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The Window

Official Newsletter of Panhandle Professional Writers
d/b/a Texas High Plains Writers



HIGH PLAINS WRITERS

September 2015

A Bi-Monthly

Newsletter

From the President

Kimberly Black

What a privilege it is to serve such a talented and distinguished group of writers represented in our organization. I know how hard you all work in your writing and in our community, and I want you to know that you are appreciated and you are not alone in your creative endeavors.

In fact, that is my primary message as your president. I want to grow our writers' organization by providing a true sense of support and encouragement within our membership. I want to recognize the remarkable achievements of our members and offer a place of growth and fellowship for those just beginning their path to authorship. I have enjoyed learning from mentors amongst our group, and I want others to share in that opportunity.

When I began taking my writing seriously, I was concerned that to become a published author meant a mountain of competition to overcome. What our organization taught me was that I wasn't sitting in a room of competitors, but rather a generous family who had walked in my shoes and who wanted nothing more than to share the secrets of their experiences. They actually wanted to help me succeed!

I understand that coming to meetings and serving in board positions is time-consuming. I know there are countless online opportunities available to learn and hone the writing craft. These are just a few of the reasons our membership has dwindled in the last few years.

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webinar or infographic. You will learn more, find more encouragement, and grow more as a writer when you are led by others on a personal level. (And you will find no greater connection to our group than by serving as a board member.)

I started serving on the board as a secretary several years ago, before I had ever published anything beyond high school newspaper articles. Since then, I have maintained a blog, self-published a children's book and a writers' workbook, as well as a traditionally-published novel. I was able to accomplish all of this while still working a full-time job and participating in many other extra-curricular activities. I know that I could never have done it without the support of the friends I have made in PPW.

Now that we are starting a new chapter as Texas High Plains Writers, I want to challenge our whole membership. Help us grow by attending every meeting you can. Invite friends to attend and join. Meet someone new every time you attend. Share your contact information with other members. Tell friends and co-workers about our fundraising events, and attend them as well. Participate and put in a good word whenever you can.

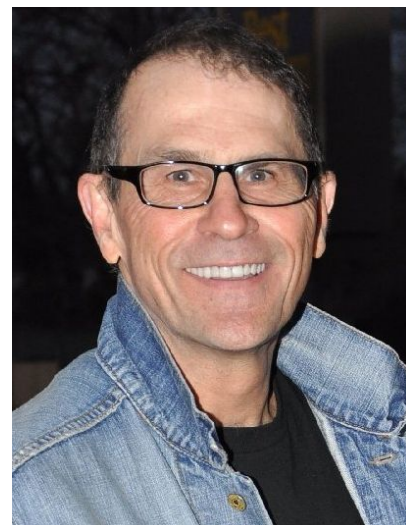
We learn best when we learn from each other. Every member is important.

September 19 Program

The Story Process in Film

Actor, screenwriter, director, producer, and an Indie filmmaker Michael Crabtree will be presenting "The Story Process in Film". In his 36-year career, to date, Michael has appeared in over 50 films on the big screen and TV.

Using the stage name Michael Weston, he has acted alongside some of the biggest names in the industry such as Robert Duval, James Garner, Kevin Spacey, Claire Danes, Sally Fields, and many others like Robert Mitchum. The list is long and varied.



He began his fascinating journey in 1979 on the TV series Dallas playing a rodeo rider. Four years later, he landed a role with Robert Duval in Tender Mercies. During his career, he's played a multitude of characters, some of which were: a cowboy, lawman, mayor, attorney, a detective, prison warden, governor, and frontier fighter

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Michael is looking forward to sharing how he gets into the role of a character and becomes the person he's portraying. Perhaps it's a lot like creating a character in a book. We'll find out. He'll tell what it's like working on set, who his favorite people were to work with, and talk about making his own movies and documentaries. In addition, he'll give insights on how he goes about finding funding for his projects, hiring actors, and touch on the screenwriting part.

His latest indie film is called ODD MAN OUT (2014) in which he wrote, directed, and starred in. It's distributed on Hulu and Amazon.

Get your questions ready. This is your chance to ask about all the things you've wondered concerning acting, filmmaking, and even breaking into the business if you have that yearning.

What it all boils down to is that no matter if it's writing a book, a song, a poem, or a movie it's all just telling a story.

Join Us For Our Potluck Social

Mark Your Calendar for 6:30 p.m., Friday, September 18

Don't forget that we are having our Potluck Social Event starting at 6:30 on the evening of Friday, September 18. Bring a dish and meet our guest speaker, Michael Crabtree. The social is being held in our usual meeting rooms (which are in the southwest corner of the Amarillo Senior Citizens Center, 1217 S. Tyler Street). Plates, cups, napkins, plasticware, and ice tea will be provided.

Youth Writing Contest Raffle

We will be raffling off a Samsung Galaxy Tab 4 Nook 10.1 tablet to raise funds to help pay for the trophies, postage, and other costs involved in the youth writing contest. Raffle tickets will go on sale at our Potluck Social and will be available at Saturday's program. The tickets are \$5 each or six for \$20. Tickets will be on sale until the drawing which will take place at the end of the Youth Writing Contest Awards Ceremony that is held after our July 16 meeting.. The owner of the lucky raffle ticket does not need to be present to win.

Contact Janet Taylor if you would like to purchase a ticket or tickets and can't make it to one of our meetings. If you want to help make this the most successful raffle ever by selling raffle tickets to your friends, family members, neighbors, co-workers,

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Taylor at panhandlewriters@gmail.com or 806-282-1227.

November Guest Speaker

Our November 21 program will be presented by Jan Sikes. She was presented an award by the Texas Association of Authors for *The Convict and the Rose*. In addition to writing books, Jan writes songs, plays the guitar, and has written some screenplays. Check out her blog [here](#).

New Book Release

Ron Brown's book *Because of the Cross* is for sale on Amazon and Barnes & Noble. He has book signings at two Hastings stores in Amarillo and one in Joplin, Missouri. For more information about Ron's book, click [here](#).

Writing Contest Winner

Lori Sheldon was the winner of our Memoir contest with her story "What In the World". Congratulations, Lori!

Next Writing Contest for Members

The subject matter for our next contest is "Halloween" (scary, ghost-like, spooky, creepy - things of that nature). Your entry can be a short story of any genre or poetry. Submissions for the November bi-monthly meeting's contest must be postmarked by November 2, 2015. Contest rules can be found [here](#).

If you are not a member and would like to submit an entry, please go to the [Membership](#) page on our website, print the Membership Registration - Renewal Form 2015.pdf (link to the form is located at the bottom of the webpage), and mail it in with your submission.

Happy writing!

You Might Be a Writer If ...

Kimberly Black

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describe it.

9. You eavesdrop on the couple in the next booth for good story/dialog ideas.
8. You refuse to retweet or share a friend's post that contains spelling or grammar errors.
7. When you hear a strange noise, you wonder how to spell it as onomatopoeia.
6. You have a *10,000 Baby Names* book in your reference library.
5. You own an antique typewriter (or three) that you've never used.
4. Your friends don't think it's weird for you to discuss different weapons or poisons while you're at their dinner party.
3. You have cried over the death of a fictional character.
2. You've had a conversation with six different people all by yourself.
1. Writing a 350-page novel sounds like fun, but the idea of writing a one page query letter for that novel makes you break out in hives.

Critique Session Guidelines

To participate in the critique session, you do not need to have a piece to be critiqued. The sessions begin at 1 p.m. and, depending on the number of those who have a story or a poem needing to be critiqued, can last up to a couple of hours. We suggest that your material not exceed approximately 750 to 1,000 words. Please bring at about five copies of your story or poem. If possible, it is helpful if you bring a short synopsis of your story so those critiquing have some background. We ask that you format your manuscript as follows:

1. Use white 8.5 by 11-inch paper.
2. Double space using either Times New Roman 12 or similar font.
3. In the header, give your last name, a slash (/), and a short title on the left and the page number on the right (at the top of each page).
4. Use one-inch margins.
5. Use one side of the paper only.
6. If possible, use line numbering.
7. Note: Your synopsis may be single-spaced.

Each person, in turn, will read 1,000 words or less (15 to 20 minutes) or the author will read their own writing, based on preference; then, the group facilitator will ask for discussion from the group. While each person is reading, we urge all other participants to offer written comments on the manuscript. All copies will be returned to each author.

The goal of every critique is: "How can we make it better."

Meetings are held on the third Saturday in odd-numbered months: January, March, May, July, September, and November.

The public and Texas High Plains Writers members are invited to hear speakers on selected writing or

Our meetings/programs follow this schedule:

Check-In and Meet & Greet:
9:00 - 9:30 a.m.

Program/Presentation:
9:30 a.m. - Noon

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	<p>Hospitality Director between 9:30 and 10:15 or bring a sack lunch. Box lunches are \$10.</p> <p>Unless otherwise specified, meeting location is at Amarillo Senior Citizens Center 1217 S. Tyler Amarillo, Texas <i>(Note: We must occasionally switch our meeting location, or we may need to change the date to avoid conflicts. So, please check the address and date for each meeting.)</i></p>	<p>Lunch: 12:15 - 1 p.m.</p> <p>Critique Session 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>Need to contact us? You can write to us at: Texas High Plains Writers P. O. Box 19303 Amarillo, TX 79114 or email us at: panhandlewriters@gmail.com</p>

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