

Earning the “AP” Way

By Jorena Faulkner



www.womenhowrite.com the “GoTo” place for women writers

Women Writer’s Wire

Most writers — at some point in their literary career — have dreamed of penning their first, great American novel. Yet, while we burn the midnight oil hunkered over keyboards, faces backlit by the glare of a computer screen as we weave our webs of deceit and romance stories fit for Fabio Lanzoni, the bills still have to be paid and Little Johnny’s college fund is fading fast.

However, one must realize that AP writing is an entirely different animal when it comes to style.

As I began my first assignment as an assistant editor at a Kentucky newspaper, the first piece of sage advice I was given by my editor was, “Forget everything you’ve ever learned about writing.” Boy, she wasn’t kidding either!

Newsprint is a viable consideration to supplement income for the “at home” writer. There are literally thousands of newspapers throughout the country who are eager to accept paid, freelance submissions from outside sources, and many writers have made quite a lucrative living off of syndicated columns which sprang from one, well-written submission.

Within five minutes, I was out the door to my nearest bookstore to purchase the “bible of the newspaper industry” — *The Associated Press Stylebook*. This little gem of a guide is an absolute necessity to anyone wishing to delve into the world of newsprint. Although a bit daunting at first glance, a quick read-through will give you a clear, concise view of what AP writing is all about: quick, to the

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 Cheri Powell was awarded third place for her short story “*Necessary Data*.” The contest was sponsored by Almost Famous Writers.

Women Who Write has joined the ranks of “social networking” with our new Face book page. To view our page go to facebook.com and type “*women who write*”. Post a comment or become a fan if you haven’t already. We hope to see you there.

“What you never submit can never be published.”

Peggy Barnes DeKay



Inside this issue:

Earning the “AP” Way by Jorena Faulkner	1
Names in the News	1
The Mighty and Sometimes Confusing Apostrophe	2
Notes on Women Who Write Activities	3
Letter from the editor – websites	3

Cont'd from page 1

point, devoid of colorful or “flowery” characteristics, reporting.

For anyone wishing to foray into the world of freelance journalism, here are five great ways to get started:

- Purchase *The Associated Press Stylebook* (which is now available in many forms, to include online at www.apstylebook.com) and educate yourself on style requirements.
- Go out and purchase several local papers to research the types of topics, columns and various sections represented. Take notice of the writing style and content and write down any ideas you have as to a story you could write and submit for consideration. For generalized writing, most newspapers want stories of local interest. Bear this in mind when selecting topics to research and write about.
- If you have a column, syndicated story, or investigative/research idea, select a newspaper you feel may be able to use your content. Write a few “test” pieces — be sure to edit your submissions thoroughly to ensure correctness — and a brief introductory letter to the general manager or editor of your selected paper(s) with a proposal to publish your article. Highlight any writing accomplishments you may have had in your letter and include any educational

training in the field of journalism if applicable. Be sure to include your contact information.

- **SUBMIT!** This may be accomplished by creating a packet with your cover letter and test submissions to hand deliver to the prospective client, or by creating an online packet to submit via e-mail. If you are declined, don't be discouraged. Ask your prospective client *why* you were declined. Knowing why you were declined is a great tool to increase awareness and an even better opportunity to make positive modifications in your work or approach to the client. Track your progress. Make sure to keep a log of who you have submitted to, along with the date of your submission and outcome. Maintain notes on each client/submission to help you become better skilled at the process of submitting and to increase your writing skills.

These are just a few pointers to help you on your way to becoming a published freelance journalist. While there are many approaches and formulas to ensuring literary success, there is but one key component to becoming published in any format: take that step forward and submit!



The Mighty and Sometimes Confusing Apostrophe by Peggy Barnes DeKay

We don't use it much, but when we need it, nothing else will do. The apostrophe is as necessary to writing as syrup to morning pancakes. When we need to show possession, use a contraction, or create some plural forms, there is no substitute.

The possessive form is easy—usually. Here are some examples:

“My mother's car, my father's hat,” or “my sister's habits.”

Ok— this seems easy, but now we add a layer of complexity. What happens when the noun already ends in “s?” Here are some examples:

“Charles's car” OR “Charles' car?” Which one would you use and why?

Here is the rule: with multisyllabic words, don't add another “s” after the apostrophe.

Now for a tricky one. To form the possessive of an inanimate object use an “of phrase” when you can.

Example: use “the roar *of the* greasepaint” instead of the “greasepaint's roar.” BUT, the apostrophe possessive can still be used for some forms, like “my heart's desire, the newspaper's error,” or “my money's worth.”

Now that I have taxed your patience with the hard stuff, we will move on to the easy application—the contraction. “I am a student“ becomes “I'm a student.” “Let us go,”

becomes “let's go,” and “It is Mary” is expressed “It's Mary” and “it is” becomes “it's.”

Sounds easy but don't forget that the *possessive* of “it” is “its.” There is no apostrophe!

We can also use the mighty apostrophe for missing digits and letters. “She got four C's and three B's.”

Next month will be really exciting, —we will talk about tricky word pairs.

Get out there and apostrophe with confidence!



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. Our subscriber lists grows monthly. For pricing call 502-541-4670 or email me at 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. Winners receive cash prizes. If you have a favorite recipe or two that is always the big hit at your family reunion, we want that recipe, and the story that goes with it! Our theme for the cookbook is "comfort." Dig out that old green recipe box and send us your best. See the website for complete guidelines.

SHORT PROSE AND POETRY CONTEST 2010

Our 17th Annual Short Prose and Poetry Contest is underway. We will have flyers available at the meeting on Thursday. 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 want to submit for Calliope to a monthly meeting.

Before reading your piece during the reading portion of our meeting 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 April meeting.



Letter from the Editor

*"Your vocation is that place where
your deep satisfaction meets the
world's hunger."* Bookner

Two weeks ago I attended a Author at the Library Series lecture by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, discussing her new book, *The 3rd Chapter: Passion, Risk, and Adventure in the 25 Years After 50*. Her book talks about attitudes toward youth and age as America's "boomers" grey. Lightfoot follows 40 men and women for three years as they transition out of long term careers to re-invent themselves in the decades after 50. Some of her subjects morphed from physicist to painter, and from high-powered executive to a stay at home husband. She calls this time a "season in search of a purpose." Lightfoot believes that the difference between boomers who live their lives with passion and those who don't are three-fold.

- Successfully transitioning from competition and ambition to collaboration and patience.
- Letting go of fear, trying new things
- Innovation

If you are standing on the sidelines, get up, get out, live it, love it, learn it, do it, make it—write it!

Peggy Fox DeKay, Editor