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NINC JOINS AMICUS CURAE BRIEF

On June 8, the Authors Guild requested that Novelists, Inc. join an amicus curae brief in a suit concerning an author's control of his own creation. After careful deliberation, the Ninc Board of Directors agreed to endorse the brief. Other authors' groups participating are the Authors Guild, Inc., the American Society of Journalists and Authors, the National Writers Union, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association, the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, and the Text and Academic Authors Association.

The case for which the amicus curae brief was filed concerns Joe Simon, creator of the cartoon character Captain America. In 1968, Simon granted Marvel Comics the copyright to his creation.

Cont. on p. 6 ▶ ▶ ▶

HOW TO AVOID WRITER'S BLOCK

BY VICKI HINZE

Once, I believed that Writer's Block did not exist. Sincerely, truly, and—I thought—irrevocably. Then, I woke up.

Actually, that wake-up call came in the form of its being pointed out to me that soldiers who go to war (and people who are in accidents) and lose limbs still feel toes or fingers no longer attached to their bodies itch. Amputated knees ache. Missing arms throb. All long after the physical trauma to the body of losing that limb has passed. These sensations are commonly referred to as "Phantom Pains."

Doesn't it stand to reason then that if the physical body can suffer phantom pains the creative body can as well?

Okay, I conceded. I was wrong. If phantom pains can exist in the physical, and there is, in fact, harmony and balance in all things—as I believe there is—then, logically, I have to accept that phantom pains can exist in the creative, emotional state.

That concession made, I firmly chose to deliberately convince my logical mind that writer's block doesn't exist. Why? A purely selfish rea-

son, I admit. Because thoughts have power. And if I refuse to believe Writer's Block exists, then I can't get it.

Sounds goofy, doesn't it?

I agree it does. But who cares how it sounds if it works? And this does work. In ten years, I've seen excellent writers agonize with Writer's Block, and yet I've miraculously avoided it. That blessing set me to wondering, Why?

I've drawn a few conclusions which, I hope, will help you avoid suffering this debilitating, excruciating, and painful plague.

Thoughts Have Power

First and most powerful, I think, is recognizing that thoughts have power. If you "think" you're blocked, "believe" you're blocked, you will be. The reason isn't at all mysterious. Our every thought feeds directly into our subconscious as fact. The subconscious can't interpret, it takes in everything in a literal sense. It doesn't interpret, and it never forgets. The subconscious can't differentiate between truth and falsehoods or speculations, or fears voiced. So if you think

Cont. on p. 4 ▶ ▶ ▶

Novelists, Inc.

FOUNDED IN 1989

Advisory Council

Rebecca Brandewyne†	Georgia Bockoven
Janice Young Brooks†	Evan Maxwell
Jasmine Cresswell†	William Bernhardt
Maggie Osborne†	Victoria Thompson
Marianne Shock†	Steven Wornack
Linda Barlow	Julie Kistler
† Founder	Carla Neggers

If you have questions regarding Novelists, Inc., please contact a member of the Board of Directors.

2001 Board of Directors

PRESIDENT: Barbara Keiler
32 Atkinson Lane
Sudbury, MA 01776-1939
Ph: (978) 443-0770
Fax: (978) 443-0775
b.keiler@juno.com

PRESIDENT-ELECT: Pat Rice
4100 Kingswood Road
Charlotte, NC 28226
Ph: (704) 341-7478
Fax: (704) 341-6195
Price100@aol.com

SECRETARY: Kathy Chwedyk
1215 Fairmont Court
Algonquin, IL 60102-1946
Ph: (847) 658-0732
KChwed@aol.com

TREASURER: Linda Kay West
204 Chaucer Lane
Mandeville, LA 70448
Ph: (985) 674-9298
Fax: (985) 674-0109
l.k.west@worldnet.att.net

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Pamela Browning
7025 Quail Hill Road
Charlotte, NC 28210
Ph: (704) 643-6930
Fax: Same as above, phone first
write2pam@aol.com

ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:
Georgia Bockoven
3324 Zircon Dr.
Rocklin, CA 95677-4725
Ph: (916) 624-7333
Fax: (916) 630-1145
gbockoven@jps.net

CENTRAL COORDINATOR: David L. Brooks
Novelists, Inc.
P.O. Box 1166
Mission, KS 66222-0166
NEW Fax: (913) 262-6435
NEW E-mail: ninc@kc.rr.com

Website: <http://www.ninc.com>

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THE PRESIDENT'S VOICE.....

Last month, I journeyed to New York City to represent Novelists, Inc. at two important gatherings: a meeting of the Authors Group Summit, and the first in-person meeting of the Authors Coalition in more than five years.

Attending these meetings in the heart of Manhattan reminded me of what a joy it is to be a writer—no rush-hour traffic when I “commute” to my workplace (just down the hall from my bedroom), no concern about how I look, no need to be sociable with anyone but my characters. Still, breaking out of my padded cell—er, my office—and meeting with representatives of other writers’ groups reminded me of how much we writers have in common, how many concerns we share, and how stimulating it can be to escape from our desks every now and then.

The Authors Group Summit was founded a year ago as a way for writers’ groups to pool our intellectual resources and find strength in numbers. Carla Neggers represented Ninc at the first AGS meeting last spring, and I represented Ninc at the second meeting, in July. Last month’s meeting included representatives from RWA, SFWA, Sisters in Crime, and the AAR as well as Ninc.

The biggest issue before the group is the Authors’ Bill of Rights. At the meeting in New York, we worked on this document, tightening and streamlining it, keeping it focused on rights rather than wishes. The document is currently being vetted by RWA’s lawyer, after which it will be distributed to the other member groups. We can then have it reviewed by our own lawyer if necessary, present it to the membership, and ratify it if we choose to do so. The AGS views the Authors’ Bill of Rights as a guideline writers can use in determining what to request and what to reject from their publishers. The Bill of Rights will not be an edict; no author will be forced to comply with it. It will serve mainly as an educational tool and a reminder that authors do have rights and should assert them.

The AGS also discussed the Amazon Blue Box program. This was seen as part of the much larger question of whether authors should receive royalties on used-book sales. Singling out Amazon as the perpetrator of an offense against authors when used-book stores exist all over the country—often in huge franchise chains—may feel good, but it won’t necessarily help authors in combating the larger problem of royalties lost when used-book sales undercut new book sales. We considered ideas for wielding publicity to discourage Amazon from promoting its Blue Box program and analyzed the feasibility of altering U.S. copyright law to protect our copyrights in used-book transactions. This would be a massive undertaking, one not even publishers are willing to attempt right now.

Another important issue the AGS addressed was the Random House/RosettaBooks lawsuit, which has far-reaching implications for authors. Briefly: RosettaBooks, an e-publisher, bought the electronic rights to some classic novels from brand-name authors (William Styron and Kurt Vonnegut among them). Random House intervened, claiming that it controlled the electronic rights to these titles, even though those rights were not enumerated in Styron’s and Vonnegut’s Random House contracts—because, obviously, no one had envisioned the existence of e-books when the novels were first published. The legal principle involved is whether publishers can control rights which technology has not yet conceived. Stay tuned; a major legal battle is just beginning.

Finally, the AGS considered ongoing projects and programs, ways we

can continue to work together for the betterment of all writers.

The following day, I attended the Authors Coalition Meeting. The Authors Coalition comprises a wide variety of writers' groups, including groups that represent journalists, textbook authors, children's book authors, garden book authors, dramatists, and songwriters, as well as many of the writing groups we novelists are familiar with (RWA, SFWA, SinC, WWA, etc.). These groups work together to collect and distribute monies that foreign countries pay for the right to photocopy printed material. The survey form you fill out every year when you renew your membership comes from the Authors Coalition and enables Ninc to receive its share of these foreign monies.

The Authors Coalition meeting covered a lot of technical stuff that I won't bore you with. I will tell you, however, that this group has grown and matured impressively in the years since its formation, and it has proven adept at advocating for its members in complicated international transactions.

That Ninc belongs to this group is not just a financial boon for us but also a source of pride. We may think of ourselves as grungy writers, or maybe flaky writers, or temperamental writers, or fragile artistes—but we are also members of a remarkable community. We are among the world's elite: people who can create works of value out of nothing but our imaginations and our intelligence, people whose words carry weight in our culture, people who can articulate ideas in such a way that society will pay to receive them.

As we retreat to our padded cells or offices or wherever it is we go to write, we should never forget that we are also citizens of the world, and that we are not alone in our struggles.

— BARBARA KEILER

ELECTIONS NOTICE

Proposed Slate of Officers for 2002:

President-elect.....Anne Holmberg
Secretary.....Kathy Chwedyk
Treasurer.....Linda Kay West

Proposed Nominees for 2002 Nominating Committee

(listed in alphabetical order,
five to be elected):

Patti Berg
Lillian Stewart Carl
Carla Fredd
Ronn Kaiser
Pat McLaughlin
Teresa Medeiros
Vella Munn
Tamar Myers
Maggie Shayne
Chassie West

As set forth in Article IX, Section 4, of the Bylaws, additional nominations may be made in writing if signed by the nominee and at least ten (10) active members who have not signed the nominations of any other person for the same position. Such nominations must be made by July 20, 2001. Mail all written nominations to Barbara Keiler, 32 Atkinson Lane, Sudbury MA 01776-1939.

INTRODUCING.....

The following authors have applied for membership in Ninc and are now presented by the Membership Committee to the members. If no legitimate objections are lodged with the Membership Committee within 30 days of this NINK issue, these authors shall be accepted as members of Ninc:

New Applicants

Gaelen Foley, Venetia, PA
Kelly McClymer, Orono, ME
Rosaline Fox (*Rox Denny Fox*), Tucson, AZ
Susan A. Kimoto (*Susan Floyd*), Los Banos, CA
Maggie Davis (*Katherine Deauxville, Maggie Daniels*),
Sarasota FL
Sharon Devita, Tucson, AZ
Lynn V. Miller (*Meg Lacey*), Cincinnati, OH

James L. Nelson, Harpswell, ME
Marcia King-Gamble, Tamarac, FL

New Members

Pam Binder, Issaquah, WA
Michele Albert (*Michelle Jerott*), Stoughton, WI
Adele Budnick (*Adele Ashworth*), Lake St. Louis, MO
Heather Graham Pozzessere (*Heather Graham, Shannon Drake*), Coral Gables, FL

**Ninc has room to grow...recommend
membership
to your colleagues. Prospective members
may apply online at www.ninc.com.**



BREAKING NEWS

BY PAMELA BROWNING

Takeover Target

"Torstar's market cap is about \$1.4 billion and the company is carrying roughly \$500 million in debt. If spun off, Harlequin Enterprises could fetch—depending on the EBITDA multiplier applied—anywhere from \$950 million to \$1.2 billion. That simple math demonstrates that Torstar is a perfect takeover target."

—Matthew Fraser in Canada's *National Post*

Affecting Your Income

Rod McQueen reports in the financial section of the *National Post* that although Torstar has been considering spinning off its Harlequin Enterprises as a separate company, the company sees corporate value in retaining Harlequin because it hauls in a \$110 million annual profit for only \$5 million in capital outlay. (Remember this when they insist that there's no money to pay you a higher advance.)

The report also says that Torstar has spent \$20 million to launch eHarlequin, which has attracted 700,000 members by offering the lure of two free books. It was a clever marketing move—Harlequin now has their mailing and e-mail addresses.

Now two percent of the 700,000 (this translates to 14,000 readers) is buying books online. Harlequin expects to sign up seven percent (49,000 readers) without any additional capital costs.

Harlequin already ships 850,000 books annually using



WRITER'S BLOCK

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ Continued from page 1

you're blocked, take it to the bank, because your subconscious mind will convince your conscious mind you are, and then you will be. The solution is to "think" yourself into creative freedom. Believe you can write and write and never run out of words. It's a simple solution, but its power is complex—and effective.

Sometimes writers feel blocked because they have drained their reserves. Remember, your body needs fuel to run. So does your creativity. When you constantly pour out creativity without refueling and taking in things that feed your creativity, you deplete your reserves and you end up with an empty creative well.

When you dip into an empty well, you can't draw out water. The well is dry. Same holds true for the creative well. But is this writer's block? Truly? The effect is the same, but it's really only a matter of refilling your creative well, of feeding your creative self.

Feed Your Creative Self

How do you do that? Read. Read novels, nonfiction books on topics that interest you. Magazine articles, newspaper reports. Watch movies. Listen to conversations, take walks, and observe nature. Daydream. Indulge yourself in fantasies. The more you put into your mind—your well—the deeper well you have to draw from. Ever wonder what it would be like to be a surgeon? Ask one. Observe a surgical procedure. Watch a heart beat, a liver quiver. It's truly fascinating. Want to be a judge? Sit in on a court hearing. Get your juices flowing by feeding your interests. That fills your creative well.

Sometimes we feel blocked because we don't have a clear picture of exactly what we want to say. Do you

know the theme of your novel? Can you put it down in concrete terms, in a few sentences? If not, think about it until you can. If you don't know what you want to say, how can you work a story into saying anything in particular? You can't. You sit and write and take off on tangents and work hard and harder still and end up with a lot of material that's not a cohesive whole. Interpretation? Writer's Block. But is it? Not really, though the result is the same. It's a lack of specific focus, of direction.

Other times, we tumble to a stop because we don't really understand our characters. We haven't fully explored these people and so we don't have a firm grasp on what makes them tick. What do they love, hate, admire, and respect? What do they fear? How are they going to grow and change during the course of the novel? Motivation. Conflict—internal and external—is essential, but so is knowing what makes each character universal and unique. If you don't know your characters as well or better than you know yourself, how can you write how they'll react to a given novel situation? You can't. And so you stumble to that stop without a clue as to how to proceed. And that is often interpreted as writer's block.

The solution to work past it: interview these people. Author Kim Kozlowski crafted a wonderful character interview that is indispensable. It takes time to complete, because it's very thorough, and you won't use all the information you glean in preparing it. But you will know these characters, and you will know what they would or wouldn't do in any given situation. And in interviewing them, they will spur the plot—one that is custom made to highlight both their goals, motivations, conflicts, and enhance

their novel purpose. Result: no more block. (For a free copy of Kim Kozłowski's character interview, e-mail her at Kimski3@aol.com and list Character Outline in the subject header.)

Find A Path

The same situation with character holds true for plot. Without a clear path on where you're going in the novel—and what story events you intend to incorporate to take you there, you can write yourself into countless corners, brick walls, dead-ends with no logical way out. And while this too is often interpreted as WB, it isn't. Not really. It's a lack of planning. Of knowing how you intend to get from Point A to B. One way to eliminate this situation is to use a plot board. Do a synopsis, lay out your chapters and scenes. Then check that plot board for all manner of things. Character growth and development, conflict, motivation, logical succession of events. You can check for logic gaps, natural progression, character consistency. You can check your timeline—make sure things are happening in the right order, sequentially. Check your settings to make sure each is compatible with the mood and tone of the scene. You can check essentially all elements of the novel on this board.

In addition to realizing that thoughts hold an enormous amount of power; that creativity must be nurtured and the well refilled to be able to meet the demands of putting out; knowing the novel, the characters and their deepest secrets, fears and desires; and having a plot plan—I think it's essential that a writer feeling blocked examine the whole. I mean the whole novel, and more. I mean the whole writer.

First look at the novel. Do you love this book? Does it tap into your emotions? Make you want to laugh, cry, choke the living daylight out of something? Does it arouse your passion? If not, change it until it does. If you don't, then apathy sets in, and you're setting yourself up for more

blocks. And for rejections. You can't arouse empathy in anyone else if it isn't put there by you, the writer. If you don't feel it, how can you stir it in others? So get passionate. Write something that matters to you. If you can't do that on this novel, then ditch the project. If your passion is aroused, you'll have plenty to say—and tons of ways to say it. Passion arouses all the nebulous creative juices and they make the work flow.

As a writer, how do you feel about writing this particular book? Are you writing a category novel because you love them, or because you've heard that so many of them are published your odds of breaking into publishing are greater by writing one of them? Are you writing your novel because it's the kind of story you love to read? The kind you've always done—and changing is too hard, or intimidating?

Know Thyself

Writer, know thyself! Know why you're doing this project. And if the reason is anything other than for the joy of it, because you love the story, do yourself a favor. Recognize the odds of its being your best work are shot before you pick up a pen. Why waste your time—this is your life, you know?—working on a project that doesn't matter to you? Feigned interest and enthusiasm are glaringly apparent and as offensive as anything else that is hypocritical. You can't fake it. You have to feel it.

WB is an unforgiving term. It can cause writers a lot of pain and agony. It can have numerous tentacles and each one of them can choke the writer. With each choke, fear and doubt that you'll ever be able to write again gain strength. But you have the power to work past it. By analyzing each tentacle, writers often find that they're not blocked at all. They love writing as much as they ever did. They've only burned out and not recharged their creative batteries, they've forgotten the value of passion, they've stepped off the trail and gotten ▶ ▶ ▶



BREAKING NEWS



conventional sales methods.

The Wind Done Come Back

A federal appeals court recently lifted an injunction against publication of *The Wind Done Gone*, Alice Randall's *Gone With the Wind* sequel that has sparked heated debate over copyright law, the First Amendment, and who owns some of literature's most memorable characters.

After less than an hour's arguments on an appeal by Houghton Mifflin, publisher of *The Wind Done Gone*, a three-judge panel of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the injunction was an "extraordinary and drastic remedy" that "amounts to an unlawful prior restraint in violation of the First Amendment."

"I wrote this book for all Americans, both white and black, so they could have a deep, hearty belly laugh together about the painful Civil War period," said Randall. "I'm so glad that the court will allow that message to get heard."

Last month, U.S. District Judge Charles Pannell blocked publication of the book, ruling that it violated the copyright of Margaret Mitchell's 1936 classic, *Gone With the Wind*.

Lawyer Richard Kurnit told the court of appeals on behalf of the Mitchell estate that allowing publication of the book means "pirates will be free to mine the rich vein of copyrighted works and only to pay if they strike gold, get sued, and get caught before they steal away."





BREAKING NEWS

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Wendy Strothman, executive vice-president of Houghton Mifflin, scheduled a late June pub date for *The Wind Done Gone*. Due to publicity from the case, Houghton Mifflin has bumped the initial printing of 25,000 copies to 38,000, with an auxiliary run of 50,000 copies on order.

The Margaret Mitchell House in Atlanta requested 250 of those copies, reports *The New York Times*.

How To Sell Your Book For Six Figures

There's this guy named Mike Daisey, a former Amazon.com customer service rep. He spoofed Amazon's corporate culture in an Internet film and solo stage show, whereupon Free Press bought his manuscript, *Dog Years: Doing Time at Amazon.com*, for "a good six figures," according to *PW Daily*.

How To Get Rid Of Your Old Junk

Publisher's Lunch reports that Hillary Clinton's Wellesley thesis ("filled with typos") on '60s radical Saul Alinsky recently sold on the online auction eBay for \$50,000 after receiving 57 bids. However, the buyer failed to produce the cash, and at press time the thesis was up for auction again with the typos corrected. Lest you want to run out and buy it, please note that the work is only a copy, not the original, and the buyer would not own the copyright.

Just gotta read it? You can take a look at it for free at the Wellesley College library.

iPublish, iWeep?

Time Warner Trade ▶ ▶ ▶

Writer's Block

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ mired in the brush.

Well, get a sickle. Hack through that brush and more often than not you'll discover you're truly not blocked, you're suffering phantom pains. Ones that are rooted in exhaustion, splintered focus, too many demands, and, more often than any of us would like to admit, in fear. We get those phantom pains in structure, in discipline, and in definition (of the work and of our purpose)—in other words, in lost limbs.

The best news is that once you identify them, you can form a con-

crete plan of action to combat them, and these limbs can rejuvenate. It takes effort, a little indulgence in spending the time and energy to figure out the root causes of the problem. But when you have, you can rejoice because you've worked your way through writer's block. **NINK**

Vicki Hinze currently writes suspense for Bantam. Lady Liberty is her 14th published book. Recent titles are the multiple award-winning Acts of Honor, Shades of Gray, and All Due Respect. She also teaches creative writing.

Ninc Joins AG Brief

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ *Continued from page 5*

According to law, he has an inalienable right to terminate this grant of copyright after 35 years, regardless of the 1968 agreement. (Congress passed this law to protect authors and creative artists who feel economic pressure to cede their copyrights; according to the law, even if an artist does grant his/her copyright, he/she may still terminate that grant after 35 years.)

In the current case, Simon is trying to terminate his grant of copyright, and Marvel Comics has sued him, claiming that (1) he granted them the copyright in perpetuity (even though the law does not allow for this); and (2) in 1968 he actually had a work-for-hire arrangement with Marvel Comics, which meant the copyright had always belonged to the publisher. This second claim is not true. Joe Simon was not an employee of Marvel Comics when he created Captain America.

Simon turned to the Authors Guild for help, and the Authors Guild asked several writers' groups to participate in order to give the brief greater weight.

The Ninc board decided to participate in the brief because we believe that we need to fight encroachments on our fundamental right to own and control our copyrights. Although this specific case concerns a comic book character, its ramifications clearly affect all professional writers.

The full text of the amicus curae brief has been posted on Ninc's website (www.ninc.com).

The Novelists, Inc.

Board of Directors

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THOSE WHO CAN—LEARN

BY RON MONTANA

Trees should teach creative writing, not people—and especially not writers.

Trees are hardy, resistant, and patient. They can be looked up to as they quietly and majestically demonstrate their ability to inspire awe. Such qualities are rigid requirements for those foolish enough to attempt to enlighten others about the inroads and pitfalls of “making fast bucks writing short paragraphs.”

I teach two basic adult education courses, “Introduction to Screenwriting” and “Mass Market Novels,” along with a manuscript clinic that deals mostly with novels. Of the three, I find the Mass-Market class the most rewarding because, even though it has been said that you have to be unbalanced to be a novelist, some maintain that the prerequisite to screenwriting is a Psychiatric ICU residence.

Most of the students who attend my classes have a genuine desire to succeed in a field that requires the stamina of a linebacker and the perseverance of a wall. The Mass-Market class runs eleven weeks and gives the student some insight into an area of literature that appeals to the broadest possible readership. I personally don’t believe that creativity can be taught, so I focus on the acquisition of skill-related techniques and technical information that enables the student to excel—no, survive—in a trade that makes more demands than a teenage son.

If after my class the novice still has the uncontrollable urge to venture into the world of novel writing, he or she will be armed with enough basic data to allow them to at least recognize the enemy, that enemy sometimes being themselves.

Thinking Like Writers

What I attempt to do is to get them thinking like writers; teach them to acquire a firm grasp of the magic of storytelling, the nuts and bolts of structuring techniques, and then what to do with the finished product.

That brings to mind an incident last year, which proved that even the instructor is capable of having a meaningful learning experience in his own class. An elderly, bald gentleman with a cane entered and took a seat in the back of the class and proceeded to study me with a steely-eyed gaze that would have made Medusa envious. Several attempts to draw him into the heated exchange of ideas that usually takes place in one of my classes proved fruitless. When we reached the mid-point of the course, I was convinced he was just a fantasy created by my conscience to intimidate me into finishing my latest stage play instead of making a fool of myself in front of a room full of would-be writers. Consciences have that innate ability to make even the most confident among us question our behavior and, when he hadn’t taken note one in four weeks, I decided to confront this Jiminy Cricket of mine and put my fears to rest.

During a break, I approached him and casually asked if there were some reason he seemed uninterested in the class. Possibly he was an editor or, God forbid, a book reviewer?

“I’m already a writer,” he stated with enough confidence to leave Billy Jeff Clinton speechless. “I’ve written a book and I’m just waiting for the marketing information section of your course.”

That’s how I like to teach. Absolutely no pressure.



BREAKING NEWS

▶ ▶ ▶ Publish-ing’s iPublish has launched a \$2-million ad campaign to attract writers at a time when the Authors Guild has raised serious questions about the iPublish book contract.

The ad campaign runs online at sites catering to writers, such as writerswrite.com and mysterynet.com, and appears in magazines such as *American Journalism Review*, *Writer’s Digest*, and *Romance Writer’s Report*.

You’ve probably seen the ads. One depicts a manuscript of Melville’s *Moby Dick* with a rejection slip reading, “Dear Mr. Melville, Whale books don’t sell. How about an alien? Or a dinosaur? Or an alien dinosaur?”

The Authors Guild warned, “Members considering experimenting with e-book publishing through iPublish, Time Warner’s new electronic publishing division, should proceed with extreme caution.”

The AG warning stated that the contract:

(1) takes a broad list of rights, far exceeding what is necessary for e-book publishing;

(2) pays low royalties for e-book rights;

(3) exposes authors to substantial liability for frivolous lawsuits;

(4) gives Time Warner the option to tie up print rights to an author’s work for \$5,000; and

(5) allows Time Warner, regardless of the success of an author’s current work, to secure the print rights to the author’s next work for \$5,000.

The Authors Guild has been joined in their criticism of iPublish by Writers Beware (www.sfw.org/beware), a website sponsored by the Science Fiction

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Writers of America that monitors publishing contracts and practices.

Victoria Strauss, writer and staff member of Writers Beware, told *Publishers Weekly*, "We agree with the Authors Guild on every point, particularly the lack of advances for e-books, the fact that simply submitting work binds authors to contract terms, and the broad control gained by Time Warner over the author's next work."

"And then they came for me."

That's what writer and journalist Steven Levy wrote in a recent *Newsweek* article titled, "Napsterized."

The full quote is, "First they came for Metallica. Then they came for Tom Clancy. And then they came for me."

Levy found two books he'd written published on the Internet, one posted by a Stanford professor who mistakenly thought the book was out of print and assumed that therefore it was okay to copy the whole thing. And—this should strike terror into your heart—the second copying was of Levy's brand new book. Yes. Brand new.

Levy's account is an eye-opener and is required reading for everyone who thinks that the Napster flap doesn't mean squat to writers. Here's the link where you can read Levy's article: <http://link.ixs1.net/s/link/click?rc=al&rti=e38153&si=r18250697>

Fee Upped, Probably

The buzz is that the William Morris Agency has raised its commission rate for books to 15 percent, but despite repeated phone calls and e-mails, no one at the

Cont. on p. 14 ▶ ▶ ▶

Dispatches:

Those who Can—Learn

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶

Selling Ourselves

Fortunately, I devote the last three sessions of that particular course to such mundane subjects as The Query Letter, How to Secure and Train an Agent to Fetch, and How to Deal With an Editor Who Really Wants to Buy Your Work But Doesn't Know It Yet.

As I proceeded to show the class that even the shyest among us can effectively sell ourselves, the gentleman with the cane took copious notes, and the class suddenly took on the atmosphere of *The Paper Chase* as he zeroed in on concise and accurate methods of marketing that in the past had not required John Houseman-like rhetoric to put across.

The following week his seat was empty.

I was both relieved and crushed. He had forced me to excel as a teacher, and I hoped I could maintain that level of excellence without what I had expected would be his final summation to the jury at the end of my trial—ah, course.

But, being the showman that I am, I forged ahead boldly and got through the remainder of the course, which consisted of three weeks of class critique of the first chapters of the students' work, without incident. Fifteen minutes before the end of the last session I was giving my final pep talk, and I saw him come quietly into the back of the classroom with the ever-present cane and lean against the wall, waiting patiently, I was sure, to ask for a refund.

Facing The Unthinkable

Opting to face the unthinkable (any time a writer is asked to return money), I boldly approached him and to my surprise was greeted not by an upraised walking stick but a genuine, warm smile that was as unexpected as a tax audit.

"I followed your advice and did exactly what you said," he beamed as he handed me a letter. It was an answer to his very first query letter under the masthead of a large New York publisher whose name impressed even me.

"The description of your book interests us a great deal. It is the kind of project we find appeals to mass-market readership and sells well. Please send us the completed manuscript by return mail and I will phone you, or your agent, as soon as I have read it."

Well, needless to say, I took him out for coffee and advised him how to secure an agent on the strength of the letter alone, which he subsequently did, along with cutting a deal on the book several months later with the publisher who had written the letter.

Which proves that writers, on occasion, can follow simple directions. **NINK**

Ron Montana's Face in the Snow from Bantam in 1992 was sold to the movies, and he adapted it to a film script in 1998. His short stories have appeared in major magazines and anthologies. He has collaborated on ten screenplays, several of which have been optioned by major producers; The Sailmaker sold for a high six figures. He has been an Editorial Associate for Writer's Digest Magazine for 12 years, and his new novel, Ride A White Zebra, is available through amazon.com.

Nextpage, <http://www.ninc.com/nextpg.asp>, is Novelists, Inc's listing of members' upcoming releases. Neff Rotter maintains the page. "Since I put up three months at a time (past, present and coming), people should get me their titles two months in advance of publication if they want them listed all three times. On the other hand, I'm perfectly happy for people to send me their whole year's worth of books at any time and I'll put them up when the time comes." Send titles of upcoming books to Neff (neff@belgravehouse.com) with your name and pseudonym (if applicable), title, publisher, and ISBN number, if known.

No Mail Vs. Unsubscribing

Since we're in the middle of summer and people are taking vacations, I thought it might be an appropriate time to explain the advantage of going "no mail" vs. "unsubscribing" from NINCLINK. Generally when people are going to be away from their computers for any length of time, they like to stop their e-mail so they don't return home to five hundred messages. You can effectively achieve this result by going "no mail." To go no mail, send a blank message to **NINCLINK-nomail@yahoogroups.com**. This action will stop mail from coming to your mailbox. When you want to reactivate your mail, simply send a blank message to **NINCLINK-normal@yahoogroups.com** to receive individual posts or **NINCLINK-digest@yahoogroups.com** to begin receiving digests again.

Very often, people stop their mail by unsubscribing from NINCLINK. While this method will stop your e-mail, it also means that you must subscribe again in order to begin receiving mail. ALL SUBSCRIBERS must be approved by a NINCLINK moderator. This action can slightly delay your receiving mail (I say slightly because the moderators are usually on top of the approvals, but they must verify your Novelists, Inc. membership before they can approve your subscription to NINCLINK—even if you've been approved previously, you have to be approved again).

The main reason I recommend going "no mail" as opposed to "unsubscribing" is because no one has to approve "no mail," "normal," or "digest" requests.

You can also control your e-mail by going to <http://www.yahoogroups.com>. However, keep in mind that unsubscribing here requires that you subscribe again when you return—and again, your subscription must be approved.

So consider saving yourself and the moderators some hassles by simply going "no mail" when you wish to temporarily turn off your mail. There are no time limits for how

long you can be "no mail."

Another advantage to "no mail" is that you can still send mail, even though you are not receiving mail. Very often when deadlines loom, you may find that you want to stop receiving mail but you may need to send out a message from time to time. Rather than unsubscribing to stop your mail, subscribing to send your message, and then unsubscribing again, you can go no mail. No mail simply means you are not receiving mail. However, if you send a message while in "no mail" status, be sure to indicate in your message that replies should be sent to you privately. Otherwise, you won't see the replies.

Cleaning Your Files

Members on NINCLINK were discussing the abundance of unsolicited e-mail they receive. Sally Hawkes shared the following information as a means to decrease unwanted mail. It is reprinted with permission from Sally and Rachel Shankles.

This is part of a Powerpoint presentation from a workshop on cleaning your PC hard drive given by Shankles (shanklr@ls1.dsc.k12.ar.us). Some of you might find it handy as a reminder to open up hard drive space that is taken up by garbage files, but cleaning out the Temp Internet files should also help in reducing spams because it deletes the cookie connections that go out with each Internet search. It isn't a cure-all, but might help. Defrag will help resector the empty spaces you've created with the clean-up.

Empty Cache

1. Go to Start then Find and type in Cache.
 2. There will be several types found.
 3. Open the one that is simply Cache.
 4. Don't delete any Fat files listed usually at the beginning of the list.
 5. Click on the first file under the fat file to highlight it and hold down the shift key and scroll to the end of the list and highlight the last file.
 6. Hit delete—it will take a few minutes.
- Do this every month.

Clean Temp Files

1. Go to Start then Find and type TEMP.
 2. Double click to open the Temp folder.
 3. Do not delete folders just files so highlight the first file under the folders and then click on shift key and scroll to last file and highlight it.
 4. Hit delete key/say Yes to All if prompted.
- Do this often—like once a month. ▶ ▶ ▶



Clean Temp Internet File

1. Go to Start then Find and type Temp Internet.
 2. Double click to open that file folder.
 3. Go to the file menu to Edit and down to Select All and this will highlight all files there.
 4. Hit the delete key/say Yes to cookies.
- Do this often—like every month.

Defrag Hard Drive

1. Go to Start—Programs—Accessories—System Tools—Disk Defragmenter.
 2. Tell it to defrag C:.
 3. This might take some time.
- Do this every three months.

Promoting Yourself Through E-zines

Written by *The Rock* publisher Carmel Thomaston (reprinted with permission).

With as many as 60 million people routinely using the Internet each month** it's no surprise that electronic newsletters and magazines—e-zines as they are more commonly called—are one of the best ways for authors to promote themselves and their work.

* E-zines that go out by mailing list can reach thousands, even hundreds of thousands of people, and do it more often than print magazines. E-zines posted on websites have the potential for reaching millions.

* E-zines target the market. They are read by people who are most likely to buy your books. And because they are usually free, complimentary copies are easy to distribute, resulting in a crossover to readers in other markets or genres.

* E-zines, even text-based ones, can contain embedded hyperlinks to online bookstores. Readers can purchase your books with a few simple clicks.

* E-zines in Portable Documents Format [.pdf] look like their slick offline counterparts and can contain not only text but covers, sound, even movies.

* E-zines can greatly reduce your promotional costs. Whether you're being featured in them or publishing your own, your biggest investment is likely going to be time rather than money.

But how do you go about promoting yourself using e-zines? Consider these options:

Write An Article

One of the best ways to get your name in an e-zine and to give readers a preview of an upcoming book is to write an

*** Figure supplied by Nielsen/Net Ratings Audience Measurement Service at <http://www.nielsen-netratings.com>. The service estimates some 60 million people worldwide routinely use the Internet each month, although 130 million have Internet access.*

article. You might get paid for the article. You might not. Don't overlook non-paying e-zines when your goal is promotion rather than a paycheck. Do, however, insist on being able to include a brief biography on yourself and information about your current or upcoming release. Include a link to your website and your e-mail address. This may be the only "pay" you get, but it's worth the exposure if the subscriber base of the e-zine is large.

Your article should provide interesting information the reader can use. Be careful not to make it a promotional piece on you or your book, unless you're asked to do so by the editor. Choose a topic related to your book, if you can. That gives you the opportunity to use it for examples.

The type of article you write will also depend on the type of e-zine. Look for e-zines in the same subject area of your book, and then write your article to catch the interest of that audience. In addition to topic, you can also choose e-zines by setting, by organization, by time period, and other factors.

Get Yourself Interviewed

What makes you or your book newsworthy? If you grew up in Chicago, you're newsworthy to the people in Chicago. If you've written a novel with a chef as a protagonist, chefs and restaurant owners online will be interested in hearing about it.

You have more than one thing that makes you newsworthy. Make a list of all of them. Use that list to find appropriate e-zines and to preparing your query. Editors love stories with angles that appeal to a majority of their readers. Show them in your query what the angle is for their respective publication.

One tactic is to send the editor a prepared Q & A they can pop in to the e-zine "as is" or that can be used as a base for their own interview. Offer to quickly answer questions that the editor poses by e-mail. Be flexible, make the interview process easy, and you have a better chance of being featured.

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Moderators:

If You Have Questions, E-Mail:

Brenda Hiatt-Barber	BrendaHB@aol.com
Patricia de la Fuente	Patricia@hiline.net
Lorraine Heath	LorraineHe@aol.com

Start Your Own E-zine

By starting your own e-zine, you can reach readers at any time and build your own base of "customers" interested in your product. Types include:

The author newsletter—published periodically with new release information, contests, endorsements for your books, reviews, and news of updates to your website.

The group of authors/line newsletter—published monthly by a group of authors or authors from a specific series or lines of books to promote new releases and reach readers.

The article e-zine—published on a set schedule (weekly, twice a month, monthly, or quarterly.) This resembles the true electronic magazine with articles written by you and others.

The Q & A e-zine—published periodically or on a set schedule. Content includes questions posed by readers and answered by the author. Readers of these types of e-zines are often other authors and writers looking for tips on getting published, staying published, or promoting their work.

To publish an e-zine you'll need:

- 1) your own mail server costing \$25-\$200 a month,
- 2) or a paid mailing service costing some \$25-\$200 a month,
- 3) or a free mail service,
- 4) or a mailing list host and software such as Majordomo or Listserv,
- 5) or regular e-mail software.

I don't recommend the last option. Managing a list manually takes time and can be a hassle. Using an online service or mailing software automates the subscriptions, the sign-offs and the delivery of routine information files.

Even with automation, publishing an e-zine is a commitment of resources, particularly your time. Can you afford that investment? Weigh that loss of time against the benefits before you make your decision.

Resources

Ezine-Universe.com. Some 2,100 e-zines in a searchable database.

<http://Ezine-Universe.com/>

The List Exchange.

<http://www.listex.com/>

Yahogroups, free mailing list service. Automates the process of sending e-zines. Also allows you to search for e-zines that might be interested in your articles. Lists how many subscribers each e-zine has.

<http://www.yahogroups.com/>

CataList, a catalog of more than 33,000 public LISTSERV lists.

<http://www.lsoft.com/lists/listref.html>

List of Lists. A large group of special interest lists.

<http://catalog.com/vivian/interest-group-search.html>

AskJeeves. Put in the search terms "e-zine directories" for lists broken down by topic.

<http://www.askjeeves.com>

Liszt/Topica. 90,095 mailing lists.

<http://www.liszt.com>

Prodigy Mailing Lists. Open to non-Prodigy members. Uses the Majordomo format.

<http://www.goodstuff.prodigy.com/Lists/>

Publicly Accessible Mailing Lists
http://www.neosoft.com/cgi-bin/paml_search/

Everything E-Mail. More about e-mail, resources, and the software to run lists.

<http://everythingemail.net/>

Novelists, Inc. Listserve

At www.yahogroups.com/group/NINCLINK, you can learn more about NincLink, subscribe, or set your preferences (digest, individual posts, etc.).

If you discover sites that you think would be of interest to Novelists, Inc. members, please e-mail me at LorraineHe@aol.com.

New Ninc Numbers:

Note these new contact numbers for the Ninc

Central Coordinator:

FAX: (913) 262-6435

E-MAIL: ninc@kc.rr.com

MEMBER

NEWS....Compiled by

Kathy Chwedyk

Medeiros wins award for hardcover debut

Teresa Medeiros' first hard-cover, *The Bride And The Beast*, recently won the Waldenbooks Romance Award for Bestselling Hardcover Debut of 2000. The book was published by Bantam in hardcover in June, 2000, and in paperback in April, 2001.

Next up in hardcover is *A Kiss To Remember* from Bantam in July, 2001.

McLaughlin wins SARA Rising Star Award

Pat McLaughlin (w/a Patricia McLinn) has won the SARA Rising Star award in Long Contemporary for her book, *Hidden in a Heartbeat*, a Silhouette Special Edition published in October, 2000. The SARA is awarded by the Sooner Area Romance Authors, an Oklahoma Romance Writers of American (RWA) chapter.

Not all of McLaughlin's recent news has been so positive—she recently discovered that *Books in Print*, the primary reference for the world of computerized book-ordering, had her pseudonym incorrectly spelled as McClinn instead of McLinn on the listing for her June Silhouette Special Edition, *Almost A Bride*. That was just a warmup—the listing for her July Silhouette Special edition, *Match Made In Wyoming*, had the same author-name error and the title listed incorrectly as *Match Made in Heaven* as well.

After weeks of effort, this is supposed to be fixed in most places, but McLaughlin asks that any Novelists, Inc., member who sees these incorrect listings in other publications or online sites please contact her with the specifics.

Spotlight is finalist for Booksellers award

Carole Bellacera's *Spotlight* is a finalist in the Booksellers' Best Award for Single Title/Suspense and Long Contemporary sponsored by the Greater Detroit Romance Writers of America. The winner will be announced at **Cont. on p. 16 ▶ ▶ ▶**



Laura Resnick is

THE COMELY CURMUDGEON

In Praise of Old Friends

"It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife."

Is there anyone among us who doesn't recognize the opening line of Jane Austen's most celebrated novel? Well, who knows? Perhaps there is. No shame in that. Books are as individual as people, and our tastes in them vary just as much as we ourselves do. Maybe you don't recognize the opening line to *Pride and Prejudice*, but you could recite the entire first paragraph of *From Here to Eternity* or *The Joy Luck Club* or the latest Wilbur Smith novel. I know people who've never read Austen, just as I know people who are astonished that I've never read Kurt Vonnegut. I know people who look at me cross-eyed after I loan them one of my favorite novels, Edward Whittemore's *Sinai Tapestry*, just as I gaped open-mouthed at a friend who told me *The Bridges of Madison County* was the best book she'd ever read. As Andre Maurois said, "In literature, as in love, we are astonished at what is chosen by others."

The most astonishing thing to me, though, is someone who chooses nothing at all. Okay, sure, if you're a starving war captive in the Sudan, you may not even know how to read, and the lack of books is probably nowhere among your one hundred most pressing problems. But who can understand the people here, among us, in our own culture, on our own doorstep, who don't read? Who can understand the people who don't love books?

I sure can't. I have a lifelong addiction to taking trips which are possible only in my imagination, and I don't want to be cured. My addiction is fostered, nurtured, cultivated, and fed by the characters I've met and come to love (or hate) on the printed page; the tragedies and comedies in which I have participated through the act of reading; the worlds and lives and times I have experienced through the gift of a writer's imagination reaching out to stir mine.

So when Jane Austen's charming, shrewd, cultivated voice reaches out to me across the span of two centuries, how could I refuse the invitation to join in the loves, lives, conflicts, and schemes of her delightful characters in the vivid world she presents to me?

My volume of Austen's collected works used to belong to my mother. The pages are yellowing, the spine is very bent, I don't recall it ever having a dust jacket, and, at one time, I badly smeared the front endpaper in an attempt to mark it with my name; and I know you'll understand when I say that it's precious to me, just as it is. My copy of *Little*

Women is in even worse shape. It's a post-WWII Grosset & Dunlap edition with color as well as black-and-white illustrations. It was also my mother's, though it was my grandmother who gave it to me. The pages are dog-eared, some of them torn, and there's a faint musty smell when I open it—which I seldom do, because the spine is unraveling. But I don't want a new copy, and I don't need to open it to remember the details which most captivated me about the lives of the March girls in mid-19th century America.

My copy of W. Somerset Maugham's *The Razor's Edge*, printed during WWII, is in pretty good shape. I have no memory of where I got it, though a stranger's name is on the front endpaper, mostly concealed by the dustjacket, and a pencil notation indicates that I must have picked it up for \$2 somewhere, long ago. Twenty years ago, I suppose, since I was a teenager the first time I read it. I've read it three more times since then, following Maugham's friends to Europe and Asia, voyaging in an exotic long-ago world of well-turned phrases, and sharing in Larry's spiritual quest during the years between the wars. A close friend of mine sometimes identifies a whirlpool of emotional denial and self-absorption encountered in real life through a simple code phrase, derived from reading that novel, when she says to me, "Isabel doesn't get it."

Three, four, five times isn't unusual for me to read a favorite book. I'm blessed with a terrible memory, so I can re-read my favorites often, remembering very little about them except that I know for a fact I'll really enjoy them, whereas new reads are more of a crap shoot. Nonetheless, a healthy balance between old and new is essential, because it is in new reads that we find the works which add to our supply of cherished old friends, our treasure trove of best-beloved books that we dust, tend, mend, alphabetize, re-read, and hoard as if they were made of gold rather than pulp.

Had I not experimented with new reads in recent years, I wouldn't have discovered Loretta Chase, Iain Pears, Tanya Huff, Sparkle Hayter, and numerous other writers whose books I now tend and dust and make space for in an ever-more crowded shelving system. When Mary Jo Putney's Reggie Davenport explains in *The Rake* that he can't just rest on his laurels because wickedness requires constant effort, I knew I had found a new favorite. When I deserted real life for three straight days because I hadn't yet reached a place in Katherine Neville's *The Eight* where I could bear to put the

book down, I had found a new favorite. When nonfiction writer Diane Ackerman mesmerized me with an entire chapter on the sense of *smell*, I found a new favorite.

But the old friends, the books I've been reading and re-reading for years... those are special in the way that treasured personal mementos, shared recollections, and old photo albums are special. Those novels are as much a part of my past as the paperweight next to me that belonged to my grandfather, the photo on my wall of a friend who died young, the scar on my knee from summer camp in 1970, or the shoe-shaped brush I bought in Holland after a group of Dutch strangers all pooled their spare cash to donate to me when my wallet was stolen. My life would be barren without these memories; and I don't want to imagine it without these books, either.

There are certain Barbara Michaels and Elizabeth Peters novels I've read half a dozen times apiece. Her real name, by the way, is Barbara Mertz, and she is, among other things, an Egyptologist holding a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago (where, incidentally, a veritable slew of my relatives went, too). She's lived in Maryland for years, and has set a number of her wonderful novels in that area. When I went east to Georgetown University as a college kid, I initially felt homesick and out of place in Washington, D.C. To keep myself from panicking, I re-read *Ammie Come Home*, which took place in the very neighborhood where I was living, as well as other novels of Barbara's set in the region: *Witch*, *The Prince of Darkness*, *The Walker In the Shadows*, *Patriot's Dream*, *House of Many Shadows*... Toward the end of my senior year, a newsletter for Barbara's readers announced a contest, which I entered and won by writing a story outline which she liked.

My prize was the original cover painting of one of my favorite Michaels novels, *The Sea King's Daughter*; but Barbara had to hold onto it for me because I left the country right after college and went for a long time without a fixed address. We thereby became correspondents; ever since those days, I still get uncharacteristically gushy about the fact that one of my all-time favorite novelists refers to *me* as a friend. (You may touch my hem.) I couldn't even count how many times I've read *The Dark On The Other Side*, which delights and terrifies me every single time I read it. Her *Wait For What Will Come* is the book I read whenever I'm sick, as the characters, setting, and story enchant and comfort me when I'm feeling my worst. (I'm so predictable that, one time, Kathy Chwedyk called here, discovered I had the flu, and automatically assumed—correctly—that I was therefore re-reading that book, as well as another great Michaels favorite, her spine-tingling *The Crying Child*.)

It was through Barbara Mertz that I once briefly met Sarah Caudwell. I decided that anyone so funny might well be worth reading, and I picked up her first three books. Since then, I've read them all almost every single year, always delighted anew by the witty, elegant world I enter when I open a Caudwell novel. I want to hang out and pal around with these funny, urbane, clever people in their thoroughly enchanting settings; and, by reading these books, I get to do so.

Caudwell's final novel, *The Sibyl In Her Grave*, was released posthumously, the author having died of cancer several months earlier. At the risk of sounding insensitive, if she weren't already dead, I would kill her for writing only four books before she left this world. I want twenty. I want forty. I want *more*.

Somebody else who left me wanting more is John Belairs, a children's writer who wrote just one adult novel (though it's a great read for kids, too) in his life. It happens to be my all-time favorite fantasy novel, *The Face In The Frost*. This perfect gem is both charming and terrifying, whimsical and dark, funny and tense. I've looked for twenty years to find another novel to give me the same feeling of fantastical enchantment which this one does, because one is not enough.

Along with Bellairs, another sf/f writer I never tire of re-reading is C.L. Moore, a woman writing in this male-dominated genre back in the 1930s. Although she also wrote novels, my great passion is for her series of fantasy short stories centered around the medieval adventuress Jirel of Joiry, as well as for her science fictional short story series about a space adventurer named Northwest Smith. I have all these stories in two illustrated specialty-press anthologies which Moore herself signed before she died. Her ability to captivate me transcends reality in a tangible way, since her sf stories postulated a solar system which we now know to be wholly inaccurate. In Moore's vision, our neighboring planets are all populated with native races and cultures; and when Moore writes, I believe that Venusians and Martians, their cities and communities, are really *there*, despite what NASA space probes show us.

Every beloved novel (*Trade Wind*, *A River Sutra*, *Cry the Beloved Country*, *Seize the Fire*, *Lincoln's Dreams*, *Catch-22*, etc., etc.) in my bookcases, every treasured writer (Georgette Heyer, Mary Stewart, Oscar Wilde, etc., etc.) whom I re-read is a refuge, a resource, a wellspring. Every book I re-open is a homecoming. Every story I return to is a friend embracing me.

I can never understand the people who choose to turn their backs on all of this. My love of all of this was so overwhelming it turned me into a storyteller—as if I could ever give back what all these writers have given to me. If I've fallen down on the job this month and failed to be curmudgeonly as is my duty, it's because I can't be anything but passionate, positive, grateful, and endlessly enthusiastic about all the fabulous writers and all the wonderful books—too many to name here—which have made my life, pretty rich and varied in its own right, so much more than it would have been without them.

Sometimes it's good to take a moment and offer them the praise they deserve.

[NINK editor's note: What books are your favorite old friends? List your five favorites and e-mail to me at write2pam@aol.com, including Favorite Books in the subject line. We'll print the list in a future NINK. E-mail only, please.]



BREAKING NEWS

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ Continued from page 8

agency confirmed or denied the report.

Identifying Numbers

The International Standardization Committee in Geneva is considering an "author-centric" identifying number called the International Standard Text Code (ISTC for short) that will be applied to each individual literary work. Present ISBNs and EANs will be subordinate to it.

Why should you care? Well, the skinny is that authors and agents will be informed of the assignment of the number and will have an opportunity to check on the accuracy of the description of the work to which it's applied. We can't do that with ISBNs, which are doled out to, and by, publishers.

Such identifying numbers already exist in the music business but have never been available to authors.

How To Go On A Book Tour When You're Dead

I know, I know. You thought you felt dead after that last book tour. Well, here's a new wrinkle: Richard Yates died in 1992, but *The Collected Stories of Richard Yates* wasn't published until May of this year. How do you send *this* guy on a book tour? Not easy. So an ingenious publicist at Henry Holt lined up admirers from around the country to read the deceased author's work for him. Do they also get the cancelled plane flights, the clueless interviewers, the lost hotel reservations? Yates isn't talking.

Pseudonym Issue

The *Authors Guild Bulletin* is seeking information from authors writing under a pseudonym who published books with Harlequin pursuant to recent (i.e., post mid-1990s) contracts containing a pen-name prohibition clause, and who sought but were specifically denied permission to use that pen name on other non-Harlequin writing projects. Authors must be able to produce a copy of the relevant contract. All information will be kept confidential.

Contact:

Legal Services Department
The Authors Guild
31 E. 28th Street
New York, NY 10016

E-mail: staff@authorsguild.org

Send *Breaking News* to Pamela Browning at write2pam@aol.com.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

NINK needs articles, and we pay. Okay, it's not a lot, but it's not bad, either. As far as subject matter and style, anything goes. We particularly need lead articles, and I'd like to see pieces about serious issues written in a hard-hitting journalistic style.

We publish Op-Ed pieces, though we don't pay for those or for Letters to the Editor. You do not have to be a member of Novelists, Inc. to write for **NINK**.

E-mail me at: write2pam@aol.com with your ideas. Or snail mail me at 7025 Quail Hill Road, Charlotte, NC 28210.

Need a jumpstart? I'll send a list of suggested topics. No phone calls, please.

— Pamela Browning,
NINK Editor



In Philly...

Meet these industry honchos...and your colleagues and friends....

Editors, agents, and publishing professionals already planning to attend are:

Cecilia Oh, New American Library; Damaris Rowland, the Damaris Rowland Agency; Claudia Cross, Sterling Lord Literistic, Inc.; Steven Zacharius, Kensington/Zebra; Sarah Gallick; Christine Zika, Berkley; Malle Vallik, Harlequin Web; Jennifer McCord, Northwest Bookfest; stand-up comic Brian Kiley from the Conan O'Brien show; Susan Race, coach, Personal Growth Systems & author of the book *Succeeding in the Workplace*; Jenny Bent, Harvey Klinger, Inc.; Steve Axelrod, The Axelrod Agency; Ann LaFarge, Kensington/Zebra; Audrey LaFehr, executive editor, Dutton/Signet; Hilary Ross with Dutton/Signet

...plus more

Laura Cifelli, Warner iPublish; Claire Zion, iPublish (Saturday only); Kay Murray, Authors Guild; Justine Jacobs and Joy Irvin, massage therapists.

...and more to come.

Liberty, Futurity



Equity, in Philly

September 6-9, 2001
(the weekend after
Labor Day)

Adam's Mark Hotel
Philadelphia, PA
City Ave. & Monument Rd.

Panic—er, Excitement—in the Streets that Lead to Philly

<g> I think.

Ack. It's my second-to-last conference column and time for me to take that daring leap and tell you that everything's in place, and we've lined up the jugglers, the clowns, the lion tamers, the trapeze artists, the bareback riders, the—

Oh wait, that's the circus. But really, I suppose that's not far off the mark of what's on Philly's menu, except that right now I'm the juggler, clown, lion tamer, trapeze artist, and bareback rider—and no, I'm not doing that naked (whoops, I probably shouldn't have written that, because those of you who did the virtual book-in-a-week thing with me a few years ago are now sitting in front of your *NINKs* with your eyes covered muttering "Oh, please, make it stop, make it stop!" because I *did* do a creativity assignment naked back then and report on it and. . .)

But I digress.

Actually, everything's lookin' good. I turned this column in *waaay* late, thinking that it was only my life and tendency to procrastinate at every turn that caused the delay when in reality it was serendipity lying in wait. Yep, that's right.

Serendipity in the form of another unique forum brought to you exclusively by a Ninc conference. Appetites whetted? Okay. Kay Murray, attorney for Authors Guild, has agreed to come and give us a special AG presentation.

Included within that presentation will be a few comments on the iPublish contract that's proving to be so detrimental to published authors that the AG has issued a warning against it. Also appearing at the conference on a panel titled *The Disenfranchised Author* will be Laura Cifelli of iPublish, with a host of

others. Yes, this is very interesting, but I'm not done.

Thinking that it might prove interesting, I invited iPublish and the AG to appear on a panel together. Claire Zion, the fearless, passionate leader of iPublish whose kids start school the first week of September and who told me last year she didn't think she'd be able to make this year's Ninc at all for that reason, has decided to come on Saturday specifically to meet with the AG in front of Ninc members.

Barbara Keiler will moderate the discussion, so come armed with your questions, or snail mail or e-mail them to Barbara or to me in advance of the conference. And that doesn't just mean questions regarding iPublish. That's all those questions you had back a couple of months that you wanted answered regarding unions, too! I've asked Kay to send us literature to include in the conference packets as well.

Also lined up for this conference..massages. Get ready to relax and enjoy and restore those biorhythms after the days of heavy-duty schmoozing and networking and information-sharing—Saturday afternoon (3-5), on us, chair massages, yoga, tai chi, before the banquet, for you.

And for those of you who prefer fewer business-style panel or presentation sessions, I've got a round-table/retreat-style track designed just for you. No, it won't be limited to authors-only if editors or agents want to pop in, but it's there and available and labeled just that way. FOR YOU!

As always we aim for the possible: to please all of the members none of the time. <vbeg>

— **Terey daly Ramin,**

MEMBER NEWS.....

▶ ▶ ▶ Cont. from p. 11

the RWA National Conference in New Orleans in July. The hardcover edition of *Spotlight* was published in July, 2000, and the paperback edition is an August, 2001 release from Forge Books. *Spotlight* was also a Holt Medallion finalist.

Ruth Scofield attends Christian Booksellers Show

Ruth Scofield will attend the summer Christian Booksellers trade show in Atlanta on July 12 to sign her latest Steeple Hill book, *Loving Thy Neighbor*. This will be her fifth inspirational for Steeple Hill.

Scofield reports that meeting so many booksellers in one place is very

rewarding—"when I attended the winter CBA (Christian Booksellers Association) trade show in January to sign *Wonders of the Heart*, it seems to have increased my book sales."

Please send news for this column to Kathy Chwedyk at KChwed@aol.com or 1215 Fairmont Court, Algonquin, IL 60102.

Fast Track.....Compiled by Marilyn Pappano

The Fast Track is a monthly report on Novelists, Inc. members on the USA Today top 150 bestseller list. Members should send Marilyn Pappano a postcard alerting her to upcoming books, especially those in multi-author anthologies, which are often listed by last names only. Marilyn's phone number is (918) 227-1608, fax (918) 227-1601, or online: pappano@ionet.net. Internet surfers can find the list at: <http://www.usatoday.com>

Members who write under pseudonyms should notify Marilyn at any of the above addresses to assure their listing in *Fast Track*.

USA Today Bestseller List—May 2001

Victoria Alexander, *The Marriage Lesson*, Avon
Mary Lynn Baxter, *Tempting Janey*, Mira
Jo Beverley, *The Dragon's Bride*, Signet
Sandra Brown, *Standoff*, Warner Vision

Sandra Brown, *Seduction by Design*, Warner
Diane Mott Davidson, *Tough Cookie*, Bantam
Diane Mott Davidson, *Sticks & Scones*, Bantam
Geraldyn Dawson, *The Bad Luck Wedding Night*, Sonnet
Kathleen Eagle, *Last Good Man*, Avon
Patricia Gaffney, *Sweet Everlasting*, Signet
Eileen Goudge, *The Second Silence*, Signet
Karen Harper, *Shaker Run*, Mira
Judith Ivory, *The Indiscretion*, Avon
Iris Johansen, *The Search*, Bantam
Andrea Kane, Linda Anderson, Mariah Stewart, et al *, *Wait until Dark*, Pocket
Jayne Ann Krentz, *Dawn in Eclipse Bay*, Jove
Stephanie Laurens, *A Season for Scandal*, Harlequin
Elizabeth Lowell, *Midnight in Ruby Bayou*, Avon

Debbie Macomber, *Always Dakota*, Mira
Debbie Macomber et al *, *First Man You Meet, Jacob's Girls*, Harlequin
Kat Martin, *Heartless*, St. Martin's Press
Connie Mason, *The Outlaws: Sam*, Leisure
Anne McCaffrey, *The Skies of Pern*, Del Rey
Dinah McCall, *Storm Warning*, Mira
Teresa Medeiros, *The Bride and the Beast*, Bantam
J.D. Robb, *Betrayal in Death*, Berkley
Nora Roberts, *Carolina Moon*, Jove
Nora Roberts, *The Villa*, Putnam
Nora Roberts, *The Stanislawski Sisters: Natasha & Rachel*, Silhouette
Lael St. James, *My Lady Beloved*, Sonnet

* Et al designates additional authors who are not members of Ninc at this time.

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NEW Fax: (913) 262-6435

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