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The Window

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



HIGH PLAINS WRITERS

September 2016

A Bi-Monthly

Newsletter

Important: Change of Meeting Time

Check-In and Meet & Greet at Noon; Program at 1:00 p.m.

Due to the Tri-State Fair & Rodeo Parade blocking the parking and entrance to the Senior Citizens Center Saturday morning, September 17, our meeting time has changed. Check-in and meet and greet will start at noon, and the program will start at 1:00 and will end at 3:00. There will be NO critique session held at the Senior Citizens Center due to the late start of Saturday's program. However, members who want to participate in a critique session after the program are encouraged to gather at another location.

From the President

Kimberly Black

When You're Too Busy to Write . . .

Sometimes the world gets a little crazy. School starts back up. The kids want one last vacation. You have six birthdays and two anniversaries and a recital to attend. Dad is retiring. The family is coming into town. Next week is the annual retreat. The elections are in full swing. And, the fair. And, the meeting. And, the other meeting.

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within ourselves to focus our thoughts onto paper.

"I have too much to work on in real life. My make-believe world just has to wait. I'm too stressed. I'm too scattered and frazzled."

But what if we used our writing time to un-frazzle? What if we pour our stresses out into our writing? What if we took the frustration we are feeling over the botched cakes and back-to-school shopping and express it through our writing? Wouldn't that improve the authenticity of our character's voice? Wouldn't that clear the negative thoughts from our minds and free it to concentrate on other things?

I'm preaching to myself as much as to anyone else. I have to make time to write every day. I have to take a few minutes or an hour or an afternoon and pour my heart out onto a page. If I don't, it will just become more clutter in my brain that has to be sorted with the laundry and bills and dishes and emails. I find that when I write a little every day, the creativity flows more easily.

Writing time isn't really selfish. It's a therapeutic method of taking care of yourself so that you can take care of all the other stuff. Even if your work-in-progress doesn't get the attention it deserves, at least take a minute or two and make notes in a journal. Cleaning out your brain is just as important as cleaning out the closet. Being busy isn't a bad thing. Being overwhelmed is.

September Program

Kimberly Willis Holt

We're so happy to have former Amarillian and former THPW member Kimberly Willis Holt as our guest speaker at our September 17 meeting. This multi-award-winning writer of children's and young adult stories will present "The Power of Place". She will show the importance that setting has played in her own work. The second half of the presentation will be a short workshop that will teach us how to employ the power of place in our stories in a way that will enrich and deepen both our characters and our writing.

Please bring paper and pen. Be ready to travel—no suitcase required! This program will be helpful to you no matter what you write. But if your interest happens to be children and young adult fiction, this is your chance to ask specific questions about that genre. A visit to Ms. Holt's [website](#) reveals that this topic is near and dear to her heart.

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roots; thus, the power of place is very strong inside her. As a child, her dream was to grow up and live in one house. She was born during a Florida hurricane into a family of storytellers. From them, she honed her craft. Books were and still are extremely important to her. One changed her life—*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* by Carson McCullers. In reading that story, she knew she wanted to be a writer. And what fantastic books she's written!

Ms. Holt is coming quite a distance for us, so be sure and come to the program on Saturday, September 17, to give her a big Amarillo welcome. She's also having a book signing at Barnes and Noble, 2415 S. Soncy, Amarillo, after the meeting from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Proposed Amendment to Bylaws

Last Amended in 2013

Between October 10 and October 31, an electronic "ballot" in (hopefully) the form of a survey will be emailed using this email service (Mailchimp). Only **voting** members' responses will be tallied. Voting members are those members who have paid their 2016 dues prior to the September 17, 2016, meeting or who have Life Membership status. The current bylaws state: "the amendment shall then be voted on by electronic ballot with a ten (10) day deadline from the date the electronic ballot was sent. Electronic ballots not received by the deadline shall be considered abstentions and shall not affect the final vote."

REPRINT: According to our current Bylaws, in order to amend the bylaws, a proposal "must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Board of Directors" and "sent out for comment to the General Membership". This email shall serve as the submission to the Secretary of the proposal to amend the Bylaws. This email shall also serve as the proposal that is to be sent to the General Membership for comment.

On our website (<http://www.panhandleprowriters.org/bylaws>) you will find the Bylaws that were amended in 2013, the Bylaws the Board has just recently amended, and "redlined" Bylaws that reflect what was changed (what was deleted and what was added or moved).

Besides some general cleanup, below is a brief description of some of the more

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- The installation of officers was changed to coincide with our fiscal year (which is January through December)
- How Life Membership is attained has been changed back to the way it was prior to the 2013 revisions
- The offices of Publicity and Newsletter were combined and the title of Workshops Director was changed to Events and Workshops
- Some of the Officers' duties were modified
- How amendments to the Bylaws are made and how the notice of amendments are made was modified
- How our organization can be dissolved was changed

Please go to (<http://www.panhandleprowriters.org/bylaws>) and review the proposed changes. If you have any comments, please submit them via email to either info@texashighplainswriters.com or to panhandlewriters@gmail.com.

Currently there are six people serving on the Board of Directors when there should be ten. That means that more than one Board Member is serving double duty. We need to have a FULL Board of Directors. Please volunteer to serve on the Board. We know you are busy . . . we all are. If we don't have a Board of Directors to manage the affairs of Texas High Plains Writers, then there is no Texas High Plains Writers.

Sincerely,

Your Board of Directors

Kim Black, President (and acting Secretary)

Mike Akins, Technology

Karen Gammage, Treasurer

Molly McKnight, Membership

Linda Broday, Programs

Janet Taylor, Publicity and Newsletter

Nimrod

Call for Submissions - Deadline: November 5

"[Nimrod](#) is a biannual literary journal published at The University of Tulsa." For their "Spring/Summer 2017 issue, Leaving Home, Finding Home, Nimrod International Journal is seeking poetry, short stories, and creative nonfiction pieces that explore ideas of home — both leaving home and finding home." They are inviting "poems,

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publication histories."

Youth Writing Contest Results



This is a photo of some of the students who placed in this year's contest. We had over 200 entries! In case you were wondering, we raised over \$700 in the raffle for the tablet, and it was won by a teacher. "Thank you" to all who participated in the youth writing contest and the raffle.

A third/fourth grader sent us this note:

Dear Texas High Plains Writers,

Thank you for reading and commenting on my paper "Principal of the Day." I enjoyed writing for the competition and look forward to doing it again in the future."

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[Robyn Conley](#), The Book Doctor, will be presenting at our November 18 meeting.

The plans for the January 21 meeting is a workshop on social media. More details to follow in the November newsletter.

[Bethany Claire](#) is coming back to speak at our March 18 meeting. She was a fantastic speaker, so if you missed her last time, don't miss her in March.

Author [Karen Witemeyer](#) out of Abilene, Texas, is our May 20 speaker.

Member Writing Contest

Below is a list of this year's writing contest prompts and their postmark deadlines:

- "Write about something ugly — war, fear, hate, or cruelty—but find the beauty (silver lining) in it." September's contest has a November 1 postmark deadline.
- "He turned the key in the lock and opened the door. To his horror, he saw ..."
November's contest has a January 3 postmark deadline.

Your entries can be a short story of any genre or a poem. For details go to our [website](#).

Centennial

It will be upon us before we know it. In a few short four years from now, our organization will be celebrating its 100th anniversary. How many writing organizations can say that? Very few. We need volunteers to join the Centennial Committee. Please [email](#) us if you'd like to be a part of the planning and implementation of such an historic event.

Linked Up

Links to Members' Websites

If you want to be included in the Linked Up section of our newsletter, email us your information.

Jennifer Archer

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate](#) ▼**Kim Black**

[Subscribe](#) to Kim Black's email list and receive a free story. What kind of writer is Kim? Find out by going to her [website](#) and reading what she writes.

Natalie Bright

Learn about Natalie and the books she's written by visiting her [website](#).

Linda Broday

Visit Linda's [website](#) and sign up for her newsletter and check out her blog and booklist.

Marcy McKay

Learn more about Marcy McKay and what she writes [here](#).

Ryan McSwain

You can get a [signed copy](#) of Ryan's book *Monsters All The Way Down* on his [website](#). His newest book *Four Color Bleed* is coming out in November. You can join his mailing list and get access to free short stories by going to his "[All My Stuff](#)" page.

Phyliss Miranda

Discovery Phyliss's books, what her favorite links are, and check out her new contest [here](#).

Janda Raker

Check out Janda's travel and outdoor recreation articles and photos on her [website](#).

There you'll find sample photos and links to all of her articles. Subscribe and you'll be notified whenever a new article is posted.

Dianne Sagan

Dianne's [website](#) has a free newsletter to announce new books, recipes, contests, and giveaways. You can also find her [Book Club-in-a-Box](#) on her website. Dianne's other [website](#) has a membership section and offers a free newsletter.

Vicki Schoen

Would you like to include Vicki in your [book discussion group](#)? You can sign up for Vicki's [mailing list](#) and you can read her [blog](#).

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President: Kimberly Black - pennie@steepledog.com
 President-Elect: vacant
 Secretary: vacant
 Treasurer: Karen Gammage - kgamm@earthlink.net
 Technical Support: Mike Akins - mike7166@gmail.com
 Membership: Molly McKnight - mmc222@ymail.com
 Hospitality: vacant
 Publicity and Newsletter: Janet Taylor - janetcoopertaylor@gmail.com
 Conferences and Workshops: vacant
 Programs: Linda Broday - lindabroday@aol.com

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 related topics.

You may order a box lunch from our Hospitality Director between 9:30 and 10:15 or bring a sack lunch. Box lunches are \$10.

Our meetings/programs follow this schedule:

Check-In and Meet & Greet
9:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Business Meeting
10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

Program/Presentation
10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Box Lunch
12:15 - 1 p.m.

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1217 S. Tyler
Amarillo, Texas
(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.)

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



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