



Writers News

Volume 7, Number 10.....October 2008

October 18 Speaker

Paul Williams

Nationally Renowned Songwriter, Actor, Speaker

Writing for a Loving—The Playful Art



Oscar, Grammy and Golden Globe winning songwriter Paul Williams is recognized as one of America’s most prolific and gifted lyricists and composers. A ‘Hall of Fame’ songwriter and recipient of the 2004 National Music Publishers President’s Award, Williams’ standards have been recorded by such diverse musical icons as Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, Ella Fitzgerald, Ray Charles, David Bowie, Tony Bennett, R.E.M., Sarah Vaughn, Johnny Mathis, Bing Crosby, The Carpenters, Luther Vandross, Mel Torme and Diana Ross.

His songs have also found favor with country legends including Chet Atkins, Garth Brooks, The Dixie Chicks, Kris Kristofferson, Charlie Pride, Crystal Gayle, Anne Murray, Lynn Anderson, The Oak Ridge Boys, Diamond Rio and Neil McCoy. When asked which song is his favorite, Paul is quick to respond, “That’s easy! It’s *The Rainbow Connection*. It’s a thrill to hear my words interpreted by such inimitable talents as Sarah McLachlan, Willie Nelson, Judy Collins and Kermit the Frog!”

The Rainbow Connection, from the children’s classic *The Muppet Movie*, is one of two Paul Williams songs that grace the American Film Institute’s list of the top movie songs of all time, the second, *Evergreen*, is from the award winning Streisand/Kristofferson remake of *A Star Is Born*. Additional song scores include the cult favorites *Phantom of the Paradise* and *Ishtar*, as well as *The Muppet Christmas Carol* and *Bugsy Malone*.

Paul also penned the lyrics for the blockbuster hit *The Sum of All Fears*. For the season finale of *Ally McBeal*, Williams offered the touching *I Know Him By Heart*, recorded by Vonda Shepard. Paul recently teamed up with legendary songwriter Carole King to write the title song *Stand Back*, sung by Joan Osborne, for *Raising Helen*. He is currently writing the music and lyrics for the Garry Marshall musical *Happy Days*. He

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President's Message



CAPTURE YOUR READER...

Capturing your reader's attention is no easy task. Whether writing fiction or nonfiction, a thorough knowledge of what appeals to your genre, as well as how to apply humor, suspense and foreshadowing, is vital. There are skills that an accomplished writer uses to get readers involved and keep them interested. So, if you want to hook your readership quickly and permanently, try a few of the following tips.

1. **Get the reader to ask a question.** This doesn't mean bluntly stating your query. Subtlety is key. The opening sentence to the popular book *Twilight* by Stephanie Meyers gives an ideal example. "I'd never given much thought to how I would die..." You've only read ten words and you're already asking yourself, "What is threatening her? Why does she fear death, now? What has changed between yesterday and today that makes dying imminent?" Good writing always inspires readers to ask a question—a question that keeps them reading.
2. **Connect with a universal theme.** You know what I mean. In *Star Wars* it was poor boy-makes-good; in *Cinderella*, abused-daughter-beats-the-odds; in *Hamlet*, murder-will-out. There are so many universal themes established in literature that almost nothing is new. The spin, the style and the flair surrounding the story are what bring freshness. Find a theme that appeals to you on a visceral level. Then, you will feel thrilled with the idea and the writing will flow easily.
3. **Write from passion.** Too often we write from our heads, not our hearts. This kills creativity. No one wants to read dry, over-edited prose. Writing from the cranium can wring the last drop of lushness from your copy. Instead, live what you write. Immerse yourself in the imaginary moment. What you see in your mind and feel in your heart will remove you from the blasé workaday world and transform your writing. Passion will bring your writing to life!
4. **Involve the six senses.** Use adjectives to involve the reader, not just to see, hear, smell, feel and taste, but to imagine (suspend disbelief) as well. The more fully your reader "buys" the characters, situation and plot, the more often they will "buy" your books!
5. **Shock the yard.** Tantalize your reader with a series of good healthy shocks. These are especially effective when incorporated at the beginning and end of each chapter. Judicious use of shock value will keep readers reading, faithfully, through the night.



Once a reader has picked up your book, don't let them put it down. A million things, from kids to spouses to work to daily chores, are crying for their attention. Yet, nothing delights a reader more than that special fascination that keeps them turning the next page. Capture your readers—then, keep them!

Lynnette Baum
President
lynnette@the-right-writer.com

SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS:

STEVE DEXTER: *Taking the Mystery Out of Getting What's in Your Head Onto the Bookshelves*

Steve Dexter was imprinted early by a habitual remark from his father, a newsman: "As journalists, we have two things to sell—fear and hope." Although Dexter never planned to be a writer, he gives hope speaking to and writing for those facing financial problems associated with the real estate industry. Along the way of appearing at Harvard's schools of law, business, and design as well as on radio and TV, he learned not only to convert his knowledge into valued books but how the publishing market works.

Dexter wanted to make a difference in people's lives and be seen as an expert (plus have a warm climate and ocean view). Moving to California twenty years ago, he began buying real estate rentals at the same time he studied with a professor of entrepreneurship, whose principles Dexter later taught at community colleges and economic courses. On his way to owning and managing his current 29 rentals, his knowledge grew, and he could teach his own material as *The Top 50 Laws of Real Estate Investment*.

Urged by Bob Bruss of the Washington Post Media to write a book, Dexter wrote about the experiences and lessons of 200 successful real estate investors. He chose a new approach—"how to stay away from bad loans and mistakes." Published by McGraw Hill, the book is *Real Estate Debt Can Make You Rich*.

The economical and brief style of Dexter's prose was brought about by his aversion to typing. He learned the value of endorsements from experts by "the Bruss bounce" he gained from Bob Bruss's endorsement. In addition, a public relations man secured media engagements. Thus, Dexter absorbed how to market a book. He tirelessly networks, attends conventions in his specialties, and researches his business interests.

Dexter's networking includes the Internet. He builds his database of contacts, currently at 8,500 people, at presentations. To manage his database regarding scheduling, phone calls, etc., he subscribes to GoldMine and Constant Contact. His electronic newsletters are bi-monthly. On the Web, his free information echoes his original material but holds some jewels back. If his name is not part of the URL, he points out, he can sell the Web site later as a brand.

Dexter's real estate rental expertise became *How to Rent Your House Out in One Day*, with zero days empty or needed for refurbishment. When his secretive brother died and Dexter had to piece together the assets to disperse to heirs, he turned that practical knowledge into *A Tale of Two Johns: How to Leave Your Estate So That Your Heirs Won't Hate You*. Comprehensively understanding America's current real estate finance industry crisis,

he authored *Beat the Banks: Prospering in the Rising Wave of Bank Foreclosures*. He quips, "They didn't read my book."

Some of his books are self-published because Dexter can make \$10-15 on each. Dexter claims some of his royalty statements from a major distributor are so inscrutable that he cannot understand them—even with his business experience. Although he cannot prove it, he wonders if he's "getting ripped off?"

Answering questions about his writing style, Dexter said he often uses a story form because "we remember in story form." He employs a sardonic, ironic, dry wit but tries not to insult intelligence.

"If people laugh, they'll remember longer," Dexter said.

He starts all sentences with "tension words" and each paragraph with a provocative statement. Whether writing or speaking, he never gives more than two sets of numbers because of the "boredom factor." To ensure unworried writing time, he has developed income streams.

Steve Dexter needs solitude for writing and takes no phone calls or distractions when at his desk. Otherwise, he's a big talker. His patient wife has to remind him, "Silence is the womb of creation, right, Steve?"

Glenda Brown Rynn
Member
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SCWA News & Announcements

If You Can't Make the Meeting:

You can buy recordings of previous speakers on both cassette tape and audio CD for the member price of only \$5 each! This is such a valuable resource if you miss a meeting. Our Southern California Writers Association rosewood pens are also available for only \$7.50. Just go to ocwriter.com and click on "Make a Purchase."



NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER: *November 15 – Maralys Wills*

Maralys Wills is the author of five books. For the past 21 years, Wills has taught college novel-writing, and in 2000 was voted "Teacher of the Year." In addition to frequent speaking engagements, she has given numerous writing seminars—at UCLA, UC Riverside, UCI, Orange Coast College, Cerritos College, and writers' conferences across the country. We will welcome her as our speaker on November 15.

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

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

PresidentLynnette Baum
VP, ProgrammingKathy Porter
VP, MembershipLinda Coyne
Secretary..... Linda Shortell
TreasurerLarry Porricelli
Publicity DirectorLarry Porricelli
Webmaster Tony Stoklosa
Meeting Coordinator.....Brennan Harvey
Newsletter Editor Mary Michel Green
Tape Librarian.....Sharon Walters

Membership Information

Linda Coyne, VP, Membership
membership@ocwriter.com

Meeting Reservations

Brennan Harvey, meeting@ocwriter.com
or message (714) 375-5275

New Online Forum Opens to SCWA Members

Webmaster Tony Stoklosa has set up a new online forum for SCWA members. Go to *ocwriter.com* and click on “forum” to go to the registration page. Once you’ve signed up, you can post threads and participate in discussion in six different areas:



- **General SCWA Stuff**
This is where you can discuss nonspecific topics not listed elsewhere
- **Contact the Board**
Let the SCWA board know of a concern, compliment, or complaint.
- **Hooray!**
Share some good news!
- **Self Publishing and POD**
Discuss experiences with self publishing and Print On Demand
- **The Craft of Writing**
This is where SCWA members can discuss the craft of writing.
- **Editors and Agents**
Discuss experiences with Editors and/or Agents.



Member Good News

Kathy Porter spoke at the Orange County Science Fiction Club in Fullerton on Wednesday, September 24.

Larry Porricelli is doing a screenplay for a true story of an abused woman for a production company. He also wrote the copy for the new Bertolli microwave sauce packets. He brought enough sauce packets for all members to take home after the meeting.

Janet De Marco was interviewed regarding her novel, *Beyond Appearances*, for a local public Access TV program called *People, Places and Cheri*.

Please e-mail your writing accomplishments to a new e-address: *jdemar08@msn.com*. Your good news will be announced at the next meeting.

Janet De Marco
Member

Elections Will Be Held at the October Meeting

It's that time again! We will elect the 2009 board at this meeting. Be sure and come to hear Paul Williams and vote!

The candidates are:

President: Lynnette Baum

With three-and-one-half years of experience as the VP of Programming and over six months working as President, Lynnette loves the SCWA and would be honored to served as President in 2009.

VP, Programming: Kathy Porter

Having taken over the VP Programming job this June, Kathy is the author of *Grey Guardians*

VP, Membership: Linda Long-Coyne

Secretary: Charla Spence

A writer that specializes in creative training materials, Charla has managed dozens of executive level programs for So. CA Edison, the world's largest electric utility company, and has served with a variety of community organizations over the years. See www.tortugaenterprises.com.

Treasurer: Vanessa Milkuvilch

Publicity Director: Larry Porricelli

Newsletter Editor: Mary Michel Green

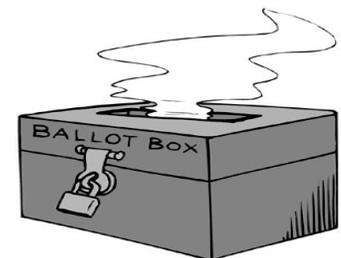
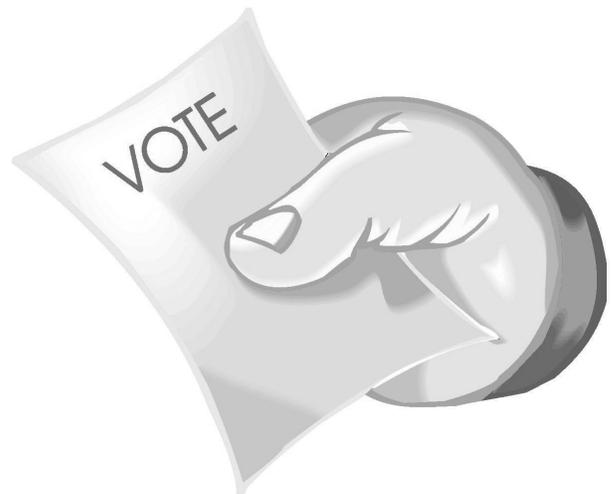
A writer, publication designer and freelance copy editor when she's not battling rheumatoid arthritis, Mary appreciates the SCWA for helping to keep her skills from rusting too much.

Meeting Coordinator: Starlyn Frischmuth (who will be taking over in 2009 from Brennan Harvey, who has done a fantastic job this year).

And, our appreciation for our volunteers who aren't elected, but do so much to make our organization successful, some of whom are:

Newsletter Speaker Reporter: Glenda Brown Rynn

Webmaster: Tony Stoklosa



Thanks

Noted Songwriter to Speak This Month

Williams, from page 1

considers writing songs for Fonzie and the Cunningham family one of life's most enjoyable tasks.

Although most people came to know the witty Mr. Williams as one of Johnny Carson's recurring favorites on *The Tonight Show*, or as an actor in dozens of films, television comedies and dramas, it is his musical legacy that continues to inspire. *We've Only Just Begun*, *Rainy Days and Mondays*, *You and Me Against the World*, *An Old Fashioned Love Song* and *Let Me Be The One* all remain pop classics and are among the 22 tracks on the November 2004 Hip-O Select release *Evergreens: The Very Best of the A&M Years*. Contemporary arrangements of some of these favorites were also recorded in Japan and released on the CD *Love Wants To Dance*, a clear indication of the global appreciation for his work.

Also new for 2006 was

the AIX DVD Audio/Video disc *I'm Going Back There Some Day* featuring Paul Williams and special guests Willie Nelson, Melissa Manchester and Gonzo the Muppet. The full-featured DVD includes stereo and 5.1 surround recordings of some of Paul's favorite songs, complete video of the sessions, interviews, and concert footage of recent performances.

Having completed a successful national tour with Melissa Manchester, he has since performed his classics in venues from New York to Los Angeles. As a part of America's large recovering community, Paul is also very active on the speakers' circuit. Sharing stories of his own escape from addiction, he quips, "You know you're an alcoholic when you misplace a decade." Sober 17 years, his humorous observations of his own life experiences are

augmented by the education and knowledge he gained through his studies and certification from UCLA as a drug rehabilitation counselor.

Privately a devoted father, and publicly lauded for his work as a songwriter, performer, actor and humanitarian, he predicts he'll be remembered for playing Little Enos in the *Smokey and the Bandit* trilogy and for his lyrics to *The Love Boat* theme. A proud parent, Paul considers his son, Cole, and daughter, Sarah, to be his best work. He is happily married to writer Mariana Williams.

We are thankful to her for this biography.

Kathy Porter
VP, Programming
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Writer's Corner



Need Extra Cash?

From *Woman's Day Magazine's 11 Easy Ways to Save Money* (August 11, 2008):

"Do you have books in good condition? Go to cash4books.net, type in the books' ISBN numbers (which you'll find on the back cover or on the copyright page in the front of the books), and see if you can get cash for them. Complete the transaction online, print out a prepaid mailing label, pack up those books and send them in. In just a few days you will either receive a check in the mail or a deposit to your PayPal account. You won't pay a cent—not even for postage."

I tried this – they wouldn't take most of my books, but I sold two for a little less than \$10. Better than nothing! I've also had luck selling on eBay and *half.com*. —Mary Michel Green



**October Meeting:
Saturday
October 18**

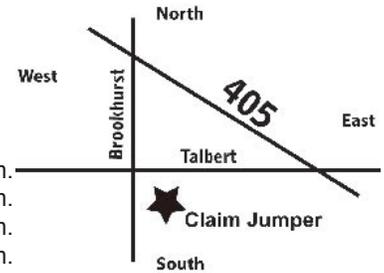
PAUL WILLIAMS
After the Loving—The Playful Art
(See inside for more on Paul Williams.)



LOCATION: Claim Jumper Restaurant

Banquet Room entrance, rear of building
18050 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

BE SURE TO RSVP WHENEVER POSSIBLE!

RSVP before October 13:

Brennan Harvey, Meeting Coordinator, P.O. Box 1585, Huntington Beach, CA 92647-9998. Check payable to SCWA must accompany reservation. Our PayPal online account is temporarily out of commission.

After October 13: E-mail Brennan at meeting@ocwriter.com or message (714) 375-5275



Writers News

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