addiction lessens and disappears until your writing has grown far beyond the box that originally seemed so comfortable.

*Marci Baun is the editor of [Wild Child Publishing](#). Since its inception in 1999, Ms. Baun has been in love with the written word beginning with *Clifford the Big Red Dog* and *Curious George*. Her reading and interests have expanded since those first books to include history, music, opera, theater, swimming, cycling, nature, travel, and writing. She has written and performed one person shows about historical women in schools, universities and festivals across the state of California and sang with the *Coasters* and the *Drifters*, *Freddie Hart*, as well as on the operatic stage. A few years past, as a member of the Academy for New Musical Theatre, she composed music for a twelve minute musical. When time permits, she hopes to return to the theater. In her other life, she is a stay-at-home mom.*

## WITS Podcast Schedule December 2008

**December 5**

Yvonne Perry will discuss the concept of “walk-out spirits” with Ray Brennan and Masomeh Fritz as they share information from their new book titled *The Legacy of the Chosen One*. The two authors have written about a topic of spirituality that largely unknown or misunderstood, as their book is the first to deal with the life of a “walk-out” spirit. Yvonne will ask them about their main character, Laila, who exists in the spirit world even though her body remains in the physical world. Through this storytelling format, Brennan and Fritz hope to remove some of the mystery from metaphysics. They also will provide some insight as to why they believe such activity is happening in today’s world. Listeners who are intrigued by the spiritual world will love this informed exchange between Yvonne and her guests. For more information on *The Legacy of the Chosen One*, please visit the book’s page at <http://www.outskirtspress.com>.

**December 12**

Writers in the Sky’s author assistant, Sarah Moore, interviews M. C. Lloyd about his new release titled *Moving Beyond Woodstock*. Lloyd is a member of the Baby Boom generation who shares a critical take on the subset of his peers to whom he refers as the “Woodys”. Those who earn this moniker from Lloyd are the men and women of the 1960s who either attended the famous three-day concert in New York or who share in the mindset of those particular music lovers. Lloyd employs his background as a poet to develop a humorous depiction of the legacy created by the “sex, drugs, and rock ‘n’ roll” lifestyle of the Woodys, but also shares some serious concerns about how his generation has had a negative impact on our society. Lloyd’s strong opinions and sharp wit are certain to make for an entertaining interview. For more information on M. C. Lloyd and *Moving Beyond Woodstock*, please visit [www.OutskirtsPress.com](http://www.OutskirtsPress.com).

**December 19**

When packing to visit relatives for the holidays, a good mystery novel is the perfect travel accessory. Tune in to this

week's broadcast for an interview with J.A. Nevling as he discusses his new thriller, *Burned*. Nevling's book starts with a tragic fire that changes the lives of the Nagol family forever. This moment of upheaval takes one member to a new city and a job at an accounting firm hiding secrets that could be deadly. Nevling powerfully weaves a plotline with flashbacks and cliffhangers that keep readers moving from one chapter to the next, and inspires reflection on the importance of trust in relationships, especially in families. In his interview with Sarah Moore, Nevling will discuss how he carefully crafted his sentences to build a novel that creates suspense and emotional investment from the reader. He also will share how he spent years developing the writing skills for his initial publication and why *Burned* was so long in the making. For information on purchasing *Burned*, please visit [www.OutskirtsPress.com](http://www.OutskirtsPress.com).

Listening to Writers in the Sky Podcast on a computer is easy. Just click this link: <http://yvonneperry.blogspot.com> and go to my blog. On the right sidebar there is a list of archived shows. Click on the interview you would like to hear and it will open a post that has a link to open the audio file. For information about being a guest on Writers in the Sky Podcast, see [www.writersinthesky.com/writing-podcast.htm](http://www.writersinthesky.com/writing-podcast.htm)

## Don't Make Another Marketing Move Without These Copywriting and Planning Tips for 2009

By Allison Nazarian

Whether you write marketing copy for your business, your clients' businesses or both, there is something far more important and crucial to your (and their) success than the words themselves.

*More than your writing, it is your planning that can and will make or break all of your marketing efforts.* All of the great instructions, skills and techniques in the world will not take the place of this most important part of the process.

*Here, then, are my Top 4 content and copy planning tips for 2009:*

**1. Diving in is for swimming, not marketing.** This is the same as the "Everyone Is Doing It, So I Should Be, Too" one. You know, the one where you learn at 9 am that others are using this site or on that social media network and by 3pm you have spent half the day creating a profile and reaching out to new friends you didn't know you needed?

**Planning Tip:** Plan your plan with both sustainability and flexibility. Trust your plan. And then, be wise enough to know when to tweak the plan – (without spending the day "playing" with no good marketing reason).

**2. Target before writing (not the other way around).** Has someone ever spoken to you in a language that was not your own? Did you understand a word said? This non-communication isn't much different than marketing to a market that simply does not want, does not need and/or is not interested in what you are marketing.

You may be writing great copy and conducting a fabulous campaign, but how successful will you be if you're preaching to the unconverted?

**Planning Tip:** Don't write one word before you have learned, lived and breathed your target market.

**3. Your vehicle can be nice-looking, but it is more important that it is able to get you where you need to go.** Where your copy "lives" is as important as what words you use. Are you choosing and using marketing vehicles that make sense and speak to your target? Or, are you just attracted to the slickest and "coolest" tools? Slick and cool are nice, but not enough.

If you aren't already, create and maintain lists of good online and offline resources, sources, experts, etc. Know your market well enough to know what will work (and not) for them.

**Planning Tip:** Guessing is generally not a good strategy in marketing planning. Make sure the words you write match the vehicles they "live in."

**4. As with people, remember that what's inside counts more than anything.** This is the one where you have a gorgeous website, a stunning blog, a fancy e-newsletter sign-up and tons of profiles on every imaginable social media, press release and article syndication site but you are missing one crucial piece of the puzzle: THE COPY!

**Planning Tip:** Don't build it, bolster or promote it if "it" has no words, message or real meaning. Neither is judging a book by its cover. A marketing vehicle with no copy is WORSE than no marketing vehicle at all.

Allison Nazarian is the President & Founder of Get It In Writing, Inc., and is widely known as one of the most honest, experienced, innovative and freshest voices in copywriting and marketing today. She holds a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.S. from Columbia University's School of Journalism, and is a recognized expert in the areas of information marketing; blog writing; SEO copywriting and is the "go-to" expert for DIY (do it yourself) copywriting and marketing, offering a variety of affordable tools and solutions for entrepreneurs, solopreneurs, coaches, consultants and Virtual Assistants who write their and their clients' copy. Allison and Get It In Writing have been featured in the *Wall Street Journal*, *INC Magazine*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Fortune Small Business* (FSB) and *WomenEntrepreneur.com*.

### NETWORK WITH US!



**Add your announcement or brag about your writing accomplishment. Tell us about your book or business. Share information and ideas or send articles or advertorial for the next issue by contacting us on our Web site [www.writersinthesky.com/contact.php](http://www.writersinthesky.com/contact.php) . Here are some announcements from our readers this month:**

Allison Nazarian offers free copywriting and marketing tips, tools, advice and expertise all over the place, including here:

[www.GetItInWriting.biz](http://www.GetItInWriting.biz)

[www.DIYCopywriting.com](http://www.DIYCopywriting.com)

[www.AllisonNazarian.com](http://www.AllisonNazarian.com)

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Voice of the Angels. com is producing a new magazine. The first issue will be launched in December. We're looking for book excerpts, particularly paranormal romance genre or similar. We're also looking for high quality informative articles on a broad range of topics. Articles about spiritual topics are most welcome. Submit queries or articles [tomagazine@voiceoftheangels.com](mailto:tomagazine@voiceoftheangels.com) Also if you would like your product or products reviewed in an upcoming issue of "Voice of the Angels.com Magazine" please send to:

Ann Churchman, Editor  
22 Glen Eagle Drive  
Springfield, IL 62704

Music CDs only to:  
Dyan Garris, Journeymakers, Inc  
3924 S. Calle Viva,  
Green Valley, AZ 85614

Please include product information and submit actual product samples. Samples will not be returned and are not guaranteed to be reviewed. For advertising opportunities, beginning at as little as \$20 and current rate card please contact:[magazine@voiceoftheangels.com](mailto:magazine@voiceoftheangels.com)

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Just thought I would share some of the wonderful responses I have gotten to my book!! Wai-nani is like no other book I have ever read. Linda Ballou is a master of language, pulling the reader in and evoking emotions hidden deep within. Her imagery will tickle your senses, allowing you to feel the story more than merely reading. Passionate and primal, Wai-nani transports you to the early days of Hawaii. Wai-nani refuses to be bound by the shackles of her society and follows her heart--finding a destiny beyond her wildest dreams. Follow her--no join her--on this incredible journey." Joyce



Anthony, author.

Larry M.: I just loved Wai-nani. In every chapter I could see your research and your exploration of years you wrote about. I loved her and loved Eku and family. I found when I put it down I couldn't wait to find out what was going to happen next. Great Job!

Go To <http://www.lindaballouauthor.com/Books.html> for autographed copies shipped FREE anywhere in the world. free! Available on Amazon.com BarnesandNoble.com Borders.com , or you can order it at your local book store.

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Literary Publicist Stephanie Barko announces two of her authors' virtual tours, which will be in progress during December.

1. **Unbridled Cowboy** by Joe Fussell (1879-1957) (Truman State University Press, 5/1/08, biography, softcover, 278 pages with photo & map) the posthumously released autobiography of rough and tumble Texan Joe Fussell.
2. **Hollywood Bohemians: Transgressive Sexuality and the Selling of the Movieland Dream** by Brett Abrams (McFarland, 8/19/08, softcover, 256 pages with 20 photographs) how early Hollywood has influenced today's sexuality on & off the screen.

[www.authorsassistant.com/Barko.htm](http://www.authorsassistant.com/Barko.htm)  
[www.theauthorsassistant.blogspot.com](http://www.theauthorsassistant.blogspot.com)

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The Dream Quest One Poetry & Writing Contest is open to anyone who loves arranging words into the beautiful art of poetry or to write a short story that is worth telling everyone! And to all who have the ability to dream... Write a poem or short story for a chance to win cash prizes. All works must be original. <http://www.dreamquestone.com> .

**Guidelines:** Write a poem, thirty lines or fewer on any subject, style, or form, typed or neatly hand printed. And/or write a short story, five pages maximum length, on any subject or theme, creative writing fiction or non-fiction (including essay compositions, diary, journal entries and screenwriting). Also, must be typed or neatly hand printed. Multiple poetry and short story entries are accepted.

**Deadline:** December 31, 2008. All winners will be announced on January 31, 2009

Writing Contest First Prize is \$500. Second Prize: \$250. Third Prize: \$100.

Poetry Contest First Prize is \$250. Second Prize: \$125. Third Prize: \$50.

Writing Contest entry fee: \$10 per short story.

Poetry Contest entry fee: \$5 per poem.

**To send entries:** Include title(s) with your story (ies) or poem(s), along with your name, address, phone#, email, brief biographical info. (Tell us a little about yourself), on the coversheet. Add a self-addressed stamped envelope for entry confirmation. Fees payable to: DREAMQUESTONE.COM

Mail to:

Dream Quest One  
Poetry & Writing Contest  
P.O. Box 3141  
Chicago, IL 60654

Visit <http://www.dreamquestone.com> for further details, to print out an entry form or to enter online.

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**A Great Christmas Gift Idea!** Do you have a teenager in your life that you love? Or do you love to read books that challenge you deeply? I would like to recommend a new series of books that would make excellent Christmas gifts! [Read more . . .](#)

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I'd like to invite you to take a look at my new novel, Patriot Acts. It is being featured [at Lost In A Good Book](#). You can read excerpts and even purchase it from the site, if you wish to buy it. Here is a short blurb of the novel:

Today, America faces enemies that make the world of the Cold War seem like much brighter times. Islamic forces

have declared Jihad on America causing the greatest threat to the United States since World War II. In Patriot Acts, America finds itself under covert nuclear attack from a unified force of the Islamic Republic of Iran and radical American Militia groups; setting aside their political and religious differences to carry out the widest and deadliest attack on America in the nation's history. Only one person can effectively retaliate against their aggression, Fisher Harrison, the best trained Special Ops killer the military has who is in a federal prison, framed by his former boss, now the President of the United States of America for a murder he did not commit. From Alaska to the heart of the Islamic Republic of Iran, witness two unified seek to bring down The United States of America, while two others bond to save her. You will be amazed how plausible this story is and you will be shocked by how close to reality it truly could be!

I hope you'll go there and read about a story that mirrors our present day in uncanny ways. You can also read a lot more about this powerful story at: <http://stevenclarkbradleyspatriotacts.blogspot.com/>

Author Steven Clark Bradley

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Wyrdwood Publications is looking for authors of Pagan Fiction and Non-Fiction, including Erotica. They publish only e-books. <http://www.wyrdwoodpublications.com/>

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### Subscriber Bonuses, What Works and What Doesn't

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Getting potential readers/customers to subscribe to your newsletter isn't always easy. One way to do this is through an "ethical bribe"—this is when you give something to get something. Giving away a valuable freebie to get an email address is a great way to build your list. When we started offering our ethical bribe on the AME web site, we quadrupled our sign ups!

If you're trying to figure out what your ethical bribe is going to be related to getting readers to subscribe to your e-zine or mailing list, make sure it matters to your reader. A lot of folks are fond of giving away free e-books or books in public domain. Who cares about getting another copy of *Moby Dick* if it has nothing to do with your book? Consider the following possible subscriber bonuses:

Tips—tip sheets are great. Giving your reader something they have to keep is a fantastic way to not only get them into your "marketing funnel" but also keeps readers reminded of you if the tip sheet is something to which they are always referring.

Forms—if your book offers a lot of forms, you may want to put one or two of them up as your ethical bribe. This is especially true if it reminds readers that you have this great book that they really need in order to maximize the effectiveness of the forms.

Check lists—another great ethical bribe are check lists, especially the kind that need to be referenced again and again.

Contact sheets—our site offers a list of the top fifty media contacts in the United States. These lists can be used and referred to again and again, thereby offering valuable information and a way to remind readers about our company. If you have a similar contact list you can offer, put one together and offer it as a freebie to your readers.

*Penny C. Sansevieri, CEO and founder of Author Marketing Experts, Inc., is a best-selling author and internationally recognized book marketing and media relations expert. Her company is one of the leaders in the publishing industry and has developed some of the most cutting-edge book marketing campaigns. She is the author of five books, including Book to Bestseller which has been called the "road map to publishing success". To learn more about her books or her promotional services, you can visit her web site at [www.amarketingexpert.com](http://www.amarketingexpert.com). To subscribe to her free e-zine, send a blank email to: <mailto:subscribe@amarketingexpert.com>*

## Do You Want to Get More Mileage out of Your Book Marketing Dollars?

WITS publicity is affordable and effective when it comes to marketing your book. Yvonne Perry offers you the benefit of the knowledge she gained from her own book marketing experience. Choose from book videos, article marketing, online media releases, author interviews, book reviews, and more.

Our writing packages are a great deal for anyone needing online publicity. See [www.writersinthesky.com/author-publicity.html](http://www.writersinthesky.com/author-publicity.html)

## What is in Your Writer's Library?

Every writer needs a good collection of books and some software in their writer's library. Each writer will have his or her own favorite writing books. Numerous books on writing are available from various stores and online. Writers are free to choose whichever ones work for them.

Anyone who wants to be a writer needs some of the following books in his or her library:

- A good dictionary, like the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary*. You may want to consider subscribing to Merriam-Webster online. For \$29.95, you have access to a number of dictionaries, a thesaurus, and an encyclopedia online. You can sign up at Merriam-Webster Online.
- A good thesaurus
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*
- If you write journalistic articles, or web content, a current *Associated Press Guide to Newswriting* is a good resource.
- If you write academic writing, a current MLA and APA style guide may need to be in your library.
- All writers should also consider a copy of *Zen in the Art of Writing* by Ray Bradbury
- For those writers who wish to write science fiction, consider an old book, *The Engines of the Night* by Barry N. Malzberg (It is an out of print book, but you may be able to find a copy.) The best thing any writer can do to help them learn their craft, it to READ in the genre you want to write.

On a personal note: A program called WordWeb Pro is a very helpful program that I use often.

Many publishers want documents in Word 97-2003 Document. If you happen to have Microsoft Office 2007, you have to option to save as Word 97-2003. It seems the Word 2007 has its own extension that some people may have trouble reading with older versions of Word.

*R J Medak, a freelance writer has written and posted 300 articles to Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and other sites. RJ also attends the Muse Conference and the Catholic Writers Conference. These online conferences are a good way to attend a writers conference without the cost of travel. In 2009, RJ will be a presenter at the Muse Conference.*

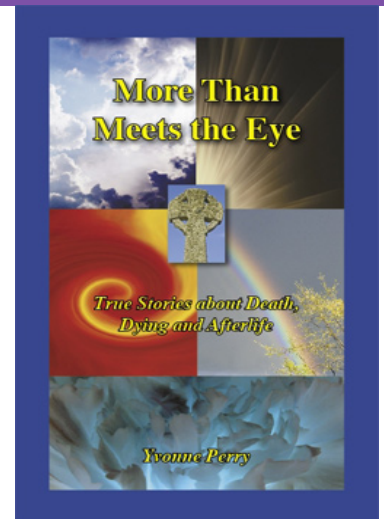
## Are You Afraid of Dying? Do you need comfort after the loss a loved one? Here's hope!

*More Than Meets the Eye: True Stories about Death, Dying and Afterlife* was authored by Yvonne Perry for people who are facing challenges presented by bereavement. In the book you will find:

- Information to alleviate the fear of death



- Comfort for caregivers, friends and family of a person who is near the end of life, or has recently passed
- Understanding for those who have had a near-death experience and lived to tell about it
- Insight from Dr. Aaron Milstone, Medical Director of Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Lung Transplant Program about why physicians are ill-equipped to deal with death and are unable to comfort dying patients or their families
- Why people sense the presence of their loved ones near them during the funeral, graveside ceremony and in the days following
- Reasons we should address end of life issues with family members.
- Understanding emotions regarding sorrow, grief, loss and guilt
- How to tell if death is about to occur for a critically ill patient and how to assist a loved one in gently departing
- Dealing with the emotional devastation of a loved one's suicide and signs that indicate someone may be suicidal
- Discussion about euthanasia



There's also a legal copy of a Living Will, also known as an Advanced Health Care Directive included in the book and on Yvonne's website [www.deathdyingafterlife.com](http://www.deathdyingafterlife.com) where you may read more or purchase the book.

## DECEMBER POEMS



### **Baby's First Merry Christmas Day**

Sweet, little bundle; born in May.  
First words, first steps; starting to play.  
The best time ever, we all say.  
Baby's very first Christmas Day.

Dust, sweep and vacuum; house will shine  
Ham, yam and turkey; food so fine  
Family brings presents just in time,  
All for this precious child of mine.

Chill in the air  
Songs everywhere  
Glittering light  
Packages bright

Baby's eyes are wide, great big grin  
Tears up packages, jumps right in  
Big, empty boxes; noisy din.  
Foam pellets up to Baby's chin.

Then pack the Grandpa Cam away,  
E-mail pictures sent on their way.  
The best time ever, we all say.  
Baby's very first Christmas Day.

Best Christmas ever, we all say.  
Baby's first Merry Christmas Day.

*Jan Bossing © 2008, Joelton, TN*

### **Poet's Quest**

At night by the light of a single lamp, I try to write my best.  
Words are my mission, to find the right ones, my test.  
Create pictures, stimulate senses, a reader's journey my quest.  
I sit solitary. Words do not come easy, I explore which are the best.

For clarity, substance, the reader will understand my intent.  
Mundane life is the reader's experience, with my words to make a dent  
in time, allow the reader to journey to a place of peace to invent.  
Words fraught with thought, from my mind, reader's joy my intent.

Zeus send forth your daughters to help me with inspiration,  
I rack my brain to put the right word to paper for creation  
of the proper time, place and setting in my mind's desperation.  
I search for the right pacing, and word for my reader's inspiration.

Calliope, muse of the epic poem, help me create  
Clio, muse of the heroic poem, help me create  
Erato, muse of the lyric poem, help me create  
Euterpe, muse of the love poem, help me create

*R J Medak, a freelance writer has written and posted 300 articles to Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and other sites. RJ also attends the Muse Conference and the Catholic Writers Conference. These online conferences are a good way to attend a writers conference without the cost of travel. In 2009, RJ will be a presenter at the Muse Conference.*

### **The Flight of Angels**

In the huddle of every life  
There will come a time  
When sweet providence rears its head  
And wants to take us away from here  
To a level that we can't see  
With these faltering eyes,  
Lifted up on angel wings  
Riding high with no fear.

In the flight of angels,  
No more worries and no more cares,  
Gently folded in angel arms,  
Lifted up above all despair,  
Taken into that Promised Land,  
No more crying and no goodbyes,  
In the flight of angels  
Where no one ever dies.

I was lost with a tortured soul,  
Tossing, turning all night,  
Trying hard just to understand  
The subtle differences of wrong and right.  
Then the angels reached out to me,  
Lifted my veil of gray,

Led me into the sweetest light,  
Took my fears away.

In the flight of angels....  
Dennis S Martin

<http://www.iwritesome.com>

<http://iwritesome.blogspot.com/>

### **Music Man**

Family Trance Uncles And Aunts  
Santa Wears Baggy Pants  
Holiday Wishes Energy Kisses  
Love's Our Music Man

Credit Card Stew  
Destiny's Flu  
Overboard Shuffle  
Candy Coated Truffles  
Life's Inner Brew  
Is Calling You

(Chorus)

Family Trance Uncle And Aunts  
Santa Wears Baggy Pants  
Holiday Wishes Energy Kisses  
Love's Our Music Man

Another Tree  
God Bless Thee  
In a Haze  
New Year's Rage  
Black Eyed Peas Power Seeds  
Harmony Bees Are Calling  
Please

(Chorus)

Family Trace Uncles And Aunts  
Santa Wears Baggy Pants  
Holiday Wishes Energy Kisses  
Love's Our Music Man

Mental Notes Hearts That Soak  
Physical Matter Overactive Bladder  
Glory Be Enlightened Me  
Native Skin And Silly Grins  
Now Is Mine Source Filled Mind  
Time Is Clear Change Wears Ears  
And Reindeer Gear

(Chorus)

Family Trance Uncle And Aunts  
Santa Wears Baggy Pants  
Holiday Wishes Energy Kisses  
Love's Our Music Man

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[www.shortsleeves.net](http://www.shortsleeves.net)

<http://halmanogue.blogspot.com/>

From The Short Sleeves 2009 Spirit Songs

## Life

By Gary Helander

I hear a muffled voice from a far and distant land,  
But the words that they speak, I don't understand.

This trip that we're on is a secret mission,  
But I had a dream and a bad premonition.

For life or death, we had no voice,  
Our fate was sealed by words pro-choice.

A light pierced our darkness from a narrow hole,  
I felt something grab me, it pulled at my soul.

A new light is shining, a beacon for me,  
Welcome young son, you're home and you're free.

We finished our mission, a sacred one now,  
I accept the warm welcome, I kneel and I bow.

Once we were cramped in our Mother's dark womb,  
Now we rejoice, we've escaped from her tomb.

## Just A Dream

by Gail Livesay

I was sitting on a porch in a beautiful place.  
I could see the mountains, the sea and the wide open plains.

I looked over a grassy knoll, you were walking toward me.  
I said," come, sit for awhile. It is so good to see you.

All the world and stars belong to us . Come stay an  
eternity with me."

I awoke and saw your head on the pillow next to mine  
and knew eternity is now.

## Using Storytelling to Create Advertising Copy

Hello, Yvonne! Your readers may wish to know of a way they can use their creating writing talents to create advertising copy. The process involves merging storytelling with the elements of copy. The result is often a piece of copy that is very compelling because the story that is woven into the copy naturally creates believability, and believability or trust is powerful. When readers trust you, they are open to buying.

So, storytelling can be an ultra-effective way of creating sales. How can you do this? Begin first with a basic copywriting "template" and flesh out the main elements of your copy. AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action) is one template that can be used. If you would like one that is a little more complex but still easy to use, email me at the address below and I'll send it to you.

Once you have the basic copywriting elements in place, it's as simple as picking a good story to "overlay" onto the main elements. Universal themes, such as local boy makes good or homely guy wins beautiful girl, often work well. A good source of universal themes is none other than those enchanting fairy tale books you used to read as a child—they're

chock full of interesting story lines.

How powerful can stories combined with copy be? One of the greatest pieces of copy ever written was a story! One estimate is that it brought in one billion dollars in revenue for its company. That story was the now-famous “Two Young Men” copy written in the early 1970s for *The Wall Street Journal*. If you’d like a copy of that particular story, just do a quick Google search. If you’re still stuck, send me an email at [cs@highrollertoys.com](mailto:cs@highrollertoys.com) and I’ll send you a copy.

The following is an example of copy that is told in story form. The story theme here is our innate desire to be thought of as men or women of distinction in our community.

### **The Easy Way to Become a Man of Distinction... Nobel Peace Prize not needed.**

Ahhh... to be known as a man (or woman) of refined taste and distinction— isn't that what the inner soul in us all yearns for? There are two main ways to acquire that rarified status. One is to devote your life to noble humanitarian causes and be honored by society for your great works.

The second way—the easy man's way—is to acquire it. Skip the years of toil and frustration; enjoy your desired status immediately. Become who you want to be **now**. Not sure how that works? Continue reading to learn more

~ I had arrived early for a business meeting at my friend’s million dollar mansion.

It was run-of-the-mill as far as those types of homes go—three stories, four-car garage and endless lush, rolling lawns. I rapped on the door and was met by the housekeeper who ushered me to the living room. The meeting would begin in ten minutes.

I took a look around. The joint was decorated with some pretty fine furnishings ... definitely not the kind of upscale decor a small-town happy-go-lucky guy like me was used to seeing in the local K and W stores. This was a big step up.

#### **When Money Seeps Into A Room...**

Very cushy indeed. That’s what happens when money seeps into a room—something special takes place. The room takes on airs and begins to boast. This room went beyond even that, beyond fine appointments and impeccable taste. Something made it brag and boast of a confident nature, superior culture and worldly flair.

But what? What was making it speak that way, give it that aura? I quickly rescanned the room.

Ahhh... there they were, drawing me into their presence. *They* were the reason for the cocky whimsical confidence the room portrayed—the braggadocio, the boasting playfulness!

[Continued...](#)

## **DECEMBER BOOK REVIEWS**



### ***Finish Line***

Author: James Ross

ISBN: 978-1-4363-3326-9

Publisher: Xlibris 2008

Genre and Target Market: fiction, human drama, golf

Pages: 289

Sarah Moore for WITS (11/08)

For those who enjoyed author James Ross' first novel, *Lifetime Loser*, you already will be familiar with the Prairie Winds Golf Course that provides the setting for a good part of his new release. You also will know many in the cast of characters who provide the background conversations of the novel during their daily rounds on the greens or while relaxing in the clubhouse. And, you undoubtedly will recognize the attention to detail and strong character development that Ross has used before to craft a rich and engrossing text. However, if you are discovering Ross for the first time through his new book, you will not be lost. *Finish Line* is a brand-new novel that stands alone with its storyline and style.

Justin Ventimiglia and his best friend, Keith Pucchio, were looking forward to a summer in St. Louis with mornings of mowing lawns and afternoons being rowdy teenage boys. However, a poor decision to vandalize the home of a cranky neighbor leaves them with a lengthy bill of damages that will not be covered by manicuring suburban lawns. Justin's mom sets the boys up with jobs working at Prairie Winds Golf Course, as her former boyfriend is the manager there. Curt Schroeder promises days of hard work that will not soon be forgotten. However, it is Curt's strength and incomparable work ethic, even in the face of a life-threatening health concern, that give the best friends the most memorable moments of their summer.

One element that Ross develops more in *Finish Line* than he did in *Lifetime Loser*, which was largely a legal and criminal thriller, is the complicated and nature of male relationships. Curt provides a stabilizing force to two teenage boys in desperate need of discipline and a strong role model. Justin has a mother with a history of poor decisions concerning the men she brings into the home, including her current husband. Keith's dad is never mentioned beyond the easy access that he provides to his cigarettes. In this book, dads have either checked out or decided to release life's frustrations on their families. In contrast, Curt maintains a strong relationship with Justin long after his relationship with Justin's mom has ended. He takes the time to talk with the two boys every day about the importance of hard work and an honorable character, and provides the title for the book with his emphasis on the need to stick to a task until you reach the "finish line." Through his attention to character detail, Ross brings to life the variety of ways in which men can impact the next generation of boys.

An interesting decision by Ross in *Finish Line* is his determined efforts to present characters that are relatable in their flaws and personal prejudices. He does not sugarcoat the lens through which Americans tend to view one another, particularly when concerning issues of race, social class, and sexuality. Readers should even be prepared to work through their own personal discomforts with some the language used and opinions expressed by the more outspoken personalities who exist within the pages of *Finish Line*. From the hesitation of Justin's mother for her son to spend time with a black man who was working at the course to the frustration that Curt expresses when he is rushed to the hospital and faces doctors and nurses of foreign origin to the brashness with which a commercial pilot who frequents the golf course describes his extramarital sexual conquests, Ross shares a portrayal of the more unseemly side of our social interactions. These brutally honest moments are important, however, because they serve as a mirror to the reader. How do we approach those who are different from us? What impact do our words and actions have on our kids and others we may influence?

Musicians, authors, and actors are all familiar with the threat of the sophomore jinx. Will the second effort fall short of the high expectations set by the strength of the first record, book, movie, etc? With his new release *Finish Line*, author James Ross shows his readers that he has the material and the talent to continue with his writing efforts to great success. This is certainly welcome news, as he leaves us with quite the cliffhanger on the last pages of this new release. If you are a reader who enjoys books which examine the many facets of human nature, then I encourage you to open the pages of the great new book, *Finish Line*. Then, like me, anxiously wait for the next installment to hit the shelves!

## **Bader Field**

Carl David

Nightengale Press (2008)

ISBN: 1-933449-66-7

Reviewed by Yvonne Perry for WITS

When I first started the developmental and copy edit for this book, I knew I held a jewel in my hands. I had come upon a skilled writer with a superb story of movie-like quality. It has the drama of human emotion stirred by true events that bring lovable characters to life. Plus, there are interesting historical facts intertwined throughout the telling. Add some mysterious and ghostly happenings to those components and you have a great book—Bader Field.

I was not familiar with the art world that is common and everyday life for the David family, but I learned things in this book that caused me to better appreciate all art forms around me—even the art of life itself. I also learned quite a bit about flying twin-engine airplanes, which is a huge love the author shared with his dad. The book is named after the



airfield that launched Carl and his dad to the skies where they enjoyed hundreds of flight hours reveling in their distinctive father-son bond.

Even though the book follows a chronological time line, each chapter has an embedded memory or flashback that lands us in the middle of an exciting, tragic, or educational event. Whether a childhood winter moment as the David boys take their dad for the sled ride of his life; or the account of how a famous piece of art was acquired; or the bygone days of the Depression Era when Sam and Flora first met—this book details a heartfelt journey that demonstrates the healing that comes from letting go of the past and living only for what is before us in this moment.

Carl has a great knack for storytelling and a gift for showing us what is in his heart. Bader Field allows a reader to see the inside impact that the self-inflicted death of a loved one has on an entire family and how much spiritual strength it takes to move past such devastation.

We may never meet the David family in person, but after reading Bader Field, I promise you will feel as if you have known them all your life. You may even feel like part of the family and be tempted to refer to Sam David as “Pop.” He might even visit you in spirit!

### ***Moving Beyond Woodstock: The Less Than Greatest Generation***

Author: M. C. Lloyd

ISBN: 978-0-9816337-0-1

Publisher: OutskirtsPress.com 2008

Genre and Target Market: humor; social commentary

Pages: 116

Reviewed by Sarah Moore for WITS (11/08)

There have been countless books written on the pivotal events of the 1960s and the repercussions that decade continues to create in our country today. From the Vietnam War to the civil rights movement to The Beatles, both supporters and critics have analyzed every angle of a time period that undoubtedly changed America. As baby boomers start to collect their social security checks and prepare for retirement, one member of their generation has decided to add his voice to the written reflections of the era. Author M. C. Lloyd focuses his attention on those who attended Woodstock and others who shared the mindset of the young men and women who were at the concert – a group he affectionately calls “The Woodys.” In his new book *Moving Beyond Woodstock: The Less Than Greatest Generation*, Lloyd pokes fun at his peers and also asserts some serious impacts of their efforts.

Lloyd uses his years of background as a poet to create a book that breaks from the conventional development of a non-fiction piece. He takes a tangent from a story about family gatherings and how they affected the Woody psyche to remind his younger readers about outdated terms such as “TV tube” and “rabbit ears.” He interrupts his analysis of the feminists’ call to enter the work force with an exclamation that millions of kids would have gone hungry if not for the simultaneous invention of frozen dinners (little credit is given to Dad to do much better!). These side notes and sarcastic quips are scattered throughout *Moving Beyond Woodstock*, and provide a real insight into the author’s perspective and personality. Just be prepared for an unpredictable, stream of consciousness ride when you open the pages and delve in for a read.

Within his amusing stories and effective correlation of 1960s events to other periods of history, Lloyd lays out some strong opinions on “Woodys” and the steps that should be taken to minimize their impact on our country. In addition to the standard laments against sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll, the author argues that the Woodys work in opposition to the foundations of our society (such as business and private property) and feel an obligation to save the world through their superior global vision. He mocks (with good nature) this subset of baby boomers for believing that they are capable of making so many substantial changes while hypocritically functioning in an affluent and mainstream society.

Lloyd describes several ideas that he believes should be embraced for this country’s future, regardless of whether or not the Woodys choose to comply. He urges his readers to support the abolition of all current trade agreements, as most were developed by the Woodys, stricter drug laws that will imprison drug users and then send them to the military, and the dismantling of the Environmental Protection Agency. He has controversial stands on the issues, to be sure, and I would likely have an animated debate with him on some of his recommendations. But, his passion is undeniable and he certainly warrants attention for his thoughts and opinions.

As a first-time author, M. C. Lloyd has written a book that likely will ruffle a few feathers and have some of the targeted members within the Baby Boom generation responding in self-defense. Through his knowledge of history and his interest in seeing how patterns develop in our society, Lloyd creates a running dialogue with his readers and leaves very few issues of contention untouched. He does not, however, shy away from those in his peer group who may take offense to his laying of the blame at their feet. Throughout the book, he encourages both those who disagree with his position and

people who want to share in his aggravation to contact him and continue the conversation. For those who consider themselves a “Woody,” young people who have heard stories about those who attended that great concert on a farm, or just Americans who want to learn more about the generation that now holds a lot of power in this country, *Moving Beyond Woodstock* is certainly a book that provides a strong perspective. Check out this unique read and develop your own take on the “Woodys”!

### ***Burned: A Tragic Mystery***

Author: J. A. Nevling

ISBN: 978-1-4327-2443-6

Publisher: OutskirtsPress.com 2008

Genre and Target Market: mystery; relationships; suspense

Pages: 273

Reviewer: Sarah Moore for WITS (11/08)

How many times have you sat in bed with the pillows propped up behind your back, the clock showing that it's well past midnight, and thought, “I'll just read one more chapter before turning out the light!” Then, four chapters later, you still are compelled to continue through your chosen novel because you are so captivated by the characters and their stories. This is the experience I had while reading the new book *Burned* by first-time author J.A. Nevling. He develops men and women whose passions and weaknesses will be understood by the readers. I certainly found myself connecting with the main character Sharon Nagol, who cherishes her life as a young wife and mother to a beautiful little girl. The other personalities who are revealed throughout the pages, from unhappy spouses to devoted best friends to conniving bosses, will likely have parallels to the people we all have in our lives. So, when Nevling takes his characters and places them in unimaginable situations, the readers will be completely caught up in the ride.

The book opens with a tragic house fire that initially leaves the reader not knowing the fate of Sharon Nagol's husband and child. Devastated by this upheaval in her ideal life, Sharon moves to a new city and begins work with a large firm as an accountant. What she uncovers through secret books that are not part of the company's standard financial disclosures lands her in the middle of a violent chain of events. The author reveals just enough in each chapter to keep the reader guessing about the motives of the main characters and to keep the pages turning to reveal the next detail. Through it all, Nevling creates unexpected twists and heartbreaking discoveries that had me jumping out of my chair (that was a sight at the coffee shop!) and invested my emotions in the outcome of the protagonists in this adventure.

One of the most effective ways that Nevling draws his readers into the development of the story is through a wonderful narrative that alternates between current and past events. Some books are not able to execute this stylistic effort with fluidity, and readers are forced to reread segments or flip back to previous pages in an attempt to determine the time frame for a particular conversation. Not so with the weaving of the plot lines in *Burned*. Nevling always chooses just the right moment in the development of the plot to take his readers back to an earlier event. This technique serves both the purpose of keeping the reader in suspense at pivotal points and filling in the background of the people we come to know as we proceed through the pages. I liked learning about the characters a little at a time, with each new piece of history or revealed struggle adding dimension to the people involved in this drama.

Nevling seems to draw upon a knowledge of the psychological dynamics that exist between individuals when developing the relationships between his characters. I was compelled to reflect on how I would feel if I discovered my husband's negligence had caused a horrific fire that forever changed the lives of my family members. There are other issues of the human psyche that are addressed as well. Why do people in unhappy marriages continue to present a public facade of a partnership in order to maintain wealth or power? In what ways do the tight bonds that exist in female friendships provide both security and an increased chance for deception? How do our first impressions of people affect the relationship we are willing to develop with them, or simply determine the level of kindness we will choose to extend? The author uses a dramatic plot of money, sex and power to address these issues in an environment of heightened emotion and consequence, but they are still relevant to readers in even the most ordinary of circumstances.

J. A. Nevling has written a remarkable book, especially considering that this is first venture into the world of book writing and publishing. *Burned: A Tragic Mystery* combines elements of a terrific detective or suspense novel with the intensely personal and human emotions of betrayal, grief, lust, and greed. Whether or not Nevling intended so upon its writing, or has allowed the possibility to pass through his mind since publication, *Burned* is one of those novels that could easily transfer to the movie screen or the stage. I assert this suggestion without any insinuation that the storytelling does not excel in its current format. But, this book does form a story that I hope will generate mass appeal in the written form, and could easily do the same in a visual format. I highly recommend the new book *Burned* by J. A. Nevling and I

look forward to future novels that this author may choose to publish in the future.

### ***How to Organize a Virtual Book Tour***

Author: Carol Denbow

Link to purchase:

Book's site: [www.authorsbox.com](http://www.authorsbox.com)

Rating: 5-out-of-5 stars

Reviewer: *Lillian Brummet: co-author of the books Trash Talk and Purple Snowflake Marketing, author of Towards Understanding; Host of both the Conscious Discussions talk radio show & the Authors Read radio program*

([www.brummet.ca](http://www.brummet.ca))

Times are changing and the world of writing has certainly joined this trend. Studies tell us that readers are no longer heading to physical bookstores and libraries in the numbers that we once experienced. So where are today's readers? Online – and that is where authors, poets and writers of all genres must go if they want to survive in the publishing industry.

Carol Denbow has provided a simplified step-by-step guide on Virtual Tours that will not overwhelm those with a limited understanding of terms like “hyperlinks”, “blogosphere”, “e-zines” or “blogs”. This guide is in downloadable format as an e-book (or electronic book) and this means that people can access it easily on their own computer, whenever it is convenient.

The book begins with a description of virtual tours and compares them to physical tours in a clear and concise manner. Carol compares things like the costs of gas, hotel and conference room fees, furnishings, and promotion materials along with personal skills that are involved with physical tours, with the requirements of virtual tours – Internet connection, good long distance phone plan, time, organization skills and office equipment. Once the reader has a full understanding of this, the author moves on to discuss how to approach book tour stops, how to evaluate them to see if they reach the audience you are looking for, how frequent the tours should be, and how many tour stops to arrange per day during each tour.

I loved the information on how to handle questions-and-answers with grace and how to promote the tour stops. Carol also offered great information on live and archive visitors to each tour stop and discusses what the author may need to be prepared to offer – including the types and sizes of images as well as being available after the tour stop to respond to questions or comments from the visitors.

I feel that readers will certainly benefit from the Check Points – where readers are given the opportunity to evaluate their understanding of the content to that point and then offers more resources where the reader can go to for further clarification. The authors positive and encouraging closing was perfect for a book like this and readers will be pleased to find that they can access 3 pages of resources with just a click of their mouse at the end of this book.

### ***How Capitol Got The Beatles (and Then What Happened)***

Author: Charles Tillinghast

ISBN: 978-1-4327-2924-0

Publisher: OutskirtsPress.com 2008

Genre and Target Market: music; business; The Beatles

Pages: 94

Reveiwed by Sarah Moore for WITS (11/08)

Even though I was born several years after The Beatles disbanded in 1970, I grew up listening to their music. Like many other kids of my generation, my parents were fans of the Fab Four. When I became a teenager, I took it upon myself to learn the entire catalog. I also read all of the books and watched all of the documentaries I could find about this peerless group. I found that nearly every aspect of the Beatles phenomenon has been captured in great detail. From the controversy over who really should be considered the “fifth Beatle” to the members’ tragic childhoods to the influence of Eastern philosophy on their later works, you can find perspectives from multiple sources. However, in his new release *How Capitol Got the Beatles*, attorney and author Charles Tillinghast offers a new lens through which to study these four musicians and the impact they created.

Tillinghast worked for fifteen years as the head of the Law Department with Capitol Records, including most of the period during which The Beatles were associated with the label. In this position, he worked with many of the players whose names were never in lights but who, nonetheless, were pivotal to The Beatles’ success. He uses his experience to share with the readers his opinion concerning several topics of controversy. He dissects the stories of three individuals

who claim to have been responsible for the signing of The Beatles. With an obvious legal flair, he pokes holes in the evidence for two accounts and provides his support for the third. He details audits of the group and Capitol Records. In doing so, he reveals the possibility that EMI, the British parent company of Capitol, may have been double-dipping when receiving their percentage of earnings and explains the painful process through which every item of merchandise was vetted for its royalty value. In chapters that will be of greatest interest to those who enjoy thinking about the human dynamics at play, Tillinghast discusses his thoughts on the infamous as well as, until now, hidden squabbles both among members of the group and between friends and family who became involved in the business. If you want to get inside the head of a person who has “been there and seen that” concerning this worldwide phenomenon, *How Capitol Got the Beatles* will be of interest to you.

Although Tillinghast could use the skills he learned during his education at Harvard Law School to write a book thick with legal language that makes a reader’s head spin, he keeps his content accessible to all readers. Each chapter is short and covers a very specific topic. He alternates between subjects that are steeped in financial and contractual details with segments that focus on the personalities involved. For example, readers will encounter a chapter about the negotiations that occurred following the death of The Beatles’ first manager, Brian Epstein. The vacuum created by the loss of Epstein left confusion over who would speak for The Beatles and how the new representative would expect talks to proceed. Would The Beatles work with EMI, go directly to the people at Capitol, or would an altogether different path now be pursued? The next chapter gets more personal when Paul McCartney decides to break with new management and hire his father-in-law, Lee Eastman. The readers will learn of the distrust and animosity that this move created with the other members of the group. By expertly maintaining this balancing act of providing his first-hand legal insight while also appealing to our desire to learn more about the people behind The Beatles’ machine, Tillinghast succeeds in producing an informative and entertaining read.

At only ninety-four pages, *How Capitol Got the Beatles* is a quick read that is packed with great information. I see this book as being particularly appealing to two groups of people. First, fans of The Beatles and their music will love this unique look at how the band started their recording career and how they chose the confidants who would come along for the ride. This book also is important for those who are currently involved, or hope to have a future, in the music industry. They will learn the legal implications of sending free records to DJs, the reasons that a major record label signs or rejects a group, and the decisions that need to be made concerning contracts. I fit into the “Beatles fan” category and highly recommend Tillinghast’s work to anyone who shares this designation with me. You will not be disappointed in this opportunity to learn more about the Fab Four and the evolution of their life in the music business.

### ***The Last Cowboy***

Daniel Uebbing

Robert D. Reed (2008)

ISBN 9781934759134

Reviewed by *Danelle Drake* for Reader Views

With eager anticipation I opened the book and was consumed from beginning to end. “Hey, baby, this is America. It’s a free country.” Even for those who would never admit it, everyone (both men and women) loves a cowboy. Bringing up visions of the sweat-covered hottie out on the tractor or the Wrangler-clad bull rider on television, the cowboy is the all-American fantasy.

Henry Dunn, “The Last Cowboy,” reads like a crazy man. He puts the best of them to shame. Beginning with a duel where both participants, he and the sheriff, were both barely able to stand, much less shoot, Henry starts a killing spree which really never ends. Rarely showing any heart, Henry is a cold, cold, uncaring man. He is consumed by the fact he wants to return to his girlfriend in Kansas. None-the-less he relieves his stress by bedding prostitutes whenever available. One encounter left him with more than he bargained for; killed the mother and now caring for the child. The Kid, barely a toddler, learns the ropes quickly and almost instantly becomes the cowboy’s partner in crime.

Both serious and down-right hysterical at the same time, this book is worth the read. From dance class to tae kwon do, I carried the book around for days while my daughters attended classes. When asked what I was reading, I would giggle and say, “I am reading ‘The Last Cowboy’ a book about a drunken cowboy that could have been written by a drunken cowboy.”

### ***Sixty-five Roses: A Sister’s Memoir***

Heather Summerhayes Cariou

McArthur & Company (2008)

ISBN 9781552786789

Reviewed by *Olivera Baumgartner-Jackson* for Reader Views

Siblings – if you have one or more, you probably know how that goes... Can't live with them sometimes, and can't live without them for sure. So often they are our mirrors – in which we see ourselves the way others see us, and at times the way we wish we would truly be. I just cannot imagine losing any of mine, and I realize all too well that they have helped shape me into the human being that I became, in many ways even more than my parents have.

Reading *Sixty-five Roses* was incredibly sobering. I cannot imagine the courage Heather Summerhayes Cariou had to have to actually write this unbelievable story and have it published. But then, she had a lifelong training in “above-and-beyond” courageous behavior. Imagine knowing since early childhood that your baby sister is ill – and that she will never get better. Imagine promising her not to leave, and not to let her die alone. Imagine being her lifelong protector. Imagine living with this impenetrable black cloud surrounding you and your family. And yet, you have to grow up. And you realize all too well that one day your sister will be gone. Imagine the rage, the despair, the jealousy for not being the center of attention, the desperate desire to make your sister's life easier... all those conflicting, oftentimes violent emotions. And one day the unthinkable happens... and your sister takes the last, labored breath. She is gone. And you are still here.

The story of how Pam, Heather's younger sister, was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis at the age of four, and how her family fought for her and other children with this debilitating disease is not a happy one, but definitely a positive and hopeful one. The strength and courage of everybody involved, from Pam herself to her family, her doctors and others with the same disease shows the world at least two perennial truths: that good does not necessarily win and that courage and fighting spirit can make an unbelievable difference. Back in those days children with CF tended to die very young, and Pammy's prognosis was no better, yet she kept fighting for over two decades and lived to the age of twenty-six. And she did not merely exist in this world, she lived her life as fully as possible and she made a difference in many other lives.

Heather Summerhayes Cariou's “Sixtyfive Roses” is a memoir, a tribute and a love poem, written in a clear, sometimes brutally honest and always sincere fashion. Her words are beautifully crafted, and her voice is distinct and unique. I have no doubt that Pammy is smiling at her big sister right now, and feeling mighty proud of her.

*Sixty-five Roses* should be required reading for anybody dealing with a seriously ill person in their life, as well as anybody with any kind of a big or small problem. It certainly puts a lot of things in perspective, and it made me so very glad that I can go, pick up a phone and talk to my siblings right now, which is exactly what I am going to do tonight.

### ***The Voice of the Muse: Answering the Call to Write***

ISBN: 978-0-9795475-5-3

\$17.00

### ***The Voice of the Muse Companion: Guided Meditations for Writers (2-CD Set)***

\$24.95

Reviewed by Julie Isaac

I've read dozens of books on writing, but none have moved me as deeply as *The Voice of the Muse: Answering the Call to Write*. Mark David Gerson's words are not only eloquent, they have a meditative quality about them that takes me directly to the core of my own creative being. Every page invites me to open, and then compels me to write.

His approach is decidedly spiritual, yet it's the spirituality of being totally present, open, courageous, alive, and consciously connected to your creative source. He often talks of surrendering: to your writing, to your Muse, to your deepest and most sacred Self. He says that “when you sit down at the black page or screen, you have three simple tasks: Trust. Let go. Leap.”

There are several guided meditations in this book (which Mark David has recorded on an optional two-CD set), but simply opening to any page, and reading, can give you something to meditate about. This morning, as I was using *The Voice of the Muse* as an intuitive guide, I was led to an idea that I would like to spend some time with.

Unsure how to end this article, I opened up *The Voice of the Muse* to see where it would lead me. The page I landed upon was the title page for chapter 5. There, in large bold letters it said, “listen to your heart.” What a perfect message to receive, for the call to write both emanates from, and ends within, the heart. It is with our heart that we hear the voice of the muse calling us to write. And it is from the still and silent center within our heart that our “yes” joyously arises to answer the call.

So go to Amazon.com or [www.calltowrite.com](http://www.calltowrite.com), and answer your call to write.



## The Writing Life: Developing Metaphor-Writing Skill

By [JJ Murphy](#)  
[writer@WriterByNature.com](mailto:writer@WriterByNature.com)

*Taylor and Turtle and Pinky the bulldog sit near the front window watching long knives of rain attack the ground at a hard slant.*

Barbara Kingsolver is a true master of the metaphor. Here are a few more Kingsolver gems:

- *She was someone you could have drawn a picture of by tracing around dimes and quarters and jar tops.*
- *She thought about the baby playing in waves of her blood, on the smooth, dark beach of her insides.*
- *The traffic was moving about the speed of a government check.*
- *His office is the kind of no-frills arrangement that goes out of its way to prove the Park Service isn't wasting taxpayers' money.*



Why do these metaphors work?

Because they efficiently create an image in the reader's mind. In Kingsolver's novels, metaphors also help develop the theme.

A well-written metaphor forms a bridge connecting two apparently unrelated things, providing logical balance to both sides. A poorly written metaphor distracts the reader.

Try this exercise to build your metaphor-writing skills:

1. Make a list of totally dissimilar things.
2. Choose two things from your list that are the least similar.
3. Identify any relationships between these two things. List any similarities.
4. Create a list (or a poem) that shows the relationship between your two subjects.
5. Check that details work logically on each side of the metaphor.
6. Have someone you trust read or listen to your metaphor and give you feedback.
7. Revise your work until you've created a clear bridge between to apparently dissimilar subjects.

By working to enhance metaphor writing skills, you can develop a tool that will give you true writing mastery.

Writer and naturalist JJ Murphy, <http://www.WriterByNature.com>, offers creative nature curriculum, wild food recipes, fiction, poetry, articles and writing services for individuals, entrepreneurs, small businesses and ecologically aware companies.



Jessica Dockter with L.E.E. Design is the graphic designer for the Writers in the Sky Creative Writing Services team.

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- The piece must be about the craft or business of writing and publishing.
- Include a short bio with your submission so I may give proper credit.
- Use Times New Roman 11 point font.
- MS Word docs are okay, but txt files are preferred.
- Promotion of your own material is accepted if it is written in an advertorial (article) style.
- No colored text box (jpg, bmp, etc.) ads. The article must be content rich.
- Book reviews are accepted as long as they highlight the book and its author in a positive manner.
- Poetry is accepted. I will publish three short works (less than 25 lines) in each issue. Do not double space between lines.
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