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The Window

Official eNewsletter of Texas High Plains Writers
(formerly known as Panhandle Professional Writers)



HIGH PLAINS WRITERS

The Oldest Writers' Group in the United States

Celebrating 100 Years ~ 1920 – 2020

May 2018

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter



May Meeting

Speaker: Rosa Latimer

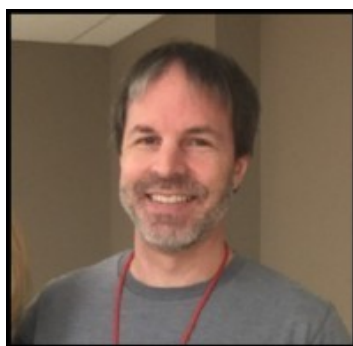
When: May 19, 2018

Time: 9:30 AM Registration, 10:00 AM Workshop

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“Writing is More Than Putting Words on Paper”.

Rosa will help us establish a process that takes writing from an initial story idea through the publishing process. “Behind the everyday discipline of writing there are core elements that you must have in place to enable you to be successful in telling your story,” Rosa explained. “I’m looking forward to discussing how to organize research, keep your story on track and stay true to your purpose. These are essential to the process of writing.” She will also share entertaining stories from her own books as well as her experience establishing and keeping a successful relationship with a publisher. “Whether you write fiction or non-fiction, this information will help you establish a simple, clear path to reaching your writing goals.”



From the desk of the President:

While I’m writing this, the wind is howling outside as a storm front rolls in that may or may not bring rain. As the saying goes, if you don’t like the weather here, wait five minutes and it will change.

Well, good things are blowing your way! The board of THPW is hard at work to bring good changes to the group, including gearing up for our centennial celebration in 2020, just two short years away!

We’re publishing a collection of short stories later this year and we’re looking for some of your stories to go in that book. Please submit your short story for consideration, with proceeds to benefit THPW. If you’ve never been published, this is your chance! Check out our website <http://texashighplainswriters.com/> in the coming week for details on how to submit.

By the way, we are a non-profit and exist solely to

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you're accustomed to seeing.

Our May 19 program with Rosa Latimer is a few short weeks away. Hanging with other writers will make you one of the cool kids. Hope to see you there!

--Mike Akins

Canadian Retreat Recap

by Natalie Bright



THPW President, Mike Akins, shares his work with other workshop attendees at the Conejo Art Gallery. Photo by Peyton Aufill artist/photographer. Amazing space, located on Main Street in Canadian. conejogallery.com

We had a good mix of brand-new newbie writers to multi-published hybrid authors for a weekend of inspiration, learning story craft, and great food. In addition to Amarillo and Canadian, writers came from Lubbock, Shamrock, Abilene, and San Antonio! The bed and breakfast accommodations were first rate. All said, the weekend was a tremendous success for the first ever, and I hope there'll be others planned in the

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We kicked off Friday morning with a panel discussion on where ideas come from and how to find markets for your work. Tex Thompson, creative writing instructor, reminded us that "It's okay to be bad. Just get through the first words. It's alright." I posed the question to the group about stopping to write down ideas while working on the work in progress. Idea journals are a must, and everyone agreed that ideas can come at the worst possible time. YA author, Kathleen Baldwin, said, "Do you ever stop writing? We may not be actually typing word on paper, but we're still writing in our head."

An artistic spirit is never satisfied at where we are. Kathleen reminded us that there is a "writing world and real world. It's nice to have both." Put a value on the words you write. You become more fertile the more you write and the better ideas you'll have.

Editing Like a Boss

Tex reminded us to eliminate happy coincidences, blow up the boring parts, target accidental repetitions by setting a important conversations at unexpected places, sharpen relevant contrasts and multi-task relentlessly.

What can this one page do for your story? For example, reveal or develop character, reveal backstory, or move the plot along. Use the setting to make your character's life harder.

The Secret Life of Pantser

Kathleen talked about our creative brain. We took an interesting quiz to determine if we are a pantser or a plotter. **Pantsers** love adventure and not knowing where their characters will take them. If they know the ending, they are bored. A pantser plots on the fly, relies on subconscious creative mind or dreams. **Plotters** are brilliant planners who like working from outlines. They rely on the power of conscious creation, and usually like structure and order in their lives. Studies have shown that there are just as many bestselling authors who are pantsers as plotters.

The main point of her talk is to know your brain. How can you maintain balance in your life? How can you minimize stress? Write at the same time every day because we are wired to respond to habit/repetitive behaviors. When are you the most creative? Your creative mind blossoms when you reward it for brilliance. Give yourself emotional strokes for your creative accomplishments.

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graveyard at midnight she might see: a vampire jumps out and attacks her. The opposite of that might be; a happy clown pops out of the headstone. Different, but too weird and doesn't work for our story. List five or more opposite ideas, but less obvious. What works best? 1) An old lady sits in a rocker, knitting. 2) Buffy's dead mother floats up singing a ghostly warning. 3) Buffy finds a baby sleeping. 4) Maybe the baby is a toddler, and it looks like Spike. 5) Little vampire Spike is trapped in a time warp, and is crying, lost, alone, hungry. Does this idea make sense for your story?

Freshman 15

On Saturday, Tex did a two-part workshop on elements of the first 15 pages of a book. In your first fifteen pages, list the ingredients. What can reader expect to find? Give your readers a reason to stay awake and keep reading. We went line by line and discussed the elements of story and structure for *THE MARTIAN* by Andy Weir and *THE NIGHTINGALE* by Kristin Hannah. This was an excellent and indepth class. We watched a video clip of *ACE VENTURA*, as an example of an opening that is unexpected.

Here's a link to another great recap, [BURIED TREASURES](#), on our weekend in Canadian by one of the meeting attendees, THPW member The Blonde Kirstine (K. R. Broman).

Thanks Canadian Arts Alliance for a great weekend!

Two exciting opportunities for you to get more involved at Texas High Plains Writers!

#1

We are converting the youth contest raffles to fundraising for THPW and the upcoming Centennial Celebration. Bring new or nearly new items related to writing - notebooks, coffee mugs, books on the craft of writing or writer inspirations, or anything else a writer might be interested in - and good condition (as in nearly new or new) fiction, to the meeting and donate them to be put in a raffle. The funds will go to help all aspects of THPW.

Don't forget to buy your raffle tickets!

#2

Bring your not-so-new used fiction, non-fiction, or writing craft books, as well

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**Texas High Plains Writers
Published Anthology Contest 2018**

Call for Submissions

500-2500 word short narrative works, fiction or nonfiction
Any genre (see exceptions below)

THPW Member Contest Fee - \$10

Non-THPW Member Contest Fee Special Deal: \$40

\$10 Contest Fee One Submission & \$30 Membership Dues for 2018

Deadline: July 31, 2018

By eMail: send MS no later than July 31, 2018, to info@texashighplainswriters.com
with subject line "Anthology Contest".

Pay Online via PayPal at <http://texashighplainswriters.com> "Become a Member" Tab
Scroll down to Payment/Donations, click your option, Add to Cart

By regular mail: must be postmarked on or before July 31, 2018.

Mail Submission and Contest Fees to:

THPW Anthology Contest

PO Box 19303

Amarillo, Texas 79114

Industry Standard Manuscript format applies.

Double-Spaced, 1" margins, Times New Roman 12 pt. font
Title, Author name, and page #, upper right corner of your manuscript.

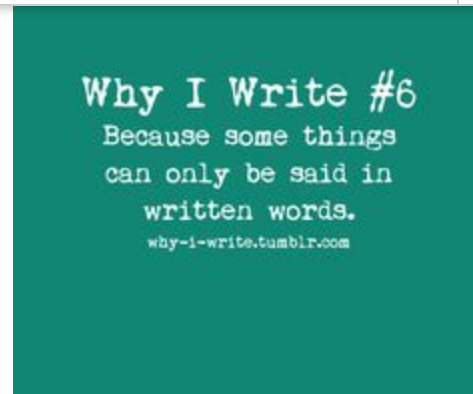
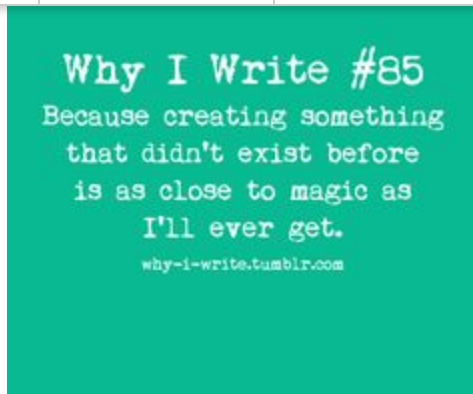
Multiple submissions are accepted, but no more than one submission per author will be
selected for the final Anthology. \$10 Fee for each additional submission.

NO erotica, incest, or stories with extreme violence will be selected.

Stories containing any of these elements will be disqualified from consideration.

No rights are reserved or assumed. Author retains all rights.

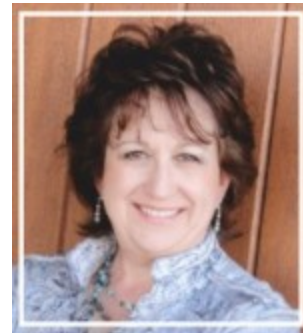
There are no guarantees that your submitted work will be accepted as a finalist for the Published Book Anthology. Winners will be determined by a pre-selected Board of Judges. All THPW Anthology sale proceeds will be used to help fund the THPW 2020 Centennial Celebration. Thanks for your participation.

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From the Editor's Desk:

If you have news or events for the bi-Monthly eNewsletter, THE WINDOW, or for the THE BUZZ notes which go out when there's anything of interest to share, you can email me at the contact address below. Also the SHARE link on our website should be working now. If I've not posted your information, please email me again.

Spending time with creative people who are on fire about their work is so inspiring, as I was reminded at the workshop in Canadian. As you listen to someone else talk about their story idea and writing process, the creative juices start flowing in your own mind. That's why participating in a group like Texas High Plains Writers is so very important to push your own ability to write and reach The End. We'd love to see you at one of our events! The year is only half done, so mark your calendars for the following meetings.



[July 21 Indie Author and Self-Publishing Panel](#)

[September 15 Robyn Conely, author & freelance editor](#)

[November 17 speaker pending](#)

Also in November, plans are underway to be a part of **Not My 9 to 5**, an event celebrating all creatives. Authors and artisans of all kinds will be invited to set-up booths to sell and display their wares. There will be poet readings, performers, musicians, films, and much more to see and do. Stay tuned!

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).*

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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.

Meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome. There is no fee for members of Texas High Plains Writers to attend our regular bi-monthly meetings. A \$10 fee may apply to nonmembers.

*Unless otherwise specified, 2017 meeting location is:
Amarillo Tower (formerly Chase Tower)
9th Floor, Ed Davis Room
600 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.)*

Our meetings/programs follow this schedule:

Check-In and Meet & Greet

9:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Coffee & Snacks provided

Business Meeting

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

Program/Presentation

10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Lunch On Your Own

12:15 - 1:30 p.m.

Critique Session, if Announced

1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Need to contact us?

Write to us at:

Texas High Plains Writers

P. O. Box 19303

Amarillo, TX 79114

Email us:

info@texashighplainswriters.com



Byline and credited articles represent the views of the authors. Publication neither implies approval of the opinion or the accuracy of the facts stated. We welcome submission, news, member announcements, and any information that might be of interest to the writing community. We will happily promote new releases and book signing events for THPW members.

Natalie Bright, Publicity Chair/Newsletter Editor

Email | [natalie\(at\)nataliebright\(dot\)com](mailto:natalie(at)nataliebright(dot)com)

Website | <http://nataliebright.com>

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