



LEAGUE OF VERMONT WRITERS, INC.

League Lines

The League of Vermont Writers Newsletter

Join us!

July 22, 2017:

Jerry Johnson's,
870 Creek Road,
Albany VT

Directions, page 7

10:00am-5:00pm

SUMMER 2017 PROGRAM

**Some of our
presenters include:**

Shawn Anderson
Amy Braun
Pat Esden
Jon Gailmor
Joan Grant
Kathleen McKinley Harris
Tammy Flanders Hetrick
Jerry Johnson
Shannara Johnson
Pat Goudey O'Brien
Annalisa Parent
Mark Pendergrast

*Register online or by filling out
the form on page 7 and
mailing to:*

**League of Vermont Writers
Registrar, PO Box 5046,
Burlington, VT 05402**

*For schedule at a glance, see
pg. 7*

More on pages 5, 6, and 7

2ND BIENNIAL "INTO THE WORDS" LVW'S SUMMER RETREAT AND MEMBER SHOWCASE

Next month marks our 2nd Biennial Into the Words: An LVW Summer Writing Retreat and Member Showcase. It's hosted again by member Jerry Johnson at his schoolhouse farm.

In the earliest days of the League, programs for members were about gathering to share ideas and to spend time together. In 2015, a special subcommittee orchestrated this summer event to bring LVW back to its roots. Purposefully named "Into the Words" playing off the hit-musical Into the Woods, the committee wanted to create that feeling of getting lost in the thing that you love (words) with people who share that adoration (writers).

Into the Words is a program that highlights the craft, skills, and talents of our members. The public can attend, but all presentations, workshops, readings, and exhibits, are provided by members of LVW.

Mark your calendars and get prepared to let the muse lead you into the words: Join us on July 22nd. Attend a session, find a comfy place to write, meditate, think, or chat with friends old and new. The day is one to inspire your creativity and surround yourself with others who share the same passion for writing.

Get all the details and learn about some of the workshops being offered by pouring over the pages of this very special edition of League Lines.

**TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT
THE LEAGUE!
HAVE THEM VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:
www.leagueofvermontwriters.org**

Letter from the President



As I reflect back upon the first half of this year I realize emphatically that to stop learning dampens the beauty seen and felt in growth, and perhaps even within existence itself. I understand this may seem dramatic. However, it very well may be the driving force behind my desire to continue to learn new things or enhance what is already there.

As writers who embrace the art for more than personal use, isn't it a natural progression to embrace those who read? Those individuals who stand on our platform are the very individuals who breathe life into our work and then spread the word to others.

Where am I going with this? It is a glimpse into how I think. I look at myself, at others, and how it all ties together. My grandmother used to say, "build a firm foundation." This simple phrase was more profound the more I pondered it.

What does building a firm foundation mean for the League of Vermont Writers and all of our members? From my perspective, it means looking at all we have in place right now. LVW has a wonderful website upon which we can build, able to support our efforts to inform writers about who we are. We have social media accounts such as Facebook and Twitter. We hold four programs a year and take part in various community events. I believe the League has built its firm foundation.

How should the LVW continue to grow from here? One person cannot answer this alone, so I won't even try. The organization belongs to all of its membership. This is a question we all need to consider. How as a League do we choose to build upon the foundation we have now?

Who is ready to join me in embracing the LVW, ready to create the organization we would like to see in the future? Yes, I am talking about volunteering again.

"No" is not a word I am worried about hearing. It is OK to say no if there's not enough time to fit volunteering into your schedule. But consider finding perhaps one hour a month to build a stronger organization. Perhaps one time you will be able to say yes. All I ask is you consider for a moment.

When is the best time to volunteer? Any time. The LVW has many things that need to be done throughout the year. At this time, a small handful of members are completing all of the tasks, putting in hours every week to keep the organization running as professionally as possible. We create quality programs, discuss ways to enhance services we offer members. Right now, we make it work. With added volunteer help, we could expand and create more. With added workshops and activity, we expand our outreach, increase resources, and provide more cost-effective options.

Why did I ask you to ask these questions of yourselves? Because of the intrinsic worth of growth as a writer and growth as a member of the LVW!

How does being an active part of LVW help you the member? How does it help you the writer? How does this enhance the LVW and the opportunities it provides? I have asked you to consider where, what, how, who, when, and now why.

Let's work together to answer these questions as a community, growing together to build upon a firm foundation within the League of Vermont Writers.

Bobbi Jo Davis

Joseph Citro

By Tristan Rich-Goding

Joseph A. Citro told us that he was unsure what sparked his interest in the macabre. He cited his father's imaginative way of borrowing another person's experiences for his anecdotes as the primary source of inspiration behind Joe's own interest in storytelling. This motivated him to be an active writer and storyteller as a child. This also led to criticism from his teacher when he told her that he wanted to be a writer.

"You can't spell," she said.

After doing some soul-searching, Citro dedicated himself to an intensive personal writing program. Each day, he'd write three pages. Doing this, finally, he managed to write his first novel, *The Monster Hunter* (re-titled *Lake Monsters*).

His first published novel

was *Shadow Child* (note: he was greatly dissatisfied with the cover chosen by his original publishers), but he said every writer is entitled to have at least two "first" novels.

Discussing publishing and distribution, Citro noted how the writing world has changed. The dark side of writing is the business side, he said, and the light part is the art. With dark humor and no hesitation, Citro described his contempt for the publishing industry, saying their goal is to deceive the writer and find ways to pay you as little as legally possible. Now that Citro self-publishes, he's writing more and is happy to do it independently. He can now indulge his passion in rescuing history through exploring the supernatural.

In concluding his talk, Citro acknowledged that self-publishing is not easy and that writing specifically about Vermont lore may have a limited audience. From his perspective,

PROGRAM RECAPS

though, by self-publishing, a writer can put the art back in writing and still reach a ready audience.

Joe Citro's seven pieces of advice:

- 1 - Write only for yourself. (That way, you will always have an audience.)
- 2 - Network and join groups.
- 3 - If you get discouraged, quit. You can always start again.
- 4 - Realize that there is an element of luck in the endeavor.
- 5 - Write what you believe in.
- 6 - Don't be afraid to say "no."
- 7 - Don't lose sight of the art of writing.

His final message: We can evolve while we create.

LVW Needs Your Support—Consider Donating Today to the 2018 Tech Campaign!

In January the LVW embarked on new territory with a brand new website, complete with a blog, member password-protected portal, and administrative membership database (through Wild Apricot software). Our new website is hosted and maintained with the support of a local web development company, Eternity.

Our new website allows us greater visibility within the writing community; a wider variety and reach in promoting our members work and in educating our members; a more efficient way of managing our members and program registrations; and future growth potential for how we

conduct business and support our members.

Entering into this land of technology and marketing means we have new costs associated with the upkeep and growth of our website and all its bells and whistles. As we forecast for next year, we need to raise \$1,620—which can be broken down into the following itemized list shown to the right. Please help us reach this target. **Consider donating today! You can make checks out to: LVW. On the memo line, write: 2018 Tech Campaign. Mail your check to: LVW, PO Box 5046, Burlington, VT 05402.**

2018 Tech Budget:

Wild Apricot \$475.00

Eternity

Hosting and Support \$800.00

SSL Certificate \$250.00

Domain Name Registration \$25.00

Adding Donations \$70.00

Total IT Support Budget 2018

\$1,620.00

Write it: Joni Cole

By Justine O'Keefe

justineokeefe@longmeadow.com

In her presentation, Joni B. Cole exposed the stark nakedness of writers. In the thoughts and actions of our characters, the words we choose and the phrases we use, through dialog and dramatic moments, we put ourselves on the page. Barefaced and vulnerable, we make manifest the workings of our hearts and minds. The work is hard and risky, but Joni exhorts us to find joy in what we do. Even when our stories are filled with darkness, our process can make us happy.

Rather than disparage our rough drafts, Joni says we should approach them in a spirit of discovery. We might uncover the germ of an idea, a phrase that perfectly expresses an emotion or gesture, an insight about our story or character that has eluded us. Joni emphasizes the value of writing prompts. Those short, timed writings can teach us a lot

about how our minds work, how we structure our writing, what thoughts and ideas have been lying just below the surface of our consciousness.

After a ten-minute write, Joni asked volunteers to share their pieces. A writing teacher for many years, she listened to each draft, then skillfully teased out aspects of craft inherent in the piece. In one, she pointed out how the placement of back story can add to or detract from the vibrancy of the piece. In another, the shared history of two characters is revealed in a simple detail. And from the third, we learn a lesson close to this writer's heart: never write a story in which the dog dies.

Joni reminds us to trust ourselves and believe in our work. She says to surround ourselves with people who encourage us and can help us move our work forward. As we uncover what motivates our characters or find the universal human experience in our personal story, we will know the joy of creation, the satisfaction of telling a story no one else can tell.

You and Your Credits

Pat Goudey O'Brien: signed with Countryman Press to contribute to two travel guide books about Vermont, with projected publication dates in 2018.

Kathleen McKinley Harris: editor, Chittenden County Historical Society—published Tom Henry's article on harness racing tracks in the Champlain Valley (VT & NY, Spring, 2017). Covers period from 1840 – 1911.

Sas Carey: author, *Reindeer Herders in My Heart*, 2013.

Amy Braun: short story, "Vanilla," in *Brilliant Flash Fiction*, Issue 13, March, 2017 (online).

Living the Good Life: Julie McGrath

By Michele Lemieux-Madison

Julie McGrath's presentation at the Springtime is the Write Time event in April was energetic and personal. She spoke of things I already knew, but knowing and being reminded in such an enthusiastic voice are two different things. I've been through hell and I chose to be happy. She brought back to mind the journey that we all have to struggle through and that we sometimes forget.

Life has to be fun, it has to have a purpose. The most controversial topic could be about letting go of toxic people. My colleague said the millennial generation was all about "What's in it for me?" She is not wrong, but we have so many

distractions keeping us from doing what we should be doing that, sometimes, we have to cut people off from our lives. Not to mention those who are sucking all our energy.

Julie's message may not have been new, but we all need to hear it from time to time. It never gets old, because we often forget to just be. Be in the moment. Be happy.

She made really good points about all the distractions in life eating up a lot of time that should be spent doing something constructive in the pursuit of our goals. We are always looking at our cell phones or our tablets.

The two major messages that

touched me from Julie's presentation involved analyzing where I spend my time (I know a lot of it is wasted on social media) and the importance of a support system. That's not true...All her points are important!

Finding joy and setting goals in writing, participating in activities and doing work that we love—it's all vital to living a happy and healthy life.

Good job Julie! I'm already halfway through your book!

**PROGRAM
RECAPS**

SAVE THE DATE:

09.30.17 is Wicked Wording This Way Comes

This year, our quarterly fall program will be a pre-Halloween-themed writing event featuring author-speakers from Vermont and beyond. Presentations will focus on publishing successes, paths to publication, platforms & book promotion, and of course, wicked word craft. (And yes, there will be pumpkins!)

More details to come, and maybe a big announcement at Into the Words.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A SPEAKER FOR INTO THE WORDS?

Last Call! Are you a member of LVW and want to present at this year's Into the Words?

Email lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org by July 10th with your interest in joining the program. A member of the planning committee will respond with further details.



EXHIBIT YOUR WORK AND/OR SERVICES AT INTO THE WORDS: LVW'S SUMMER RETREAT AND MEMBER SHOWCASE

Are you interested in showcasing your work in our members' showcase this July? This is a free perk for members (which means you have to be current on your dues: write to Tommy Walz, membership chair, if unsure: twalz@aol.com).

Please note that you must bring your own table and be responsible for its supervision. This includes the sale of your books and the exchange of monies.

Please email lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org if you intend to showcase your work so event-planners can provide appropriate space. In the subject line of your email please write: Into the Words-Showcase. All those intending to showcase their work must notify LVW by Friday, July 10th.

A Few Titles of Sessions being Offered at the Summer Program

Building a Solid Foundation for
Your Writing Castle: Defining Your
Persona, Platform, and Plan

Using Your Senses to Get Into the
Writing Zone

Cranking Out a Hit Song
Self-Editing for Writers

The 6 steps to go from Struggling
Writer to Published Author

Publishing Four Books in 2017, and
How I Am Surviving the Experience

Revision is like a Haircut

Co-writing a Novel

2017 Summer Program, continued

Are you coming to “Into the Words”—LVW’s 2017 Summer Retreat and Member Showcase?

Use this nifty guide and checklist to help you prepare for an awesome time!

A few reminders:

Cell phone and internet service is spotty at best

There is uneven terrain and we’ve done our best to make things as handicap accessible as possible, but please be mindful as you go about the grounds

Parking is limited, but we manage along the road. Carpool if you can.

There will be no fridge or community coolers provided for personal food and beverage

Some beverages and snacks will be provided by LVW: lunch is Bring Your Own.

We can’t control the weather

The final day’s schedule will be provided upon check-in

A few recommendations from the planning committee:

Wear outdoor, walking footwear

Carpool (good parking is limited and the drive is long for some)

Arrive early and check-in at the welcome & registration table upon arrival

Bring your own lunch in a personal, private cooler if you have items that need to be refrigerated

Dress for anything and pack sunscreen and/or bug spray and sunglasses [we do provide shade]

Things to bring (check them off as you pack them):

Water bottle (cups and water will be provided, but it may be more beneficial to have a water bottle you can refill and carry around)

Lunch (with cooler)

Bug spray

Sunscreen

Sunglasses

Camera (you may want to take photos or have photos taken of you)

Lawn chair (Jerry can’t provide chairs for everyone)

Writing utensils and notepaper

Showcase materials (*if you plan to exhibit)

This includes your own table and cash to make change if you’re selling your work

Cash/checkbook (in case you want to purchase something while you’re there or make a donation)



Registration Form

LVW 2017 Summer Program

Register online at www.leagueofvermontwriters.org or fill out the form below and mail with a check to:
League of Vermont Writers Registrar, PO Box 5046, Burlington, VT 05402

Make check payable to: *LVW Summer Program*

Registrar: lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org

DATE: July 22, 2017 **TIME:** 10:00am-5:00pm

LOCATION: Jerry Johnson's, 870 Creek Road, Albany VT (physical location); 870 Creek Road, Irasburg, VT (mailing address)

If using Mapquest, use the above mailing address to get directions that will bring you right to Jerry's door.

If using a GPS, this can be tricky, as it's unknown which address (physical or mailing) would be the most accurate. Please plan accordingly by giving yourself plenty of time to arrive and by printing out a hardcopy of these addresses and directions.

Directions from the common in Irasburg: Pass Ray's Market on your left with Irasburg's common on your right. You are now 3.3 miles from Jerry's schoolhouse. Just after Ray's Market, you will pass a church on your right. Continue straight ahead down Creek Road. (It may not have a sign.) About 100 feet past the church you will come to a road that forks to the left. Do NOT take it. Continue straight. After about 3 miles you will come to a blinking light at a 4-way intersection. Continue straight. Jerry's schoolhouse is the 2nd place on the right, about 0.2 miles after the blinking light. Look for "870" just below the mailbox. Park along the road. If you get lost, you can ask people in Ray's Market or anyone on Creek Road, "Hey, how do I get to Jerry Johnson's schoolhouse?" Jerry's number: [\(802\) 754-2265](tel:8027542265).

Schedule at a glance:

(*A day-schedule will also be provided upon check-in)

10-10:30 Welcome/Arrival

10:30-12:30 Sessions (offered at 1/2 hour and hour-long increments)

12:30-1:30 Picnic Lunch (Bring Your Own bagged lunch)

1:30-3:30 Afternoon Sessions

3:30-4:30 Ice cream social (provided by the League)

4:30-5:00 Send off and closing

*At any point, people may skip a session and opt for writing, social time, or contemplation of the pastoral setting.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Members: _____ @ \$25 ea. registration = \$ _____

Nonmembers: _____ @ \$35 ea. registration = \$ _____

[Students, ask about our student discount]

Tax deductible donation: \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Check # _____

LVW Board: Bobbi Jo Davis, president; Shawn Anderson, vice-president; Julia Hoover, secretary, Alyssa Berthiaume, past president; Ron Jensen, treasurer; Wendy Heilig, Annalisa Parent, Tammy Hetrick, Shannara Johnson and Lisa Halvorsen at large.

Membership: Tommy Walz; Critique service: Sharon Putnam.

League Lines is published four times per year, in January, April, July, and September. Questions or information can be emailed to us at lw@leagueofvermontwriters.org

Tommy Walz
157 Camp St.
Barre, VT 05641