

# Outline Your Way to Organization

By Elsbeth "Beth" Boisseau



www.womenhowrite.com the "GoTo" place for women writers

## Women Writer's Wire

The writer has many weapons in the war against the blank page. One of the most useful is the outline. The working outline should be drafted in pencil to facilitate changes.

What meets the technical definition of an outline?

According to the Modern Language Association an outline (this is the one required by academia) is as follows: The title is typed and centered on the page. Drop two spaces to the body of the outline. Use Roman numerals for each main idea, aligned to the left of the margin. Create succeeding levels using "I", "A", "a", "(1)" and "(a)" for key points under each subject.

Many writers use one of the less structured outlines such as story boards. With a story board the author places ideas on note cards then arranges them in order of importance on a cork or a dry erase board. I have used three panel poster boards with post it notes in a pinch! Any system that allows the cards to be moved, removed or rearranged will work nicely. The story board is very visual and fluid which may be why it is so popular among fiction writers such as Janet Evanovich.

Of course there are other forms of outlines that are not quite so visual but are just as unstructured and just as useful as the story board.

*Continued page 2 Organized*

## Names in the News

Each month Women Who Write highlights the accomplishments of our members. If you have had a publishing success, please let me know so that your name and accomplishment can be added to our

*Names in the News* monthly column.

This month, May 15th is the Women's Book Festival. If you plan to attend and want to stay for lunch you should place your reservations early.

We would like to recognize Peggy Grimes, our Associate Director for all of her hard work in making the Women's Book Festival happen. I hope to see many of you there on May 15th.

San Dee Crabtree attended the Erma Bombeck Humor Writer's workshop in April. She had a wonderful time and plans to share some of what she learned with us!

### Inside this issue:

Outline Your Way to Organization by Elsbeth Boisseau	1
Names in the News	1
May's Calendar of Events	2
A Few Words to the Wise by Peggy Barnes DeKay	2
Letter from the editor – Trip to an Indi bookstore	3
Notes on Women Who Write Activities	3



## May Writer's Calendar of Events

Some are simple thoughts placed on paper with the most important at the top, either in the center of the paper or at the top left margin of the page. Subsequent thoughts follow in order of importance. Each main thought has details listed below in a list form that is indented to the right. Although this format has no roman numerals, numbers or commas, it is a fast easy way to get crucial thoughts on paper before they slip away, and yes technically it is an outline.

No matter what form is used the outline is precious in the world of writing; it is the tool that turns the dream into the finished project.

Beth Boisseau is a freelance writer and poet. She is the winner of honorable mention in the 2005 Writer's Digest Fiction Writing Contest, and her poem *The Meeting* was published in the 2009 *Calliope, the 16th Annual Anthology of Women Who Write*.



### May 6th

Women Who Write Membership Meeting  
Highlands Branch—Mid City Mall—6:30 p.m.

### May 8th

Grant Seeking for Non Profits  
Louisville Free Public Library Main —9:30 a.m.

### May 9th

Mother's Day

### May 15th

Women's Book Festival  
Begins 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

### May 24th

Sarabande Poetry Reading Series  
21C Hotel, downtown Louisville 7:00 p.m.

---

## A Few Words to the Wise

by Peggy Barnes DeKay

---

I don't know about you, but for me there are a few words that I still look up when I use them—just to make sure I have it right! Grab your writer's journal and make a note so the next time you don't have to visit Webster before you write.

Here are my top seven list of words that make my head hurt.

1. affect and effect—Usually (and I use that advisedly) the noun is “effect.” The verb is usually “affect.” Example: *When poison ivy affects the skin, the effect is blistering.*
2. illusion/allusion—an illusion is a false impression, while allusion (root alude) is an indirect refer-

ence. Example: *Despite her conspiratorial allusions, the conspiracy was illusion.*

3. Flaunt/flout—flaunt is showing off, flout is to defy or ignore. *The writer choose to flout convention and flaunt her newly gained MFA.*
4. *Imply/infer*—Imply means to suggest, infer a thing means to draw a conclusion. Example: “You imply that I have gained weight,” said the wife. “You infer correctly,” said the angry husband.
5. Lay/lie—to lie is to recline, to lay is to place something. Example: *I will lay down the new*

*Music track after I lie down for a nap. Sounds easy enough right—the past tense of lie lay. Oy Vey!*

6. anxious/eager—anxious means there is anxiety involved, if there isn't, use *eager*. Example: *He was eager to be published but anxious about signing the contract.*
7. Convince/persuade—you convince someone about a fact, a person or idea; you persuade a person to take action. Example: *After the defense attorney convinced the jury of his guilt, she persuaded them to convict.*

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

**Meetings**

**First Thursday of each month  
Louisville Free Public Library**

**Highlands Branch in Mid-City Mall**

**6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.**

*The "GOTO" place for women writers in  
Kentucky*

*Welcoming, supporting, educating and  
encouraging women who aspire to  
write.*

Women Who Write is an organization of women writers dedicated to excellence in literary creation. Our mission is to welcome, educate, and support women who aspire to write. We encourage women to use writing as a creative force in their lives. Women Who Write was established in 1992 in Louisville. Our co-founder, Carridder "Rita" Jones, is a published author and playwright. Many of our current members are also published. All women interested in writing, in any genre, at any level, amateur or professional, are invited to join. Each year we sponsor a poetry and short prose contest and the winners are published in our annual anthology. Selected writings from our membership are also featured. This year will be our 17th publication of *Calliope, the Annual Anthology of Women Who Write*. Annual dues are \$25.00\* which entitles members to participate in our annual retreat, special events, reading and critique and monthly meetings.

*\* Members are required to purchase five anthologies each year at a discounted rate.*



*Want to support our newsletter? THIS SPACE IS FOR RENT on a monthly basis! This newsletter is posted on our website at [www.womenhowrite.com](http://www.womenhowrite.com). Our subscriber lists grows monthly. For pricing call 502-541-4670 or email me at [info@womenhowrite.com](mailto:info@womenhowrite.com)*

## Notes on Women Who Write Activities

### *COOKBOOK CONTEST 2010*

Our first ever cookbook contest is in full swing. This contest is a fund raiser for our group. We plan to dedicate those funds to sponsoring a fellowship or scholarship to be established in 2010. In this contest, members are eligible and can submit their favorite recipes and the story that goes with it for a ten dollar entry fee. See the website for complete guidelines. [www.womenhowrite.com](http://www.womenhowrite.com)

### *SHORT PROSE AND POETRY CONTEST 2010*

Our 17th Annual Short Prose and Poetry Contest is underway. We are now reading and critiquing member entries for 2010 *Calliope*. Here's what you need to do:

Bring the short story or poem you are submitting for publication in *Calliope* to a monthly meeting.

Before reading your piece give your name, and let us know that this piece is for submission to our anthology.

Read your story or poem to the group for critique.

Make any changes that may be needed and submit to Cathy Courson via e-mail or on CD in Word, Times New Roman, 12pt on or before August 1, 2010.

Pieces must be read and critiqued by the group before the August meeting. We look forward to hearing your submissions!

Don't forget to pick up a Calendar of Events at the May meeting.

Only three meetings left to read your submissions for critique. We look forward to hearing your submissions.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

***We will be making short, three-minute videos of poems and prose pieces that were published in last year's Calliope. If you were a contributing member and would like to do a video please contact Peggy DeKay at [pdkpost@gmail.com](mailto:pdkpost@gmail.com).***



### Letter from the Editor

Last week my husband and I took a short trip to Hodgenville, Kentucky. It was a stunning spring day. Hodgenville is one of the boyhood homes of Lincoln. We stopped for lunch on the square at Laha's Red Castle Hamburgers. A tiny hamburger joint serving hot burgers, black with pepper, nestled between steaming, soft buns. After lunch we walked next door to the indie bookstore called Lincoln's Loft. Just inside the door was a rolling two-shelved cart filled with books. A printed sign taped to the cart read "ARCS." ARC stands for advanced reader copy which means they are free to be borrowed from the book store. I left with an ARC copy of *Leadership and Self Deception (which was an excellent read)*. Walking into that small independent bookstore, and being treated to an ARC was an inspiring moment. Take heart, there are still book sellers out there that aren't homogenized clones from "mocha-chino-land" who are as disconnected from their writers as Pluto is from the sun. Thank you Lincoln's Loft, just for being there.

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

*Peggy Barnes DeKay, Editor*