



Writers News

Volume 11, Number 2.....February 2012

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SCWA Newsletter Contribution Opportunities

Do you have a book or conference review? An article of interest to the SCWA? An event SCWA members should know about? Your SCWA Newsletter accepts contributions (typically 250 words or less) for the "Writer's Corner", "Events and Announcements", and "Reviews" sections of the newsletter. To be considered for the following month's edition, please submit by the 27th of each month. The editor will evaluate all input and determine when, and if, it will be published in the newsletter. Send any contributions to editor@ocwriter.com.

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SCWA President's Message

Larry Porricelli, SCWA President



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February is "Two for the Price of One" Month!

Each SCWA member that attends can bring a non-member for free! Check out our exciting and entertaining speaker and bring a friend. The price is right.

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SCWA Lotteries

Beginning with our January 2012 meeting, SCWA is holding a monthly lottery at our luncheon.

In its inaugural month, SCWA gave away twice the normal number of lottery prizes.

- *Laura Long* won a Bath and Body Works set.
- *Kathy Porter* won a sack of chocolate coins.
- *Brennan Harvey* sacrificed his prize for a chance at a free meeting admission, but drew the 9 of Hearts and lost.
- *Darlene Quinn* won a gift card for Target Stores.
- *Charlene Spence* won a gift card for Wal-Mart Stores.
- *Mariana Williams* won a copy of the book, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*.
- *Irene Jordan Dardashti* won *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* merchandise.

Next month, SCWA will give away three more lottery prizes. Tickets are \$1.00 each. If you buy 5 tickets, you get a 6th ticket free. Good Luck!

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SCWA Monthly Meeting - February 18th Speaker

"You're Not Done"

Mark A. Clements



My love for dark fiction cannot be traced to child-hood trauma, abuse, or neglect. My folks, now both deceased, were fine individuals and terrific parents, and cannot be blamed for a single one of my many faults. Which is really unfair when you think about it. Who can live with the burden of knowing he's responsible for all his own problems?

I'm educated, but not necessarily smart, because after I graduated with a degree in art, I decided that painting was probably not going to make me rich and famous after all, or even pay the rent, so I struck off into another, more lucrative field: writing.

In 1980, I got serious about writing. In 1989 my novel, *6:02*, was published. Every other subsequent year I had another novel published. All the novels were at the very least recommended for an award of some kind, and the last two, *Lorelei* and *The Land of Nod*, won "best of" awards in their category at the San Diego Book Awards in the appropriate year. *The Land of Nod* also won the Theodore S. Geisel "Best of the Best" Award, which means it received the highest recommendation of all the dozens of books of every type entered in the Book Awards that year. Pretty cool.

As creative people we often hear (and say) that it's essential for us to trust our guts, rely on our instincts, "just let things flow." And that's true...sometimes. But not all the time. Not when you're doing your taxes, for example.

And, sorry to say, not nearly as much as you'd like when you're writing.

Most writers stop pushing themselves far too soon. Done, they think. That's my best work. Now I can start the sequel/submit the manuscript/buy myself a Lamborghini.

Wrong.

Why? Because guts are just guts and brains are big fat liars.

Seriously. Your brain will trick you if you let it. Blame evolution. Like any organ, the brain defaults to a minimum level of activity when it's not actively involved in finding food, a mate, or an open Starbucks. And let's face it: in the distant past, killing mammoths for food was a lot more important than finding a fresh metaphor for "big pointy tusks."

But this causes a problem for us modern writerly types.. Unlike a spleen or Isles of Langerhans, a brain is...well, smart. Creative. Given the chance it will use every excuse, story, impulse and hormone at its disposal to lull us into accepting the simplest solution to a problem, the clearest path to a destination, the minimum excuse to stop entirely...all while making us believe our choices are profoundly justified.

The result? For writers: the formulaic plot, the uninteresting character, the drab description, the unsold book. Not to mention the baffled expression on our faces when the rejections roll in.

The solution? For writers: well, that's what I'll be talking about.

That, and the two-headed dog.

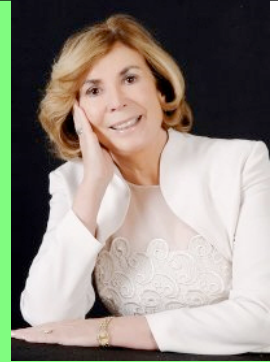
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SCWA Monthly Meeting - January Meeting Highlights

"Time Management for Writers"

Darlene Quinn

by Larry Porricelli, SCWA President



Darlene Quinn, 2011 Indie Excellence Award Winner and best-selling author of a “Webs of Power”, “Twisted Webs”, and the latest, “Webs of Fate”, gave the SCWA members not only a preview of the latest book, but also an enlightening insight into the intimate world of successful writers and what they do outside of writing to enable their success.

“If you do all the things it takes to be a successful author,” said Darlene, “you won’t have time to write. But you need a footprint on the web and in the writing world that makes it appear that you are everywhere.”

Darlene shared that her latest book, “Webs of Fate”, is 500+ pages only because of the success of her previous novels, and the fact that characters live within the author and are real, and writers keep them alive in ongoing plots, as readers and critics ask many questions about those characters and why they do certain things.

Darlene said she writes what she likes to read, page-turning suspense based on what is real, and at the end to hopefully have learned something we didn’t know before.

But the writing is only a part of the effort, as making the footprint on social media is so important to keep in contact with readers and to garner more readers. This takes time, and other people besides the writer. Kathy Porter, also an award-winning successful writer, and SCWA member, has helped Darlene with keeping up the social media successfully with great effort, as has award-winning SCWA writer, Brennan Harvey, who keeps her web page looking so sharp.

A writer should also have a web blog, or a Facebook page like Darlene’s, which is called “Talking Fiction”, where writers post messages, insights and more on these pages and all can read and see. It keeps the writer in contact with other writers, and also lets readers share their questions and comments.

Being a keynote speaker at several events helps bring Darlene’s writing to new exposure. Darlene spoke as keynoter at a Braille Conference, which sold not only 50 copies of the book, “Webs of Power”, but also copies of her earrings, which are mini-copies of her book, “Webs of Fate”. As a result, Darlene’s trilogy of Webs will be made into audiobooks that will go on sale through Amazon and everywhere else books are sold.

But Darlene also gave some great information on her writing style, by saying that with short chapters, readers can peek ahead and see there is only a few pages to read and find themselves not putting the book down.

Also a factor is keeping the story real, and factual, and in the world of fashion that Webs characters inhabit, she is constantly researching the field to keep the reader involved in what is current and true.

You can find Darlene’s page at www.darlenequinn.net, and you can see the trailers for her books.

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SCWA Monthly Meeting - March Speaker Preview

"Science Fantasy"

Deborah Pratt



[Deborah Pratt](#) is a significant force in Hollywood. Her numerous works have touched people all over the world. From the award-winning series "Quantum Leap" to the internationally acclaimed Masterpiece Theatre's "Cora Unashamed," she is a visionary and an inspiration to audiences worldwide.

A master storyteller with a spiritual dream for a better world, [Deborah Pratt](#) breaks the mold of science fiction and creates a genre of science fantasy with the soul of the universe and a key to the human heart. Intricately layered with scientific fact and fascinating detail, "The Vision Quest" is a riveting, action-packed adventure based on the science and technology of today-projected into a probable tomorrow.

[Deborah Pratt](#) is a five-time Emmy nominee, a Golden Globe nominee, and the recipient of The Lillian Gish Award from Women in Film, The Angel Award, The Golden Block Award, and Six B.E.N. Awards.

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SCWA Book Exchange

The SCWA is offering its members the opportunity to bring and drop off books (any subject) at meetings. Any attendee may take any number of books home for free. Leftover books will be donated.

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SCWA Board Meeting Minutes

The SCWA Board of Directors held a Board Meeting on Jan 7, 2012. In attendance were Larry Porricelli (President), Victory Crayne (VP, Programming), Dava White (VP, Meetings), Brennan Harvey (Webmaster), and Steven Jackson (Newsletter Editor). Here is a summary of the decisions.

1. VP of Membership. Larry suggested that in the absence of a volunteer for VP of Membership we divide up the duties among current board members. Dava White will accept checks for membership and update the membership roster file. Victory Crayne will recruit new members.
2. Two for One. The board approved of the idea of recruiting attendance by offering a member to bring a non-member guest for free to a meeting. This will start with the February 2012 meeting. Addendum: Victory Crayne suggests this 2-for-1 rate be allowed only once for a given non-member, otherwise it could easily be abused.
3. VP of Meetings. The board approved of renaming the old "Meeting Coordinator" to be the "VP of Meetings".
4. SCWA address for membership and meeting reservation checks. The board approved using Dava White's rental postal box.
5. Name tags. Brennan Harvey will investigate options and costs.
6. Speaker survey. Victory Crayne will send out another survey on speaker topics.
7. Mailing lists. Brennan Harvey will code the new website to allow the Newsletter Editor and VP of Meetings to send emails individually to members via our website.
8. Raffles at meetings. The board liked the idea of having more raffles at meetings. Dava White will bring some gifts and try a "Let's Make a Deal."
9. Book Exchange. The board approved of allowing members to bring and drop off books (any subject) at meetings. Any attendee may take any number of books home for free. Dava White will take the leftover books to donate elsewhere.
10. Sponsors. The board decided to try recruiting more sponsors by offering to place their logo on our website if they would donate gifts at our raffles.
13. Newsletter advertising. Victory Crayne recommended that SCWA would get more advertising revenue in our newsletter if the rates were very low. Our cost is zero. Victory recommends for a 2x3.5 inch ad a rate of one-third and for a full page ad a rate of ten percent of rate listed in the January 2012 newsletter. Brennan Harvey suggested that advertisers in the newsletter will have their logos displayed on our website.

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SCWA Writer's Corner

“An Oft-Forgotten Secret to an Author's Success”

By Patricia Fry

How close are you to your book project? If you're like most authors, you're quite intimate with your book—at least to a point. You are writing the book that you want to write and you're making all of the decisions based on what you want for your project. You even refer to it as “my book.”

Yes, you came up with the idea for the book and you're putting all of that work, time and money into it. In order to create something that will sell, however, you have to consider your readers more seriously than you regard your own desires.

During the Planning Stages

The reader must be your primary concern. What does your reader need or want? What is lacking in the category of your book? Is there room for another book on the subject or genre of your choice? Your thought should be on the needs or desires of a particular segment of people and not on your desire to write a particular book.

What happens if you disregard this advice? You may write a book for which there is no eager audience, thus your book will likely fail.

While You're Writing the Book

You must keep your audience in mind. For nonfiction, be intimately familiar with your competition so you are certain that your book brings something different, timely and valuable to the table. Organize your book so it is easy to use, and then write with clarity. For fiction, choose a genre that is currently popular or for which there is a wide base of faithful readers. And never lose sight of your readers as you tell your story, lest you leave them behind in a trail of dust. Climb into the reader's head and stay there as you write the story expressly for him.

Ignore this suggestion and you will lose your readers even before they've had a chance to dog ear the book. And you can bet that, if they talk about your book, it won't be favorably.

When Designing Your Book

Think of your audience. Will the design attract or repel them? People who purchase coffee table books, for example, expect something they can display elegantly. Cooks and grillers might appreciate a spiral bound book for ease in using the recipes. And a useful nonfiction book or a wonderful novel will go unnoticed if it has a blah appearance.

When you Begin Promoting the Book

You must continue to think about your audience or sales will be dismal. By now, you should know who your readers are. Where are they? How will you locate them? How do they purchase books like yours—online mostly, in specialty stores or through other trusted outlets? Where do they congregate in person and online? How do they prefer to be approached? Follow your potential readers, don't expect them to find you.

It's NOT About You!

When you become an author, it seems as though it's all about you. You come up with the idea for a book. You write the book and you have to market it. But in order to be successful with your publishing venture, you really must take the focus off of yourself and concentrate pretty much fully on your potential readers.

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Events and Announcements

[The SCWA Information Disclaimer.](#)

Southern California Writer's Conference - San Diego

This annual writer's conference is President's Day weekend, February 17-20, 2012. Check out <http://www.writersconference.com/sd> for more information.

SCWA Publications

The Braille Institute has chosen *Webs of Power* to go into audio book production with an award winning narrator. Soon a digital audio book will be available to the vision impaired, with a Braille version to follow.

Book Launch

SCWA's Evelyn Marshall will be having a book launch and signing for her novel *The Provider* at Temple Beth David in Westminster from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m on Sunday, February 26th. Bagels included.

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SCWA Writer's Corner (con't)

I've met many writers who became authors just because it suited them. They wrote a book for a particular audience, but without much regard for that audience. It's sort of like the seamstress living in a village of giants who loves making tiny dresses. All she wants to do is design and sew miniature dresses and then she gets upset when the dresses aren't selling. If she'd thought more about her audience than her own desires, she would have been making clothes for giants and she would have been making many more sales.

Don't be like the short-sighted seamstress. Enter into the world of authorship by considering your audience first and foremost and keep them in mind throughout the marketing process.

Patricia Fry is the author of 34 books, including her latest, *Promote Your Book, Over 250 Proven, Low-Cost Tips and Techniques for the Enterprising Author*. Patricia is the executive director of SPAWN (Small Publishers, Artists and Writers Network). www.spawn.org. Follow her informative publishing blog: www.matilijapress.com/publishingblog. Visit her websites: www.matilijapress.com and www.patriciafry.com.

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SCWA Planned Speaker Schedule

DATE	SPEAKER	SUBJECT / SPECIALTY
February 18, 2012	Mark A. Clements	Horror / Sci-fi / Fantasy
March 17, 2012	Deborah Pratt	TV Producer
April 21, 2012	M. Louisa Locke	Self-publishing
May 19, 2012	Dara Marks	Character transformation / Screenwriting
June 16, 2012	Mike Sirota	Editing
July 21, 2012	TBD	TBD
August 18, 2012	TBD	TBD
September 15, 2012	TBD	TBD
October 20, 2012	TBD	TBD
November 17, 2012	TBD	TBD
December 15, 2012	TBD	TBD
January 19, 2013	TBD	TBD

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SCWA Board of Directors

President..... Larry Porricelli
 VP, Programming Victory Crayne
 VP, Meetings Dava White
 Treasurer Charla Spence
 Publicity Director Larry Porricelli
 Webmaster..... Brennan Harvey
 Newsletter Editor Steven Jackson



Membership Information

membership@ocwriter.com

Meeting Reservations

Dava White, meeting@ocwriter.com

714-204-6500

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SCWA Members Directory

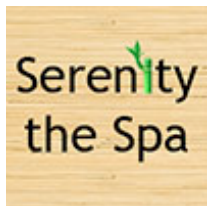
The SCWA now offers a complementary listing with all paid memberships. This is entirely voluntary. If you would like your contact information listed in the newsletter, please forward this information to the editor at editor@ocwriter.com.

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Baum, Lynnette	therightwriter@cox.net	www.the-right-writer.com	949-654-3891
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SCWA Sponsors

The SCWA gratefully acknowledges our sponsors:



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SCWA Newsletter Advertising

If you would like to list services in the SCWA Newsletter you may apply for a paid listing by sending an email request to editor@ocwriter.com. You may purchase either business card or web page size.

Size	Monthly	Quarterly	Half-Year	Year
2 x 3.5" :	\$5.00	\$13.00	\$25.00	\$40.00
Full page:	\$10.00	\$25.00	\$40.00	\$70.00

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SCWA Monthly Meeting Information and Map

Meeting 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.



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SCWA Information Disclaimer

The SCWA receives information on various services, writing contests and events. As a courtesy, we will forward the information to our members. Unless otherwise indicated, the SCWA does not discourage, encourage or recommend any of the services, contests or events. Many of these services, contests and events cost money; therefore, we recommend that you evaluate the opportunities based on your individual situation and interest. Because of our membership email protection policy, please do not forward information to the general membership directly. We request that all members forward any information to the SCWA President for approval and forwarding to the membership.

SCWA Members wishing to share appropriate writing related information and resources are welcome to do so via the SCWA Facebook page or the SCWA discuss@ocwriter.com discussion board. The SCWA Newsletter Editor will determine the information to be contained in the SCWA on-line newsletter which is primarily used for official SCWA information.

[Events and Announcements](#)

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