

The Write Stuff

Long Island Writers' Guild, Inc. Newsletter

SPECIAL/SPRING 2009

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Word From The Editor

First, an apology for not having an issue of The Write Stuff available for such a long time, too long, actually. I won't bore you with the list of excuses, except to say it was the best of times and the not-so-best of times and let it go at that.

On second thought, perhaps a short list of the real reasons why I haven't published an issue of the Write Stuff for all these months:

My dog ate all my notes-Computer had a virus-I caught that virus, was laid up for weeks-Pencil sharpener on the fritz-Carpal tunnel closed for repairs-Vacation close vicinity to Area 51-Abducted by aliens for two months-Interrogated by the CIA,FBI,CBS,ABC, ETC-This caused severe writers block and CRS.

2008 was a busy year for the LIWG, Inc. The Levittown Library was hard at work renovating and supplied us with a brand new room, cozy and intimate to hold our workshops. Old news, of course, but I had to mention this and thank the Library in this issue. Also in our debt, the East Meadow Library for stepping in and allowing us to hold our meetings there for all those many months. Thank you.

The Long Island Writers' Guild is branching out with daytime workshops at East Meadow and Bellmore Libraries, moderated by Beverly Kotch and Florence Gatto. Plans for a Suffolk workshop a reality. LIWG and the Book Revue in Huntington offer a free writing workshop the second Monday of the month starting at 7PM. A new event "LIWG Inc Reads" a huge success at the East Meadow Library, Sat. afternoon, Jan.17th, we are doing it again in June 13. The LIWG Inc is again invited to read at Governor's Island, there's another Winery event planned, Jones Beach, the Planting Fields, guest speakers WOW!

Now we need new members and more of our regulars to attend these events.

Ideas are always encouraged, attend a board meeting, talk to a board member or just drop us an e-mail.

JP

"...a good writer of prose must be part poet, always listening to what he writes"

THE WRITE STUFF

Princess Peggy Lee with Tracheostomy

“Come one and all.
To the Kingdom’s ball!”
Cried a squire named McGuire
as he recited the King’s request
to the court’s council and the rest

“It starts at eight, so don’t be late!
No frocks or pinafores if you please
and no cocktail dresses above the knees.
Only the finest taffeta, silk and lace,
should greet her royal, fair Queen Grace.”

“A ball tonight!” Cried Princess Peggy Lee.
Princess Peggy Lee with a tracheostomy.
“A lilac gown I shall wear,
to accent my purple power chair!
And with mauve shoes upon my feet
my festive ensemble shall be complete!”

“Now, whatever shall I see or do,
to hide my ventilator’s hose of blue?”
Pondered Princess Peggy Lee.
Princess Peggy Lee with a tracheostomy.

She rolled over to a lavish dresser deawer.
A dresser drawer filled with scarves galore.
She weeded through the wools and tweeds,
till she found a plum, satin scarf with beads.
“Oh! This shall take care of and see too!
It shall hide my ventilator’s hose of blue!”
Exclaimed Princess Peggy Lee.
Princess Peggy Lee with a tracheostomy.

She twisted the plum scarf around her neck,
then rolled to the mirror for one last check
before proceeding to the party room,
where the band was playing a roaring boom!

She danced all night to the band’s trombone.
Sliding and gliding upon her aerated throne.
A ball was had by Princess Peggy Lee.
Princess Peggy Lee with a tracheostomy.

Mary Gallo

THE POET’S PAGE

Ever notice how when you giftwrap a book
everyone can always tell it’s a book?
They don’t have to pick it up, shake it or put their ear to it.
They look and they know.
Hmm. A book.

But strangely enough that doesn’t stop them.
They don’t set it down and utter,
“Let’s move on to the big one in the corner.”

They don’t sit and agonize,
“How do I tell them I’ve already got one of these?”
That familiar shape doesn’t make the
gift opening experience any less engaging.
They still tear into it like a box of chocolates.
Why?

Because they know, that despite the dimensions
and the weight in their hand,
ideas can take on a million different forms.
They know they’ll encounter a point of view
they’ve never met before.
One that can take them to a million different places.

The jacket, the paper
and the binding...
well, that’s just a handy carrying case.

Editor’s note:

Don’t know the author, Peter handed out this nifty poem one evening at our workshop. How many of us have read it or kept it; just in case I have reprinted it here for another look. JP

Editor’s note:

Mary had a great colored drawing with her submission that I could not reproduce properly in my current format.

Submissions accepted for the Summer-Fall Issue. They should have a seasonal theme (30 lines or less please for poems) but this Editor will use any good poem, essay, bio or cartoon.

THE WRITE STUFF

TRAPPED

the winter walls
are closing in
a torture chamber
of the mind

I want to reach out
push them back
strip the shelves
wipe off the walls

clear the closets
of their accumulations
exorcise the air
of household evils

throw wide the windows
welcome
the lilac scented
breath of spring

the lilac scented
breath of spring

Ellen Lawrence

SPRING'S SONG

crocus, focus! hold on tight
push your way up to the light
for all the earth and sky to see
your white and purple pageantry

dogwood, you should blossom in the air
sitting on your branches-the sign of hope is there
encased in small buds soon to shower
the soft pink cloud form of your flower

rose knows to wait 'til warmth of June
to climb along my fence and sing its crimson tune
the melody shared with sparrow, jay and robin
tells all in doubt that spring's been ushered in

hocus-pocus, mother nature's cast her spell
it only takes one look to see she's done it well
she raised her hands with a mighty zing
she called upon rebirth of earth and suddenly it's
spring!

Monica Andermann

Editor's Note:

Monica and Pat attend the afternoon LIWG workshops at the East Meadow and Bellmore Libraries, and when they can, attend the evening classes. We welcome material from those workshops.

HAIKUS

It's raining today
Oodles of puddles all day
Soggy, squishy mess
*

You're my Valentine
The one I love most of all
My heart is all yours
*

It's Saint Patrick's Day
Time for wearin' of the green
Irish Heritage

Marge McDowell

TO MY VALENTINE

Together

Together we grow
Together we know
Together we show

Together

Although apart
In no way alone
Joined in heart

Together

Pat Gordon

THE WRITE STUFF

A LOVE POEM IN AUTUMN

we fall in love
snuggle into beds of
frosty sheets
settle into dens of
security
draw blankets of
impending winter up
to our necks
curl up toe to toe with
our books
while our swings grow rusty
cuddle into deeper thoughts
get nipped by cooling
reactions
warm to ne leafs turned
watch memories log in and
dance in fireplace
while mulling new ideas
tender thoughts at a stew
looking forward to cabin
fever
and spring's need to
reemerge

Beverly E. Kotch

CRYSTAL CLEAR

shards of ice
picking at my eyes
slashing line of vision
the sting
cutting my
connection
to the beauty of
the storm

Beverly E. Kotch

HOW TO BECOME WEALTHY

Accidents of birth, buses, manmade & insured calamities
need read no further.

Your ticket to earthly milk and honey
has been punched.

For most of us the task remains a mystery
How to become wealthy?

Set a course for the open sea
Steer with the wind, loyal crew, clear mind
Pray you find land.

Let money be not your goal;
downfall of many who never find land,
cousins that now reside with this poor soul.

Ron Scott

FYI

Did you know that Abraham Lincoln was an Edgar Allen Poe fan?

Did you know that Lincoln was a published mystery writer?
Published twice in fact. The first time in a copy of *WHIG*, in Quincy, Illinois, April 15, 1846. Then again in the March, 1952 issue of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*.

The title of the story *The Trailor Murder Mystery* based on a case Lincoln acted as defense attorney

.All this good stuff came from a thirty-year old book called *MURDER INK, The Mystery Reader's Companion*, Perpetrated by Dylis Winn. Workman Publishing, N.Y.

The WRITE STUFF NEWSLETTER
EDITOR: JOE PANTATELLO

THE WRITE STUFF

LONG ISLAND WRITERS' GUILD, Inc.

Guidelines for *The Write Stuff*.

BIO:

250-300 words or less. Be informative; be clever, and especially creative. The Bio should contain some semblance of truth (but not necessary) .

ESSAY:

250-300 words or less, could be seasonal, Editor prefers something humorous or really profound (avoid sexual, political or slanderous content)

POEMS:

Keep length to 30 lines or less. Prefer seasonal poems, but will use any good poem. (Avoid same content as in Essay).

BRAG BOARD:

Any announcements, members receiving awards, winning contests, publication (You get the idea)

MISC.:

Anything you feel might be of interest to our members. A cool web site, a good sale, a new book or an old book you've read (A short review would be nice).

Send all material to:

Joe Pantatello

20 Orchid Rd.

Levittown, NY 11756

tellopan@yahoo.com

tellopan@AOL.com

Or hand it to me at one of our meetings

THE WRITE STUFF

BIOGRAPHY PAGE

ALBERT MANACHINO

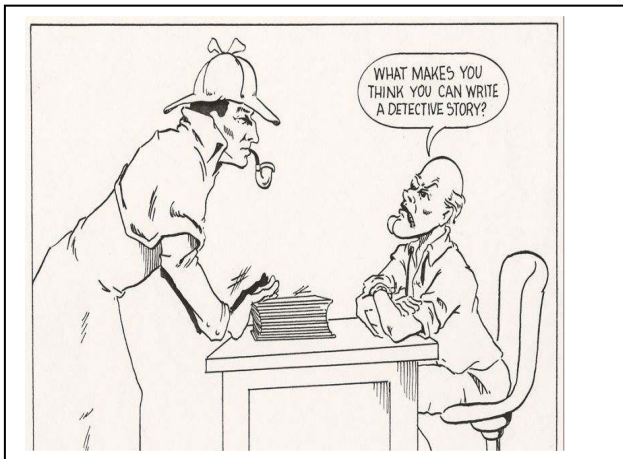
Writing is a wonderful, though addictive pastime. I strongly urge everyone to take it up. It improves your intellectual perspective and keeps you out of gin mills. Also as an added incentive, it improves your spelling.

My first efforts were in Science Fiction and Fantasy ... short stories which were dedicated to my first granddaughter. For a long time, we thought she would be our only grandchild; she absorbed all of our literary attention. I wrote countless adventures that featured her as an interplanetary or occult heroine.

Finally I took my courage in hand and mailed a manuscript to a little magazine with the imposing title of "Warlock". The editor was a wonderful and sympathetic person named Dale Donaldson. He liked the idea of a baby practicing magic and suggested I continue the story as a series. And so I did. There are probably more than thirty of the stories circulating the millstream in search of an adopter.

Writing is enjoyable if you don't expect too much in return. Write because you enjoy it. It is unlikely you will become rich. there compensation in that I think to adds to your life span, I cite myself who has become a great grandfather three times.

Al Manachino



For the new and not so new members of the Long Island Writers' Guild who have not had the pleasure to know or meet Al Manachino, the Write Stuff has dedicated this page to Al.

Not only is he a prolific writer with hundreds of published short stories and several novels to his credit, he is also a gifted cartoonist. Al has graciously allowed the Write Stuff to use a number of his previously published cartoons, one of them here on this page. Thanks Al.

Editor's note: See it's easy. How about some submissions from you folks for the next Issue. Keep it down to 250 or so words, and I promise I do not edit or spell-check. No porn please

THE WRITE STUFF

Some Thoughts on Memorial Day just past

Memorial Day took on an entirely different meaning this year as I passed car after car with a special Gold Star license plate. That's the designation for Gold Star Mothers, an organization that represents mothers who have lost sons and daughters through war.

It was early this past Monday, but the roads were starting to fill with people on their way to various Memorial Day celebrations. After seeing the sixth or seventh car with this special license plate, I slowed down and then pulled over. All of a sudden I felt helpless and alone. And I felt guilty, because I was about to enjoy a beautiful clear day with nothing to do.

There are people all over the world giving up everything for me to be able to do nothing. I started thinking, who were these sons and daughters? I'll never know. There are so many questions I don't have answers for. Why are we fighting these wars? Is it worth it? How do you put a value on them? When will they end?

They ended in tragedy for those young men and women. Their families find some solace on their license plate. Their families will always have unanswered questions. Perhaps mostly they'll wonder, what could have been?

On this year's beautiful Memorial Day I realize how much I have to be grateful about. It's not just a cliché. I do have a sense of gratitude that allows me to take in the good of everyday. It's not always easy; there demands, disappointments and expectations that try to overtake my attempts to be optimistic. Yes: The glass is half-full. Tomorrow is another day. This too shall pass. And my mother's favorite, things always look better in the morning. I will hold those unknown soldiers in my heart for whenever I need to be reminded that life is good.

Cindy March

Editor's note:

This essay is a reprint of Cindy's story that appeared in *NEWSDAY'S EXPRESSWAY* column, on Saturday May 30, 2009.

ESSAY PAGE

MY FAVORIT THING

Our First "Cell Phone" Circa 1956

It was spring and every year you clean out the garage, right? It's a yearly ritual.

The snow blower is replaced with the lawnmower. The newspapers and soda cans finally get trashed and recycled. In moving stuff around, I found a soiled brown paper bag covered by years of dust and the evidence of generations of spiders. Before I opened the bag, I ran a mental list of items that I might find inside. Perhaps a forgotten school lunch, garbage that missed the trash can, I didn't have a clue.

I opened the bag!

I do not remember when I assembled the crude "cell phone" for my children eons ago, but here it was, still operational. I dusted it off, checked the Campbell's soup cans for unfriendlies, uncoiled the string, held it taut and made a call to my wife fifty feet away.

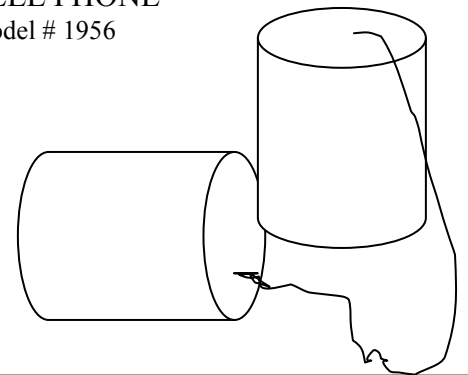
I got through on the first ring. No buttons to push, no recorded messages. Inexpensive to use, low maintenance, no batteries and a lifetime guarantee.

It was a favorite then; it still is now and has a special place with other memories of our children growing up.

JP

CELL PHONE

Model # 1956



"If you want Hollywood to screw up your book, don't sell the movie rights"

Nelson DeMille (On-line newsletter)

"...the act of writing is beyond currency. Money is great stuff to have, but when it comes to the act of creation, the best thing is not to think of money too much. It constipates the whole process."

Stephen King (*Four Past Midnight*-An Introductory Note)

THE WRITE STUFF

LIWG READS

Recently, on a lovely Sunday afternoon, the Long Island Writers' Guild journeyed to Rockville Center to the VILLAGE BOOK SHOPPE as part of LIWG Reads. There was a decent amount of readers and listeners welcomed graciously by owner Tim Schmidt.

This is a cozy and colorful little shop which offers gently used hard and soft cover books at reduced prices. They also purchase books in good condition..

This reporter personally bought some great new and old mysteries.

Readers read their works against a charming backdrop of multi-hued books, and listeners sat on comfortable chairs and small sofas and rockers. Dennis brought along coffee and donuts and his inimitable sense of style and direction.

I'm looking forward to our return engagement in October.

Marge McDowell
Events Reporter

Editor's Note:

We should all try to attend the next engagement the VILLAGE BOOK SHOPPE is kind enough to open their doors for our events.

MORE STUFF

Suffolk Workshop Debut

On May 4, 2009, the LIWG debuted at Huntington Book Revue for the first regular workshop. Over 150 people interested in the written word attended and appeared to have a satisfying evening.

Following an introduction to our Guild and an expiation of who we are and what we're about, three prompts were given and an eclectic assortment of readings followed.

Peter did what he does best, critiqued gently, emphasized the good and offered valid suggestions for possible improvement where applicable. with the most able assistance of Shawn and Dennis.

Both the readers and listeners benefited from their evening in Suffolk County.

Hopefully this venue will continue to tempt those who do extraordinary things with ordinary words.

Marge McDowell
Events Reporter

KUDOS to veteran LIWG members, **Florence Gatto** and **Joe Pantatello** (who were often reminded at workshop meetings, especially by Peter, and other members to publish their works) they have finally "bit the bullet", collected their stories and published their books.

Florence share a few things in common: Both born in Brooklyn, Italian immigrant parents, Florence travels to Italy regularly, Joe did it once as a child. Her book is filled with true life stories, his stories are complete fabrication. They both share the love of writing and so it very well.,

THE SCENT of JASMINE by Florence Gatto
Born in Brooklyn, but bred as though she lived in Sicily.. A Fulbright scholar, member of the LIWG and Italian American Writers Association her true-life stories and essays have been published in anthologies and Newsday; humorous accounts of an immigrant's daughter in Brooklyn. Reflections of women's role, the neighborhoods, holidays and assimilation written with wit, insight and pride. ***The Scent of Jasmine***
Order from: LEGAS Publishing, AMAZON.Com and Florence if she's not in Italy.

ROBERTSON'S ATTIC and other stories
by Joseph Pantatello

Finally retired from two businesses and slowly went stir-crazy until he began writing. Honed his craft at SUNY Farmingdale, CW Post and Nassau Community. The finishing touch he obtained from the fourteen years with the Long Island Writers' Guild.

ROBERTSON'S ATTIC is a collection of many award winning short stories some stories the result of workshop prompts.

Order ***ROBERTSON'S ATTIC*** from: Borders Barnes&Nobel, Amazon.com, OutskirtsPress & Joe