

Purple Pros

The Official Newsletter of

Southeastern Writers

writers helping writers



PURPLE PROS – SOUTHEASTERN WRITERS NEWSLETTER – JULY/AUGUST 2022

SWA President's Letter



Good day. This is my first letter to the membership as President of SWA. I would be remiss to not begin by acknowledging my predecessor, Sheila Hudson, and recognizing all the work she has done, and the many successes she achieved as President. Sheila led SWA through a very difficult period

dealing with COVID-19 issues, transitioning from the past president, Amy Wethington, and keeping everyone involved and active. Prior to that, Amy did an exceptional job as well providing SWA terrific leadership through that very difficult and unusual period.

The results of their work as well as all the volunteers on the Board of Directors was proven last month as, after a long period of no in-person events, we were able to hold our annual June conference. To those who were unable to attend, you missed a great time. It was a joy to be together with old and new faces, and to get to hear informative and entertaining presentations from the faculty. From comments and feedback I've received, I can easily state the conference was a huge success. I thank the Board for their dedicated work during the year to achieve this result.

It is also important at this point to recognize Director Muriel Pritchett, who handles the important job of assembling and publishing this newsletter. She has taken the bull by the horns and never looked back. Thank you for all you do and this contribution.

We are fortunate to have one of our faculty members from the conference, Jeff Newberry, elected to the Board of Directors. Jeff is a welcome addition and has already impacted the Board with his input. Another faculty member, Walter Curry, was added as an auxiliary board member, and member, Melinda Farris, also volunteered as another auxiliary board member. It is wonderful for the organization to have more talented people willing to step up and support "writers helping writers." We are looking forward to their ideas, input, and help looking forward to the 2023 conference.

As we have become so acutely aware during the past couple of years, we never know what may happen by next June. We are very hopeful to build on this year's success and make next year's conference even better. I would invite every member to spread the word about SWA, and set aside those four days next June to attend. Please feel free to share your experiences with others whom you feel may benefit from our conference, and encourage them to join SWA and attend next year's conference.

You already know we take pride in being a close-knit personal organization. The organization's history is filled with many writers who have built their successes by starting as members of SWA. As the Board begins their planning for the 2023 conference, keep your eyes on our newsletter for updates through 2022. Thank you for your membership and involvement with SWA.

Jim Furry
President, SWA



SWA 2022 Conference Photos





SWA 2022 Conference Photos



Awards Night



Sandra Giles (L) presents the First Place Vega Award for Speculative Short Fiction to Melinda Ferris for her entry "Gironde." Ferris also received First Place Award for Historical Fiction for her entry, "The Secret of Tuileries" and Second Place Lowcountry Award for Excellence in Southern Writing for her entry, "The Secret of Harper Lee."



Verne Hoyt (R) receives the First Place Humor Award from Cappy Rearick for his entry, "Unfortunate Incident."



Dana Ridenour (L) presents the First Place Lowcountry Award for Excellence in Southern Writing to Jayne Adams for her entry, "Tree of Life." Adams also tied for the First Place Award for Excellence in Inspirational Writing for her entry, "His Final Flight" and the Second Place Hal Bernard Memorial Award for Novel for her entry, "The Next Home Run."



Buzz Bernard (L) presents the Third Place Hal Bernard Memorial Award for Novel to Amy Wethington for her entry, "Project Observers." Wethington also received the Second Place Microcosm Award for her entry, "Spooky Action at a Distance" and the Third Place Award for Historical Fiction for her entry, "The Stargazing Rock."



Ed Green (R) receives award certificate from Buzz Bernard. Green received Honorable Mention for his Hal Bernard Memorial Award for Novel entry, "Unfortunate Incident."

Congratulations!

Contest Finalists

Microcosm Award (Sponsor: C. Babb)

First Place: Going Home – Susan Lindsley
Second Place: Spooky Action at a Distance
– Amy Wethington

Vega Award for Speculative Short Fiction (Sponsor: S. Giles)

First Place: Gironde – Melinda Farris
Second Place: Preserving Earth's Children
– Amy Wethington
Third Place: Operation Yellowstone
– Susan Lindsley

Award for Excellence in Inspirational Writing (Sponsor: M. Stripling)

First Place Tie:
Goodnight – Susan Lindsley
His Final Flight – Jayne Adams

Award for Historical Fiction (Sponsor: J. Furry/Eye on the Page)

First Place: The Secret of Tuileries – Melinda Farris
Second Place: Bloody Jasper – Susan Lindsley
Third Place: The Stargazing Rock
– Amy Wethington

Lowcountry Award for Excellence in Southern Writing (Sponsor: D. Ridenour)

First Place: Tree of Life – Jayne Adams
Second Place: The Secret of Harper Lee
– Melinda Farris

Hal Bernard Memorial Award for Novel (Sponsor: B. Bernard)

First Place: Heritage – M. Z. Thwaite
Second Place: The Next Home Run – Jayne Adams
Third Place: Project Observers – Amy Wethington
Honorable Mention:
The Curse of the Illusionist – Ed Green

Humor Award (Sponsor: D. Brown/Authors Ignite)

Unfortunate Incident – Verne Hoyt



Dana Ridenour Honored

Alexandra Christle was a writer who helped many writers during her tenure with SWA. If a task needed to be done, “volunteer Alex” seemed to be there.

“It was my pleasure to present the 2022 Alexandra Christle Writers Helping Writers Award to my dear friend, Dana Ridenour,” said Patrick Hempfing, SWA Treasurer. “I know Alex would be pleased this board-sponsored award went to Dana, who took on the role of our social media director. Dana, always spreading the good word, also coordinated an online event at the Pat Conroy Literary Center for our members. SWA is blessed to have her as our new vice president.”

My Thoughts on the 2022 SWA Conference . . .



I didn't know what to expect when I signed up for the Southeastern Writers Conference. I recently moved to beautiful St. Simons Island and wanted to take advantage of the Southeastern Writers

Conference meeting in my new hometown. Although I'm in graduate school and getting my MFA in Creative Writing, I had never before attended a conference just for writers.

I could not have asked for a better experience. Epworth by the Sea is a beautiful setting and longtime SWA conference attendees were welcoming and friendly. I was excited to meet other first-time attendees and we quickly became friends.

The faculty was fantastic. Each of them is experienced in their fields and gave us practical and valuable information. As a conference attendee, I had the opportunity to sign up for individual faculty meetings and ask their advice about my writing project. I found the individual meetings very informative. I have already improved my novel in progress because of things I learned at the conference.

Because of that, I've volunteered to recruit attendees from the St. Simons area for next year's conference. If you have any ideas or suggestions on how we can make the conference more available to the St. Simons writing community, please contact me at Melinda@mfarris.me. And mark your calendars now for next year's Southeastern Writers Conference, June 9-13, 2023. You don't want to miss it.

-- Melinda Farris

More Cowbell, More Attendees

By Patrick Hempfing, SWA Treasurer

Most of us have seen the Saturday Night Live skit starring Will Ferrell done over twenty years ago. In the skit, Will Ferrell -- wearing way too tight a shirt -- gives it his all when Christopher Walken -- playing the part of a music producer -- says, "I need more cowbell."

As I Googled this skit in research for this article, I saw the question, "What does it mean when someone says we need more cowbell?" The answer, "More cowbell can stand in for anything that a person is longing for or feels is lacking." A perfect fit for this article.

Coming off another fantastic conference at Epworth by the Sea, I'm recharged and can't wait until our June 2023 conference. Based on the positive feedback the board has received so far, the conference was a great success. I'm so glad the board decided to hold the event, even though there was a good chance we weren't going to break even due to low registration numbers.

But as we prepare for next year's conference, there's one simple solution, "We need more

cowbell." Insert "attendees" in place of "cowbell."

The continued success of SWA will require a team effort, or in the case of SWA, a family effort. One of the nicest emails I received was from a first-time attendee who wrote, "I really feel as though I just extended my family." We truly have something special at Epworth by the Sea, family reunion special.

I can't promise you more cowbell in 2023, but I'm confident you'll find:

- Excellent instructors
- A writer's paradise
- Three delicious meals a day (without cooking or washing dishes)
- Helpful one-on-one meetings with faculty
- Cash prizes and certificates awarded for winning contest entries
- Hugs and support from other writers and "family members"

So, bring a friend and spread the word about our June 9-13, 2023, conference. Will we end up with more cowbell? This I can't guarantee. But I think it's safe to say, we'll have plenty of kazoo.

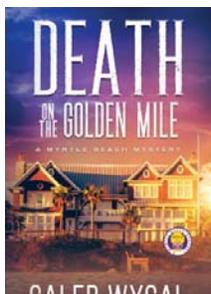
Keep writing!

SWA Member News



Sandra Giles led a world building workshop “Not in Kansas Anymore” for the Young Writers Conference at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College on June 25, 2022. Giles is recording secretary and a member of SWA Board of Directors.

Caleb Wygal's third novel in his Myrtle Beach mystery series, *Death on the Golden Mile* (Franklin/Kerr Publisher), is scheduled for release August 23, 2022. In this book, Wygal takes readers to one of the most upscale areas of the Grand Strand, the Golden Mile, as the lead character, Clark Thomas, receives an invitation to a retired Hollywood music composer's oceanfront estate. Wygal will be at the Back Again Book Shop, Myrtle Beach SC on August 23 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. www.calebwygal.com



In July, **Ed R. Green** launched *Hope* (CreateSpace), the first book in his six-part The Sapphire Prison series. The other five books in the series are finished and ready to be released. He has also completed three of the four books in his subsequent series, The Orb of Ascendance. This series involves the protagonists who, at the end of the first series, were still breathing. ed888@startmail.com.



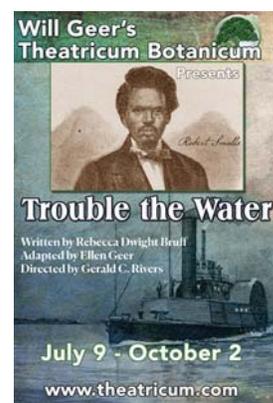
Rebecca Dwight Bruff's 2019 award-winning historical novel, *Trouble the Water*, was freely adapted by Ellen Geer into a play being performed by Will Geer's Theatricum Botanicum on the outdoor stage in Topanga CA through October 2.

Trouble the Water is the true story of Robert Smalls, the first African American hero of the Civil War. Smalls, who was born into slavery in Beaufort SC, carried his family and others to freedom by commandeering a Confederate warship into Union waters.

Hometown Novel Writers Association based in Newnan, GA hosts local authors to local audiences south of Atlanta with author panel programs throughout the year.

If interested, visit hometownnovel.com or go to Facebook @WGAHometownNovelNights and follow/subscribe for our newsletter.

HNWA also sponsors writers critique groups, workshops, and book promo opportunities. Info about the August 27th Sharpsburg Book Fair coming soon! Rent a table opportunity to promote your books and support scholarships for high school students to attend the AWC Writers Conference and FERST Readers program.



The SWA Conference is easily one of the BEST and most engaging conferences I have ever attended. The interaction between attendees and presenters is amazing. The interactive workshops will have you writing and crafting and planning to return next year.

– Lis Anna-Langston

SWA 2022-2023 Board of Directors

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