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The Window

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



HIGH PLAINS WRITERS

September 2018

A Bi-Monthly eNewsletter

September Meeting

Please help us welcome the book doctor, Robyn Conley!

Saturday, September 15, 2018.

9:30 Registration 10:00 Meeting

This month's meeting includes a morning & afternoon session.

Robyn has been helping writers publish for over twenty years. In addition to holding workshops, she taught the mechanics of writing at TCU and UTA universities.

This meeting we'll have both a morning and afternoon session – a sort of one day workshop.

Need help with characters? Robyn will devote the morning to DRIVING YOUR CHARACTER: HOW TO DEVELOP A WELL-ROUNDED PROTAGONIST. She'll also have interactive exercises that help layer emotional and physical depth to main characters.

The hour-long afternoon session from 1:00 to 2:00 – SELF-EDITING WITHOUT SELF-DESTRUCTING – will feature a checklist of sample editing tips. If you're struggling to get your manuscript in shape to publish, this will be an excellent class.

If you would like help with your WIP, the doctor is in. All you have to do is show up.

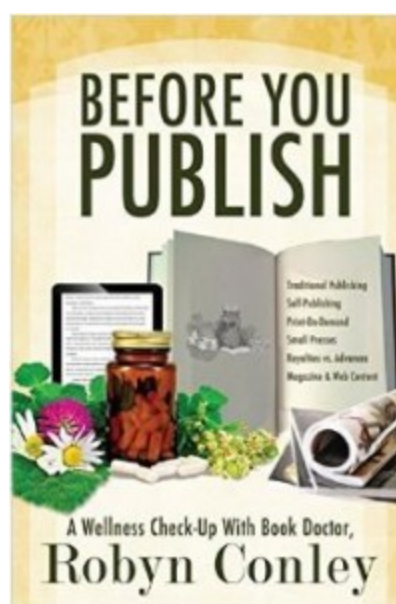
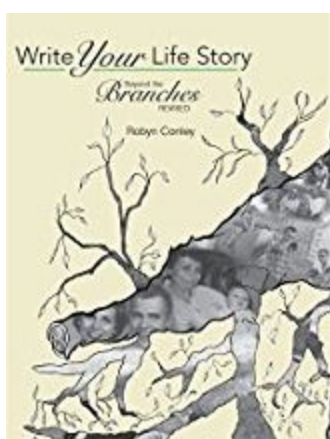
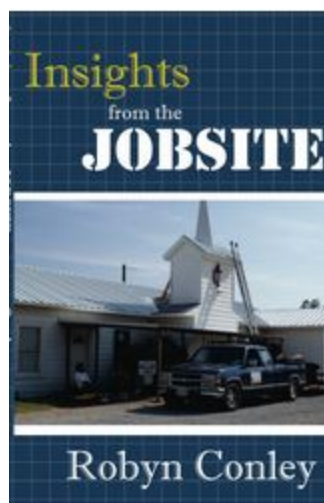
Robyn has graciously offered to read and critique the first two pages of your manuscript, but she'll need it ahead of time. She requires that it be two pages only, in Courier 12 font, double-spaced. Send those to Robyn Conley, 6376 CR 252, Clyde, Texas 79510.

Robyn co-founded and led the Writer's Group of Fort Worth for over a decade in addition to speaking at

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Take advantage of her expertise and attend the September meeting. You'll come away a better writer.

<http://robynconley.com/>



Meeting Location

First Bank Southwest Tower
(formerly Chase Tower)
600 South Tyler Street
Downtown Amarillo

THPW 2018 Board

President: Mike Akins
President-Elect: Rick Brown
Secretary: Audrey Massingill
Treasurer: Janet Taylor
Technology: open
Membership: Richard Brown

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*Workshops: open
Programs: Linda Broday & Phyliss
Miranda*

WT's Writer in Residence Retires to Write!

by Natalie Bright

In 109 years of history, West Texas A&M University boasts a legacy of having two Writers-in-Residence. Both are former school teachers and both are known for weaving the heart and spirit of Texas into their stories.

Jodi Thomas, a long-time Texas High Plains Writers member and supporter of area writers retired from this past August after seventeen years of service to WT. Her first book was published in 1988, and she has since earned five RITA's, multiple awards, and made it on numerous best-selling lists. Jodi has fans located all over the world.

Following a thirty-year absence of a writer-in-residence at WT, Thomas followed the footsteps of her creative writing instructor, Loula Grace Erdman, and became the second person to teach and write on the Canyon campus. Dr. Russell Long, WTAMU's President at the time, supported the idea of an artist in residence. As a former English teacher of the classics, he was naturally drawn to a writer. After hearing Thomas speak at a local event, he considered a romance writer for the position.

"I was impressed by her wit, common sense, and the way she related to her audience," said Dr. Long. "I knew Jodi would add value to the student experience."

A newly married Jodi enrolled into a creative writing course at Amarillo College, taught by WT's first writer-in-residence, Erdman. Jodi recalls, "She led me to believe I could write." Erdman autographed her book, *A TIME TO WRITE*, for her young student Thomas. The inscription reads, "*May you be writing--and autographing--book of your own some of these days, Best of Wishes.*" Upon her retirement, Jodi has donated that book to the Cornette Library.

Loula Grace Erdman arrived in Amarillo from Missouri in 1926 at the invitation of a college roommates' mother. She taught Junior High and wrote short stories for many years, spending one summer in New York City to obtain her Masters in creative writing from Columbia University.

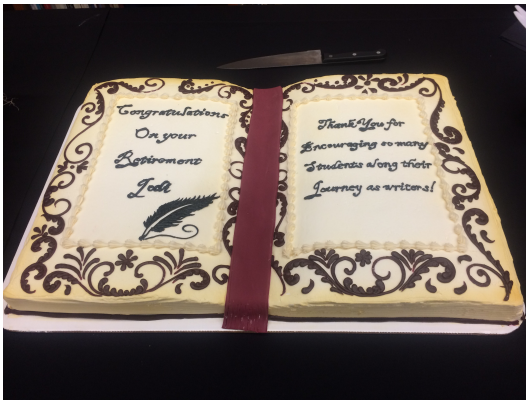
Erdman agreed to teach a summer session at West Texas Normal College in 1945. When she inquired if this might lead to a permanent position, President J. A. Hill informed her that they were looking for a man with a Ph.D. Based on a glowing recommendation from the English Department, Erdman accepted a place on the faculty to teach Freshman English and creative writing. When she came to WT she began work on her third novel, *THE YEARS OF THE LOCUST*, which won the prestigious Dodd, Mead-Redbook Award in 1946. A contest she entered despite the advice of her agent.

Erdman sent the manuscript to New York. Her busy agent passed the manuscript to an assistant at the publishing house who reported the story showed no promise and recommended a complete rewrite. Erdman asked for her story back. When she arrived at the train station, the package had been thrown from the train and landed in a water puddle. She retyped the ruined pages. Paying one dollar and seventy-five cents in postage and using a men's underwear box from the general store, she resubmitted her story as is, with no revisions. Four months later a letter arrived from Mr. Edward Dodd to let her know that she had won the \$10,000 grand prize. Erdman's writing career was launched.

Encouraging other writers, teaching writing, and entertaining us with their stories--two writers-in-residence leave their legacy in our area.

REF: *A TIME TO WRITE* by Loula Grace Erdman

Reception Photos: Jodi pauses for a pic with Dr. Long, who appointed her to the position, and with current WT President, Dr. Wendler. Pics by Julia.

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MEMBER NEWS

Amarillo Area Foundation

Texas High Plains Writers has successfully completed the application process to participate in the Amarillo Area Foundation's PANHANDLE GIVES fundraiser, a nonprofit organization serving the northernmost 26 counties of Texas through philanthropic leadership. Stay tuned for more information about the upcoming #givingTuesday in November.

JAMES D. QUIGGLE

Published in September, "A Private Commentary on the Bible: Colossians." My current writing project, begun this month, is a commentary on Mark's Gospel, tentatively scheduled for publication late 2019. **Writers, persistence brings results.** I have published seven books this year, ranging from 15,000 to 300,000 words (a total of 697,000 words). Two books were written over the course of six years of research, writing, and editing. One took shape during a two year span. A collection of eighty essays (originally posted on FB), was written from one May to the next. The fifth was the result of three decades research on the biblical view of marriage and family. Number six was a one volume revision of a previous two volume work. Number seven took about two months. Be persistent in your writing.

JANDA RAKER

Janda has just posted a new online travel article on HubPages.com. It's titled "*How to See the Beautiful City of Rio de Janeiro on a Tight Budget.*" Go to <http://hub.me/amcWB> to access it, or go to her website, [TravelswithJanda](http://TravelswithJanda.com) for links to all four of her travel articles on HubPages. Enjoy the trips! Janda is a long time THPW member who writes travel articles, travel essays, flash fiction, profiles, short stories, novels.

"Read, read, read. Read everything -- trash, classics, good and bad,
and see how they do it. Just like a carpenter who works as an
apprentice and studies the master.
Read! You'll absorb it.
Then write. If it's good, you'll find out."

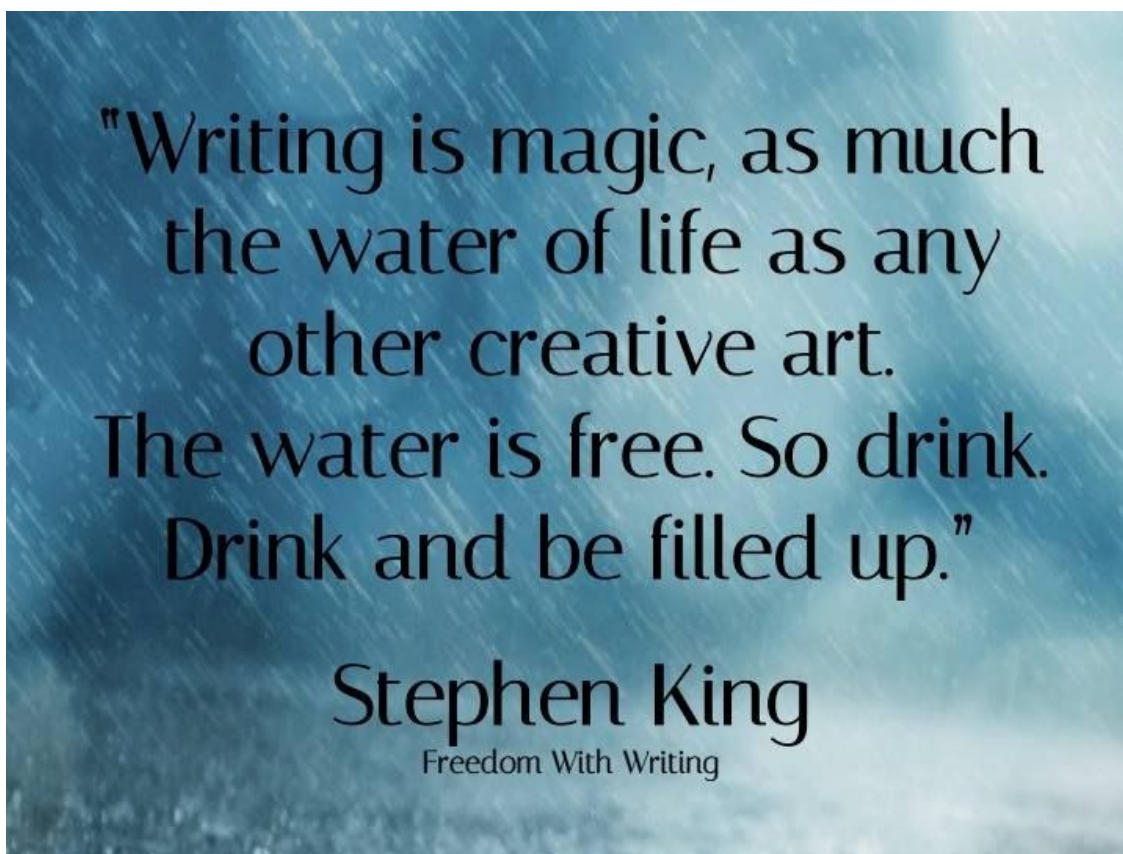
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Upcoming Programs

Our last meeting of the year will be November 17

Amarillo Author, Bill Briscoe

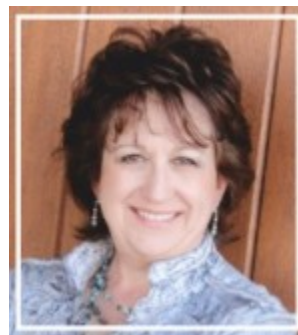
billbriscoe.com



From the Editor's Desk:

We Need YOU: There are huge opportunities for you to serve our organization, and we need you! A nominating committee will be appointed and we'll post Board positions and committee openings soon. Please consider getting involved in 2019. As it has been for many years, we are dedicated to helping area writers by providing networking opportunities and top-notch programs every other month.

Raffle Fundraiser: Be sure to check the raffle table. It's just your luck that I have a gazillion book club books and we'll be moving so



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know.

eReader: Remember to see Janet about a chance to win an eReader. All funds will help towards our upcoming Centennial Celebration.

SHARE. SHARE. SHARE. Click and share THPW posts and tweets. Help keep everybody informed. It's easy, just one like, comment, or click spreads the word about Texas High Plains Writers. You never know who might be needing inspiration from a group just like ours.



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:

Our meetings/programs follow this schedule:

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	<p><i>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.</i></p> <p><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>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 p.m. Critique Session, if Announced 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.</p> <p><i>Need to contact us?</i></p> <p>Write to us at: Texas High Plains Writers P. O. Box 19303 Amarillo, TX 79114</p> <p>Email us: info@texashighplainswriters.com</p>



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.

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Email | [natalie\(at\)nataliebright\(dot\)com](mailto:natalie(at)nataliebright(dot)com)
Website | <http://nataliebright.com>

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