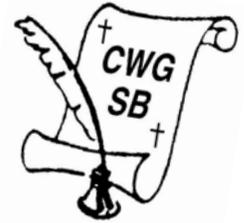


WRITER'S VOICE !



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

Winter 2008

Volume 4, Issue 1

From the Editor ...

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

... not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the LORD of Hosts. Zechariah 4:6

What a joy and a blessing to have the unction of the Holy Spirit to help us write and publish His Word around the world.

Speaking of blessings, we at CWGSB are blessed with two new members, Peggy Homer and Mark Krilanovich. Peggy has already answered the call to submit an article for this issue of *Writer's Voice*. I believe many of you will relate to her *New Member's Perspective* on page four.

When I asked Michael, Cory's husband, if Cory had any favorite books she would like to share in *Cory's Pics*, he answered, "Oh, sure: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John." I thought, "This lady really knows good reading!" Cory also shares a special event in her article, *2-12-78*. It touched my heart when I read it, and I'm sure you'll agree she has thoroughly read all the above books, plus more.

Larry Skahill's *Educational Options for the Aspiring Writer* is designed to get us all, no matter what level we write, off to a successful year of writing. Getting started is half way there, and Larry has something to stimulate each of us into action.

The Orange County Spring Writers Day is coming up on April 12th. I have enjoyed attending this special day for almost 12 years. I encourage you to visit their website for more information and to attend this valuable conference.

All the above is but part of what you'll find in this issue. We wish you all "Happy Easter."



Opal Mae Dailey
Editor-In-Chief



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Calendar . . .

CWGSB Monthly Meeting:

2nd Thursday
12:00 p.m.
IHOP Restaurant
1701 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA

April 12, 2008: OCCWF Spring
Writers Day 2008
www.ocwcf.org

May 2-3, 2008: Antelope Valley
Christian Writers Confer-
ence
www.avwriters.com

October 2008: 12th Annual Santa
Barbara Christian Writers Confer-
ence at Westmont College: Email
cwgsb@sbcglobal.net
(805) 682-0316

Educational Options for the Aspiring Writer . . .

Lawrence G. Skahill

“I’ve always wanted to be a writer.”

“Me too!”

One by one, the other members of my magazine article writing class at my first-ever Christian Writers Guild of Santa Barbara annual conference were singing the same tune.

Not me. I’m new at this. How can I become a writer?

In seeking out the most efficient use of my time, energy, and money, I followed the four-step methods of corporate career-planners from my past, spiced with sage advice from the National Management Association. Those four steps are:

- Goal Setting
- Self-assessment
- Options
- Action Plans

Using these tools and methods over the past three years, I have gone from as many as twelve drafts to as few as three. I am more knowledgeable about the publishing business; and most importantly, I am pleased with my writing and optimistic about my future as a writer.

Step One: Goal Setting

Make sure you are setting goals and not dreaming. A dream is an achievement that is beyond your singular ability to control: “I want to write a New York Times best-seller.”

A goal, however, is clearly defined and expressible (preferably written); achievable (you have the qualities, energy, time and other assets to accomplish it); credible (you reasonably believe you can do it); measurable in quantity, quality and time; and finally, a goal must be flexible to meet the changing circumstances of your life.

Establish short term (less than three years) and long term (longer than three years) goals. Set rewards for yourself along the path, and make the rewards commensurate with the achievement.

“I will write 500 words every day.”

Reward: a banana.

“I will complete my Masters in Fine Arts degree in six years.” Reward: a Caribbean Cruise!

Reach for the heights in setting your goals and remember to have fun setting them.

Step Two: Self-Assessment

This is the area of your life that will be directly impacted by the four-step plan, so do not perform self-assessment first as there is the danger of setting your goals too low.

Fill out a job-application and/or write a résumé as if you were applying for a publishing-related position. Areas to cover include: interests, values, personality, skills, experience, and education. Please note that this order of attributes differs greatly from a standard job application or résumé. The greater your interest in the subject matter, the better your writing. Listing your values and personality will help tighten up your areas of interest as well as establish your “voice,” the uniqueness that only you bring to your writing. While a potential employer might not care that you “love to play badminton,” it just might land you an article with *Sports Illustrated*.

Do you have a good imagination and are you a good storyteller? These traits significantly impact your choice of fiction versus non-fiction writing. While they make for a better non-fiction writer, they are essential traits for fiction writers.

A fiction writer’s primary qualification is the ability to write a good story. On the other hand, in developing their “platform” (for books), or niche (for magazines), non-fiction writers need to develop subject-appropriate credentials in addition to their writing skills. Credential-related educational options will be covered in Part Two of this series.

Do you have experience as a writer? Add it to your list. Is it pertinent to the direction you want to go with your writing? How can it be used to further your goals?

Whatever your level of education, are you comfortable with your “voice?” How does your self-assessment compare with your goals?

The Bottom Line: Examine your writer’s job ap-

plication and résumé. Would you hire yourself for the writing career you envision?

If not, while the details of Options and Action Plans will be covered in Part Two, here is a Quick-start Guide you can put into action today:

1. Join the CWGSB! For a mere \$20 per year, you will learn from other writers what works and what doesn't work in all aspects of writing.

2. Books. There are many fine "How to" books on writing. Most cost less than \$20. Commit to one book per month. Join the Writers Digest Book Club www.writersdigestbookclub.com and save money! Choose an editor or other professional that will take you through the entire process in a focused manner (personal favorite: Sol Stein) as opposed to a book that quotes multiple authors with multiple—and often opposing—views.

3. Attend writer's conferences. Although expensive, a good conference (i.e. Mount Hermon <http://mounthermon.org/writers>) is worth the money. For a great bang for the buck, attend our own Christian Writers Guild of Santa Barbara (email: cwgsb@sbcglobal.net) annual conference, held the first week of each October. Be picky. There is an entire industry that thrives on living off your hopes and aspirations. A sure red flag is a flyer with poor spelling and grammar offering to teach you how to write.

4. Writing courses. Contact your local school district and/or community college. Many of these institutions offer online courses as well.

Most importantly: Keep writing!

"I never let my schooling interfere with my education." Mark Twain

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2-12-78 . . .

Corrinne Abele

My heart swells with emotion. I will celebrate my 30th birthday on February 12th – my born-again birthday that is. Getting to know Jesus has been the most amazing and exciting adventure of my life and one that has no end.

The early years of my faith were filled with exhilaration and extreme triumphs. At times, though, seemingly alone, I faced trials that were frightening and overwhelming. I began a daily discipline that would help me throughout the years to untangle confusion and reveal answers. I could release my frustrations, my anger, and my fears. I could also share my victories, my dreams, and my questions to the One who gave His life for me. I realized long ago the benefits of the simple practice of keeping a journal.

What is it that takes place in us as we sit before the Lord and talk to Him on paper? Perhaps we are releasing those things that clog our thoughts by deliberately slowing down and getting quiet and writing. Sometimes writing can expose destructive emotions so they can be dealt with in prayer. Other times our journals carry the written treasures of a life spent with God and answered prayers.

As writers, we seek to put words on paper for others. Journaling, however, is private and for us alone, and can be a great help to our mental and physical well-being. What joys I have found writing and being taught by the Holy Spirit, as He has communicated scripture truth to correct me and build me up. And sometimes His awesome power and love embraces me with a courage and strength that puts my enemies fleeing in seven directions!

Thirty years of great and wonderful experiences with the Lord have been written down one page at a time in the notebooks of my life.

To God be the glory!

1 Peter 1:23-25

Corrinne Abele is the author of the daily devotional, *Who Am I? Discovering Who You Are In Christ Jesus*. She has recently completed a bible study titled *Who Am I? The Study Guide*. Her books are in great demand in several California prisons. Please visit her website: <http://healingstreet.com>. Email: books@healingstreet.com

Cory's Pics . . .

By Corrinne Abele

The Bible, various translations and publishers: My first recommendation is to read this wonderful book, especially the New Testament. Whether you are a young or a seasoned believer, this book can help you to settle your thoughts to be able to write clearly and be more focused. This is the only book that is alive and has the powerful ability to separate spirit and soul, helping the fiction and non-fiction writer to produce fruit. Try writing a chapter of scripture to unclog writer's block.

Abingdon's Strong's Concordance of the Bible, Nashville, Abingdon, 1980, and *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Old Tappan, New Jersey, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1981: These two popular books have brought me great understanding of the scriptures. I have used them for personal research and also for instruction in the writing of my first three books.

The Random House Thesaurus, College edition, New York, Random House, 1987: This book is a great tool. I have used it often when I have experienced writer's "brain fatigue." It has helped me to express what I had difficulty capturing on my own.

Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, College edition, New York, The World Publishing Company, 1966: How I love my old dictionary. It quotes scripture! I would not trade it for a new one even if it were free.

WRITER'S VOICE !

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

New Member's Perspective . . .

Peggy R. Homer

As a butterfly struggles to emerge from his protective cocoon, I found myself struggling as I prepared to show my writing to others. Should I join a Writer's Guild? Can I trust others to respect my work? Can I detach myself from my writing? What if they do not like my efforts?

The first step is the biggest one. I need people who share my interests and with whom I can share ideas, without fear of compromising my work or myself. The second step is to detach myself from my writing so I can accept my weaknesses and leave my self-esteem intact. This must be done in a way that allows me to correct my faults and to continue to find the creativity to write.

In my search for a writer's group, I had the encouragement of a friend who saw merit in my writing.

My first venture out of my protective cocoon was at a Christian Writer's Guild of Santa Barbara Conference. This gave me a positive glimpse into the world of writers and their support system.

Next, I took a closer look into this world, by sharing a story from one of my anthologies at a monthly meeting of the CWGSB. I was not sure I would show the story, but I took it and presented, *The Bobbie's Gift*, to a friendly, open, and warm group of writers. They gave me both ideas for improvements and praise for what I had accomplished.

The question, "Why should I become a member of a Writers Guild?" was answered. I am now ready to break away the next piece of my cocoon and join the writer's guild. Perhaps the day will come when I will fly as a beautiful butterfly into the world of publishing.