

Dear Writers,

Indiana Jones is the main character in a 1981 movie which stars Harrison Ford as an archeology professor. A reluctant hero, he finds himself on a crazy adventure to find and seize a biblical artifact known as the Ark of the Covenant. My favorite scene in the movie is the boulder scene, which begins with Indy holding a bag of sand. He removes sand from the bag to make it equal to a coveted gold statue and exchanges the bag for the statue. He and his sidekick breathe a sigh of relief when the exchange is made smoothly... until... the room begins to shake and rocks fall from the ceiling. Before long, Indy is jumping ditches, running through spider webs, dodging darts and running from a giant rolling boulder. The final moment of the scene is perfect. His hat falls off as he escapes through a small door and he reaches in and grabs the hat before the massive door slams shut, almost on his hand.

When I think about my role as president of the League, I think of myself as Indy. I am on this wild quest to figure out how to manage things for the League in a new hybrid world where people are overworked and overwhelmed most of the time. Yes. I am comparing my experience being your League President since January 2022 as a wild adventure. Yes. I am referring to myself as a reluctant hero.

While we temporarily lost our beloved League Lines, we are rebuilding it. With incredibly capable volunteers, we have begun the newsletter again. We have learned to gather virtually rather than in-person and have managed to maintain virtual Open Mics and Book Clubs. The League co-hosted, with Northern Vermont University, the 2021 Vermont High School Writing Contest, with nearly 150 entries. Winners and runners-up were awarded complimentary one-year membership in the League. We also held a successful in-person Writers Meets Agents event this past August. We are doing it. We are adjusting to things as they change. We are making it happen.

It has been exciting and unpredictable to try and fill past president Shawn Anderson's shoes, and at every turn, I have found myself dodging rolling rocks and grabbing my missing hat and breathing sighs of relief after in-person and virtual events. As hard as it gets, I will not give up. It probably isn't a comforting comparison for you as a member of the League of Vermont Writers to think of me as Indy, but I'm being honest about how it has felt to try to lead us into 2022 and beyond. I am not complaining. I am honored to have this role. Thank you for trusting me to do it.

I am not the first person to tell you that these are crazy times. You've heard it before. I just want to take this moment to say THANKS for hanging in there as we at the League recalibrate to Covid. THANKS for volunteering to help out when you can. THANKS for attending the events we have planned. JUST THANKS! Writing is lonely, but not when we reach out to each other as we leap across the unknown.

All the best,

Amy Braun

Introducing the New and Improved League Lines

As life slowly begins to become what it once was, we are happy to announce the resurrection of League Lines. The exact schedule of production is still in the works, but league members can look forward to future editions of the newsletter. If you have any writing news to share, short submissions for works, or recent writing accomplishments you would like to share, please email them to the league to be considered to be featured in an upcoming edition of League Lines. We appreciate every one of you and look forward to sharing more news and events with you all.

Writers Meet Agents

It was a rather intimate setting at Pierce Hall in Rochester, VT when we gathered for the League's biennial "Writers meet Agents" event. Despite a smaller attendance than pre-pandemic events, the atmosphere was charged with camaraderie and the relief of being able to meet again in person to share projects in progress and plan for the future armed with new writing skills.

The guest author Robin MacArthur, speaking on "Rewilding Fiction: Practicing Kinship, Biophilia, and Mutuality on the Page" took participants on a colorful journey through nature, sharing tips and tricks on how to incorporate nature into our writing as opposed to just using it as fill in scenery description.

Katharine Sands, Sarah Jane Freymann Literary Agency, Susan Nystoriak, Golden Wheat Literary Agency, and Leah Pierre, Ladderbird Literary Agency were our three publishing agents of the event. Their 'dance cards' were filled with authors in hopes of getting representation for their writing.

There were many items contributed for a fund-raising raffle. Our three agents provided an end of day Question and Answer panel for all manner of questions big and small.

Sandy's Books and Bakery catered the event providing yummy rolls, muffins, soup, salads and beverages



A letter from the new intern

Alli McLaughlin

Writing student at Northern Vermont University- Johnson

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I introduce myself to this wonderful league. As long as I can remember, I have always been a writer in one way or another, and it feels refreshing to surround myself with fellow literature lovers.

I come from the Orlando area, and earned my first degree in business at the University of Central Florida. After some time post-grad working in the business field, and after being forced out of it by COVID, I moved to Tennessee to regroup.

From there, I decided to make the move to Vermont in search of mountains, a new setting, and a fresh start. I have since been attending Northern Vermont University in Johnson as a writing, editing, and publishing major.



In January, we will be having elections for the Board of the League of Vermont Writers. We have been blessed with some very talented officers to date, but some have to step aside because it is time to move on or because the duty of regular life is calling.

Secretary: Must be familiar with parliamentary procedures as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order, be able to navigate Google Docs and Facebook, and function with Zoom and other various useful technologies. Will take notes from quarterly board meetings.

Several At-Large Positions: Must be willing to attend quarterly virtual board meetings, navigate Facebook and be willing to interact within the Board's private group regularly and help plan League events.

Upcoming League Events

Open Mic: Thursday, October 27th at 7:00 PM. If interested in attending or reading, email the League at lw@leagueofvermontwriters.org to get the link. Email Hank Parker at hank@hankparkerauthor.com with any questions.

Fall Program: October 22 @ 10am via Zoom. Guest speaker will be Tessa Wegert. Information below.

Tessa Wegert is the author of a series of mystery novels featuring Vermont-born senior investigator Shana Merchant, which include *Death in the Family*, *The Dead Season*, *Dead Wind*, and *The Kind to Kill*. A former digital media strategist and freelance journalist, Tessa has contributed to such publications as *Forbes*, *The Huffington Post*, *The Economist*, and *The Globe and Mail*. Raised in Quebec near the border of Vermont, she now lives with her husband and children in Connecticut, where she studies martial arts and is co-president of Sisters in Crime CT.

The Legacy of the Locked Room Mystery

For almost two centuries, crime fiction writers have been crafting locked room mysteries that give sleuths and readers the challenging task of solving an "impossible crime." Join mystery author Tessa Wegert, whose novels include *Death in the Family* ("A deliciously complicated locked-room mystery that would make Agatha Christie proud" — New York Times bestselling author Margaret Coel) as she explores the evolution of this classic subgenre and its role in today's popular serial killer thrillers.

Member Accomplishments

Gail Elizabeth Wind won the 2022 Vermont Writer's Prize in prose. The contest is sponsored by Vermont Magazine and Green Mountain Power. Her winning essay, "Twenty-Eight and Counting" recounted some of her many adventures since moving to the state over twenty-eight years ago. It is published in the summer issue of the Vermont Magazine.

Kathleen McKinley Harris of Charlotte has had a story, "The Secret of the House Highest on the Hill Near the Diggins," accepted to be performed Oct. 15, 2022, in *Bridgeside Books*, Waterbury, Vt. for its "Spooky Tales." The performance will be done at 7 p.m. in person. Kathleen's story is based on a real experience dating from the summer when she was 12 when an Old Timer told of ghosts associated with the house and property in Hyde Park, Vermont.

Calling All Writers!

We are accepting submissions for poems, short stories, brief nonfiction articles, etc. to be featured in upcoming League Lines. Submissions can be previously published, or not. Email submissions to Alli at axm05281@nvu.vsc.edu