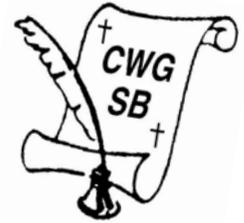


# WRITER'S VOICE !



"...I recite my composition concerning the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." Psalms 45:1 (NKJV)

Spring 2007

Volume 3, Issue 2

## From the Editor...

Greetings in the mighty name of **Jesus**.

In the last issue I wrote about 2007, the year of **Crowning Glory**, which means **Completion, Fulfillment, Perfection**, and that we were in line for it. Well, I believe that we, Christian Writers Guild of Santa Barbara, are truly experiencing all that and more.

First, you can see what Katie Cushman's book will look like, and you can read the process that brings about such a lovely book cover. Wait until you see it in color! It's gorgeous. We look forward to her book release this fall.

One of our new members, Larry Skahill, tells how he came to be a member of CWGSB. We really enjoy Larry and he brings a lot of life to our meetings. Just think, the devil tried to snuff his life out permanently, but "greater is He that is in Larry than he that is in the world." Praise the Lord for His faithfulness. He never leaves us or forsakes us.

Following Larry's article is Corrinne Abele's first poem. The Lord is working mighty through her. For some reason everything Cory writes makes me misty-eyed—an unusual phenomenon for me.

We thought maybe some of you may like to have a little help selecting books on writing so we have included **Larry's Picks**. Let us know if these are helpful to you.

Lastly, I share conference bits and tips: information acquired during my hilltop experiences at Mount Hermon Writers Conference, March 30 through April 3, and the energy-charged day at the Orange County Spring Writer's Day, held on April 21. Truly this is turning out to be a year of **Crowning Glory**.

Opal Mae Dailey  
Editor-In-Chief

## Points of Interest...

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## Calendar . . .

### **CWGSB Monthly Meeting: 2nd Thursday**

IHOP Restaurant  
**12:00 p.m.**  
1701 State Street  
Santa Barbara, CA

**September 28-29:** San Diego Christian Writers Guild Fall Conference:

[www.sandiegocwg.org](http://www.sandiegocwg.org)

**October 6:** 11th Annual Santa Barbara Christian Writers Conference at Westmont College:

[cwgsb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cwgsb@sbcglobal.net)  
805) 682-0316

## Uncovering The Perfect Cover

By Katie Cushman

Cover selection was the latest step in my publishing pathway. Most royalty-paying houses retain control over their covers, although some big name authors get this written out of their contract. For the rest of us, the final decision lies with our publisher, which is just fine with me. Publishing houses know the market and understand what kinds of covers sell books.

First in the process, my editor sent me to Border's and told me to find four covers that gave me a "strong emotional reaction." The editor uses this list to get an idea of what the author likes. So, I walked through Border's one rainy Saturday afternoon, paper and pencil in hand. As it turned out, number one on my list was number one on his list, too.

A whole team of people weigh in on cover design, but getting the editorial group and the marketing/sales group in agreement is the biggest step. At the first cover meeting, the designers bring in three to four cover ideas, either created in-house or by an out-of-house design firm. Depending on the book, and the degree of concept already developed, these first designs can be anything from variation on a single theme, to widely divergent ideas. For a great example of the divergent, check out [http://www.infuzemag.com/staff/robin/2006/08/rejected\\_covers.html](http://www.infuzemag.com/staff/robin/2006/08/rejected_covers.html). This shows the cover variations of Robin Parrish's book, *Relentless*.

After the group concurs on the general set-up, the designers are sent back with instructions for tweaking. If the cover design involves portraits

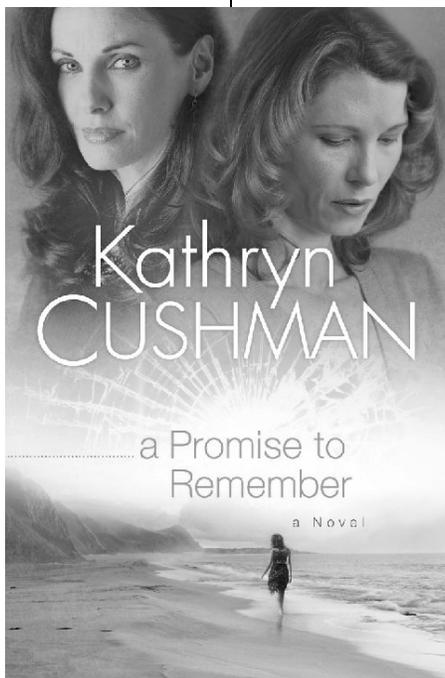
of the characters, either stock photos are used or models are hired.

After the designer returns with a more finalized version, things still change. With my cover, one of the models looked significantly different than expected. The committee went through more of her photos, trying to find a shot that seemed more appropriate. After that, they worked on the cover overlay a little. Originally, it was ice blue, but the committee felt it gave the cover a really cold, distant feel. So, they literally stood around while the art designer played with color options on the computer screen.

Then, at long last, the author gets a first glimpse at the cover. (I loved mine!) Author response is taken seriously, and covers *sometimes* change dramatically if an author doesn't like it. Bottom line, the publisher has the final word.

Occasionally, even after a cover is agreed upon and put in the catalog, it gets negative feedback at the first sales conference. Since this is the group who actually sells the book to the stores, these remarks carry a lot of weight and may bring change. My editor tells me this happens to about one book a season.

When at long last the book makes it to the store, hopefully the cover gets noticed. If it causes people to pick it off the shelf, then it serves its purpose well.



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Watch for Katie's new book, *A Promise to Remember*, to be published in the Fall of 2007 by Bethany House Publishers.

## Writing In Larryland

By Larry Skahill

I was attending my first Santa Barbara Christian Writers Guild conference in October of 2005 when I initially heard of the necessity of belonging to a writer's group. I've always been a do-it-yourselfer and filed the advice away.

At the 2006 Mount Hermon Christian Writers Conference the mantra, "Writers' Group, Writers' Group," reverberated through the majestic redwood forest and the steep, waterfall-laden and fern-covered canyons.

Secluded in Larryland (my name is Larry, thus: Larryland), I spewed 50,000 plus words concerning the spiritual journeys and thoughts of a man at death's door following a deadly boating accident. Scenes include the sport of spear-fishing, blood and guts, and fighting to live against enormous odds. In the unofficial dictionary of Larryland, this is a guy book.

Faithfully, the CWGSB sent this non-member quarterly editions of **Writer's Voice!** After one-and-a-half years, I attended the February 2007 luncheon meeting.

In hopes of having a few pages read and critiqued, I printed out a half-dozen copies of my first chapter and headed south from my home in Lompoc.

As George read the opening paragraphs, I was overcome with emotion as the story still hit close to home. I looked across the table at Katie Cushman (congrats on book deal), another new member.

*She's crying. That's great!*

*You're a sick man, Larry. How can you enjoy making a lady cry?*

Such are the faults of a writer, so I quickly forgave myself and tuned back into the reading.

The fact that seventy percent of all books are purchased by women caused great concern for potential sales in Larryland. I wrote off my concerns as being circumspect. As it turns out, I was simply wrong.

Katie and I share an avid interest in Sol Stein's books on writing. She correctly pointed out where I

left the style of immediate scene, and began narrating.

Following comments by other members as well as Katie, I've been enthusiastically rewriting the book with particular attention to the emotional impact on *all* readers.

The stated mission of the Santa Barbara Christian Writer's Guild is "... to educate, encourage and inspire ... ."

Mission accomplished!

I'm through with Larryland.

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## A.M.

By Corrinne Abele

I lower the bucket  
Down, down ...  
Down it goes.

As I read, as I study  
Deeper and deeper the bucket goes  
Plunging into the waters of life.

Ah, finally—  
Refreshing, soul-cleansing, pure water  
From the kingdom of God.

My spirit—drink!  
Drink of the inner treasures  
The deep secrets God breathed.

Weariness of soul  
Be calmed in the presence of the Master  
Anchored in faith—hope—love.

And I emerge, the new creation  
Strengthened with might  
Illuminated with clarity of truth.

My mission redefined.  
My objectives embraced  
In His ability.

Oh, the might  
The gentle waters  
Of this well called grace!

*Ephesians 3*

## Larry's Picks . . .

By Larry Skahill

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of "Picks" we hope to bring you recommending books our contributing writers/editors have found helpful in their writing journey.

*Stein on Writing, and How to Grow a Novel*, by playwright, author, editor and publisher Sol Stein, will take you from the essentials of writing to "guidelines for living forever." These books are enjoyable, invaluable studies on the art, craft and business of publishing.

*The Complete Handbook of Novel Writing*, Writer's Digest Books, provides everything from basic building blocks to insights, methodologies and tips through interviews and articles by well known authors and editors.

*The Dream Giver*, by Bruce Wilkinson, is a delightful, inspiring parable that will take you from the world of "ordinary" to embracing the dream God placed in your heart. Don't just be a writer; be a writer for Him!

## WRITER'S VOICE !

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We welcome your input: ideas, suggestions and article submissions. Please use the addresses above.

## Bits & Tips . . .

By Opal Mae Dailey

At both Mt. Hermon and Orange County writer's conferences there seemed to be a trend for authors to be either co-authors or ghost writers. This is not anything new, but it was stressed as a way to make a good living as a writer if that is your goal. In no way does this mean you can't write your own books and articles, but suggests options you may want to consider.

Jim Denny, my major morning track instructor at Mt. Hermon, has been making a great living for his family for over twenty-five years writing his own books and articles, as well as co-authoring with well-known people who have a platform.

Jim shared with us that Amazon.com is the least expensive place to buy his book, *Quit Your Day Job: How to Sleep Late, Do What You Enjoy, and Make a Ton of Money as a Writer*. Everything he taught us in "The Business and Holy Calling of Non-fiction" workshops is in his book.

Speaking of a platform, that's another big buzz word this year. I sat with a number of agents and acquisition editors at lunch and dinner, and all were adamant that they would not consider a manuscript without a proposal that included the author's platform. They want to know what you are going to do to sell your book. Times are changing! The past rules of publishing are slipping away, but conferences are a way to keep up with the changes.

Self-publishing is giving way to co-publishing, even with the large publishing houses. The publishing world is a whole new business full of excitement and adventure.

Jesus says to us:

I'll leave my place, I'll come to your place,  
I'll take your place, then we'll go to my place.

Dick Foth