

# The Purloined Newsletter

A CAPITAL CRIME WRITERS PUBLICATION



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Capital Crime Writers is an organization of writers and editors working in the mystery field, as well as readers who love the genre.

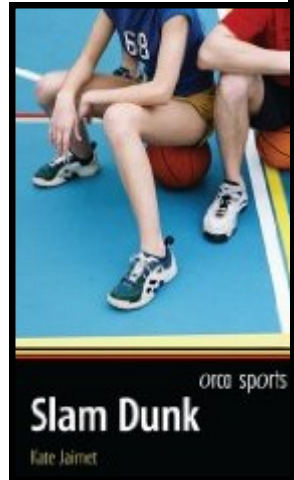
We meet on the second Wednesday of each month to discuss writing and crime. Meetings are suspended in July and August for the summer.

Membership fees are:  
\$30 per year,  
\$15 corresponding.

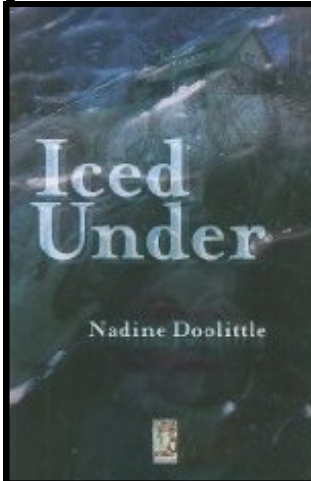
Meetings are held in Room 156 at the Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington Street beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Volume 22, Issue 6—February 2010

**The next CCW meeting is  
on February 10, 2010.  
Spend an evening with  
authors  
Nadine Doolittle,  
C.B. Forrest &  
Kate Jaimet**



**At February's meeting, come out to hear about the pleasures and perils of being a first-time author! A panel of three mystery writers who have recently published their first books will be sharing their stories and insights.**

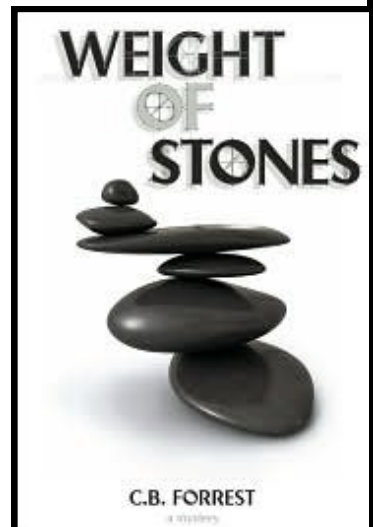


**The authors are: Nadine Doolittle (author of "Iced Under"), C.B. Forrest ("The Weight of Stones") and Kate Jaimet ("Slam Dunk"). The evening will start with readings from each of the books.**

**The panel discussion will take up the remainder of the meeting and will include a snack/refreshment break for people to mingle and chat with the panellists.**

**Hope to see you there,**

**Wynn Quon,  
Program Committee**



## CCW Executive

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**"It seems to me that those songs that have been any good, I have nothing much to do with the writing of them. The words have just crawled down my sleeve and come out on the page."**

**Joan Baez**

## Message from the President - Ken Gibson



Editing may not be the best part of writing a story but it is a necessary part. Thanks to Laura Paquet for her presentation on self-editing at our January meeting —and for the tip sheet she provided to everyone who attended. It won't stray far from my computer.

Thanks also to Wynn Quon from the Program Committee for assembling a member panel of new authors to speak to us at the February meeting. I always enjoy hearing from our own members. Kate Jaimet, C.B. Forrest and Nadine Doolittle will tell us about the challenges associated with getting that first novel published. As an added treat, we will have a draw for one copy of each of their books during the evening.

In April, the Great Canadian Theatre Company (GCTC) will present the world premiere of 'Facts', a play written by former GCTC Artistic Director Arthur Milner. The play involves a Palestinian inspector and an Israeli detective who come together under political pressure to try to solve the murder of an American archeologist. It is inspired by a true story. Katherine Hobbs has negotiated an arrangement with the GCTC that will provide CCW members with tickets at a reduced price and a post play chat with the author. There will also be a little cocktail party thrown in for good measure. More details about **Write Night at the GCTC** are on page 3.

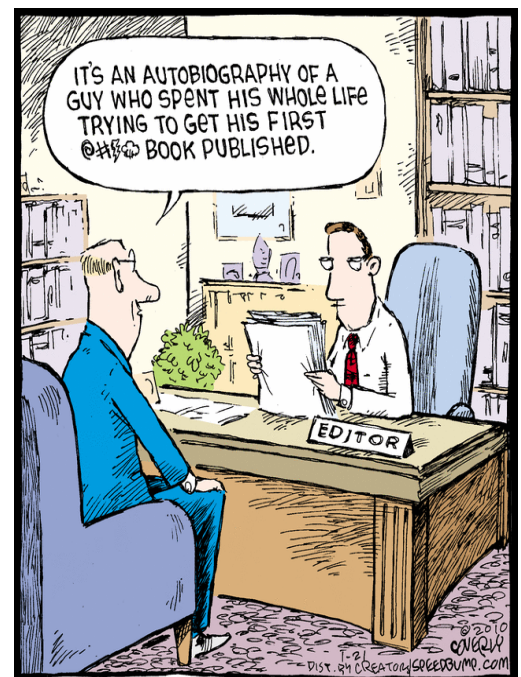
On a sadder note, it is with great regret that we learned that Linda Wiken will be closing Prime Crime Books in mid-March. Prime Crime has been a great supporter of Canadian crime fiction and CCW has had a special relationship with Prime Crime for many years. Linda was the bookseller at our November conference and she has always generously given a 10% discount to CCW members on book purchases.

Linda will be holding book sales starting Feb. 15th through to the closing date of March 13. She suggests we shop early to be sure to get the titles we want.

Also, mark your calendars, as Linda has invited everyone to attend a **Thank You party** she is throwing for customers & friends during regular store hours on **Sun., March 7th -- from noon-4 p.m.**

This would be a great opportunity to go and wish the best to Linda in whatever she chooses to do in the future.

**Ken Gibson**





## From the Editor, Katherine Hobbs

The Great Canadian Theatre Company (GCTC) is celebrating its 35th Anniversary Season this year and it's come a long way since its first production launched in August, 1975. Back then it was simply five people who joined together at Carleton University with the idea of becoming an independent professional theatre company. Nowadays the GCTC is housed in the stunning Irving Greenberg Theatre Centre at the corner of Holland and Wellington Streets.

The GCTC founders believed there was an audience that craved Canadian theatre that was emotionally charged, intellectually engaging and socially and politically relevant. And perhaps no play is more politically relevant than the world premiere of *Facts* playing this April.

*Facts* is written by former GCTC Artistic Director Arthur Milner. Inspired by the true story of the murder of American archeologist in the West Bank, Milner spins the tale of a Palestinian inspector and an Israeli detective. Under political pressure, the two officials come together to try to solve the mystery. And the two men discover that bias will sometimes make fiction look like truth.

I'm telling you all this because on **April 24th, 2010 CCW** is hosting a special event for its members called — **WRITE NIGHT**. As part of this event CCW members are being offered a special rate of \$25 to attend a performance of *Facts*. I was encouraged to organize this event because of the GCTC's commitment to the production of new Canadian work and artist development, and the fact that they continue to commission and workshop new plays by emerging and established playwrights. Way to go GCTC!

**WRITE NIGHT** gives us an opportunity to talk to the author, Arthur Milner, after the performance of *Facts* on April 24<sup>th</sup> and uncover firsthand what's involved in playwrighting.

Although regular ticket prices are \$42, when we contact the box office and indicate: **WRITE NIGHT** we will be given a reduced rate of **\$25**.

But wait, there is more! CCW is hosting a reception at prior to the play upstairs in the mezzanine. There will be plenty of cheeses, fruits and desserts provided by the CCW. The GCTC will be operating a cash bar for those of us who would like some liquid accompaniment to the goodies.

**So call the GCTC box office today at: 613-236-5196 or visit the GCTC Box Office in person at 1233 Wellington Street West, at the corner of Holland Avenue.**

**Make sure to say you are with WRITE NIGHT on April 24<sup>th</sup> – the 8:30 production.**



**Following is an overview of WRITE NIGHT:**

**DATE: Saturday April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

(Please note this offer is for the April 24, 8:30 time slot only)

**COST OF TICKETS:** \$25 Please indicate the discount code: **WRITE NIGHT** when you call the Box Office at 613-236-5196 or visit the GCTC at 1233 Wellington Street West, at the corner of Holland Avenue.

### **DESCRIPTION OF EVENT & TIMELINE:**

**7:00 p.m. Reception** Cash Bar

The playwright Arthur Milner will be in attendance, give an introduction and mingle. CCW will be providing dessert trays, fruit trays and cheese trays.

**8:30 p.m. FACTS** by Arthur Milner

**10:00 p.m.** 10 minute break after the play.

**10:15 p.m.** Return to the theatre for a Talkback with Arthur Milner in the intimate theatre space.

But break a leg getting to the box office — there are only a certain number of tickets set aside for us. In addition to the CCW members, the invitation is going out to all of the writing community in Ottawa.

And not only that, you'll want to be at **WRITE NIGHT on April 24<sup>th</sup>** because who knows, there may also be prizes. :) Hope to see you there.

**Katherine**



## Maximizing your website

by Guy Mercier

There are a few basic rules to follow to ensure you are maximizing your presence online. Here's what to do to your web site to improve it, and options to maximize your presence online.

A good web site should immediately identify the purpose of the web site to the online visitor. It should be easy to navigate and offer content that is relevant to the site. Your pages should include **meta tags** to ensure good search engine results and to make it more accessible to other devices.

### Start with your home page

Your home page is the first place visitors see. This should be the page you keep up-to-date on a regular basis. Use your home page to highlight your *raison d'être* for being online. Your visitors should immediately sense what you are all about. List current news or events your visitors need to know about, such as, book signing events or new book releases. Put yourself in the visitors seat. Think of the reasons your visitors come, and keep coming back to your site. Your site is for them.

### Meta Tags

These are tags that are not visible to the visitor. It's invisible code information that is added to the page that helps in getting recognized by web search engines like Google. These tags list the title of your site along with keywords and page descriptions. Tags are also used for images, acronyms, tables, and a number of other page content items.

Meta tags also make your web site more accessible to other devices. The visually impaired use devices that reads your web page content back to them. Think of tags as courtesy messages for page items and code required for search engine results to find you. These tags are normally entered by a web developer or by the Content Management System (CMS) you may be using for your site.

### Navigability & Accessibility

Make your site easy to navigate. Offer a site map page that lists all your web pages. Your site's main template should contain navigational links to the main sections of your site. You can offer sub-navigational links in side bar columns for the interior pages. Add online forms to make it easy to reach you. Code every external link to load in a new browser window. Your aim is to keep them on your site as long as possible. Code your page items such as photos and page links to make them accessible to other devices.

### Relevant Content

Keep the content relevant to your site. Avoid adding a lot of extra items that are not required on your site. For example, I visited a web site recently that had an incredible amount of photos. To me the site should be promoting the author and the books, not the photo albums. I would recommend placing your photo blog photos on your Facebook account. Keep your content up-to-date and remove any irrelevant content.

### Links

Ensure all your links are working properly. Inform anyone who may be linking to your web site. Let them know of any changes in your web site URL or if it is no longer available.

### Promote your web site

Promote your web site on other popular sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Add links on your home page to those sites. It will increase the traffic and awareness of your sites' existence. Add your web site URL address in your email messages and communication material. Create an RSS Feed to your site.

### Pre-fabricated Templates vs Using a Web Designer

There are several pre-fabricated web sites online you can download to create basic web sites. They may be cost effective and an easy way for you to get online but may not meet all your needs.

Your webmaster can create custom pages based on your specific content needs or offer other programming solutions for your web page content. For example, additional program items such as a Javascript rotating script could be added for displaying your photo albums.

These scripts are often available online for free. It can greatly improve your sites navigation and offer solutions for presenting your page content more effectively.

A pre-fabricated site or CMS will not always meet your needs to present the web page content to your visitor. A good web designer will. The webmaster will also be able to use other programming technologies solutions such as creating an RSS feed, email notices, or a web site Blog page on your site you can populate with content.

## Maximizing Your Website, Cont'd

### Web Site Design & Maintenance

Hiring the services of a good web designer may seem expensive at first but well worth the extra money. The biggest expense is the initial site design and site structure creation. The cost of maintaining it afterwards is minimal. The web-master can make the updates quickly and add the required meta tags etc... The web designer will present the information more effectively and offer solutions or additional programming technologies to present your web page content more effectively.

**For more information about what you can do to your site to improve it, visit my web site at [www.guymercier.com](http://www.guymercier.com) and read The News Bits newsletter.**



**Guy Mercier provides graphic design services for print and the web. He is also skilled in 3D illustration, photography, communication, marketing, and computer programming. He likes to call himself: "The artistic techno geek." or as his father says: "He was born with a drawing pencil in his hands."**

**He has been in the forefront of technology since the introduction of personal home computers. He began in his career in the early**

**1980's as a drawing clerk for Telecom Canada while studying at Algonquin College in the evenings. Eventually he became responsible for the creation and production of all national and international sales collateral and internal communication material for Stentor (the alliance of all the major telecommunications companies in Canada.)**

**He received the designation of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario in 1998. He then worked as senior graphic designer and creative director for graphic design firms in Ottawa until 2003.**

**He has freelanced throughout his career, but became a fulltime freelancer in 2003 although he does occasionally work on a contract basis for the Federal government. He is currently under contract to provide web development services for the CRTC.**

**Guy volunteers his services to a number of not-for-profit organizations such as: [Ottawa Therapy Dogs](#), [Ottawa Romance Writers Association](#), and [Capital Crime Writers](#).**

**Graphic design and web services are provided to Rachel Sentes of [Gal-Friday Publicity](#) in Edmonton, Alberta when required.**

**He takes great pride in every project he undertakes and provides valuable information to improve the end product. To view his online portfolio, visit his web site at**

**[www.guymercier.com](http://www.guymercier.com)**

**or send him an email at:**

**[gmggraphics@gmail.com](mailto:gmggraphics@gmail.com) to find out what he can do for you.**

## Social Networking Seminar: March 13

Confused about Facebook? Clueless about Twitter? Not sure how to connect to LinkedIn? On Saturday, March 13, Ottawa writer/editor Murray McGregor and David Shaw of Ottawa's Workplace Institute will explain how members of the writing community can use these and other online social networking tools to connect with other writers, conduct research and promote their published works. Attendees should have a basic understanding of computers, web browsing and email.

Where: Library and Archives Canada, Room 156, 395 Wellington  
When: March 13 - 1 to 4 p.m.  
Cost: \$10 for OIW; \$15 for non-members (includes refreshments).  
Register via e-mail to: [membership@oiw.ca](mailto:membership@oiw.ca)  
Info: [membership@oiw.ca](mailto:membership@oiw.ca); [www.oiw.ca](http://www.oiw.ca) (613) 731-3873

## Journalists to use only social media to find news

A Canadian radio journalist is about to find out just how much news you can find on Facebook and Twitter, without access to traditional TV, radio or print media. Janic Tremblay, a reporter with Radio Canada, will participate along with four other French-speaking radio reporters in Behind Closed Doors on the Net, an experiment running from Feb. 1 to Feb. 5 in which the journalists will be sealed off in a French farmhouse in Perigord, using only social media to uncover the news. Radio Canada said the experiment, which will include radio reporters from France Inter, France Info, RTS and RTBF, will include radio reports and live debates, as well as a dedicated Twitter feed with Facebook updates.

## Embrace the net!

(or how Michael Geist says the proposed new copyright law is all copywrong)

By Dorothyanne Brown

Finally, a reason to be glad for the prorogation of Parliament. At the January meeting of the Canadian Author's Association, Dr. Michael Geist, law professor at the University of Ottawa, where he holds the Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-commerce Law, discussed C-61, the proposed copyright law. At first overview, it seems not to have protected copyright for authors at all, but rather restricted access to works everywhere. It died when Parliament did. Dr. Geist feels this was a very good thing.

Geist argues that creators and users of information are the same people. All of us "google" information, many of us use Open Office and Wikipedia, and I know I am addicted to the new NFB library and Open Culture.

C-61 concerned itself with little things like: preventing you to move your cell phone service to another company; permitting software sampling your interests for research to be placed on movies and CDs; requiring professors to destroy on-line classes after one month; restricting access to other items to five days; and assigning blame to those who infringe the many complicated rules, banning them from the internet after three such crimes and no due process. It meant that reader software could not be used for the blind, requiring them to purchase the more expensive audio books. Mashups would be out of order, and archiving would be a nightmare of rules and exceptions.

None of this seems particularly helpful to us as writers. As Cory Doctorow pointed out, it isn't

piracy that is the enemy, it's obscurity. All of us toiling in our various book and paper strewn offices want to be read, want to share our vision with someone, or else we would not seek to



publish our writings. It seems counterproductive to want this on one hand, and deny all access on the other.

Geist went on to encourage us to "embrace the Net". He talked about the various open access sites available now, and how they were helping collaboration and innovation. Open Medicine, for example, was started by doctors who felt that where the public funds research, the results should be open to the public. Now we all can wander through the various research studies, finding unusual disorders and novel ways to kill off our characters, without having to pay for this access.

There are different types of people who react to digital information given free. There are the ones that use it free and wander about in glee. This does represent a decrease in sales of the item. Another group use the digital versions to determine if they want the hard copy. He described a university book publisher that put the entire text of a heavily academic book online.

Initially they were afraid this

would result in reduced sales - but they were pleasantly surprised when sales went up. People who never would have bought the book or known of its existence were able to find it online and decided to buy all 700 pages of it to take home.

Geist feels that fair dealing, the sharing of information with users, should be expanded. Currently, the law is a series of enumerated categories - if you are not in a given category, you're not part of the deal. Satire and parody are not protected under fair dealing - which places many at risk of being sued for copyright infringement.

Fair dealing does not mean free dealing, says Geist. There should not be a blanket exception for educators to pull materials off of the internet, for example. Multiple copying or commercial uses should not be free. However, using a website in the classroom should be. He encouraged us to help define fair dealing in a way that was fair for both creators and users.

Of course, most of this is moot, with the prorogation of Parliament, but copyright law is eternally being revised. The pressures now are to match the US and Europe in their copyright arrangements, a delicate dance orchestrated by big players like big pharma up in the stratosphere. It's doubtful we can have much of an effect on the opinions of such heavily pocketed groups.

Geist encouraged authors to focus on contracts, instead, especially those where publishers want authors to surrender all rights. Now, in this multiple-access world, this is even more unwise, and there is scope for authors to resist these contracts, and negotiate a better arrangement.

## Embrace the net! (Cont'd)

By Dorothyanne Brown

Geist also recommends that we encourage and prioritize digitalization. Google is developing a monopoly on this, and it could result in a lack of multicultural input on what is digitalized. Canada should start its own digitalization project to ensure a diversity of voices in the new digital future.

Dr. Geist has an excellent (if a bit impenetrable for non-lawyers) website: [www.michaelgeist.ca](http://www.michaelgeist.ca) that includes a blog about the latest in copyright law.

Slides from the talk are available from me on request.

***Dorothyanne Brown is a nurse and writer. She was published for writing humour when she was a military wife with young kids and life was funny. Life got more serious and she shifted to writing sad short stories and mysteries, finding killing off characters quite enjoyable. Now, life is just ridiculous, so she is returning to humour while still bumping people off here and there. In fiction, of course.***

***She lives in Ottawa with her feisty parrotlet, Dora, and mothers long distance to her three grown children.***

***She can be reached at***

***[dorothyanneb@gmail.com](mailto:dorothyanneb@gmail.com)***

## Heard around town....

### From OIW Writer's List: Google books project rolling over writers

Imagine that a giant monster invades your country. But the beast is not gobbling up people or homes.

It's devouring our books.

That's what most writers insist is happening with Google, the Internet search-engine behemoth. Since 2005, Google has been digitizing the world's books. Reportedly, its ultimate plan is to reproduce the contents of more than 20 million books, to be read online and with electronic reading devices

Click on this Web address if you want to read more:

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/technology/internet/Google+books+project+rolling+over+writers/2482067/story.html>

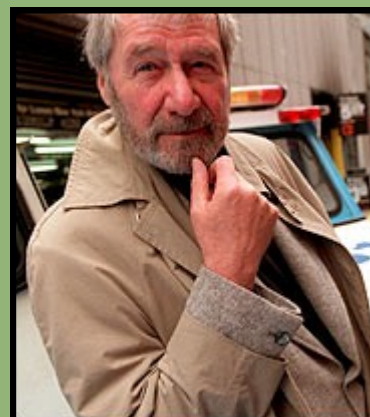
### CCW Member Tom Curran reports....

Ed McBain is a legend in the police procedural and in crime writing generally. There is a collection of his stories out now - on sale at Chapters for \$7.00 - The stories are chronological from the early 1950s and they chart his progress as a crime writer. He was spectacularly successful, with at least 100 million books in print. Here are a couple of links, FYI:

[http://books.google.ca/books?id=IV4IRlpEpiUC&dq=learning+to+kill+mcbain&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](http://books.google.ca/books?id=IV4IRlpEpiUC&dq=learning+to+kill+mcbain&source=gbs_navlinks_s)

<http://www.bookreporter.com/reviews2/0151012229.asp>

<http://www.curledup.com/learn2ki.htm>





## What's a publicist got to do, got to do with it? A CONVERSATION WITH BOOK PUBLICIST RACHEL SENTES.

**Edmonton-based publicist Rachel Sentes answers the Purloined's questions about what a publicist does, debunks the myths, offers advice and helps us understand what exactly a publicist can and will do for authors.**

**The Purloined: What can a publicist do that an author can't to promote their book?**

**Rachel Sentes:** A publicist will map out a publicity strategy that will incorporate the use of media including print, radio, television, and social media. They also have the media relationships that an author might not have. Publicists use a combination of online and traditional industrial media to reach a writer's audience. They may write and distribute press releases for you, create a media/press kit, design posters for signings, and book media interviews for you.

**Purloined: With the many social networking options open to writers what harm or good can authors do themselves online?**

**R.S.:** Using the Web 2.0 and social media is of excellent benefit to the author when promoting their book. However, too much publicity can harm the author's reputation and their book if not planned out properly. Inundating the virtual world is a trap that some authors fall into, especially if they have old material that they still want people to read. Over saturation is not going to help sales. If you are going to market your book, then you need to start with putting to-

gether a monthly publicity strategy making sure that every post you put up sticks with one theme for that month. That way every posting is cohesive. It's also important to spend time researching which sites are actually going to benefit your book. Why sign up to a social media site that has nothing to do with book promotion?



**Rachel Sentes and Lucy the Dog**

Working with a publicist can ensure that your message is strong and targeted to the right people.

**Purloined: When is the best time to call in a publicist?**

**R.S.:** The best time to contact a publicist is when you are ready to switch from the creative mode to the selling one. If you are publishing traditionally, then six months before the book hits the stores is appropriate. That gives the author, publicist, and publisher time to put together a cohesive strategy to promote the book.

Some media book interviews months in advance and you also need time to send out Advance Reading Copies for possible review. You can certainly hire a publicist for your first book, and indeed that may be of the most value to you in establishing your name. The point of hiring a publicist is so that you can concentrate on writing your next book while they promote your

current one.

**Purloined: Will publicists work with self-published writers?**

**R.S.:** Some publicists will work with self-published writers if they feel the work has merit or it will appeal to a large audience. I work with both if the self-published book is less than a year old. Any older and it will be more difficult to gain media.

**Purloined: Is there a more marketable genre?**

**R.S.:** Some publicists like to specialize in a genre, but many will choose a book that they find challenging to work on regardless of type. However, non-fiction is more marketable than fiction.

**Purloined: I'm a published author; shouldn't my publisher be promoting me?**

**R.S.:** Many publishers have limited funds and staff to devote to publicity for their books, especially if they have large catalogs. Most publishers are happy to work with a publicist because it means that they can focus distribution and other aspects of marketing.

**Purloined: Can you get an author on Oprah?**

**R.S.:** Many authors want to be famous and on a top celebrity talk show. But unless you are already a celebrity or a famous author; you probably won't get a booking.

But that doesn't mean your publicist can't try. I've received some very polite responses from top producers of those shows, so it's not out of the realm of possibility. When you hire a publicist it's good to ask what experience they have when dealing with high profile shows.



## What's a publicist got to do, got to do with it?

cont'd.

### **Purloined: What is the difference between advertising/promotion and publicity?**

**R.S.:** Publicity is the key to letting people know what you do. When combined with marketing and advertising strategies, publicity is a valuable tool to heighten awareness about you and your book.

The simplest explanation is that you buy advertising, but publicity is free. The word free is referred to because you don't pay the media to use your news and information- while you do pay them to run ads, and commercials.

Publicity is more powerful and more influential than advertising because it is usually linked to newsworthy events, or information that makes it useful or interesting. Credibility is the key to good publicity because of the implied endorsement of the press.

### **Purloined: Why should I have to pay for a publicist? Won't my publisher do that for me?**

**R.S.:** If you are with a large publishing house and your book is expected to do very well, they may give you some funds for travel and publicity. If you are with a small house then the most they can do is send out one press release (with no follow ups) and try to get your books on the shelves. Paying for a publicist is your choice but ultimately it will come out of your budget.

### **Purloined: If I hire a publicist what guarantee will I have that my books will sell?**

**R.S.:** With publicity there are no guarantees. Return on investment is always a sticking point when hiring a publicist, and sometimes it's difficult to justify why you can't do it all on your own. The benefits of hiring a publicist are cost (it's a myth that all publicists are too expensive), size of audience (publicity is powerful), credibility, impact, versatility, and longevity.

***Rachel Sentes is a Freelance Publicist and writer.***

***She was the co-creator of Book Television's 3 Day Novel Writing Contest 2006, and a Manager for Indigo Books and Music.***

***She writes and distributes press releases, book media interviews on a local and national level and works with publishers, authors, and agents to promote the Canadian publishing industry. Rachel has appeared on CTV, Breakfast Television, Life Network, Shaw Television, TSN, Global Television and Bravo.***

***She's appeared in the Globe and Mail, Edmonton Examiner, Edmonton Journal, and the Edmonton Sun commenting on everything from dogs to romance, and music to lost Canadian novels.***

***Rachel currently lives and works in Edmonton and enjoys watching horror movies, reading, writing, playing with my dogs, and in roughly that order.***

***Get more information about Rachel at:***

[www.gal-fridaypublicity.com](http://www.gal-fridaypublicity.com)

## Writer's Resources

Here's a web site that may interest you:

[http://  
www.placesforwriters.com/](http://www.placesforwriters.com/)

About them:

This is a Canadian writers' resource site. Where possible, they also like to help international writers, too.

Since 1997 they have been posting writing contests and submission calls, occasional literary news, publishing information, and links to great Canadian writers and organizations.

Here are some of the categories of information on the site:

[Calls](#)

[Contests](#)

[Young writers](#)

[Jobs & Opportunities](#)

[Writing retreats](#)

[Expired deadlines](#)

Other helpful bits:

[Canadian literary journals](#)

[International journals](#)

[Publishers](#)

[Writing resources](#)

## January Meeting Report: Self-Editing with Laura Paquet

by Katherine Hobbs

**“I hate revising,”** said author and editor Laura Paquet, our guest speaker at the January meeting on Self-Editing. “Everyone hates revising. But when you finish a manuscript, that’s where it begins.” She went on to remind the audience that when rocks come out of the ground, they don’t look like diamonds.

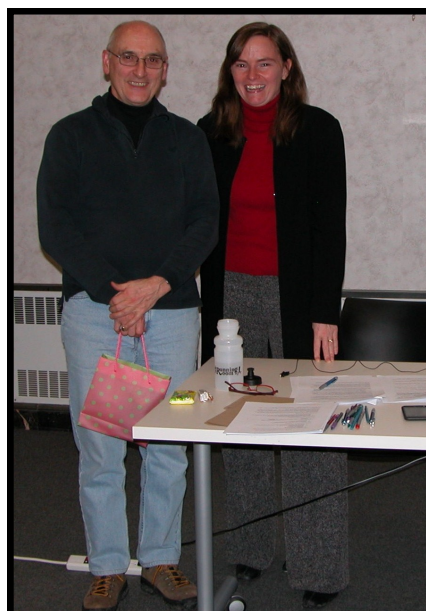
“If you don’t have the luxury of time to revise, get a pad of paper, and tear off four sheets for **TIMELINE**, **CHARACTERS**, **SETTING** and **QUESTIONS**. Every time you find a detail on one of those items, jot it down on the appropriate sheet,” Paquet said. “Page 10 you said something would be 4 days later—mark it down on the **TIMELINE** sheet. If on page 19 you mentioned your character looked out the window at the garden — place it on the **SETTING** sheet. Then on page 29 the character was looking out the window at a building. It goes on the **SETTING** sheet as well. This enables you to see at a glance if you have facts that are contradictory, and the page numbers are handy to fix the errors.”

The workshop focussed on a few basic elements of polishing your draft:

- Fixing continuity errors
  - Timeline errors
  - Descriptive errors
  - Action error
- Spotting overused words  
Every writer has words or phrases they like and use over and over again and repeated words are a problem because:
  - They make the manuscript monotonous



- All the characters and situations start to sound the same, and
  - They pull readers out of your story, by drawing their attention to the mechanics of the storytelling and away from your characters.
  - The exception is ‘said’ which you can get away with, as you don’t notice it when reading.
  - Intensifying Emotion—In your big, turning-point scenes, you need lots of emotional detail. Don’t tell us “Barbara is angry.” Show us, i.e. “Barbara bit her bottom lip until she was afraid it would bleed..”
  - Building atmosphere:  
Focus on all five senses and on characters’ interactions with the setting.
  - Fine-tuning dialogue. All sorts of factors influence the way we speak. Career — is your character a hockey
- player or a scientist—they will speak differently. Education, age, life experience or relationships also govern the way a person might talk. In addition most people have particular words, phrases or constructions that set them apart. While being careful to avoid over-using words, you can use these *tics* to distinguish characters from each other.
- Streamlining rambling prose: Redundancy, unnecessary adjectives and adverbs and needlessly long phrases. Think about your manuscript as if it were a telegram and you had to pay for every word. Make every word count.
  - Following the Top Five Grammar Rules Every Novelist Should Know:
    - Don’t overuse the passive voice
    - Avoid run-on sentences
    - Use sentence fragments judiciously
    - Avoid dangling modifiers
    - Make your sentences parallel, i.e. *Her hobbies were reading, movies and jogging,* should be: *Her hobbies were reading, watching movies and jogging.*



Program Director Tom Curran thanks guest speaker Laura Paquet on

### **(TWUC) Postcard Story Competition:**

Deadline: February 14, 2010-01-24

The Writers Union of Canada (TWUC) is hosting its 11<sup>th</sup> annual Postcard Story Competition.

A Postcard Story is a short piece of 250 words or less. The grand prize is \$500. This competition is open to ALL WRITERS of ALL GENRES. For details contact Fan Li, Projects Coordinator, TWUC at [fli@writersunion.ca](mailto:fli@writersunion.ca) or check out their website at [www.writersunion.ca/cn\\_postcard.asp](http://www.writersunion.ca/cn_postcard.asp)

### **Writing With Style:**

Program dates: April 19, 2010 - April 24, 2010

Application deadline: February 05, 2010

Writing With Style is a unique opportunity for writers to participate in a week-long workshop at The Banff Centre, a setting for artists that is both inspiring and productive. Whether you have attended many writing workshops or this is your first, Writing With Style will be an intense and transformative experience. Amidst a diverse community of writers, you will encounter new ideas and gain confidence in your own style and voice, while shaping and editing your work-in-progress under the guidance of an experienced writer and editor.

### **Self-directed Writing Residencies:**

Set amid the beauty of Canada's oldest and most renowned national park, The Banff Centre offers an exceptional environment for creativity. Self-directed writing residencies provide time, space, and facilities for individual research, editing, and manuscript development. Writers structure their own time, and are free to maintain privacy or to engage with other artists and activities at The Banff Centre.

For more Information please contact: 1-403-762-6100

[arts\\_info@banffcentre.ca](mailto:arts_info@banffcentre.ca)

[www.banffcentre.ca](http://www.banffcentre.ca)

**[www.capitalcrimewriters.com](http://www.capitalcrimewriters.com)**

### **Carte blanche is looking for submissions for Spring 2010:**

The Montreal-based online literary magazine, [www.carte-blanche.org](http://www.carte-blanche.org) is looking for fiction, non-fiction and graphic fiction writers, poets, translators, and photographers from across the country and around the world. We publish high-quality, cutting edge and good old fashioned great writing from both emerging and established writers. New for 2010, carte blanche has been invited to submit fiction for the Journey Prize award.

#### **Submission deadline for the May issue is March 15th.**

Fiction, Non-Fiction, Poetry: Send us your odes, sonnets, free verse, short stories, memoirs, personal essays, or literary journalism. If it's under 3500 words and well written, we'll consider it. See [www.carte-blanche.org/submissions.html](http://www.carte-blanche.org/submissions.html) for complete submission guidelines. Please include a bio. [www.carte-blanche.org](http://www.carte-blanche.org)

#### **GOODBYE TO PRIME CRIME BOOKSHOP!** Prime Crime is closing its doors on March 13th, 2010.

Sales will be ongoing from Feb 15, but get in early to make sure you get the titles you want. Also owner Linda Wiken has invited everyone to attend a **Thank You party** she is throwing for customers & friends during regular store hours on **Sun., March 7th -- from noon-4 p.m.**