

# DEAD TO WRITES

A MALICE IN MEMPHIS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2016 ISSUE

Saturday, March 12th our special guest was supposed to be Shane Richards. Shane is an Air-Evac pilot who has worked search and rescue, search and seizure, plus more with the Jackson-Madison County Sheriff Department, and surrounding areas. Please be sure to attend to hear his story and experiences. Come pick his brain on procedure or whatever else you may deem important if writing about search and rescue. Due to a family emergency Shane had to cancel but we will get him rescheduled soon. Thanks for understanding.

\*\*Here is a little time line breakdown of Shane's career:  
Police Dept. since 1996. Pilot with the PD since 2000. Airevac since 2005. Still flies for both.

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT:

All,

Due to a family emergency, our guest this Saturday had to cancel. We will reschedule him soon, but since we have no other program on such short notice, this Saturday we will hold a round table discussion. Bring your questions, concerns or ideas and let's see what magic happens.

We will have a guest for the April 9th meeting as well. Heather Miles is a self-published author of erotica who will share her expertise in self-promotion. Her tips will benefit the self-published author as well as traditionally published.

River City Romance Writer's is holding their retreat April 22-24. If anyone is interested in attending, go to [rivercityromancewriters.org](http://rivercityromancewriters.org).

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

Notice:

We have a new feature in our newsletter. Angelyn has given me permission to reprint posts from her blog so if you missed reading her blog online, you will be able to read it here in the newsletter. Thanks Angelyn.

Juanita, Secretary/Editor

**WRITING TIP:**

What do you know about your characters? What happened in their lives that make them who they are? Was it a traumatic incident as a child/teenager or young adult? How they react in any given situation depends on their past. It takes a little time to build a character sketch for each person in your story, but good characterization can make a good story great.

**Happy Writing**

**Barbara Christopher**

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Minutes for February 13, 2016

The Meeting was called to order at 10:15a by Kristi

In attendance:

Kristi, Barbara, Vicki, Juanita, Carolyn, Jim, Richard, Angelyn, Margaret, Seth, Jackie, and Cindy.

Also we had 3 guests in attendance: Lynn Maples, Cindy Wolf and Mary Balsamo.

Kristi announced that her novel *Mysta*, had been accepted by Dark Oak Press and now she was just waiting on a release date.

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

Barbara gave the Treasurer's report and announced that she would not be here in March and April.

Carolyn announced that she had sent all the pictures for the anthology to Ann and that she still needed bios and info on locations for some. She passed around a paper of the list of stories.

One of our guests, Lynn Maples, told us he had read the first Anthology and that he had talked to his boss who is in charge of the Memphis in May events and pitched that maybe we should do a Memphis in May based

Anthology. Everybody was in agreement and it was decided that we would discuss in more detail in future meetings to iron out what we would need to do.

Introductions were made for the guests in attendance and they introduced themselves.

Since no program was scheduled, Barbara, Carolyn and Pat gave an impromptu program on Critique groups and how theirs worked and what was needed in a support group.

Meeting was called at 12:00 and announcement that we would be going to lunch at Brad's BBQ nearby.

### **It's a St. Patrick's Day Mystery!**

**Celtic artist Seamus Darby is celebrating St. Patrick's Day at the Faire Land Castle legendary home of the entrance to the Land of Youth. This con-artist has finally met his match when he tries to find the fairies and he finally gets his just rewards.**

**Enjoy this original interactive St. Patrick's Day mystery!  
Leprechaun Artist**

**Saturday, March 19th  
7-10 p.m.**

**\$38/person  
includes dinner & entertainment  
Reservations Required!  
Contact Phyllis at 901-210-0545; 901-377-0143 or [Paappleby@aol.com](mailto:Paappleby@aol.com)**

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**Writing Inspirations: Stick to your process**

**By Angelyn Sherrod**

(previously published 3/4/16 online at <http://www.angelynscriesofpassion.wordpress.com>)

***Inspiration usually comes during work, not before it. -- Madeleine L'Engle***



Writers write.

Writers stick butt to chair and fingers to keyboard daily.

Writers write whether there is inspiration or not.

One of the biggest lies I tell myself is that it's okay not to come to the computer today because I can't think of anything interesting to say.

Here's another one: I don't have *time*. That next chapter will take *hours* to write.

Or, and this one is my favorite: I'm still trying to work through the plot point. I need to think more. Do more research . . . run by Starbucks for an Americano. I'll put another load in the washing machine because *I'm thinking*.

No, I'm *procrastinating*.

People much smarter than me figured it out a long time ago. People procrastinate because they are in pursuit of perfection and that drive is, at its root, based on fear. It's fear that pushes you (me) to avoid the work, despite your(my) best intentions. But that's emotion. Not logic.

If you're anything like me, you say, "I'm not afraid of anything. What's there to be afraid of?" I'm a good writer and I'm telling a story I'm excited about. Fear? *Pfffttt!!*

But that's the beauty of it. It's there hiding in the deep recesses of our psyches, unnoticed . . . just out of sight. But it's there, a dulled-out neon that screams "I can't do it or I'm not good enough."

Fear of failure? Who does that? But it's actually quite common. What if I try and no one buys the book? What if I'm not as good as I think I am? But it's so hard. New things are uncomfortable and so we put them off.

Overcoming perfectionism and fear has to start with acknowledging its presence. We have to be honest with ourselves about why we are avoiding the task, or in my case, why am I avoiding face time with my computer screen?

According to John M. Grohol, Psy.D. (<http://psychcentral.com/library/procrastination.html>), fear can be very self-reinforcing in that each time we fail a task because of procrastination, it

reinforces our own beliefs about our abilities and self-worth. *I knew I was going to fail, so what's the use of even starting work on the next one?*

So, I ask:

Are you afraid of not being good enough?

*Hell, yeah!*

Have you ever failed at anything before?

*Sure.*

Did the world end?

*Well, no. But I didn't like it. I like to win.*

So, what did you do then?

*I figured out what I might have been doing wrong and adjusted.*

Right. Did you fail again?

*Sure did. And each time, I got a little better.*

**Exactly.**

I've been putting off working on the next chapter of my novel, KAOS. I am approaching the crisis point in both the plot and the internal crises of my two main protags. I know how the story ends but it's been frustrating trying to decide how my two characters will reach that end point.

So, I think. I research. I play WORDS WITH FRIENDS at Starbucks. My house is cleaner than it's ever been. I've been catching up with old friends.

Two days ago, I had the above conversation with myself and decided not to wait for inspiration. About twenty minutes into the session, it came to me. The answer had been right there on the fringes of consciousness, the solution that will take me over the hump so that I can slide through to the finish.

The inspiration came from the process – *during the work*, not before.

Lessons learned:

Confront perfectionism - it doesn't need to be perfect, just get it *done!*

Challenge procrastination, and avoidance then face it head on.

Then Write. Immerse yourself in your story, your characters, the world you've created. Storytelling is an organic process. If you're there, it will come.

Finally, stick butt to chair and fingers to keyboard daily.

Happy Writing!

For more information about challenging procrastination, check out Dr. Grohol's series of articles on the topic online at PsychCentral: <http://psychcentral.com/library/procrastination.html>).

For more Writing Inspirations, step over to [angelynscriesofpassion.wordpress.com](http://angelynscriesofpassion.wordpress.com) each Friday.