

Writers' Notes

The Newsletter of



Women Who Write, Inc.

News and Information for Women Who Write. Inc.

Volume 24, Issue 2

Summer 2018

Goldfinch 2018—Another Success

Another successful *Goldfinch* launch was held in March 2018, under the direction of our Editor, Mary ann Mosa, and her terrific

team. They put together a great issue. We had many outstanding submissions which resulted in this issue being 50% larger than last year's edition.

Mary ann made the decision to use Submittable.com for collecting the works electronically, which streamlined the process and made it easier to manage more efficiently.

Several of our writers were able to read their work at the launch in



Goldfinch. Any member whose submission is accepted will receive an extra copy.

Why should Women Who Write members submit to *Goldfinch*? Since this is an official literary magazine, anyone who is accepted and published in it can then state on their resume that they have been officially published as an author. It's a great way to start a career as a writer, or just to get credit for being published. (I think these are extra benefits of being published in *Goldfinch* besides being recognized by your peers.)

A special thank you to Elsie

Boehm, who again designed the cover for this

year's issue. Elsie has designed many of the covers used in our magazine over many years. She is a talented artist and has done a wonderful job. We thank you, Elsie, for your hard work and dedication.

Also, a thank you to Andy Skurna, our webmaster and IT professional, who was responsible for the desktop publishing and instrumental in helping to get this issue published. Thank you, Andy for your hard work as well.



Ekphrastic Poetry Workshop—by Lynn Fernandez



Until this workshop, lead by Deborah Gerrish, I never knew what Ekphrastic meant. An ekphrastic poem is an exploration of how the speaker is impacted by a work of art.

Debbie introduced us to this method with examples of poems and then she handed us pictures for inspiration to write our own ekphrastic poems. Producing something in a short period of time and lacking the time to edit, is always intimidating. However, Debbie created a comfortable environment where we could share our first drafts

knowing that we would receive constructive criticism and encouragement. We were a small group so that afforded us additional time to discuss our poems and contemplate the diverse ways we reacted to our pictures. We ranged from memoir, to imaginative. I attended this workshop so I could conquer a battle with writer's block. I left with another tool for my toolbox.

[Joan Heleine](#) commented. "Thank you, Debbie- your workshop was beautifully crafted to bring in novice poets like myself as well as the pros."



Writers' Notes Editor: Maria Dewaik—Copy Editor: Dorothy Ryan

2018-2019 Board Members

We would like to thank our departing Board members for their service and dedication and for a job well done. Thank you to Diane Masucci, former VP Membership and to Gigi Collins, former Treasurer. We wish you well in your future endeavors.

On the same note, we want to welcome our newest members: Olga Christie as our new VP Membership and Jawahara Saidullah as our new Treasurer. Wishing you both the best of luck in your position.

Board Members for this term are as follows:

Dana Faulkner Punzo—President
Olga Christie—VP Membership
Sarah Ducksworth—Secretary
Jawahara Saidullah—Treasurer
Ginger Pate—Adviser and Web Liaison
Maria Dewaik—Editor, Writers' Notes
Mary ann Mosa—Editor, Goldfinch
Kristen Jaccodine—Member at Large
Jodi Young Ariel—Member at Large
Elsie Boehm—Caring and Sunshine



Seated: Jawahara Saidullah, Dana Faulkner-Punzo, Sarah Ducksworth, Olga Christie.

Standing: Ginger Pate, Jodi Young Ariel, Kriste Jaccodine, Maria Dewaik

Not Pictured: Mary ann Mosa, Elsie Boehm

Memoir Writing Workshop—Presented by JoAnn Jackovino



This was a workshop where participants were shown how to gain the skills needed to create their own personal memoir.

Some comments from attendees:

Vivian Fransen "Nice group of people did some mighty fine writing (and talking and listening) at today's part two of workshop. JoAnn Jackovino set the tone as our workshop leader. Thanks, WWW, for organizing this series. Memoirs rock!"

Dana Faulkner-Punzo "Thank you JoAnn Jackovino for kicking off how to write a memoir; session one of three held at the New Providence Library in New Providence."

This program was sponsored by WWW's Published Author's Group



Writing an Essay for Publication—by Sheila Moore



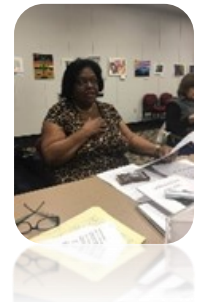
On Saturday, May 19th, an essay teaching program was presented at the New Providence Library. It was sponsored by Woman Who Write's Published Author's Group. The presenter was Dr. Sarah Smith Ducksworth, who formerly taught English at Rutgers University and Kean University. Her many essays

have covered multiple subjects including the Underground Railroad. She has published in school journals, encyclopedias, and newspapers, including *The New York Times*.

During the program, Dr. Ducksworth covered topics such as Writing an Essay for Publication, with emphasis on thesis, topics, supporting paragraphs, and outlines.

Ginger Rockett Pate stated; "Sarah's program was so wonderful, I had members who attended

ask if she would do another program for us. I asked Sarah and she said, Yes, I'll do another program in 2019." Thanks so much, Sarah. I wish you were still teaching; I'd sign up right away!! We have such a talented group of amazing women, don't we?"



Congratulations Nancy Gerber

Nancy Gerber has just published a collection of short stories, *A Way Out of Nowhere*, with Big Table Publishing. The nine narratives explore the challenges of women's lives: a young woman struggling with new motherhood; a college student trying to rebound from date rape; a high school girl confronting desire. Marjorie Tesser, editor of *The Mom Egg Review*, wrote, "This collection is told with intelligence and compassion. The characters are failed by boyfriends, par-

ents, husbands, but they persevere and even prevail." The book is available on Amazon.



Member Honored

Board member and this year's *Goldfinch* cover artist Elsie Boehm was honored on June 13, 2018 with a gift from the board at the Nautilus Diner in Madison. She was very surprised, and we told her that WWW is truly grateful for all her dedication. Elsie is not only a long-standing cover artist for *Goldfinch* but she also assumes responsibility for sending our journal in the mail. Elsie always has wisdom to share with fellow board mem-

bers, so along with her artistic contributions, she is the **picture-perfect volunteer**. Elsie is a member of Poets' Corner and has been published in *Goldfinch*.

Thank you



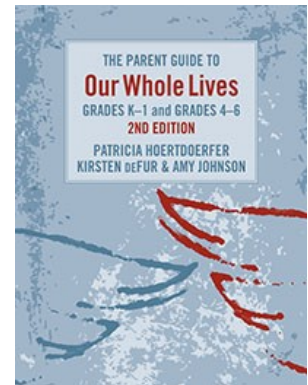
Parent Guide to Our Whole Lives—by Melanie Davis

Sexuality educator Melanie Davis, Ph.D, CSE was a developmental editor for *The Parent Guide to Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Grades K-1 and 4-6, (2nd ed.)* by Johnson, A. and deFur, K. It was published this May by the Unitarian Universalist Association and United Church of Christ.

"I jumped at the chance to write this chapter, which incorporates my research findings into referrals among physicians, sexuality educators, and sex therapists," said Davis. The co-authors are partners in the New Jersey Center for Sexual Wellness, and the chapter details the model they use to provide holistic sexual wellness care to

teens and adults.

Davis added, "We were thrilled to learn that the editors placed our chapter immediately after the introduction because they felt our topic is essential knowledge for sex therapists and their supervisors."



Debut Novel by Julie Maloney

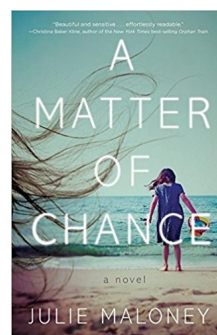
"I'm delighted to announce the publication of my debut novel, 'A Matter of Chance,' released in April, 2018 (She Writes Press.) Forward Reviews calls it "a masterful thriller." Selected by US WEEKLY Magazine as a spring/summer trending book, this novel asks the question: "What happens to the person left behind when tragedy strikes?" *New York Times*_ best-

selling author, Christina Baker Kline says this: "... beautiful and sensitive ... effortlessly readable."

"A Matter of Chance" had a spectacular book launch party at the Bernardsville Library on April 22nd. Since then, I've been on book tour taking me to NC, PA and will continue on to DE, MA, ME, FL and TX ... and of course, I'm going all over this beautiful

state of ours —New Jersey!" To watch the book trailer, visit:

www.juliemaloney.net



Announcing!

Diane Masucci, former VP of Membership, has had a poem accepted by Peregrine Magazine for their fall publication.

Congratulations Diane. Wishing you continued success.

President's Message by Dana Faulkner-Punzo

Dear Writers:

Summer has always been “the fly by season” for me. The lingering days and soft evening breezes are short-lived. I try to get fresh-squeezed lemonade at least once a month in the summer and sit outside with a good book.

“Speaking of good books,” summer is an amazing time to catch up on reading. On Memorial Day, I cracked open the navy blue pleather cover of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, my son Nicholas’ favorite. This summer I am reading my three children’s favorite books, hoping this will give us something to talk about when they come to visit. Now that I have adult children, I search for ways to connect that can never be misunderstood as prying into their busy lives.

Having a discussion about a book on a balmy summer day never interferes with anyone’s space.

I don’t know about all of you, but I have a confession to make. Since I am a writer, when I am engulfed in a book, I always check out the grammar. **“In other words, no pun intended,”** I check the word usage and punctuation. This can be daunting at times, so I usually only concentrate on grammar inspections when something stands out to me as: clever, wrong, or the way I would have done it if only I had thought of it. Women Who Write transformed the way I read, write, and critique in and out of our groups.

Fellow writers, I appreciate all that you continue to teach me. Listening to your creative work, real-life experiences, grammar and writing tips, has been an incredible asset to my writing and reading enjoyment. Even when we break in summer, I take all of what I learn from you and continue to evolve as an artist. I would love to hear about any summer reading and writing you have done during this “fly by season.” Until then, try to stay in the moment, cherish each day; whether you are sitting at the computer finishing your novel, or just reading a magazine from time to time on the beach. You are practicing this amazing gift we all share together. The love of words, and the connection we receive through and to each other and ourselves.



Announcing!

Anne Frommer’s three Tailgunner series books are now available in eBook Format.

- *Tailgunner, War Defines Us if We Let it,*
- *Tailgunner—RC,*
- *Tailgunner-Pip, Legacy of War*

Also one of Anne’s photographs made the cover of *Vicinity magazine*.

The Purpose of Critique Groups



Women Who Write has critique groups in order to help a member’s work to be more marketable or market ready with a goal of publishing in mind. Many members want to have their work published but some members may not intend for their work to be published. They may just want to improve the work.

The members who critique the submitted work write their comments down for the author to consider when giving the critique. It is up to the author to make her decision as to whether or not she should take the suggestion of the critiquer because it is always the author’s work. It takes time to develop the skill of critiquing and for the person who is being critiqued, as well. Writing is an art and so is the art of a critique and each member brings their different experiences to the group and to a critique.



President's Critique Tour--Danapalooza

LATEST-- STOP SPOOKY LADIES! On Saturday, March 17, 2018 I made my way into a jam session with the **SPOOKY LADIES** at the New Providence Library! Being the ultimate groupie, I was down with scribbling around with Heather Strout, an English teacher at High Point Regional High School and a featured surprise artist, who showed up to party with us. Heather explained how to put down a one syllable writing exercise. We all cringed with the idea of having to write a page that made sense, trying to concentrate on effective one syllable noun and verb usage. We went around the table throwing one syllable words out in the air. It was like a verbal mosh pit, slamming into a rhythmic vibe! We had an awesome session after we realized that we actually could create some amazing writing together!

Mary Olmsted shared with me how Spooky Ladies keeps their groove going: Be kind to other writing groups, and share what works for yours. Communicate with each other. Cheer each other's efforts and successes.

Heather kicked in a list of writing companion recommendations. I thought it would be real cool to put it out there to all of you:

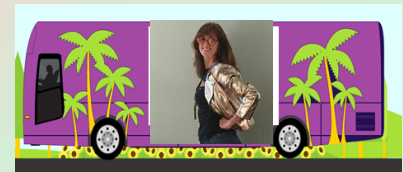
- In the Palm of Your Hand - Steve Kowit
- The Art of Description: World into Word - Mark Doty
- Poemcrazy: Freeing Your Life with Words - Susan Woolridge
- Old Faithful: 18 Writers Present Their Favorite Writing Assignments
- The Writing Life - Annie Dillard
- Bird by Bird - Anne Lamont
- The Fourth Genre: Contemporary Writers of Creative Non-Fiction
- Writing Down the Bones - Natalie Goldberg
- A Poetry Handbook - Mary Oliver
- The Crafty Poet, Vols. I & II - Diane Lockward
- Writing Poetry to Save Your Life - Maria Mazziotti Gillan
- The Daily Poet: Day-by-Day Writing Prompts for Your Writing Practice - Agodon and Silano
- The Writer's Block - Jason Rekulak



Peace Out!



Dana Faulkner-Punzo
WWC President



Writing for Kids III by Dana Faulkner-Punzo



Michelle Skelly gave me her riffs to rap on. A kid's rhyme cleverly masqueraded for speech therapy. Fantabulous! This little ditty about farm life was a trip; the words rolled around my mouth and tumbled off my tongue like Cirque du Soleil performers. Olga chimed in with the next groove about planting things. These chicks know how to put it down. The only thing that defused the mood a touch were the Duncin Donuts that waited to be nibbled. I should of known that intelligent chicks like this don't touch that stuff! Ginger Pate gave a few words of wisdom about why their group has stayed together and never disbanded for more than 10 years. "Wow, I want her autograph!" Her modest tone revealed to me that encouraging the group to be the best they can be was numero uno! I couldn't help but think of the lyrics to that Pink Floyd tune, "Shine on you crazy diamond."

I give these two groups five stars and a standing WOOT WOOT!

To be continued...



Craft Marketing Plans Like an Author-preneur

By Mary Lee Waldron



Carol Van Den Hende, a fellow Women Who Write (WWW) member and

marketer who has spoken at Writer's Digest, NJ-SCBWI, WWW and New Jersey Romance Writers conferences, debuted new marketing insights at New Providence Library on June 10. This workshop was a sequel to her talks on author branding and translating brand into a consistent visual identity. This session covered the marketing of the finished product - in our case, the story. She stressed that

we should relentlessly pursue a near perfect end product because quality makes a difference whether people will recommend a book to others.

Using real-world examples, she taught us how to craft a marketing plan that could be included when submitting work to publishers.

First, set your objectives and determine your strategies. Ask yourself: who will be your most ardent promoters? A sophisticated approach is quantifying a broad audience and then estimating percentages that can be converted, how many will come back for more titles, and what percentage of that audience will talk about it with their

friends.

Then ask, where can you best reach that audience? Consider traditional media like magazines, radio and (local) TV; physical places like bookstores, book clubs, and events; virtual places like email lists, partnerships, blogs, websites, interviews; and importantly, word of mouth.

The final tactics, or actual promotions, should be stacked (or timed) to reach people multiple times. That's because attention spans have dropped from 20 minutes in agrarian times to 9 seconds today.

So people need to see a message more than once for it to break through. Lastly, to the

extent possible, start planning 6-9 months before the book launch, apply creativity to your marketing plans and be ready to test and learn.

With her usual blend of humor and insight, Carol helped to make the inevitable promotion side of writing less daunting for all of us. How do I know that to be the case? Attendees rated her talk a 9.75 out of 10. Sounds like a near-perfect end product to me.



Message From VP Membership



Dear members of Women Who Write,

Allow me to introduce myself, I am Olga Christie and have recently joined the board of Women Who Write as VP of Membership.

As a first step to our growing relationship, I aim to establish easy access to my contact information and encourage open communication. My email address is membership@womenwhowrite.org but you may also reach me at 917-848-3864.

Many members inquired about a memoir critique group. I am excited to support the formation of this new group and I hope that you will take the chance to share your interest.

I look forward to serving you in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Olga Christie

Announcing!

Eileen Valinoti has received an acceptance from an online magazine which is put out by Columbia Presbyterian Medical School, Intima-A Journal of Medical Narrative. The story title is "Sisters of Mercy" and was scheduled to appear on the site on May 28.

Congratulations to Eileen!

Rutgers Writer's Conference

By Kristen Jaccodine and Mary Olmstead

"One day, you can't find a book you want, so you decide to write it" – Alice Hoffman

And so it began, the opening remarks at the 2nd Annual Rutgers Writer's Conference. Held at the Rutgers Continuing Education Building in Somerset, Mary and I attended this sold out event. Alice Hoffman and Chris Bohjalian served as the keynote authors for the weekend.

Offering six different writing tracks – creative non-fiction, writing for performance, the business of writing, writing poetry, fiction, and genre fiction, writers had the option to mix and match from each category. All attendees observed (and could participate in) a pitch session



during lunch on Saturday and a publishers' panel on Sunday. With no additional charge, writers were also offered the opportunity to meet with various agents, editors, and publishers.

Writing Linked Short Stories, led by Alice Hoffman, was one of the workshops Mary and I attended together. After reviewing this concept, Alice prompted us with questions. As a group we then developed chapter titles and summaries for our fiction piece. We

were then asked to individually write the opening line. My line, "I, like my father before me, had a history of trickery.", was selected by Alice as the opener we should all start with!

We both could share individual pointers that we learned in our workshops. Instead, we'll list three consistent themes:

- Consider narration
- Do your homework when researching

agents and all publishing services

- Think about diction, how it relates to your character and the world they live in

If you ever have the chance to see Chris speak, go! He is funny, honest, and truly loves writing. Chris never studied creative writing. The one time he attempted to, he was told to be a banker! On that note, below was one of his top ten tips:

"Pretend you're a banker, but you write in the night to prove to some writing professor that she was wrong, wrong, wrong. Allow yourself a small dram of righteous anger."

Educational Writing Resources by Maria Dewaik



For those of you who have a passion to continue your education, the following are sites that offer little to no-cost studies. There are many writing courses available

online, but these are by far the most cost-effective for beginners and those who just want to learn more that I have found and have been using.

[www.Udemy.com](https://www.udemy.com/) — A good selection of writing classes (and various other interests) and often have special low-cost pricing available, usually around \$10 per course.

<https://www.coursera.org/> — Offers a wide range of courses on many subjects, from recognized schools throughout the country. Most have a fee but some courses can be taken for free if you choose to only audit video lectures and some course content. Good starting point for writing classes.

<https://blog.reedsy.com/learning/> Offer a great selection of Free Writing Courses. They also have courses on marketing, editing, revision and other subject related to writing.



Eighth Annual WWW Writers Conference



**Writers Conference
WWW 8th Annual**



Saturday, September 29, 2018

Join us for an amazing day filled with all things writing. Conference will be held at The Madison Community House, 25 Cook Avenue, Madison, NJ 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. It is open to both female and male writers, and membership in Women Who Write is not necessary. Sessions will include workshops, speeches and discussions. Attendees may request a document critique (a 15-minutes one-on-one session with an editor or agent), which will be available during the day with materials having to be submitted prior.

(See website at www.WomenWhoWrite.org for details and registration deadline information.)

Topics include:

- Poetry
- Character Development
- Achieving Writing Success (Planning your writing day)
- Writing Dialogue Across Genres

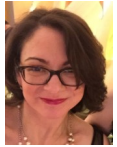


Meet some of our Conference Presenters



Billy Mitchell, a member of the Dramatists Guild, Billy is the author of several plays for young audiences. He has a Bachelor's in Performance and a Masters in Directing. His presentation will be on Writing Dialogue Across Genres.

Susan Litman is an editor for the Harlequin Special Edition and also acquires for other series lines including Romantic Suspense. She has a B.A. in Film Studies and Theater and a minor in Developmental Psychology. Her presentation topic is titled, All About Romance and More!"



Rachel Orr is with Prospect Agency where she represents both authors and illustrators. Her presentation will be on Crafting Strong Characters in Picture Books and Novels.

Mary Carlomagno, is a nationally recognized media expert and author of three best-selling non-fiction books on simplicity. She will be the morning keynote speaker who will talk about Organizing Your Writing.



Upcoming Programs and Events for 2018 and Beyond

Doris Parmett - THE IMPORTANCE OF FIRST AND LAST SENTENCES IN A CHAPTER - SUNDAY, OCT. 14th New Providence Library.

The workshop will be about what should be included in a chapter. Doris will give examples citing authors who continue to entertain and grab the reader. The audience will also be given examples that "missed the boat."

As an author, Doris practices the art of show don't just tell; therefore all members of the audience will become participants. They'll be transformed from listeners to critics. Doris is a well-published author whose works span several decades.

Ronnie Hammer - READING YOUR WORK ALOUD - SATURDAY, NOV. 3rd at 1:30 New

Providence Library.

In this workshop, Ronnie will offer techniques to improve an author's reading her work aloud. She will need volunteers that day to read their work at the podium.

Ronnie was half-owner of the company Power Presentations which taught executives the techniques of writing and delivering effective speeches. Ronnie was involved with her business for 22 years.

Planning for 2019 but not yet finalized. Elissa Matthews for February on Character Arc, Laurie Wallmark, TBD on Children's Biography, Donna Baier Stein in April, Nancy Gerber on Flawed Characters in May (possibly March) and Sarah Ducksworth in June.

WWW—30 Years and Still Going Strong



Women Who Write, Inc. has reached its 30th year of helping women achieve their writing goals, and we celebrate the friendships and accomplishments we have made.

Congratulations WWW!

Keep going and growing



Volunteer Needed



Need a Volunteer to be in charge of an Open Mic session. Duties would include: booking a venue where event would take place, either on the weekend or week night, having a signup sheet for readers to sign-up at the door, having someone be a "timer" who would time the reader for an allotted number of minutes. Chosen date cannot be in conflict with already scheduled events. Reimbursed spending for bottles of water and a small snack could be offered, but not necessary. Please respond to Dana Faulkner Punzo at President@WomenWhoWrite.org or to Ginger Pate at Webliason@WomenWhoWrite.org

Facebook & Internet Reminder



A reminder that all members of our Facebook page can post any article that is helpful to our members.

Articles can be about programs you have attended (can be outside of WWW), any scheduled speaking events you may have coming, anything published, or soon-to-be published, upcoming conferences or workshops that you are planning to or have already attended, educational opportunities, or anything to do with the art of writing. The site is for all members of Women Who Write. So why

not join and spread the word.

WWW, through our indispensable webmaster, Andy Skurna, has been working on a possible online forum. For news and further information, please check frequently on our website at www.womenwhowrite.org.

If you have a story about writing, an event of interest, or a personal writing success, please submit for inclusion in our next Writer's Notes Newsletter. All submissions will be considered; however, if you do not meet the deadline that will be posted in emails or on Facebook, your story will go into the next coming issue.

Visit us on the web at:

<http://www.womenwhowrite.org>

Or join us on Facebook

facebook