

WRITER'S WIRE

The newsletter for women writers in the know.



Women Who Write, Inc.

www.womenhowwrite.com

The "GoTo" place for women

WOMEN WHO WRITE, INC.

ENCOURAGING, SUPPORTING AND EDUCATING
WOMEN WHO ASPIRE TO WRITE

Around the Town for Writers

December 2010

Dec 2nd Women Who Write monthly membership meeting. Thursday, Mid City Mall, Highlands Branch, 1250 Bardstown Road, Louisville 6:30p.m.-8:30p.m. Bring your work to read!

AWARDS CEREMONY: WOMEN WHO WRITE

Dec 4th: [The Clifton Center](#) 1:30 p.m. -4:00 p.m.

1:30 p.m. -2:00 p.m. Light Refreshments

2:00 p.m. -3:30 p.m. Program

3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Book Signing and Sale

We will have four of our contest winners present to read their work! We are giving a Lifetime Achievement Award and much more. We will be honoring our [Carrider "Rita" Jones](#) our co-founder and long time mentor. **Guests are welcome**, please come and help us celebrate!

BOOK SIGNING AND READING:

[Women Who Write](#) will be reading from their books published this year—*Calliope 2010: the 17th Anthology* and from *Cooking Comfort: Stories with Recipes* on Sunday, December 5th at the [Old Louisville Coffee House](#) 1489 South Fourth Street Corner of 4th and Hill from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. (if you plan on reading your piece from either book be at the coffee house at 12:45 p.m.)

FIVE THINGS EVERY COPYWRITER SHOULD KNOW

Part 2 (conclusion)

By Cynthia Canada

Attention-seeking behavior.

Ever put down an article halfway through? If you don't hook your readers in the first paragraph, you've lost them. Even if they read to the end, they won't remember much later.

If you really know your readers, you know roughly how much focus they're willing to spend. They might stretch a bit, but only if you lock in their attention even before they get started.

Take movie previews. A studio has a one- to three-minute window to convince you to spend time and money on a two-hour show. The best dialog, the most intriguing camera angles, and the most gripping moments all have to fit into a tight minute or three.

Target the main point in your first sentence – or the title. First and second paragraphs: Wow 'em.

Those paragraphs are your preview. Keep them crisp and tight – take a fast, hard run at the burning questions and make your readers want the answers. Capture their interest in 45 seconds to a minute and they'll keep reading. Otherwise, they're outa here.

Time's a-wastin'

After you get a reader's attention, you have to keep it. Too many mouse clicks or page turns and she's gone.

Make your work "scannable." Keep sentences short. If a good 50-cent word works in place of the three-dollar one, use it. If you're writing technical information, directions, or anything else that lends itself to notes and lists, use bullets.

In commercial copy, aim for a sixth-grade reading level. It's not "dumbing down." No, the average reader isn't Jethro Bodine. But everyone else is just as swamped as you.

Your reader will scan the title, the first sentence, and the bullets or call-out text on the first page. Then he'll decide whether to dig in. He doesn't have time to waste – respect that.

Edit yourself

Some basic points for effective self-editing:

- Is it short enough? Good. Make it shorter. Cut unnecessary words. For example, "that" is often unnecessary – as in, "We knew that Betsy baked cookies." You probably don't need a word if the sentence makes sense without it.
- Choose adjectives carefully – and avoid exclamation points. Write for interest and accuracy, not romantic fiction.
- Even if you're sure, look it up. Frequently confused words – like "affect" and "effect" or "lay" and "lie" – fly right under a spellchecker's radar. Nothing shrieks "brainless impostor" louder than contractions and homonyms used incorrectly. Such mistakes may be common, but that doesn't make them okay. *You* should know the difference.
- Write conversationally. Yes, you *can* start a sentence with "but" or "and," as long as it makes sense. It's also fine to end a sentence with a preposition, if it works. Your copy will be easier to read – and you can sometimes improve the rhythm of a paragraph by bending "don't" rules.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1 Five Things

- Do use contractions. Your readers will trust your “realness.”
- Read *everything* out loud at least once. You’ll find typos, discrepancies, and unwieldy sentences you’d otherwise overlook.
- And for the record – “ask” and “spend” are not nouns. “*Incentivize*” is not a word. Got that?
- Finally – *death to passive voice!* In case that lesson from freshman English escapes you, passive voice describes action for which no one takes responsibility. “We’ve been told” it’s acceptable in formal correspondence or documentation. But 95 percent of the time, it’s a cop-out. Think about it. The letter from your insurance company says, “This claim was denied.” Wouldn’t you rather hear, “We didn’t pay this claim because...”? It’s still bad news, but someone’s admitting they’re accountable – and telling you why. “Invitations were sent.” By whom? How do you know? Did you personally witness those invitations dropping into a mailbox? Why does no one want to admit they sent them?

And there you have it: The Top Five Essentials of Good Copywriting. Go forth and communicate!

To find out more: General –

<http://dictionary.reference.com/> (links to Thesaurus.com)

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

<http://www.webgrammar.com/index.html>

<http://www.copyblogger.com/5-common-mistakes-that-make-you-look-dumb/>

<http://www.copyblogger.com/commonly-misused-words/>

<http://www.copyblogger.com/embrace-brevity/>

<http://www.copyblogger.com/fancy-nancy/>

<http://www.copyblogger.com/short-attention-span-copy/>

Cynthia Canada is a member of Women Who Write. She is a professional copywriter and blogger. Please visit her blog:

[Cynthia Canada's Blog](#) or <http://cynthiac54.blogspot.com/2010/10/hope.html>

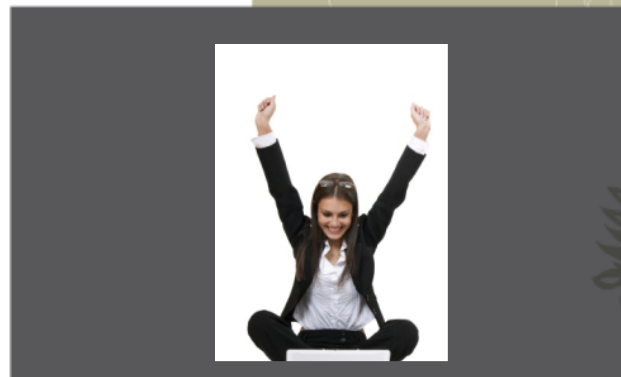
Member Names in the News

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WWW member [Susan Lindsey](#) was recently honored with a second award for her media relations campaign on behalf of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance following the earthquake in Haiti. The campaign was honored with a Diamond Award from the six-state East Central District of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). The media campaign, which helped raise \$10 million in donations for the organization, was previously honored with a Landmark of Merit Award from the local chapters of PRSA and the International Association of Business Communicators.

Judith C. Owens-Lalude, M.A. Founder/Director of [j. camille cultural academy](#) will host a **Christmas Brunch and Holiday Tales** program, December 2nd, at Limestone Restaurant. 50 meals have been ordered - friends are welcomed see details at www.judithcamille.com or email jcamille@insightbb.com or phone 502-327-5056



If you have been published or have received an award or accolade in your writing career please let us know. Send your news to info@womenwhowrite.com

TOP 5 REASONS TO HIRE AN EDITOR

By Susan Lindsey

You've spent months or even years working on your book, and now you want to send the manuscript to the printer. There's one more crucial step—hire an editor.

An editor will read your manuscript with objectivity. She will watch for the 5 “Cs”—*clarity, chronology, coherency, consistency, and correctness*. An editor will fix spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes. She will edit for verb tense, point of view, unintentional changes in voice (active versus passive), inconsistencies in plot development or speech patterns, smoothness of transitions, and more. Many publishers insist that manuscripts conform to a particular style, like *The Chicago Manual of Style* or *The Associated Press Stylebook*. A good editor can apply the right style. An editor can also provide support, encouragement, and motivation to authors. Here are five excellent reasons to hire an editor.

1. **Not everyone can edit.** You may be a gifted storyteller, or a diva with dialogue. That doesn't mean you have editing skills. Editors need to have extraordinary spelling, grammar, and punctuation skills. They must also be among the pickiest, most meticulous people on the planet. You may not want to take a figurative magnifying glass to your work, but an editor will.
2. **It's difficult to edit your own work.** We often read what we *intended* to write rather than what is actually on the paper or the screen. An editor will look at your writing with fresh eyes and can help ensure that you say what you mean to say.
3. **Your readers deserve your best.** They've read the cover blurb or the description on Amazon, and plunked down their hard-earned cash for your book. They deserve a good read, free of distracting errors.
4. **Well-edited, professional work will enhance your reputation and help you build your career.** Traditional publishers are increasingly watching the world of self-publishing for new authors. Don't alienate them by publishing a sloppy or less-than-perfect work.
5. **Finally, technology isn't infallible.** Spell check and grammar check miss mistakes that the human eye can catch. Evil twins—those words that are similar, but mean very different things—can easily slip past spell check. I've recently come across the following misused words in published works: “relived” instead of “relieved,” “loose” instead of “lose,” and “cattle-shoot” rather than “cattle-chute.” *Don't make the livestock suffer—hire an editor.*

[Susan E. Lindsey](#), a member of Women Who Write, provides a range of editing services to writers, including substantive editing, line editing, and proofreading. She also offers a full range of media relations services to help authors publicize their works. Susan offers discounted rates to Women Who Write members. Contact her at 502-585-2419 or SELindsey10@gmail.com.

PLACE YOUR AD HERE

For information about placing your advertisement here contact info@womenhowrite.com



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

What a wonderful year it has been for the women of Women Who Write. Here are some of the highlights of 2010: [Karen Angelucci](#) came to talk with the group about writing and selling her books. [Sheila Joyce Pyle](#) read her essays from her memoir.

We did two workshops during the year, [Self-Publishing for Virgins](#) workshop and [Sheryl Connelly's](#) “Building Your Author Profile with Social Media.”

We sponsored two writing contests: The International Short Prose & Poetry Contest and the Story with Recipe Contest.

We have published two books this year, *Calliope 2010: the 17th Anthology* and *Cooking Comfort; Stories with Recipes*. The anthology is 180 pages this year, and I think it is one of our best.

Our annual retreat at Hopscotch House for our members with guest speakers [Ellen Birchett Morris](#) and [Kyle Anne Citrynell](#) gave us wonderful talks on writing and copywriting.

December 5th we will have a book signing and reading for Women Who write at the [The Old Louisville Coffee House](#)

Saturday December 4th is the annual Awards Ceremony—where we have a special recognition planned. Please come and help us celebrate a wonderful year! (Guests are welcome)

Peggy Barnes DeKay, Editor

MEETINGS AND MEMBERSHIP

Our goal is to encourage, support and educate all women who aspire to write. Our group is diverse and dynamic. If you are beginning your writing journey, a newly published writer, or in the middle of your career, there is something here for you.

Benefits of Membership

Writing Critique	Annual Retreat
Public Readings	Cookbook Contest
Annual Anthology	Guest Lectures
Annual Awards Ceremony	Free Workshops

Come and grow with us!

Meeting Times and Locations

**1st Thursday each month in Highlands Library Branch
Mid City Mall 1250 Bardstown Road
6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.**



Women Who Write, Inc., a nonprofit 501c3 was co-founded in 1992 by Carridder "Rita" Jones, a playwright, author and historian.

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