



LEAGUE OF VERMONT WRITERS, INC.

League Lines

The League of Vermont Writers Newsletter

Join us!

January 21,
2017

DoubleTree Hotel
South Burlington,
VT

WINTER 2017 PROGRAM & ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

JOHN CHURCHMAN

PRESENTING:

The Sweet Success Story of Sweet Pea & Friends: A Journey Through Both Traditional and Unconventional Paths to Publication

Continued on page 6

John will share his journey and success story into the wonderful world of publishing, complete with discussing the traditional path versus the creative and unconventional path he chose instead. Through John's presentation, he will provide key tips and vital pieces of advice that every writer on the path to publication should know. Please come prepared with your questions as he will be sharing insights to your personal areas of interest.

John Churchman worked for a number of years in New York City as an airbrush photo illustrator before moving to



Photo Credit: Jim Brown

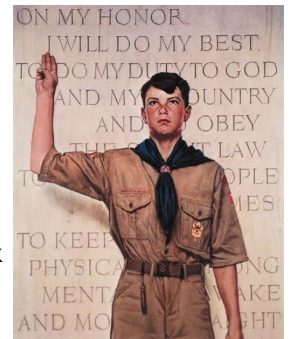
BUD EDGERTON

PRESENTING:

The Unknown Rockwell: The True Story of a Neighbor and Family Friend to One of the Country's Most Prolific 20th-Century Painters

Continued on page 6

Bud Edgerton will share with us his story of knowing Norman Rockwell, famous American artist, as a neighbor, model, and family friend. Reading excerpts from his book, *The Unknown Rockwell*, accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, those in attendance will get a glimpse from 1939, when Norman arrived in the valley, through 1953 when he left W. Arlington for Stockbridge, due to his wife's illness. Bud will talk about the option a film director has on the book to make a feature film, which is in progress. A sought-after guest lecturer about his experiences as friend, next door neighbor to the



YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT

The Young Writers Project will also be presenting during this year's program. YWP Executive Director and Founder, Geoffrey Gevalt, as well as young writers will provide an overview of the Vermont-based organization, read some of their work, and lead a creative writing exercise. Attendees will learn about opportunities to mentor young writers. Visit youngwritersproject.org for more information about the organization.

Letter from the President

My dearest members,

It is so very difficult to believe that this is my last President's letter. Writing this is incredibly bittersweet. I swear it was only yesterday when Immediate Past President, Deb Fennell, approached me to see if I had any interest in this officer role. Only yesterday when I penned my very first letter to membership which began:

Our founders' original thoughts and guidance has led us now for 85 years... As you can imagine, coming in to this leadership role ... is both humbling and exciting, invigorating and challenging...

I can say without any doubt that these feelings have held strong throughout my three-year term. I have been humbled by the wealth of talent among our membership; excited by forward progress and programming and positive feedback; invigorated by gatherings like Into the Words and Writers Meet Agents, by fresh ideas of those that serve alongside me, and by working with our student interns from Champlain college; and challenged with always having to consider the bigger picture, our long term sustainability, our financial outlook, our role in the writing community, and our vision for the future. Three years seems hardly enough time to really dig deep with any of the latter.

Yet, in the last three years we've accomplished some incredible things. Before writing this letter, I took the time to reread all

my previous ones. From them I was able to glean just how many wonderful things we've accomplished in the last three years since my induction. Of these, I am particularly proud of the success of the inaugural biennial tradition Into the Words: Summer Retreat and Member Show Case (July 2015), WMA 2014 and 2016, and our internship relationship with Champlain College's Professional Writing Program.

Lastly, I am particularly excited and gratified to be unveiling to you – finally, three years later – a new website that satisfies the promises I've made throughout my term about what it would do for our organization and for our members. I can only hope that it truly provides for LVW a better chance for the future—stronger visibility and sustainability to ensure this organization's success for another 85 years.

But more than initiatives, more than projects and goals, or Board objectives, I am so very blessed, so very thankful for the opportunity to have met so many amazing people. To have grown such a fabulous network. To have been placed in the center of one of the state's most talented bodies of writers. Every program I feel your energy, your spirit, your passion for words, for stories. Every program I feel a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging, a sense of home. And it has always been that deeply engrained feeling that has motivated me to do better, work

harder, and reach farther in my role.

I can only hope that our new leadership experiences the same overwhelming sense of community that I have. That the new leadership has the chance to meet as many amazing people as I have. And that they feel throughout their term that this is a job worth doing even though the pay is terrible (cue audience laughter). I am excited to announce the slate of directors and officers in this issue, having the utmost faith that they will take this organization further ahead into the here and now and into the future.

But just as I did in my very first letter, I want to make one more call to arms. I encourage you all to become more involved. To lend us your hands, skills, and talents. To help us continue to be one of the oldest and best writing organizations in the state. There are plenty of places where you are needed and where the extra help would be welcomed. To quote myself: Let us leave our fingerprints like bread crumbs for the next generations of writers to follow.

Thank you for the experience and the opportunity to have led you all these last three years. I am so very appreciative, so very humbled.

For the good of the cause (now and always),

Alyssa



FALL 2016 PROGRAM RECAPS

Nancy Means Wright, *The Writing Life* by Paul Mascitti

NANCY MEANS WRIGHT gave a talk about *THE WRITING LIFE*, only casually mentioning she has published 21 books!

Nancy called herself a “late bloomer” and told how her housemates often said things like, “She’s not working, just writing,” which many in attendance in September could well identify with. Joseph Campbell was a great influence on her, she said, with his “call to be involved.”

Nancy suggests it can be helpful to have someone to help achieve your goals. She has at times invented an “agent” to communicate with publishers, admits she is constantly listening in on conversations, and says all the facts in a novel can be lies, but the characters have to ring true.

“Fiction writers are lucky; we can make things come out!”

She talked about the “Head vs Heart” struggle, and how life suggests art. Nancy told us about discovering that one of her recent ancestors had been “illegitimate,” or born “out of wedlock” as they used to say, a circumstance that she turned into a book: *Queens Never Make Bargains*.

After talking about the ups and downs of publishing, of books going out of print and publishers going out of business, etc., she called herself a “living example” of getting thru it all. She was a great inspiration to all and received very warm applause.

Jensen Beach, *Surface Tension* by Paul Mascitti

JENSEN BEACH, who hailed primarily as a teacher at Johnson State College, spoke about what he calls *SURFACE TENSION*. He focused on the importance of subtext in a narrative, about setting a task for a character to achieve, something the character will “want” – and often want desperately – but that may not be openly spelled out in the course of the story.

Jensen named several authors, such as Robin MacArthur, whose *Half Wild* stories are set in Brattleboro, and John Cheever, whose short story “The Swimmer” was passed out in copies as a demonstration of a strong narrative story that carried an equally strong subtext. A man whose life is beginning to unravel – whether he openly knows it or not – decides to swim from backyard pool to back-yard pool all the way from a party at a friend’s house to his own home. In the process his interactions with friends and others along the way reveal a subtext about his own life and life within his culture.

Jensen said a story tries to impose order on chaos, that a story is never about just one thing, but reveals many motives that remain unnamed. They come through in the course of the action, the emotion, the struggle ... the subtext. He thinks plot should be secondary to the emotional content of a piece.

William Notte, *Starting Right—The Dos and Don’ts of Submitting a Manuscript*

by Paul Mascitti

WILLIAM NOTTE reviews as many as twenty submissions a day and highly recommends writers put energy into crafting a well-thought-out cover letter.

Being Professional was the #1 order of business when working with anyone in the writing field. Know the process; understand the business end of genres and submissions.

#2 on his list, Find the Right Home for your book. Don’t use the word “unique” as a description. It’s the kiss of death. Publishers want to build on the success of what has been published previously, not experiment on something that could be a dud.

#3, The Danger of the Wrong “Yes.” If your manuscript is accepted by someone inexperienced in your genre, or without the necessary contacts to place and promote your work, you may languish without a publisher, or find yourself published, but unable to reach your audience.

#4, Remember this is a Business Relationship. Unless a friendship naturally grows, the professionals are about business. Never be late on deadlines. Avoid nagging phone calls and have patience.

#5, Know Who You Are Not. You are not the book’s cover designer, the interior designer, and you don’t decide if the book is released in hard or soft cover. The publisher hires professionals who do this work. Your job is to write the best book possible and deliver it on deadline.

Continued on page 4

Looking for the recap on Tammy Hetrick? Check out the Online Version of *League Lines*!

WINTER 2016 PROGRAM RECAPS

Annalisa Parent, Social Media

by Emily Ferro

At the League's Fall Program in September Annalisa Parent focused on social media, offering aspiring writers tips on building a writer's platform. The most important question Annalisa answered was "Why?"—for authors unfamiliar with social media, how is it helpful to take the leap into this new digital territory?

The short and simple answer is "visibility." Social media is an easy and effective way to gain visibility, build a base of readers and supporters, and as Annalisa pointed out, offers concrete data about your audience that can be presented to publishers considering you for a book contract.

Annalisa talked about where to begin using social media on the World Wide Web. It's no secret that there are dozens of sites and applications that could help advance an author's visibility, but Annalisa discussed the five that she has found to be most useful—Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Snapchat.

She addressed several need-to-know points, including how to use a hashtag (#), how to communicate with followers and individuals through each social media site, and how to identify those individuals who might become followers. She also offered suggestions on how much time is a good amount to spend on social media—and what sort of info to post when you're on there. [Hint: post info relevant to

your book, but don't just make it an advertisement – be conversational, talk about current topics, mention events you'll attend or other writers you know or enjoy, and be friendly rather than just pushing your work.]

While the flurry of sometimes unfamiliar vocabulary may have seemed overwhelming to some, the ultimate takeaway from the discussion was to start where you're comfortable and work your way up—choose one site you like, build a base of people you talk to on the site, and grow from there as you please.

To find out more about Annalisa Parent visit www.datewiththemuse.com, or perhaps, dive into social media and follow her on Twitter: @AnnalisaParent!

William Notte, Starting Right—cont.

#6, Know Who You Are. You are the person whose name is on the book. Be a tireless self-promoter, handle give and take between editors, agents, publishers. Know what to give away and what to keep—get legal advice when negotiating contracts. A good agent can be invaluable.

Here William gave some advice to first time authors: Publishers prefer to print first time novels in the neighborhood of 230 pages or so to keep down costs. Your first royalty advance may be small, especially for fiction, and you will typically earn less money if you contract without an agent.

About self publishing and Ebooks, William advises writers to pay for an editor and proofreader to go over the manuscript before printing. Publishers may still be interested in picking up your book, if you can prove a wide readership. If you receive negative reviews on your author pages, do not engage those people.

#7, Wait Patiently. Once you've sent in a manuscript, one polite call is OK if you haven't heard for a few months, but then leave agents and editors alone. They have to pitch ideas they like to others in the publishing house, and do their research on YOU. After 4 months, give a call.

#8, Present You to the World. Find out how to use social media like Twitter, Facebook, and so much more.

#9 Build your base. Develop a readership (10,000 followers is a benchmark to impress publishers). In the modern world, the Internet is one of the best tools, but personal speaking, joining groups, and networking with others all help.

In the end, it's your professionalism and ability to reach an audience that helps your work progress. William was a very accessible, interested, speaker willing to answer quick questions at willnotte@gmail.com

As a member of the League of Vermont Writers you have access to a free manuscript critique service!

Visit the website for more details. Please send to: LVW Manuscript Critique Service | Director c/o Sharon Putnam
108 Waterford Lane | North Springfield, VT 05150

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

The COG Poetry Awards and COG Page to Screen Awards

Deadlines

COG Poetry Award: January 31, 2017

COG Page to Screen Award: March 31, 2017

For Full Info, go to cogzine.com

Looking for Writers!

Catch Our Drift is Looking for Writers to Submit Stories for an anthology about facing personal challenges *39 Signs of Hope*

For full details go to www.catchourdrift.ca/39-signs-of-hope

South Burlington High School Job Expo

April 4th, 2017

South Burlington High School is looking for professionals looking to participate in their annual Job Expo for students to network with professionals in the area.

For more information, email lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org

Vermont Writers Resource

Current LVW Intern Cynthia Anderson is putting together a directory of Vermont Writing Resources, from writers to editors, illustrators to layout artists, book publishers to booksellers.

She will be reaching out to people around mid-January to start her research and will release the document to the public by late April or early May 2017. If anyone is interested in being included in this directory or would like more information, please contact Cynthia at cynthia.anderson@mymail.champlain.edu.

LVW ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- We are looking for someone with editing and graphics skills to help out with the workings of *League Lines*.
- The marketing committee, programming committee, and membership committee are also actively taking new volunteers

If you'd like to put your skills to use for the League in one of the above ways please drop us a line at lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org.

You and Your Credits

Katherine Britton published her third novel, *Vanishing Time*, from Brigham Boos. Available in print and ebook formats.

Shannara Johnson published *Cactus Carlos and the Blotchy Bandits*, October 2016. Independently published. Available in print and ebook formats.

Lisa Halverson recently had two travel articles on Edenton, North Carolina, published in *Recreation News*, a magazine for federal employees; and published travel articles on Mark Twain's Heidleberg; America's Carousel Museums; Baked Alasa; the PEZ Museum in Orange, Connecticut; Roane, Virginia, outdoor recreation; and Roanoke culinary tours in *AAA Home and Away Magazine*, a national auto club magazine.

Board of Directors

The Winter Program will feature our annual business meeting and vote on the slate for Board of Directors. As such, we would like to share with you the individuals who are nominated to join the Board of Directors.

The candidates to fill At-Large positions with three-year terms are:

**Lisa Halvorsen
Linda Cruise
Tammy Flanders Hetrick**

Candidates (and current board members) nominated to hold officer positions include:

**Bobbi Jo Davis -President
Shawn Anderson - Vice President
Elizia Meskill - Treasurer**

2017 Winter Program, continued

JOHN CHURCHMAN, CONT.

Vermont, where he works as a commercial fine-art photographer and graphic designer. Jennifer, John's wife and collaborator, began her career as an American liaison and copywriter in Europe. The husband and wife team bring their talents together to give voice to the stories of all the animals that surround them on their bustling farm in the beautiful countryside of Essex, Vermont. They are the authors of the New York Times bestseller *The SheepOver*, which has been featured by CBS Evening News and The Associated Press, and *Brave Little Finn*, the second book in the Sweet Pea & Friend's series.

BUD EDGERTON , CONT.

Rockwell Family, and frequent model for Norman Rockwell, Mr. Edgerton has delighted audiences for decades with his charming wit and detailed recollections. James A. "Buddy" Edgerton grew up on a dairy farm in Vermont. His schooling started in a one-room schoolhouse and concluded with a Master's Degree from the University of Vermont, retiring as an Emeritus Professor.

Edgerton and his wife of fifty-five years, Dot, make their home in South Burlington, Vermont.

LVW's New Website! Read all about it ...

Over the last three years the Board has taken the time to consider consistent feedback provided through a variety of mediums about programming and membership issues and challenges, to review our current marketing and visibility, to assess our administrative systems and operations, and to contemplate the long-term sustainability of our organization.

Our evaluation of all of these things has illustrated how much of our current practice, needs, and vision require a better website, more automation of tasks (thus, less manual labor), and an accessible membership database. In short, we came to determine that not only did LVW need a new, fresh website, but it needed membership, event, and newsletter software as well.

After much deliberation, the Board approved the redevelopment of our website, complete with a SECURE, PASSWORD PROTECTED, membership portal whereby each member will create an account and have individual, PRIVATE access to control their membership activity. 'Members Only' databases that are integrated into larger websites are very common in online businesses these days, making it a convenient and secure way for members to keep their information up-to-date. This is very similar to setting up a private Amazon account whereby you sign in as a specific user and your details are accessible only by you.

The Board approved a budget and a project team to facilitate this initiative. The project team includes Board members, Alyssa Berthiaume (President), Bobbi Jo Davis (Vice President), Shawn Anderson (member at-large), Wendy Heilig (member at-large), and general LVW member Ron Jensen who has spearheaded the effort on a volunteer basis with the Board's directive. Ron has thirty years of experience designing and managing software and

website development. Together with Eternity web development, the team has been working diligently on a new LVW website to provide the following (which is not an exclusive list):

- Clean, modern look and feel that will make it easier to find what you need and provide greater visibility to the organization for both purposes of membership recruitment and retention
- One place for all member information, which means reduced risk that members aren't included in League mailings, and reduced risk of this information being on someone's private computer and therefore lost due to any number of circumstances
- The ability for you as a member to modify your profile online, including email, address, phone number, and genres and to manage your own dues
- A community tab where we will be adding information about other writing groups and showcasing our own writers' publications and services
- An upgraded and flexible website architecture which will provide more control to LVW for making enhancements to the website as needed

The new website is scheduled to be unveiled at the winter program and annual business meeting on January 21st and will include training and will answer any questions you might have. Members of the project team will also provide a more extensive overview on the benefits this website provides to the organization as a whole and its individual members.


We look forward to unveiling to you the final product,

The Project Team

A SNEAK PEAK AT OUR NEW LVW WEBSITE!


Please have a look at the memo provided on page 6 of the newsletter for more information. The images provided here are not scaled to size and text and images provided within the mock-ups are placeholders, not final products.

Top: A mock-up of what our new homepage will look like; Bottom: A mock-up of what our Blog page will look like.



LEAGUE OF VERMONT WRITERS, INC.

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LVW ANNUAL MEETING AND FIRST PROGRAM OF THE YEAR!


REGISTER NOW

THE LEAGUE OF VERMONT WRITERS IS OPEN TO ALL WHO MAKE WRITING A PART OF THEIR LIFE. [LEARN MORE >](#)


Blog Posts



Alyssa Essay - Good of the Cause
Dec 20, 2016
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A New Emily Dickinson Emerges in Vermont
Dec 20, 2016
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Writers Meet Agents 2014
Dec 20, 2016
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[Read All Posts](#)

Current Events



Join us for Bookfest 2017!
June 23, 2017
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Blog





Alyssa Essay - Good of the Cause
Dec 01, 2000
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Writers Meet Agents 2014
Sep 01, 2000
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Alyssa Essay - Good of the Cause
Dec 01, 2000
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A New Emily Dickinson Emerges in Vermont
Nov 01, 2000
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Tags:
[Tag 1 \(2\)](#) | [Tag 2 \(1\)](#) | [Tag 3 \(2\)](#)

Archives:
[December \(1\)](#)
[November \(1\)](#)
[September \(1\)](#)

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 WEBSITE BY  ETERNITY

Registration Form

LVW 2017 Winter Program & Annual Business Meeting

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

Make check payable to: *LVW Winter 2017 Program*

Registrar: lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org

DATE: January 21, 2017

TIME: 8:30-9:00 arrival and registration

9:00-3:15 program

3:30 gathering at Trader Dukes for networking (cash bar)

LOCATION: DoubleTree Hotel, South Burlington

PRICE: \$48 for members, \$55 for non-members—price includes morning refreshments and catered lunch

DIRECTIONS:

From East -Take Williston Road from Taft Corners all the way into South Burlington. See DoubleTree on the left just before you reach Dorset Street.

From West, or I-89 - At Exit 14E off I-89, go through light at Dorset Street, see DoubleTree Hotel on right at next light. Follow around to parking and conference entrance in back.

Schedule at a glance:

9:00 First half of the business meeting

9:30 Break

9:45 John Churchman

10:45 Break

11:00 Bud Edgerton

12:15 Lunch

1:15 Second half of business meeting

2:15 Young Writers Project

3:15 Social gathering and networking at Trader Dukes

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

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Members: _____ @ \$48ea. registration = \$ _____

Nonmembers: _____ @ \$55ea. registration = \$ _____

[Students, ask about our student discount]

Tax deductible donation: \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Check # _____

Do you have special dietary needs? _____

LVW Board: Alyssa Berthiaume, president; Bobbi Jo Davis, vice-president; Julia Hoover, secretary, Deb Fennell, past president; Elizia Meskill, treasurer; Pat Goudey O'Brien, Shawn Anderson, Wendy Heilig, Annalisa Parent, 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 lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org

Tommy Walz
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