

# WRITERS' WIRE

*The newsletter for women writers  
in the know.*



## WOMEN WHO WRITE, INC.

ENCOURAGING, SUPPORTING AND EDUCATING  
WOMEN WHO ASPIRE TO WRITE

August 29, 2011

*I make money using my brains and lose money listening to my heart. But in the long run my books balance pretty well.*

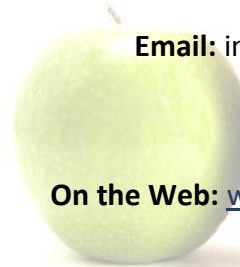
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## My editor is picking on me!

*San Dee "Blondie" Crabtree*

School has started again, which brings back lots of memories. There probably isn't a parent alive who hasn't learned you must pick your battles. At one point in time, I was not the most understanding parent. When the kids would complain that a teacher was picking on them, I would insist they study harder and make it work out. My reasoning was that the teacher would like them more if they were the best in the class. However, after I went back to school, my expectations changed. When they came home and made such a comment, I completely understood. I was the mama, and I still told them to do their best and study hard – but I also understood that some days you are picked on.

The feeling of being picked on, as we all know, can last a lifetime. Any one working at a J-O-B knows about having an unreasonable boss. This morning, extensive rewrites and discussions with my editor left me with that same feeling. I still don't have a taste for it, but I'm learning to digest a great deal of "humble pie."

Any writer knows how hard it is to agonize over every phrase, every sentence, and every single word until your work is just right – and then send it off and get back something you hardly recognize.

I've found getting paid every week does compensate for some of the phrases and words my editor dismisses. I can be unknown and unpaid and do my own thing. But in the great scheme of things, I prefer published and paid. Besides, when I really look at the critique and suggestions and changes, some of them are actually better. As much as I hate to admit it, I even occasionally find an edit I prefer over my original copy. It's just like raising kids: you have to pick your battles wisely.

Also, when I choose my battles instead of complaining about every change the editor wants, I have a better chance he'll listen to me when I do challenge his opinion. Granted, my years as a professional negotiator come in handy. I know making it a win-win situation will improve the likelihood the editor will accept my work, and making him mad will not do me any good.

Recently, I suggested he had a wonderful idea – and (I mused) it would work *really* well as a series around the holidays. Then I explained why my story was so important, and the timing of the new school year made it something that needed publishing *now*. Thankfully, picking my battles worked out well.

And after all, who says tact and diplomacy aren't a winning strategy? It's amazing how far you can get with a smile!

*"Blondie" Crabtree is a professional blogger and a member of Women Who Write.*

## Editor's Note



Remember when school started in September? It seems every year the school buses hit the roads earlier.

I haven't had a child in school for years – my baby is 25 – but September still feels to me like a new year of sorts. It's nice enough outside now to ride my bike or dig in the garden, but bit by bit, that's changing. Suddenly, it's no longer daylight at 9 p.m. I leave for work one morning and – thanks to getting stuck behind one of those yellow buses – I arrive 10 minutes later than the day before. The first frost will be here in a couple of months, and it will feel like the chill hit overnight – but I'll know better. Already, I need a long-sleeved T-shirt if I ride before 9 a.m.

School supplies are marked down in the stores – a great time to stock up on printer paper, note pads, and purple pens (my favorite for editing on paper). Halloween displays are going up, especially in the fabric-and-craft shops. Once my kids got too old to trick-or-treat, I encouraged them to dress up as fictional or historical characters. My favorite year is still the one when Mitch, then about 12, was the Phantom, a comic superhero who predates several more familiar superheroes, and I – then the manager of one of those fabric-and-craft establishments – went to work disguised as Anne Bonney, a real 18<sup>th</sup>-century pirate.

In this issue of the *Writers' Wire*, Blondie Crabtree and Cheri Powell take us “back to school” with memories come to life and lessons in punctuation. The area events calendar is packed with opportunities to build on knowledge and talent, from a weeklong Free Expressions Seminar on “Writing the Breakout Novel” to *really* free encounters with authors and poets all around this part of Kentucky. And for Women Who Write, the annual retreat is back on at Hopscotch House – two days of gathering new information and developing our own work.

I hope you'll take advantage of some of these options. “Back to school” with all of us!

*Cynthia C. Canada*

## Members in the News

Susan E. Lindsey has been busy. She sold a personal essay to Louisville-based *Underwired* magazine. The essay, entitled “Depression Ladies,” appeared in the August issue. She also wrote an essay that will be published by *The Highlander*, about the Aug. 13 storm that hit Louisville. And she entered and won second prize in the national *Writers Weekly* 24-hour short story contest. See her entry here: [writersweekly.com/contest/2ndsummer11.html](http://writersweekly.com/contest/2ndsummer11.html).

Judith Owens-Lalude's *j. camille cultural academy* is celebrating the tenth anniversary of the **Children's Picture Book Writing Workshop** – senior women who write for children – at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 10, at Captain's Quarters Riverside Grille on the Ohio River. The guest speaker is award-winning novelist Crystal Wilkinson, author of *Blackberries*, *Blackberries*. Her latest book is *Water Street*. Tickets are \$22.50 per person, which includes luncheon and program. For more information, visit [www.JudithCamille.com](http://www.JudithCamille.com).

Be sure to check the “Area events” section on page 6 to find out when and where **Peggy DeKay** is spreading the word about *Self Publishing for Virgins*.

If you've been published, reviewed, scheduled a reading – in fact, if you have *any* noteworthy news about your work – let us know! We want to spread the excitement. Email [info@womenwhowrite.com](mailto:info@womenwhowrite.com) or call the editor at (502) 905-3925.

### Help us accomplish our mission: donate to Women Who Write

Our mission at Women Who Write is to welcome, encourage, support, and educate women who aspire to write. Our vision is to be the “go to” place for women writers. We are committed to helping women of all skill levels use writing as a creative force in their lives.

Your contribution can make a real difference. Please support the work of our organization by sending your tax-deductible donation to **Women Who Write, P.O. Box 6167, Louisville, KY 40206-0167**. Thanks!

Writing Cheri:

## Dash It All –

or

*What's the difference between a dash and a hyphen?*



Dash it all! It's ninety-five degrees outside and too hot to garden. Might as well do some writing in the air conditioning. I hope it's a lot more pleasant by the time this is published.

Let's get right to it. Do you know when to use a dash and when to use a hyphen? Do you honestly care? You should, because when you use them correctly, your writing will be clear, concise, and more interesting.

Technically, a dash is a punctuation mark and a hyphen isn't. Use dashes to frame sentences and hyphens to connect or separate words. Let's take them one at a time.

A dash surrounds an aside or extra information in a sentence. It's the informal parenthesis. Reference books I consulted cautioned against using too many dashes in anything but informal writing. The consensus is that dashes can weaken writing when they're used too much. Consider the following sentences. All are grammatically correct. Which sounds better?

*When you come to class – after completing all assignments – be prepared for a quiz*

or

*Complete all assignments and come to class prepared for a quiz.*

*My cat is gaining so much weight – she'll eat anything – I must buy her a bigger bed.*

or

*My omnivorous cat has gained so much weight I must buy her a bigger bed.*

Notice the sentence within the sentence – “she'll eat anything” – doesn't have a period at the end, even though it's a complete sentence.

You also can use a dash instead of an ellipsis to show interruption or to control reading tempo.

*The firecracker fell from his hand and then ... kaboom!*

or

*The firecracker fell from his hand and then – kaboom!*

Both sentences are grammatically correct, but which connotes more danger?

When you insert a list into a sentence, use a dash in place of commas to avoid confusion.

*Carole's work ethic – punctuality, professionalism, friendliness – made her the ideal candidate for manager.*

If you're writing a math book, use the dash to represent subtraction.

$$23 - 6 = 17$$

And you can use a dash in place of the word “to.”

*The temperatures average 40 – 80 degrees Fahrenheit.*

*Pages 200 – 235*

*11 a.m. – 1 p.m.*

*The Civil War, 1861 – 1865*

Got it? Good. Now let's look at hyphens. A hyphen is used within words. Some words always have a hyphen – for example, *mother-in-law*.

Use hyphens when the root word is capitalized, as well as with some prefixes (ex-, quasi-, self-).

*mid-June*

*ex-husband*

*quasi-legal*

*self-exam*

Traditionally, hyphens were used to separate a word at the syllable break when the whole word wouldn't fit at the end of a line. Today, word processors do much of this automatically. But this rule may come in handy when you format your manuscript for CreateSpace and you're looking at the esthetics of each line. A well-placed hyphen can prevent the “gapped” look you sometimes get with justified margins.

Use hyphens to spell out age (as an adjective), fractions, and numbers.

*three-year-old child*

*(but the child is three years old)*

*two-thirds*

*five and seven-eighths*

[Keep reading – next page!]

## Writing Cheri

### Continued from page 2

Hyphens differentiate certain words.

*He recollected his travels in Africa.*  
(He remembered his travels.)

*He re-collected the tickets.*  
(He did it again.)

*She recovered from a bad cold.*  
(She got over it.)

*She re-covered the chair.*  
(She put new fabric on it.)

The most confusing use of a hyphen is with compound adjectives before a noun. If you use two words to describe something and neither word works alone, put a hyphen between them.

*sure-footed mountain goat*  
*six-foot-two athlete*  
*well-known celebrity*  
*first-class ticket*

If you're unsure whether you need a hyphen, use one word at a time and see if it makes sense.

*A first ticket. A class ticket.* Doesn't make sense – hyphenate it.

*A red boot. A leather boot.* Makes sense – no hyphen. *A red leather boot.*

However, if the description goes after the noun, hyphens aren't necessary.

*The mountain goat is sure footed.*  
*The athlete stands six foot two.*  
*The celebrity is well known.*  
*His ticket is always first class.*  
*She wore a boot of red leather.*

Use a hyphen when trying to imitate a sound.

*clickety-clack*  
*tee-hee*  
*tick-tock*

Use a hyphen, or many hyphens, to construct a phrase to use as a modifier.

*Sally gave Harry the you-better-be-telling-the-truth stare.*

Use a hyphen to indicate a stammer.

*"Wh-wh-what do you m-me-mean?"*

That's about it. You now can successfully distinguish between a dash and a hyphen.\* But wait – have I mentioned that a dash is longer than a hyphen? About twice the length. At this point, you may be looking at your keyboard to find the dash and the hyphen so you hit the right key when you need it. You probably found only one key that looks anything like either. The good news is that you use that key for either one. Your word processor will adjust the length – just type a single space before and after a hyphen, and it will magically become a dash when you start the next word. That's one thing you don't have to think about.

Got a writing issue? Contact Cheri Powell at [writing\\_cheri@yahoo.com](mailto:writing_cheri@yahoo.com). Please put "question" in the subject line. Cheri will address all inquiries in future columns.

\* Various style guides handle dashes differently; in doubt, use the style guide suggested by your publisher.

Women Who Write, Inc. was co-founded in 1992 by Carridder "Rita" Jones, a Louisville, KY playwright, author, and historian. Our mission is to encourage, support, and educate all women who aspire to write.



We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and we will gladly accept your tax-deductible donations. You'll find contact information on the front and back pages of this newsletter.

We thank you for your support!

*The retreat is on!*

**Women Who Write Annual Retreat  
Sept. 23-24  
8221 Wolf Pen Branch Rd.  
Prospect, KY 40059**

The annual retreat of Women Who Write has been officially rescheduled. Please email Beth Wells at [dawgpaws2011@gmail.com](mailto:dawgpaws2011@gmail.com) if you plan to attend.

Your email should include:

- Whether you plan to spend the night (sleeping space is limited)
- What dish you'll bring to share
- What you plan to contribute to the silent auction

**Remember, you must be current with your dues to attend the retreat.** Annual dues for Women Who Write are \$50. If you haven't paid your dues for this fiscal year, send a check or money order to:

Women Who Write, Inc.  
P.O. Box 6167  
Louisville, KY 40206-0167

Thank you for your continued support and membership. We hope to see you at Hopscotch House!



## **Calling all bloggers!**

Are you a blogger? Have you been thinking about blogging? As a writer, would you like to know more about blogging? Then mark your calendars for Sept. 1, the next meeting of Women Who Write. We have a special guest, **Miriam Williams**, who will be talking about blogging and how to build a platform as a writer through blogging.

Mariam Williams is a widely published freelance journalist and a writer recognized by media and arts institutions for excellence in copywriting, script writing, and creative nonfiction. Her awards include an Al J. Smith Emerging Artist Award from the Kentucky Arts Council in 2010, the Gabehart Prize from the Kentucky Women Writers Conference in 2010, and Artist Enrichment grants from The Kentucky Foundation for Women in 2006 and 2009. Since 2009, Mariam has worked as a columnist for *Velocity Weekly* and the *Courier-Journal*, and as a correspondent for *Business First* and *The Lane Report*. Some of her best unpaid writing can be found on her blog, [RedboneAfropuff.com](http://RedboneAfropuff.com). She has been blogging since Jan. 2009.

Spread the word – and bring along a guest to this *free* workshop! If you know a fellow writer who might benefit from this workshop and would like to join Women Who Write, please extend an invitation.

See you on the first of September!

*Peggy DeKay*

## Area News for Women Who Write: What's happening in September

### *Area events*

**Sunday, Sept. 11 – Millersburg** – The 5th Street Cafe hosts Kentucky Poet Laureate **Maureen Morehead**. For information, call (859) 473-0552 or email [www.fifthstreetcafe.com](http://www.fifthstreetcafe.com).

**Sunday, Sept. 11 – Lexington** – The **Wild Women of Poetry** at the Green Lantern, 497 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., featuring **Kate Hadfield, Rae Hodge, Erin Keane,** and **Kiki Petrosino**. Hosted by Bianca Spriggs. 7:30 – 10:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, Sept. 13 – New Albany, IN** – *Self Publishing for Virgins* author **Peggy DeKay** teaches *How To Self Publish Your Book*. Indiana University Southeast, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. on four consecutive Tuesday nights beginning Aug. 16.

**Wednesday, Sept. 14 – Lexington** – **Bobbie Ann Mason** – Reception and reading at the University of Kentucky Art Museum, Singletary Center, 3:30 p.m.

**Thursday, Sept. 15 – Lexington** – *Poetry of Resilience: a work in progress*, with filmmaker **Katja Esson**. Opens with *Waterbody*, a short film by **Bianca Spriggs**. 7 p.m., the Kentucky Theatre, 214 E. Main St. Free admission.

**Saturday, Sept. 17 – Knifely – Kentuckians Reading Kentuckians**. Participants read from their own work or that of any Kentucky author. Authors may bring their books to sell. If you'd like to read, email [KathySkaggsPoet@aol.com](mailto:KathySkaggsPoet@aol.com). 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Central time at Giles House, home of Kentucky author Janice Holt Giles. Sponsored by The Giles Society, [www.gilessociety.org](http://www.gilessociety.org).

**Sunday, Sept. 18 – Lexington** – The Wild Fig Bookstore presents poets Ricardo Nazario-Colon and **Tina Andry** at 4 p.m. An open mic will kick off The Fig's Reading Series, 3 – 4 pm. The store (usually closed on Sundays) opens at 2 p.m. For more information, call (859) 381-8133.

**Sunday, Sept. 18 – Louisville** – Carmichael's Bookstore hosts a reading with **Sallie Bingham** from her latest book, *Mending: New and Selected Stories*, published by Sarabande. *Publishers Weekly* hails Bingham's stories as "luminous" and "striking." 4 p.m., 2720 Frankfort Ave.

**Sunday, Sept. 18 – Lexington** – The Kentucky Women Writer's Conference, WRFL's Boomslang, and The Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning present a literary celebration featuring former Kentucky poet laureate **Jane Gentry**, award-winning poet **Honorée Fanonne Jeffers**, and **Sallie Bingham**. Includes a Q&A moderated by **Katerina Stoykova-Klemer**, founder of WRFL's Accents, a radio show for literature, art, and culture. 7 p.m. at the Carnegie Center.

**Sept. 19-25 – Louisville** – Free Expressions Seminars offers **Writing the Breakout Novel Workshop**, with literary agent/instructor Donald Maass, at the Sheraton Louisville Riverside. To find out more or to register, visit <http://www.free-expressions.com/site/intensive.asp>.

**Tuesday, Sept. 20 – Owensboro** – **Third Tuesday Coffeehouse** opens its 16th season in a new venue, Gambrinus Libation Emporium, 116 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. This month's featured writers are members of Evansville's First Monday Writers Group and Owensboro author and columnist **Greta McDonough**. Also enjoy live music, a featured visual artist, open mic for local writers of prose, poetry, comedy, and song, and a fun writing competition. Free; must be 21 to enter. For information, call David Bartholomy at (270) 686-4203 or email [david.bartholomy@brescia.edu](mailto:david.bartholomy@brescia.edu).

**Monday, Sept. 26 – Louisville** – Sarabande Books and 21c Museum welcome poets **Rachel Richardson** and **David Roderick**. 7:30 p.m. at the 21c Museum Hotel, 700 West Main Street.

**Tuesday, Sept. 27 – New Albany, IN** – *Self Publishing for Virgins* author **Peggy DeKay** teaches *eBooks – Publish, Promote, Prosper* at Indiana University Southeast. 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday nights for two sessions starting Sept. 27.

## Contests

### Writer's Digest Romance Short Story Competition

<http://www.writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions>

#### \$20 entry fee

**First Place** – \$1,000, promotion in *Writer's Digest*, \$100 worth of *Writer's Digest Books*, and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

**Second Place** – \$500, promotion in *Writer's Digest*, \$100 worth of *Writer's Digest Books* and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

**Honorable Mentions** – Promotion in *Writer's Digest* and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

Deadline: **Oct. 15, 2011**. Manuscripts must be 4,000 words or fewer.

### Writer's Digest Crime Short Story Competition

<http://www.writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions>

#### \$20 entry fee

**First Place** – \$1,000, promotion in *Writer's Digest*, \$100 worth of *Writer's Digest Books* and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

**Second Place** – \$500, promotion in *Writer's Digest*, \$100 worth of *Writer's Digest Books* and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

**Honorable Mentions** – Promotion in *Writer's Digest* and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

Deadline: **Oct. 22, 2011**. Manuscripts must be 4,000 words or fewer.

### Writer's Digest Horror Short Story Competition

<http://www.writersdigest.com/competitions/writing-competitions>

#### \$20 entry fee

**First Place** – \$1,000, promotion in *Writer's Digest*, \$100 worth of *Writer's Digest Books* and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

**Second Place** – \$500, promotion in *Writer's Digest*, \$100 worth of *Writer's Digest Books* and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

**Honorable Mentions** – Promotion in *Writer's Digest* and the 2012 *Novel & Short Story Writer's Market*

Deadline: **Oct. 31, 2011**. Manuscripts must be 4,000 words or fewer.

### Catch a Star Theatrical Players Contest

<http://www.castplayers.org/>

#### \$10 entry fee

**One-act playwriting competition.** Aspiring playwrights of all ages who live in the U.S. are invited to submit their unpublished works. All styles and genres are welcome. Top plays will be showcased at the 2012 One Act festival in Beaumont, CA. The top ten plays and authors will be listed on CAST Players website through Dec. 31, 2012. The top six plays will each receive \$100 and three performances at the One-Act festival in June 2012, plus one all-access festival Pass.

Additional prizes awarded at the end of the festival:

**First Place** – \$400

**Second Place** – \$300

**Third Place** – \$200

**Audience Favorite** – \$100

Deadline: **Dec. 31, 2011**.

### The Ledge 2011 Poetry Chapbook Competition

<http://www.theledgemagazine.com/print%202009%20Poetry%20Chapbook%20guidelines.html>

#### \$18 entry fee

Winner receives \$1,000 and 25 copies of the published chapbook. Submit 16-28 pages of original poetry. No restrictions on form or content.

Deadline: **Oct. 31, 2011**.

### Children's Writer Contest for Poetry or Verse Story

<http://www.thechildrenswriter.com/ad028/>

**First Place** – \$500 and publication in *Children's Writer*

**Second Place** – \$250

**Third, Fourth, and Fifth Places** – \$100

**Entry fee** – \$15 for nonsubscribers (no fee for subscribers)

A single poem, collection of poems, or verse story up to 300 words, for children of any age. Entries may be serious or humorous and take any poetic form. Winners selected based on quality of verse, including rhythm, meter, word choice, wordplay, imagery, and the use of other poetic devices (rhyme, alliteration, assonance, or others). Above all, the winning entries will have appeal for young readers. Entry deadline is **October 31, 2011**. Entry fee includes an 8-month subscription. Winners will be announced in the March 2012 issue.

## The 33<sup>rd</sup> Kentucky Women Writers Conference

**Sept. 16-17 – Lexington** – at the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, 251 W. Second St. Workshops and craft talks with poets **Lynnell Edwards, Krista Franklin, Aimee Nezhukumatathil,** and **Susan Stewart,** fiction writers **Tananarive Due, Francine Prose,** and **Danzy Senna,** and creative nonfiction writer **Kim Dana Kupperman.** Tuition is \$175 (\$90 for a single day), \$30 for students. To find out more or to register, visit [www.kentuckywomenwriters.org](http://www.kentuckywomenwriters.org).

### Free events:

**Friday, Sept. 16 – Gypsy Poetry Slam,** a spoken-word poetry competition with audience judging, featuring national slam champion **Krista Franklin.** 7 p.m., Downtown Arts Center, 141 East Main Street.

**Saturday, Sept. 17** – An evening with **Francine Prose,** bestselling novelist and essayist, and fiction writer **Danzy Senna.** Keynote event of Kentucky Women Writers Conference. 8 p.m. at Memorial Hall, University of Kentucky Campus.

**Sunday, Sept. 18 – Stars with Accents,** readings by **Jan Isenhour, Honoree Fanonne Jeffers,** and **Jane Gentry Vance.** Q & A moderated by **Katerina Stoykova-Klemer.** Final event of the Kentucky Women Writers Conference, co-sponsored by WRFL's Boomslang Festival. 7 – 8:30 p.m. at the Carnegie Center.



## WOMEN WHO WRITE MEETINGS AND MEMBERSHIP

Our goal is to encourage, support, and educate all women who aspire to write. Our group is diverse and dynamic. Whether you're just starting out, a newly published writer, or in the middle of your career, there's something here for you.

### Benefits of membership

Writing critique	Free workshops
Cookbook contest	Public readings
Annual retreat	Annual anthology
Guest lectures	Annual awards ceremony

### *Come and grow with us!*

#### Regular meetings:

First Thursday each month in the Highlands Branch,  
Jefferson County Free Public Library,  
Mid City Mall  
1250 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY  
6:30 – 8:30 P.M.