



# Writers News

Volume 6, Number 7.....July 2007

July 21 Speaker

## Terry A. Whalin

Writer/Editor

### Secrets Editors DO Want You to Know



As an editor and a writer, Terry Whalin understands both sides of the editorial desk. He worked as an editor for *Decision* and *In Other Words*, and his magazine articles have appeared in more than 50 publications - including *Writer's Digest* and *The Writer*. During the July SCWA meeting, Terry will share the secrets of good writing that let an editor know you are worth publishing!

As the author of more than 60 nonfiction books, Mr. Whalin knows how to weave facts into a fascinating read. His latest book, a best seller, belongs on the shelf of every serious author. It is called *Book Proposals That Sell, 21 Secrets To Speed Your Success* (Write Now Publications). Another recent and very popular book is *Running On Ice: The Overcoming Faith of Vonetta Flowers* (New Hope Publishers).

But his nonfiction expertise is only the tip of the iceberg. For more than five years, Terry was an acquisitions editor in the book divisions of *Cook Communications* and *Howard Books*. And, for more than 12 years Terry was an *ECPA Gold Medallion* judge in the

fiction category. With extensive experience reviewing Christian fiction, he has also reviewed/edited numerous fiction books for publications such as *Faithful Reader.com* and *BookPage*.

As the creator of and Webmaster for *Right-Writing.com*, Terry now lives with his wife, Christine, in Scottsdale, AZ.

Lynette Baum  
VP, Programming  
therightwriter@cox.net

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# *President's Message*

## ***E-mail delivery of your SCWA newsletter***

Do you wait and wait for your newsletter to arrive? Does it sometimes come with a tear or wrinkle? Would you like to receive it instead in your e-mail inbox in PDF format before any one sees it in their postal box? All you'd need is a copy of Adobe's *free* Acrobat Reader program to read it. Plus, you would not have to save past issues in your already crammed filing cabinet.

In my conversations with the newsletter editors of writers groups and other groups, I found out that many of them also prepare a newsletter each month, but they save the printing and postal costs by e-mailing their newsletter instead. We did a cost analysis and discovered that if *half* of our members opt for e-mail instead of hard copy, we would save \$240 a year as well as reduce the workload on your editor, Mary.

Be a "green" member! Save a tree! Save your filing cabinet space, too. Opt to receive your newsletter by e-mail instead.

**How?** Just send a quick note to your Vice President Membership, Shelia Cassidy, at [membership@ocwriter.com](mailto:membership@ocwriter.com) and let her know you want an e-mail newsletter. Shelia will update your membership record. She sends the latest membership list each month to me and I prepare the mailing labels file and send it to our editor, who then knows how many copies to print.

Note: Did you know you could download your newsletter from our website at [www.ocwriter.com](http://www.ocwriter.com)? We have issues going all the way back to 2004. So, if you ever miss an issue in your postal box, you can get it from your friendly website in an instant!

If you want to show somebody an announcement of your success, make sure you send that information to our editor. When she publishes an issue with your announcement in it, you can e-mail copies of our newsletter to all your friends and family!

## ***Would you like to be our Master of Ceremonies at one of our meetings?***

If you would like to see what you could do running one of our luncheon meetings (the job Victory normally does up at the podium), then we would love to give you the chance! Or have you been a member of Toastmasters and would love to get credit for presiding at a meeting away from Toastmasters? Would you like to be the center of attention for a few minutes some Saturday? We even have a printed agenda to help you and we'd love to help you develop your leadership and speaking skills.

So raise your virtual hand and send an e-mail to me. You'll be glad you did!

See *President's column*, page 6

## JUNE HIGHLIGHTS:

### Warren Lewis: *Working Hollywood from Gutter to Glitter*

“Words created the universe. Something was said. It made Creation. Congratulations, we are all God,” Warren Lewis, screenwriter and director, solemnly declared. His presentation, which centered around four key words—*heart*, *truth*, *craft* and *process*—began with this strong emphasis on creating. Regardless of which word he’s using at the moment, Lewis subordinates each to the all-powerful drive to create. As a director, Lewis left the nuts-and-bolts stage behind long ago. An audience used to how-to presentations, SCWA members were informed by Lewis’s commentary on the visceral and emotional aspects of writing, rather than the intellectualized.

The first of Lewis’s four words, *heart* is akin to the drive to create. *Heart*, he explained, makes you believe in your ability to show the truth of your characters. Writing every day is “as important as taking your insulin,” and you “put your psychological safety on the line.” You must not only believe your work is as important as any other person’s work, but you must train those around you to respect your *heart*. “What if they don’t?” Lewis deadpanned a metaphorical solution: “They have to be killed.”

Two stories demonstrated the necessity of giving oneself over to creating. One of Lewis’s friends uses an airplane image: he’d “rather get blown out of the sky than die of an oil loss.” The more telling anecdote, however was Lewis’s. When his father was dying, Lewis wrote in his car every day. (His father knew and was proud of him.) “If I hadn’t, two persons would have died,” Lewis said.

After *heart*, you, the writer, must recognize *truth* because you “know your world as well as God knows this one.” If so, you can isolate “the most intimate moment in your characters’ lives.” Lewis quoted one writer as saying, “Sometimes the story singing inside me is realer than the people I live with.”

Lewis said that a person is allowed to lie to himself, but a writer may not disrespect his audience. An example of disrespecting truth, he pointed out, is embodied in one of America’s most famous paintings, *Custer’s Last Stand*. In it, Custer stands with a pistol in one hand and a saber in the other as his men stand around him. They are surrounded by approaching Indians. Lewis is scornful because the scene

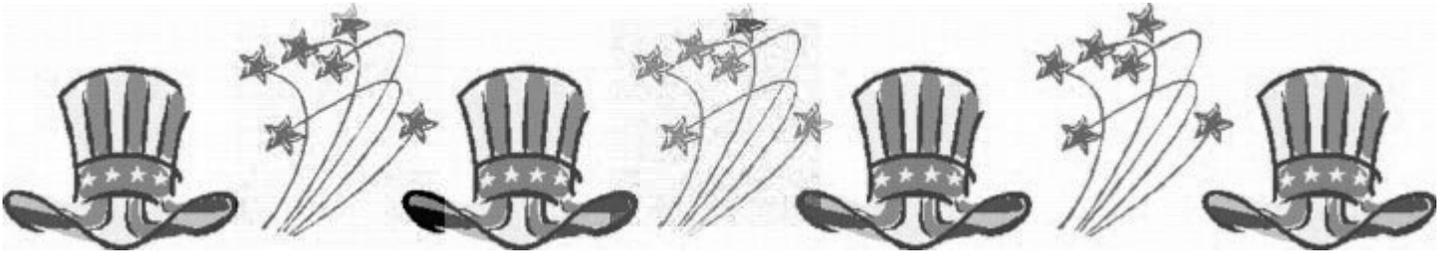
doesn’t show the desperation of the situation by including all the empty bullet casings that in reality littered the ground.

*Craft* is the ability to convey truth. “If you write more than two true lines in your life, you’ve done more than most [writers].” He recommended that you take an acting class to absorb “how to make someone else’s reality come alive.” Your created characters may not be likable but must fascinate you. Lewis compared HBO’s Tony Soprano to Shakespeare’s Richard III. An actor would have to study the War of the Roses, know how the king walks, and why he “keeps killing the women he loves.” The writer’s *craft* sequences the action to incrementally reflect the truth, just as each stop-action frame, when flipped quickly with the others, becomes movement on the big screen.

The dialogue must be crafted as well and its rhythm fit to the characters and action: no “dead kitten” speeches, please. Example: a commander rushes into the palace. “Prince Alexi, the troops are coming. You must flee!” The prince should strap on his sword and leave. He mustn’t stand there and reminisce about the death of a kitten he once loved. In other words, Lewis

See *Highlights*, page 7

# SCWA News & Announcements



## NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:

*August 18 – Jerry D. Simmons*

### ***What Writers Need to Know About Publishing, Part II***

Last year, we had the privilege of hearing from Jerry D. Simmons, VP/Director Field Sales for the Time-Warner Book Group (Retired). His insight and expertise revealed the “how to’s” of the publishing game. With a first-hand education in the way decisions are made, how they impact authors, and how the business operates, he shared invaluable information.

Due to popular demand, Simmons, (who will soon go on the national speaker circuit and no longer be available to groups with humble budgets), has agreed to share the second half of his presentation on *What Writers Need to Know About Publishing*. Professionally connected with *New York Times* best-selling authors such as James Patterson, Nicholas Sparks, Michael Connelly, Alice Sebold, Sandra Brown, David Baldacci, Nelson DeMille, Scott Turow, Robert James Waller, Alexandra Ripley, and Jack Welch, he will share the formula for success that made *The Bridges of Madison County*, *Scarlett* and *Lovely Bones* runaway best sellers!

Join us in August for this outstanding speaker!

## SCWA Critique Committee Open to Members of SCWA

### Nonfiction & Fiction

This position is open.

### Poetry

#### Dr. Joyce Wheeler

Joyce will critique up to five poems.  
Please mail your work to Joyce at:

3801 Chestnut Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90807

## Executive Committee

President ..... Victory Crayne  
VP, Programming ..... Lynnette Baum  
VP, Membership ..... Shelia Cassidy  
Secretary ..... Janet de Marco  
Treasurer ..... Carolyn Smith  
Publicity Director ..... Larry Porricelli  
Webmaster ..... Tony Stoklosa  
Newsletter Editor ..... Mary Michel Green  
Associate Editor ..... Belinda Falk  
Tape Librarian ..... Sharon Walters

### Membership Information

Shelia Cassidy, VP Membership  
[membership@ocwriter.com](mailto:membership@ocwriter.com)

### Meeting Reservations

Carolyn Smith, Treasurer ..... (949) 675-4244

Contact Writers News Editor Mary Michel Green at (949) 361-6581 or [green.mary@cox.net](mailto:green.mary@cox.net).

# July 2007 Short Story Contest

Warm up your pen and pad, or your keyboard, whichever you prefer. Pour a glass of wine or put on your favorite music. Don your favorite writing clothes, maybe that crazy “lucky writing hat.” Invite your Muse to come out and play. We are having our first short story contest this year.

## Rules

- Type it up in one of the following (1) MS Word, (2) Rich Text Format (RTF) if you use a different word processor, or (3) plain old text in an editor.
- Write a story in less than 2,000 words. That word count does not include the title or your name, just the story itself. Go over the limit by even one word and your story will be excluded.
- You chose the theme. It can be anything that delights you.
- The contest ends July 31.
- You may submit only one story for this contest.
- Send your story by e-mail to our “Short Story Agent,” Shelia Cassidy, at [membership@ocwriter.com](mailto:membership@ocwriter.com). Make sure you put “SCWA Contest” in the Subject line of your e-mail so she won’t miss it.
- Shelia will keep track of who sent which story, remove all references to your name from your story, and forward all of them at the same time to the Judge soon after the deadline, in early August.

## Winners

The winners will be announced at the August 18 meeting. You can only win First Place once in the year for all the contests. The first place winners will receive a free luncheon meeting. The first, second, and third place winners will receive a certificate. All winning entries will be published on our Web site.

## Criteria for Judging

You may want to pay attention to the criteria that our Judge for this contest will be using. The stories will be judged on:

- Originality
- Craft of writing
- Satisfying ending (surprise endings will rank higher)

The Judge for this contest will be Victory Crayne. As I understand, she’s a tough judge, too, having judged many contests before. So take some time to polish your tale before you submit it.

## Future Contests in 2007

1. Submission due September 30: a 250-word Flash Fiction. Theme: *End of Vacation*. The Judge will be Carolyn Smith.
2. Submission due also September 30: a 1-2 page single-spaced query; a 1-5 page double-spaced book synopsis; and a 10-15 page double-spaced sample chapter. This would be like the package you would send to an agent or publisher. The Judge will be Victory Crayne.
3. Submission due October 31: a 250- word Flash Fiction. Theme: *A New Life*. The Judge will be Larry Porricelli.

Judges for future contests may have their own criteria for selecting the winners, so stay tuned.

*Victory Crayne*

Story Contest Manager;

[victory@crayne.com](mailto:victory@crayne.com)

## Tell Us About Yourself—Newsletter Content Appreciated

*President's column*, from page 3

### ***Announcements of your writing successes***

This newsletter is for our membership and that includes you. Have you published a book? Is your article going to be in a magazine? Have you won a contest outside of SCWA for your fiction, poem, or nonfiction? Got an agent? Got a publishing contract? Then let us know!

If you have an announcement of some success in your writing career that you'd love to share with others, I suggest you write our editor, Mary Green, at [editor@ocwriter.com](mailto:editor@ocwriter.com). We will also be making time at more of our luncheon meetings for such announcements.

### ***Contests***

Our June non-fiction article contest will be over by the time you receive this newsletter. So what's next? **Get your Muse cranked up!** Now is the time for you to work on a fictional story for our July Short Story Contest. See my article on this elsewhere in this issue.

*Victory Crayne*  
President  
[victory@crayne.com](mailto:victory@crayne.com)

## **Panelists Needed for April 5, 2008 Literary Orange (next year)**

You may have heard about Literary Orange, an all-day author event held April 21, 2007, organized by the Orange County Public Library. U.C. Irvine was one of their sponsors, and Tom Basinski, our May 19 speaker, was one of the authors. For more details, see their website at <http://www.ocpl.org/literaryorange/>

Jill Patterson, chair of the Author/Program Committee for Literary Orange 2008, would like to know if authors from among SCWA members are interested in serving on one of the panels they are scheduling. They are looking for published authors in the fields of nonfiction and science fiction or fantasy. In 2007, the non-fiction panel featured Tom Basinski, Martin Dugard, and J.A. Flynn and was very popular. Their evaluations included a request for science fiction and fantasy authors, so they are adding that topic. The Orange County and L.A. chapters of Sisters in Crime both support the events.

Our member, Lynn Price, Editorial Director of Behler Publications, will be on one of their panels.

If you are interested, please contact:

Jill Patterson e-mail: [jkpatterson@ocpl.org](mailto:jkpatterson@ocpl.org)  
La Habra Branch Library/Orange County PL  
221 E. La Habra Blvd. La Habra CA 90631  
TEL: 562/694-2958 FAX: 562/691-8043

*Victory Crayne*  
President  
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# Speaker Shares Elements of Screenwriting

*Highlights*, from page 3

said, do not insert a static passage about feelings when action should carry the scene.

*Craft* includes formatting the screenplay professionally; not to do so is, in Lewis's opinion, disrespectful. Although stories come to all cultures in a narrative way, the screenplay format is "daunting" because its unnatural form must be mastered. Its "brevity and pointedness" must be like that of "a master sniper hitting a target." Thus, a screenplay is a "technical document." Lewis didn't specify a *format* because this tool of the trade is readily available. (Variations on "Final Draft" software may be purchased from [www.finaldraft.com](http://www.finaldraft.com).)

According to Lewis, *process* is not only the set of techniques and abilities you use to "get from the top of the page to the bottom" but also your method of operation. Respect your working habits, whether you scribble notes to yourself, work late at night, or stop everyday by 3 p.m. as Lewis does. "Respecting the process" includes throwing your inner editor out of the room if he or she utters a word. Those around you must also respect your need for "consistency and moving ahead." However, he passed along Paddy Cheyefsky's quip, "I open up the store everyday, but some days no one comes." (For *process*, see Kenneth Atchity's *A Writer's Time:*

*Making the Time to Write*.)

Lewis clarified that you'll need an agent because this business will not take scripts directly from individual writers. Neither will the big agencies sign on beginners. Most likely, your first agent—90 percent are female—will be on your level. You'll move up to someone else once you've made a sale. If you're a good writer, you'll be a good marketer, Lewis observed. But, above all, you must be true to yourself and your vision.

Glenda Brown Rynn  
Member  
[grynn@cox.net](mailto:grynn@cox.net)

## Writer's Corner

### Quotes on Writing

"Asked how he became a writer: In the same way that a woman becomes a prostitute. First I did it to please myself, then I did it to please my friends, and finally I did it for money."

—Ferenc Molnár

"I love deadlines. I love the whooshing sound they make as they fly by."

—Douglas Adams

"I'm writing a book. I've got the page numbers done."

—Steven Wright

"The man who doesn't read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read them."

—Mark Twain

"In America only the successful writer is important, in France all writers are important, in England no writer is important, and in Australia you have to explain what a writer is."

—Geoffrey Cottrell

"I get a fine warm feeling when I'm doing well, but that pleasure is pretty much negated by the pain of getting started each day. Let's face it, writing is hell."

—William Styron



**July Meeting:  
Saturday  
July 21, 2007**

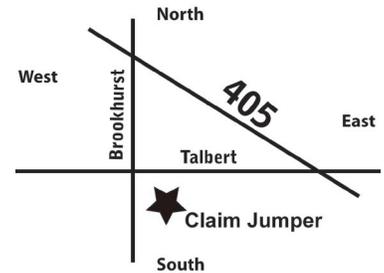
**TERRY A. WHALIN**  
*What Editors Do Want You to Know*  
(See inside for more on Terry A. Whalin.)



**LOCATION: Claim Jumper Restaurant**

Banquet Room Entrance, rear of building  
1805 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, CA  
Restaurant telephone: (714) 963-6711

Registration & Networking:	9:30 a.m.
Meeting:	10:00 a.m.
Lunch:	11:30 a.m.
Afternoon Program:	12:30 p.m.



*GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME—\$30 AT DOOR; \$25 WITH RSVP*  
*MEMBERS WHO DO NOT RSVP PAY \$25 AT DOOR*  
*MEMBERS WHO DO RSVP PAY \$20*



**RSVP before July 13:** Carolyn Kimme Smith, Treasurer, 630 Harbor Island Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660  
Check must accompany reservation. Make checks payable to SCWA.

**After July 13:** Carolyn Kimme Smith, Treasurer, [ckimmesmith@ucla.edu](mailto:ckimmesmith@ucla.edu)

**BE SURE TO RSVP WHENEVER POSSIBLE! . . . Or register online at [www.ocwriter.com/meetings.html](http://www.ocwriter.com/meetings.html)**



# Writers News

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*Happy Independence Day!!*