



# Chattanooga Writers' Guild

## News & Updates

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Greetings, fellow writers! Last week I took my kids to Dollywood. In case it's been a minute since you last visited, there's a ride in the new Wildwood Grove called Black Bear Trail. You straddle a mechanical bear and then wobble around a track while squealing "Whee!" I had my four-year-old daughter sitting on the saddle with me, and she was having a blast. When our bear completed its circuit, there was a Dollywood employee waiting to help us onto the platform. "How did she enjoy the ride?" he said. "It was a little bumpier than she expected!" I replied. The employee rolled his eyes and sighed. "They all say that."

And there it was. Just like that, I had become a cliché.

No one likes to think that their stories are trite, that they're predictable, that the words they just said made someone else roll their eyes with the utter unoriginality of it all. So when you're writing, how do you keep yourself from writing platitudes? Well, the answer to that is pretty easy - read a lot and pay attention.

But is it even really *that* important to avoid clichés?

As I thought about this Dollywood employee suffering from ennui, I realized it didn't matter that what I said was cliché. It was the first time I had said those words all day, and up to that point I had not heard anyone else say it, either. However, the employee had probably asked hundreds of people the same question that day, and thousands of people in the days before that. Not only that, but I surely was not the first person to disappoint him with my reply, so he had most likely already given his "They all say that" retort, too! *He* was the cliché, not me!

Good, I feel better now. Where was I? Oh yeah. Sometimes a cliché just IS the best way to say what you want to say. It's not always necessary to find new and exciting ways to describe objects or experiences that really aren't crucial to your story. If someone's eyes are sky blue, just say it. You don't need to bust open your thesaurus for other ways of saying "blue." And if a theme park ride is a little bumpier than your character expected, it's ok to just call it like it is (-> yes, I know that's a cliché.)

I'm Kate Landers and sometimes I dream in anagrams. I'll answer the emails sent to [newsletter@chattanoogawritersguild.org](mailto:newsletter@chattanoogawritersguild.org).

### Our Monthly Program for June will be OPEN-MIC

Bring your fiction, non-fiction, and poetry to the microphone! 5 minute limit (please time yourself in advance.) This is a very popular meeting, so please be on time to ensure you get a chance to share! While our program is open to the public, only members of CWG will be invited to the mic.

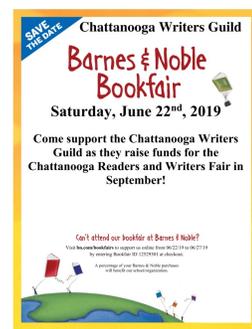
The program will be held June 11 from 6 - 8 PM at the Downtown Library, 1001 Broad Street, in the Auditorium. Street parking is free after 6.

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### Fundraiser for the Chattanooga Readers and Writers Fair

On June 22 when customers refer to CWG, a portion of sales will be donated to our organization to support the [Chattanooga Readers and Writers Fair](#). Come listen to

authors **Susan Spurgeon, Janie Watts Spataro, KB Ballentine, MJ Kobernus, Cynthia Robinson Young,** and **Mark Anderson** read from their books between 2 and 4 p.m. Bring the kiddos for a children's reading at 11 a.m.



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## The 2019 Chattanooga Readers and Writers Fair

will be held Saturday, September 7 from 10 AM to 4 PM at the Downtown Library, 1001 Broad Street. Chattanooga area writers are invited to participate in presenting their works in multiple categories: Non-English, Creative nonfiction, Fiction, and Poetry. Authors will be selected through an application process.

See website for details: [www.crwfair.org](http://www.crwfair.org).

\*Open mic stage for multiple genres on the library plaza.

\*Vendor tables and book sales, on the library 4th floor

\*Children's crafts on the 4th floor

\*Games, prizes, and food, too!

\*More details to come!

## 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.

**Thud vent chores huff a cull bear reef inn  
Purr rave gnu whir auld  
This hound hand thief your he**

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**Word to Know: Didactic, adj.**

Designed to teach people something

Word-a-Day calendars are *didactic*.

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## Upcoming Events:

MTSU Write is hosting its first ever writers' retreat this summer at Rockvale Writers' Colony in two sessions, a short one in June and a week-long retreat in July. Session 1 (June 20th-23rd) will feature a Meet the Mentors Mixer where both Writerhaven campers and the general community can get to know the MTSU Write program mentors. Session 2 (July 14th-20th) will offer a full week of sanctuary for writers working on substantial projects. Both sessions will include craft colloquia taught by award winning writers. These focused sessions will dive deep into specific elements of the craft of writing.

More information on Camp Writerhaven is at

[www.mtsu.edu/write/writerhaven](http://www.mtsu.edu/write/writerhaven).

Also, the MTSU Write Fall Creative Writing Conference will be held Saturday, October 19, on the MTSU campus in Murfreesboro, TN. There will be small breakout sessions with award winning writers on a variety of craft related topics in all genres, as well as a keynote from Nashville Novelist Mary Laura Philpott. For more information, visit [www.mtsu.edu/write](http://www.mtsu.edu/write).



### Member Spotlight with Susan Spurgeon

**What was your first job?** My first job was as a metallurgical engineer at the Steam Turbine division of Westinghouse writing specifications for the forging of turbine blades and analyzing turbine blade failures.

**What does your writing area look like?** My writing area has dual monitor computers hooked to my laptop. Adjacent is a table where I write positive words on Chattanooga Hugs cards while I listen to a podcast or Audible book.

**Who is your favorite character from a novel?** Hank Rearden from *Atlas Shrugged*. I wanted to invent a metal like his Rearden metal and call it Porzeliium.

**What is your biggest time waster?** Facebook.

**Where is your favorite place to go in Chattanooga?** The Mountain City Club. When my father came to Chattanooga as manager of the Water Company in 1922, he lived at the old club which had rooms for five bachelors. He lived there until 1937 when he married my mother.

**Tell us about Chattanooga HUGS.** The movement started July 16, 2016 at the first remembrance service in honor of the Fallen Five who had been killed on July 16, 2015. I told Fred Fletcher, our chief of police, that I was starting Chattanooga Hugs and asked if he could use a hug that day. Hugged the audience, the police, the Navy. I thought we need to be connected whenever we can. Now I give out positive words attached to mini Moon Pies whenever I have a table at an event or just give out the cards whenever I can. Take One, Give One! Is the motto.

**What is something you are looking forward to?** I have a new message for Chattanooga Hugs which will launch January 1, 2020. I think we're going to need a lot of hugs and positivity that year. The launch will be at the Lula Lake Polar Plunge. I'm not jumping in - been there, did



that in 2018 but I'll bring a big cake to celebrate my 76th birthday.  
**Featured member for next time:** Leah Bailey

Mad Blab answers: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn; Brave New World; The Sound and the Fury

STAY CONNECTED

