

The Write Stuff

Long Island Writers' Guild, Inc. Newsletter

Number Thirteen

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Word From The Editor

By the time you get to read this issue, the snow should be a distant memory, and we can all get a chance to ask **Darrell Trout** what flowers to plant this spring. Especially when he is Committee Chairman for the Long Island Gold Medal Plant Award.

Kudos to **Rob Lanzone** for taking the plunge and become our new published author. Way to go Rob! Don't forget his upcoming book signing at the Book Revue in Huntington, April 19, Tuesday 8 PM. Let's rock the place.

We heard bits and pieces of his novel at our workshop meetings, now we can read all of "CYBERJIHAD"

We have **Jack Bilello** back as guest speaker April 7, at the Levittown Library. He will discuss his new book "I Still Love Joni James" and fill us in on all the good stuff about publishing and the bad stuff too.

Mark your calendar for our upcoming guest speakers:

June 2nd – **Stanley H. Barkan** – poet and editor/publisher of Cross-Cultural Review Series of World Literature and Art in Sound, Print and Motion.

October 6th – **George Wallace**, Suffolk County Poet Laureate – editor of Poetry bay and co-host or a weekly poetry radio show.

Check our website for new information.

JP

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

ON WRITING WELL—William Zinsser

THE WRITE STUFF

AN ORANGE MOON

An orange moon, rides a deep sapphire sky
An artist could not create a more perfect contrast

In full view she observes the earth
As we observe, her full face

In early evening she wears a saffron dress
That makes her face clear and bright

Later she will change to a citron shade,
As she rides higher in the sky

Until she turns to silver, while
The morning sun chases her home.

Dorothea Weckbecker

A DOG IN SEARCH OF HIS TAIL

dog tail
illusive foe
in circular pursuit
captivating entertainment
flea-ting

(Cinquain)

J R Turek

THE POET'S PAGE

JUST PERFECT

He's having a tail-chasing good time
round and round he goes
at dizzing speed
hopping in perfect rhythm to a callipoe beat
he is a merry-go-round that chuffs
complains that he is not perfect
his tail is too short to capture
yet it is enticing and inviting
a constant foe that needs to be bitten
to submission
to obey its master and not lead chase
his victory is glory, yet fleeting
the illusive foe escapes
he's impelled to begin again

Spent and breathless, he concedes defeat
temporarily
soulful eyes search me out
his foe becomes his best friend
a syncopated metronome
when he wants a hug
or his dinner

I say
He's perfect
just the way he is.

J R Turek

Submissions are being accepted for the SUMMER '05 Issue. They should have a seasonal theme, but this Editor will use any good poem, essay, bio or cartoon.

THE WRITE STUF

THE WEANING

In awe;
we watched our Shepherd whelp,
then tend her young
with a nobility I envied,
although I knew I, too,
had mothered well.
But the faithful Spock,
its cocers worn through fretful days
and sleepless nights,
bears testimony to the lack of insinct
that clouded the passage
of my nurture.
While here she lay,
Pink teats taut with the certainty
of their creation...
In due time,
hers not ours,
she weaned them one by one.
Coats licked clean and smooth
they left,
like children on their first day of school,
leaving behind the void
that once was filled
with the urgency of need
and the sour-sweet smell of puppies' breath.

Joan Vullo Obergh

MORE POEMS

OVER THE HILL GANG

they trot to the bases
Mickey Mantle
Ted Williams
Jackie Robinson
greats that inspired
love of the game

carried onto the field
by men ripe with age
their hands caressing leather
knees yielding in a crouch

the soft ball arches
like a half moon
stir men to move through

first grade town fields
high school sthletic fields
life's mind fields

these seasoned men
on a field at night
under a new moon
catch old dreams.

Paula Camacho

SPRINGING FORTH

Winter this year was like a party guest with no home to go to. It lingered, blew, gusted, flaked, fashioned white blankets, made luminous mounds, snarled our traffic and tried our patience. But Spring, irrevocable Spring, is almost here and will once again line our roads to bid us welcome. Tulips, Forsythias, Magnolias, Violets and Spruce will vie with each other to drench the land in color. Music will be provided by gifted mockingbirds and other equally vocal mates. Spectacular mauve, rose and gold sunsets will stretch the limits of the horizon.
Springtime is living poetry.

Marge McDowell

THE WRITE STUFF

OPINION:

“Love Story”, “Terms of Endearment”, “Million Dollar Baby” – all are movies that fit a formula of a two-act movie. Discounting the departure from the standard three-act story, these movies add an extra dimension. That dimension is simply this: the two acts have nothing to do with each other.

The first act shows development of plot, characters, or something frivolous (“Love Story”). The second act utterly ignores the first act and presents in agonizing detail the protracted death of one of the characters.

If I were to perfect these movies, I would throw out the second act and break the first act into the traditional three of a standard plot. The second act? Chuck it. Deep six it. Confine it to oblivion. If I couldn’t get a good story out of the first act, I would shorten the denouement. If Hillary Swank’s character gets a broken neck, I would have terrorists bomb the Garden so that everybody dies right away. I would have Debra Winger hit by a car after learning that she has cancer. As for “Love Story”, I would just burn the entire film.

Joe Dlhopsky

“Poetry is as universal a language and almost as ancient,
The most primitive peoples have used it, and the most civilized have cultivated it.”

--*Literature, Structure, Sound, and Sense*
Laurence Perrine

HERE and THERE

BOOK REVIEW

“*DIGITAL FORTRESS*” by Dan Brown

If you enjoyed “The Da Vinci Code” or “Angles and Demons”, you will definitely enjoy “Digital Fortress”. If you are into computers, web sites, e-mails. Etc. and government conspiracies, this book is for you.

When the NSA’s monster code-breaking machine loads a weird code it cannot break, they call in, Susan Fletcher, their number one cryptographer. She finds the NSA is being held hostage, not by terrorists or threats of bombs, but by a code, that will cripple U.S. intelligence. It gets a little technical in spots, but doesn’t slow the story down. Plenty of intrigue, twists and turns, and a little long-distance romance. Does Susan save the day? Save the country from utter chaos? You gotta read it.

Note: Sounds a little like Rob Lanzone’s “Cyberjihad”. I haven’t read it yet, I’m waiting for the book signing to buy the book.

JP

THE WRITE STUFF
Editor: Joe Pantatello

The Autobiography of a Frustrated Feral Cat
By Meowf

Ah, at last, spring is in the air. Yeah, but what the heck good is that going to do me? I'm sure you've heard all about me and my big mouth and all about the yowling I do every spring from that person who keeps me fed. So let me set the records straight.

First off that person, the one who told you all about me, thinks she owns me. But, you know what, nobody owns me. I don't belong to anybody other than myself even though I've paid dearly for the security of having a reliable food source, shelter from cold weather and an occasional ear scratching. I'm not like Dennis and Flopsy and Mopsy who were born into captivity and whom She keeps trapped indoors. Though sometimes I get tempted when Flopsy invites me in, but then Mopsy bites me every time I try to go inside, and Dennis yells that hr doesn't want any more animals invading His territory. It's a good reminder to me that I wouldn't like it trapped in there all the time like he is. Enough about them and back to important things like me.

Yeah that first ear scratching really cost me. You see, I had just begun to trust Her, just begun to think maybe my mother had been mistaken and that possibly not all humans were to be avoided entirely. Especially not when their touch could make me feel sooo good. But no such luck. The very first time I let my guard down while being scratched, She took advantage. Just as it was feeling so good I could hardly stand it, She grabbed by the scruff of my neck and before I could figure out what was happening She had me shut up inside some kind of traveling casket, put me in Her car and drove off to the vet.

I should have known what was in store for me when I realized it was a female vet She was discussing my future with. Hadn't my mother warned me that if I wished to remain footloose and fancy free, and in full possession of all the body parts I was born with, to stay away from humans, especially female humans. I was born free. I had never felt the seductive touch of a human hand before She used it to lure me into Her clutches. My mother had never known the feeling, neither had my grandmother. All they had known was that if you submit to the power of the human touch you lose your freedom and sometimes your very life. I could hear my family's warnings ringing in my ears as the two female humans approached my container. What was it? Were they going to kill me altogether?

No. I was to be one of the lucky (?) ones. Between them they had decided that I must be neutered in order to keep the feral cat population down in the neighborhood. And to add more pain to my captivity I was to have every kind of shot known to humankind, supposedly to prevent everything from rabies to scabies. I will give Her this much, She did turn me loose a few days after my stitches healed and never missed seeing to it my breakfast is served to me shortly after I wake up each morning. But after ten years of this, She still thinks I need more shots, and whenever I think they are due, I avoid Her like the plague. And every spring I sit on Her back deck and yowl and howl as long and as loud as I can, just to remind Her of what She took away from me.

And just for the record, Beverly E. Kotch is She. And sometimes I feel sorry for Dennis; poor guy is trapped inside with all those bossy females. Not me. I come and go as I please.

The Not So Slick City-Slickers

By Teri Schwartz

When I was first married, my husband worked the graveyard shift in Manhattan as a security guard at the same company as my mom. He'd tell incredulous city stories, one about the 'girls on the stroll'. He said despite plunging temperatures they were barely dressed and drew an audience. So that Friday night, Mom initiated a fact finding tour. Securely locked into her newly purchased grey on grey Monte Carlo, we set out.

Arriving on 9th Avenue we stared open-mouthed. The stories were unexaggerated. 'Ladies of the night' paeaded around in skimpy skivies and stilted pumps. Night workers in the nearby warehouse took their coffee breaks perched curbside against parked cars to gawk at the ongoing.

One lap around was enough for us and while stopped at a traffic light, we were besieged by a vagrant with a spray bottle and a squeegee. Mom sat silently begging the red light to turn. I, however, was hanging out the passenger window up to my right butt cheek yelling. The light turned. Mom floored it. Throwing me back into the genuine imitation velvet seat. Screeching around the corner of 10th Avenue, her gaze fixes in the rear view. I was watching behind us too. The squeegee man was bringing up the rear. Running, shaking his fists, screaming about equipment, (*Equipment?*). Then a gasp from the driver's seat. I whirled around only to see (*Ugh! Gasp!*) headlights.

"Ma! You turned down a one way, the wrong way!" We ducked down the side street and pulled over. There we sat mentally genuflecting during our 'Hail Mary's'. A shrill voice disturbed us.

"Yous got my 'quipment."

Motion in the side mirror drew my attention. The vagrant was lumbering towards us. Switching my gaze I caught ate glint of clear plastic.

"His spray bottle is laying in the wiper duct Ma! That's why he's chasing us."

I reached for the door handle and Mom yelped.

"No! Don't you dare get out in this neighborhood."

"This neighborhood Ma? It's Tenth Avenue, not South Central, L.A.."

"No!" She shrieked again.

"Yous gonna gimme dat back or I'm callin a cop."

"Fine." I reached up, slid the noon roof open and hung myself out, straining fruitlessly towards the bottle, but I was suddenly propelled back into imitation velvet. Mom had peeled out and began jerking the car side to side until the spray bottle careened off the hood. (*No more Starsky and Hutch reruns for her!*) Hitting the pavement with a half hollow clunk. Watching through the back windshield I could see the bottle of dirty water bouncing down the pavement as we drove eastward. Back to Long Island. Back to where Mom stated she belonged. That was the last time we challenged any of my husband's city stories.

Teri Schwartz

Editor's note: See how easy it is? How about submissions from you folks for the next issue.

Keep it down to 300 words, and remember **I do not edit** or spell-check. No porn please.

THE WRITE STUFF

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