



News & Updates

Greetings, fellow writers! Normally I sit down to write this little opener one week before it's due. That gives me plenty of time to write it, read it, delete it, start over, read it, edit it, read it again, make my husband read it, and finally schedule it for send-off at 12:05 AM on either the 1st or 15th of every month. But I am late this time, although only the night owls who are still awake and checking emails at 12:05 AM have realized that. And the reason for my tardiness is because *I could not think of the right thing to write about this time.*

Oh, I could think of some stuff I'd like to share, but I'd talk myself out of writing about it because the topic was either too broad or too specific, or I'd imagine writing it and couldn't find the precise words I needed to convey the feeling I wanted, so I'd give up trying. And so it happened that by 12:05 this morning, I still had not written a word.

When I agreed to take over the newsletter, no one told me I had to do this opening article. This is certainly not a requirement for the job. It's just a little habit I've got myself into, and some months it's the only bit of "creative" writing I do. It gets me in my seat, thinking, and writing. It's important to me to not break this habit; to train myself to focus and write, even when I'm not sure where I'm going with it, or what I'm going to write about, or who even is going to read it.

And that's the story of why the newsletter is a little late going out today.

I'm Kate Landers and I'm off to get my coffee now. Tell me about *your* procrastination or writer's block at newsletter@chattanoogawritersguild.org.

Mark your calendars!

The Chattanooga Readers and Writers Fair is a free event taking place on Saturday, September 7 from 10 AM to 4 PM at the Downtown Library, 1001 Broad Street. There will be:

- *Author readings in the Auditorium
- *Open mic stage for multiple genres on the library plaza.
- *Vendor tables, book sales, and children's crafts on the 4th floor
- *Food carts, games, a flash fiction contest, and more!

It's a celebration of all things literary, for and by the entire community! For more information visit www.crwfair.org.

If you would like to be a presenter, check out the guidelines [HERE](#), and then send your application to [Mark Anderson](#). Deadline is midnight on Sunday, July 28!

If you would like to be a vendor, please email [Sherry Poff](#).

Also coming up in September is our **Annual Party and Board Elections!**

This event will take place on Tuesday, September 10 at The Edney Innovation Center downtown. We will have a potluck dinner and say

good-bye to departing board members, including John C. Mannone, who has been our president for 3 years.

The Chattanooga Writers' Guild is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) run by its members. In order to continue, we need volunteers to step up for board and officer positions, various committees, and annual events throughout the year. If you would like to find out more about what we do and where your help is needed, please read through our [BYLAWS](#) and [JOB DESCRIPTIONS](#).

Mad Blab

How to play: Say the following nonsensical sentences aloud and try to guess the name of the famous literary work you're saying. Answers at the bottom.

**Han there owed
Check hens hoop forth he's hole
Fore wrest comp**

Word to Know: Callowly, adv.

In an immature way.

The temp was callowly ignorant of the office protocols.

Member Spotlight with Barbara Tucker

When did you first consider yourself to be a writer? That is really an interesting question because it's very much a process, a development. I started writing even as an elementary age child, but didn't start thinking about writing fiction seriously as an adult until the mid-1980s when I took a fabulous fiction-writing course from Ken Smith at UTC. I dabbled, and started a novel in the early 2000s. It was terrible and self-indulgent—150,000 words long—but I finally cut it to about 100,000 and ultimately found a publisher, who published it and two sequels. Despite that happening in 2008-2012, it was not until the last few years that I started introducing myself as a novelist. One novel should make you a novelist, but there is so much emotion in writing, so much questioning, so much rejection and “putting yourself out there.” I finally have very few qualms about putting my work “out there.” I don't cram it down peoples' throats. If they want it, it's available. If not, fine. No one criticizes a musician for practicing and playing, even for money. No one criticizes an artist for expecting hundreds for a painting. It's odd that people are so likely to want writing for free. I don't worry about the money part any more, and that helps.

What writing project are you currently working on? I wish I could say just one. My work as a college professor and administrator means I spend



a lot of time writing outside of my personal fiction and blog writing. Right now I am finishing up the fourth edition of an open resource textbook, *Exploring Public Speaking*, that is being used all over the world (partly because it's a free download, and partly, we hope, because it's very good.) I am also working on scholarly articles about college teaching and communication. However, outside of that, I am beginning the notes and early stages of my eighth novel. It's the next in my series of *Long Lost* mysteries, featuring the main character Scott Wallace, the editor of a small town newspaper in (where else) Northwest Georgia who gets involved in helping the police (and sometimes working against them) with incidents and crimes in the community. The first was *Long Lost Family*; in June I published *Long Lost Promise*, and this next one is *Long Lost Justice*. The last centers on the burning of an African-American church in 1959 that has never been resolved.

What does your writing area look like? Legal pads and a Mac computer. Occasionally a notebook I'm either scribbling in or transcribing from. I have a comfortable chair I do a lot of writing in.

What is your favorite book on writing? John Gardner's *The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers*. It's not a technical manual, but more theoretical and a 35,000-foot view. There's a lot out there for the techniques. I read a lot of fiction, and tend to read works from the 1800s and early 1900s. That is good for a long view, but not for models of how novels should be, or are, written today. Today novels are more like screenplays.

Tell us about your muse or source of motivation. I wish it were simple. There are stories in my head that just want to come out. As hard as writing is, I achieve great happiness from writing and creating characters, dialogue, plot, resolution, setting, and having it all cohere. Once I finish a novel, I say, "It will be a while before I get into another one," but it's not really that long. I have about ten more sketched out ideas for novels and a few short stories. I also write plays and hope to start writing screenplays soon. Screenplays are a different animal because of the technical aspects of the scripts.

Who do you nominate for next time? Devereaux Chivington

Mad Blab answers: *On the Road*; *Chicken Soup for the Soul*; *Forrest Gump*

STAY CONNECTED

