

# DEAD TO WRITES

A MALICE IN MEMPHIS NEWSLETTER

JULY 2016 ISSUE

I apologize for this being later than normal but this has been a busy week. As some of you know, Missy and her family are moving to Iowa to take care of her husband's aunt who recently suffered a stroke which left her paralyzed on her right side. Missy will still remain a member of Malice and will keep her membership dues current but has spoken to Carolyn and has stepped down as President. I want to wish her and her family safe travels on Friday. We will miss you Missy.

That leaves us without a President for the moment. I am pretty sure we will be discussing this on Saturday at the meeting as to the next step.

Hope to see everybody on Saturday at the meeting.

Juanita D. Houston  
Secretary/Newsletter Editor of Dead to Writes  
A Malice in Memphis publication

Let us also keep the families of the police officers who were killed in the line of duty in Dallas, TX and the officers that were injured, in our thoughts and prayers, that they may be healed.

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT:

Saturday, July 9th our special guest will be Justine Reames of the Bartlett Police Department. She will speak with us about her studies on serial killers. Please come out and support our special guest. I've heard she is a very good speaker with interesting information. You won't want to miss this one.

Our retreat is October 28, 29 and 30th at St. Columba's Sanders Lodge. The address is 4577 Billy Maher Road, Memphis. You can check out their facilities at [www.saintcolumbamemphis.org/](http://www.saintcolumbamemphis.org/)

This event will be free to all Malice members. We have enough room to sleep 20, but we can also accommodate the day-trippers. We have many who commute, but all are welcome to stay.

I'm so excited Deb Dixon of Belle Books will present her program on "The Black Moment" at 10 am Saturday, October 29th. This program will last about 2.5 hours depending on questions. We will use our August meeting to lock down the rest of programming and presenters, and what everyone will commit to bring regarding food/menu items.

**Kristi Bradley**  
**Vice President**

**WRITING TIP:**

I've talked before about being prepared for the unexpected thought that springs into you mind at the weirdest times. For example I was having cataract surgery this morning when I realized what my next move would be for the hero in my novel. Needless to say I couldn't tell the doctor to hold up a minute so as I gazed at the three marshmallow shaped lights I gave each one a significant part in the story and the minute I got home I wrote them down so they wouldn't be gone forever. So there are many ways to remember important details other than putting the pen to paper for a note or two. Grab all your chances. Some may not make it into print, but at least the idea wasn't totally lost.

**Happy Writing****Barbara Christopher**

Minutes for June 11, 2016

The Meeting was called to order at 10:20 a.m. by Kristi

In attendance:

Kristi, Barbara, Juanita, Carolyn, Jim, Richard, Margaret, Seth, Pat, Dutch, Cindy, Tangey, Beth, Elaine, Geoffrey, Cheryl,

Also we had 1 guests in attendance: Judy Beigler

Kristi asked for a motion to dispense on the reading of the minutes, Carolyn made the motion and Pat seconded the motion. All agreed and Motion passed.

Barbara gave the Treasurer's report.

Our retreat has been secured and now we are working on programing for the retreat. We will be having Deb Dixon come speak during our retreat and some of the topics will be GMC, Black moment, POV. (black moment is a crucial moment in the story that changes everything).

Lynn Maples is working on a website for Malice and a new logo and is looking for helpers in maintaining the website. Pictures of the three choices for the logo were passed around for people to vote on. They will be emailed to everybody for a vote. Hope to announce a winner at the July Meeting.

Rivercity Romance writers will have a speaker this month, Justine Reames of the Bartlett Police Department. She will speak with us about her studies

on serial killers. We are hoping to get her to come speak to us in July. Stayed tuned for an update on that.

We are working on getting the next anthology which will be focusing on Memphis in May festivities. The stories can be ghost stories or mysteries, writer's choice. We are looking at a September deadline so that hopefully the release of the anthology can coincide with next year's Memphis in May.

Our program for today will be given by Elaine Meece on pacing.

Meeting was called at 12:00 and announcement that we would be going to lunch at

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#### **CURRENT ANTHOLOGY NEWS:**

I have conferred with Allan Gilbreath, our publisher at Dark Oak Press and 2<sup>nd</sup> Anthology has gone to pagination. He will keep me apprised of the status in the upcoming weeks and hopefully we will have a publication date soon.

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I want to thank Elaine Meece on her presentation at our June Meeting on Pacing. It was a great program.

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An article by one of our own:

You might find interesting a forensic article I wrote for Killer Nashville Magazine-- March 2016 edition: DEATH SCENES ARE CASTLES IN THE SAND. Just click on this convenient link and take a look:

<http://www.killernashvillemagazine.com/under-the-microscope-with-steve-bradshaw/>

Maybe you are as fascinated as me about the O.J. Simpson Case, and you are following the series on FX. Probably many of you wonder how so much physical evidence recovered at the death scene, Simpson's residence, and Simpson's Bronco did

not lead to a conviction. I must admit, of the hundreds of homicide cases I investigated, I never had that amount of physical and circumstantial evidence to take to the medical examiner. The O.J. Simpson case clearly demonstrated judicial outcomes depend on many more factors than physical evidence alone. Regardless, for me, the forensic investigation process (scene, autopsy, lab) is the key to finding the truth.

In the Killer Nashville article, I explore a few cases I worked that looked one way but went another way based on the evidence. Like the O.J. Simpson case, each time we pursued physical evidence, there was an opportunity for it to be missed, destroyed, lost, or swallowed up by the whirlwind of circumstances. In my humble opinion forensics, in its purest sense, is the injection of the scientific method into the legal system. I believe it is the most objective tool available to deal with a subjective process to find truth.

I am pleased to tell you the second edition of **The Bell Trilogy** will release this summer. Soon after, I look forward to my next forensic mystery/thriller coming out. It is a riveting story based on true events and reaches into the paranormal in a way that will fascinate.

If you have a comment or any suggestions, feel free to drop me a note.

Very best

Steve Bradshaw

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*From Angelyn's Crimes of Passion Blog*

## *Writing Inspirations: Transformations*

There was a moment when I changed from an amateur to a professional. I assumed the burden of a profession, which is to write even when you don't want to, don't much like what you're writing, and aren't writing particularly well.  
-- Agatha Christie

Writing – and reading, for that matter – has been a part of my self-expression, exploration and growth for as long as I can recall. If not making up quirky short

stories about evil chickens, or poems about my latest crush, I made daily diary entries and as I grew older, journaled.

Despite my own efforts, I never considered myself a writer. I maintained a certain envy for people who did. I'll even admit to a certain awe for people I'd met or known who committed themselves not only to writing a book but following their dream through to publication.

But somewhere along the way, the mantle of writer fell across my shoulders and I found myself introducing myself as a writer even before revealing my professional day job.

I can't quite put my finger on exactly when that happened . . . when writing became more than just a diary entry or something I did when I was bored or to pass the time. It felt like an overnight transformation. I suspect it started when a short story idea took on a life of its own and became starting point for the novel that would eventually become *KAOS*.

The problem I encountered was that though I'd read hundreds of thousands of books, I had no idea about the extensive process that went into producing a publication-worthy novel. Me, never one to back down from a challenge, started reading craft books on the subject. I returned to my graduate school technical writing tomes (not helpful at all, by the way!). Eventually, I figured out that I needed to network with others who were identified writers and try to learn as much as I could about the craft of novel writing from them. That led to seeking out writers conferences, taking online classes and eventually joining several writers groups, both local and national.

Each of these factors taught me how to become a *better* writer but it didn't turn me into a writer.

I wrote when I didn't feel like writing. I created a writing space in my home and developed writing times that I held sacred. I demanded (in a loving kind of way) that family and friends view my time away from them with a similar respect. I continued (and still do) to identify ways to improve my writing but despite my areas of weakness, I write through it, until a better way comes to me.

I am realistic about my writing goals. I'm not a butt-in-chair-every-day kind of writer; my life as a full-time professional, a full-time single parent, and full-time friend and lover does not easily accommodate that goal. Instead, I identify

weekly goals: if I meet this week's goal in 24 hours – *GREAT!* – then I press on to the next one. If not, I keep at it until the goal is met.

Realistically, to say that the transformation from amateur to professional takes place in an instant is a bit of an understatement. As you can see by my development, and no doubt yours as well, there is a rather extensive process involved which includes not only mental adjustments but physical and social as well, not unlike the process from caterpillar to butterfly. While it may seem that a cocoon is a resting place for the caterpillar, there's a lot of activity going on inside, as the caterpillar transforms into something new. The old body is broken down – our old way of thinking and doing changes and grows; priorities shift and our new identities as writers, refine from the inside out.

It's the mental and emotional adjustments made as we accommodate our new identities that lead to changes in our behavior, that leads to, as Ms. Christie said, taking on the burden of the professional by writing when you don't want to, write when what you're writing is crap and writing even when your internal editor thinks you suck.

We're writers. That's what we do.

What about you? What was your transformation like? Your process from amateur to professional? I'd love to hear your story.

**ATTENTION:**

Have you written an article for a writer's magazine? I would love to include it in a future edition of the newsletter. Would anybody be interested in writing one for the newsletter? If so please email me at [juanitah03@aol.com](mailto:juanitah03@aol.com) and put newsletter article in the subject line. I would love to see any contributions you would like to make.

Thanks.

Juanita Houston