



Twin Cities Chapter Newsletter ~ January 2008

Inside this issue: **Changes** in the **National** office. A full calendar of upcoming workshops and events belies the expression 'the dead of winter', for this month of January and into February.

Whether looking for agents, insurance or joining a Roundtable, there are definite choices and variety in the Calendar of Events section listed below.

Letter to Twin Cities Writers

Welcome to 2008. We can't be more than a week into the New Year and already there have been several major changes in both the national and political scene. I'm not referencing the winners of the Iowa caucus – this is a little more 'up close and personal' – it is our own writers union – at the National level.

An edited version of this major change is that three of our elected vice presidents have tendered their resignations over the New Year. Miryam Williamson, Ken Wachsberger, first and second Vice Presidents, respectively, and Alice Rogoff, Internal Organizing Vice President are gone – the result of an 75% cut in stipends meted out by our Administrator, the UAW, without the advice or consent of our members (that would be us), or the National Executive Committee, (NEC).

How these resignations affect the internal workings of the national office and the future of the union itself cannot be determined here – only time will tell.

Our TC Chapter historically has functioned independent of the National; both physically and financially. Our Steering Committee members have been apprised and this will be a major topic for discussion at the SC meeting on Tuesday,

January 22, 2008. I urge and invite all members who wish to weigh in on this discussion to come to this meeting. For immediate and/or additional information, please contact me at jangigi@earthlink.net

The bare bone facts given above, neither addresses or discloses any logic or political motives behind the severity of the stipend cuts - (visit Marginal Notes within for additional information). For the moment, we are members of the National Writers Union, and its chapter here in the Twin Cities.

I believe writers need a union – so I will close with these final thoughts. A union exists first and foremost in the hearts and minds of its members; not its bank account; or before collecting dues and paying stipends, nor building an institutional structure. When we, as writers, decided to organize and better ourselves, it was at that point, we became a union.

Do you want a writers union? Look in the mirror.
In Solidarity,

Jan Alan, NWU-TC Chair

About our Members ~

Congratulations to Jacqueline White who is the recipient of a 2008 Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant, for work on her memoir,

My Transgender Husband: A Love Story.

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In Remembrance - Carol Bly a charter member of the Twin Cities chapter of the NWU, died December 21, 2007, of ovarian cancer. In her short stories and essays, she often portrayed characters living in small towns and rural areas—a milieu she knew well, having lived for many years in Madison, Minnesota, while she was married to poet Robert Bly.

Both as a writer and a teacher, Carol Bly decried snobbery and bullying, and she encouraged her students to deal with moral and ethical dilemmas. A novel, *Shelter Half*, will be published by Holy Cow Press later this year. For more about Bly's career, see Mary Ann Grossman's obituary in the Pioneer Press at http://www.twincities.com/allheadlines/ci_7784517?nclick_check=1

First Things First ~

- Save Your Home Hotline: According to a national survey, nearly half the homeowners who have adjustable rate mortgages don't know how their ARM(s) adjust or reset, and most don't know how much their monthly mortgage payments will increase when they do. To provide quick, accurate information, the AFL-CIO has set up a new Union Plus Save My Home Hotline: 1-866-490-5361.

- Steering Committee meetings are open to interested members. The next SC meeting is on Tuesday, January 22, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at the East Lake Library in Minneapolis. The address is 2727 East Lake Street.

- There is a revised contract guide available in PDF form that can be down-loaded and referred to without sitting in front of a screen – clicking away, page after page. Kudos go to Chris Ammer, and Miryam Williamson for all their efforts.

Members can get to it by logging in and going to http://www.nwu.org/nwu/index.php?cmd=showPage&page_id=1.5.1.5.

This guide is a treasure-trove of information to every member inquiring about book contract advice.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Please mark your calendars for the following workshops and activities confirmed for the coming months. NWU-TC notices will be sent out just prior to each event. For additional or new information regarding the time, date and the featured topic will be posted on the NWU-TC website, www.nwu-tc.org

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January Workshop: Finding an Agent; Two Agents' Advice for Writers

Wednesday, January 9, 2008 at 12:00 p.m. Please **note the start time is atNOON**. Literary agents Bill Dorn and Bill Hammond will advise writers about how to find an agent and how agents can help writers market their work.

Bill Dorn and Bill Hammond founded Minneapolis-based 2Bills Literary Agency LLC in 2006. Both agents are veterans in the publishing field. Bill Hammond is a writer and former publisher; Bill Dorn is the founder of Dorn Communications - and also the founder and CEO of Publishing Advisers International.

This workshop takes place in the Washburn meeting room at the Washburn Library, 5244 Lyndale Avenue South, in Minneapolis. The library phone number is 612-630-6550. Please join us for this FREE event!

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NWU-TC Series Readings ~

Please come to the next NWU-TC Free Form Reading, on Thursday, January 17, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at Magers & Quinn Booksellers* at this address, 3032 Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis (Uptown).

Join emcee, Mark Connor, and hear from these authors:

Patricia Stutts, poet and children's author

Virginia L. Martin (Ginny), non-fiction writer and editor

Walt Jacobs, African American Studies professor and creative non-fiction writer

Jane Gilgun, Professor, researcher and author of a new book *On Being a Shit*

The event is FREE and open to the public. Cookies will be served.

*If you are not already familiar with Magers and Quinn independent bookstore, check out their web site at www.magersandquinn.com

If you want to participate in future readings, contact Marly Cornell at animarly@aol.com

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NWU-TC members are cordially invited to the following workshops:

- Sponsored by the Professional Editors Network, (PEN) is a panel discussion on Health Insurance Options for Freelancers. Two insurance agents will be available to answer questions and clarify what is available.

Tuesday, January 8. 2008, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 p.m. The location is at the Edina Community Library, 5280 Grandview Square, in Edina. For directions, the phone number is 952-847-5425. Refreshments will be served.

Please contact the meeting planner, Carla Lomax, at redrover@visi.com for additional questions and further information.

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•The Twin Cities Chapter of the American Society of Indexers, (ASI) meets on Saturday, January 12, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. "You say potato, I say potatoe," presented by Stephanie Reymann, is a hands-on demonstration and comparative study for indexers. For details, and/or assignment download, contact sreymann@indexingsolutions.com

Location: William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul, 875 Summit Avenue, room 234. For security purposes, enter bldg, by the flagpole. Details and directions can be found at: <http://www.asindexing.org/site/chapters.shtmi#twin> or, contact Galen Schroeder: galenschroeder@msn.com or call his cell number cell: (701) 541-0055

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• Minnesota Book Publishers' Roundtable offers the topic, Partnering with Outside Organizations, along with a luncheon, on Wednesday, January 16, 2008. Registration and lunch will begin at 11:30 a.m. Held at the Target Performance Hall at Open Book, 1101 Washington Avenue in Minneapolis.

The cost is \$15 for members, \$20 for non-members. An additional \$5 will be added for walk-ins. **Reservations** are required; please contact Steve Deger at sdeger1@fairview.org

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• UpSwing Business Expo is back! For the cost of a business card, you can join the largest business networking event in the Twin Cities area. Join the fun, this Thursday, January 17, 2008, at the Golden Valley Country Club, 7001 Golden Valley Road in Golden Valley. The event runs from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

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• The Freelance Communicators Network meets every month at the Old Country Buffet on County Rd. B2, between Snelling and Fairview near Rosedale. This month join them for socializing and business on Friday, January 18, 2008, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. For more information, please contact John Fineberg at, 651-699-3333.

COMING IN FEBRUARY

• **Red Hot Internet Marketing Workshops** entitled; 'Using the Internet to your Advantage' and 'Working with the Media'. Led by Penny Sansevieri, she will explain why traditional marketing no longer works.

Each session is \$90, or register for both at \$150 (includes lunch). Sessions also include a copy of her latest book, *Red Hot Internet Marketing*. She will also offer 15-minute personal consultations on marketing your book or to evaluate your website.

The workshops take place on Saturday, February 2, 2008, at the Bloomington ArtCenter, on 98 Street and Logan Avenue.

Sponsors include The Bloomington Literary Council, Armchair Interviews and Midwest Independent Publishers Association (MIPA). Further details and registration will be available soon at www.BloomingtonArtCenter.com

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• A **Workshop** entitled, **Writer's Best Response to Writing Resistance**, on Tuesday, February 19, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at the East Lake Library, 2727 East Lake Street in Minneapolis.

The presentation is given by Rosanne Bane, M.A., a Creativity Coach and the author of *Dancing in the Dragon=s Den: Rekindling the Creative Fire in Your Shadow*. She is a renowned speaker on creativity and change. She is the owner of Imagination Ink, a small business dedicated to releasing human potential to transform the world, one creative person at a time. Rosanne has over 17 years experience as a trainer, coach and speaker. Her interactive workshops are always informative, engaging and encouraging.

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• **Coming in April** ~ The 5th Annual Bloomington Writers' Festival and Book Fair at the Bloomington Art Center. This is sponsored by the Bloomington Literary Council and the Midwest Independent Publishers Association (MIPA). The keynote speaker is novelist Faith Sullivan. For more details and to register for workshops, go to www.BloomingtonArtCenter.com

CLASSIFIEDS

18th Annual Midwest Book Awards

FINAL CALL for ENTRIES- DEADLINE February 1, 2008

Presented by the Midwest Independent Publishers Association (MIPA) Publishers and authors are invited to enter the 18th Annual Midwest Book Awards competition for excellence in books published in 2007. The awards in 25 categories recognize creativity in content and execution, overall book quality, and the book's unique contribution to its subject area. Any book published within the 12-state Midwest region is eligible to enter: IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD & WI.

Three (3) finalists and one (1) winner are chosen in each category. Finalists and award winners receive certificates and may purchase foil seals for their marketing efforts. Winners are featured on the MIPA web site, in the MIPA Newsletter, and at MIPA displays throughout the year, including the 2008 Midwest Booksellers Association (MBA) trade show. Judges' evaluation sheets for your books will be provided to you after the awards ceremony.

For more information about categories, fees, etc. or to download entry forms, visit www.mipa.org or email Marly Cornell at animarly@aol.com

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The People's University, a program offering free lectures taught by professors and cultural experts, will host three new classes this winter:

- "Backstage at Peer Gynt" presented by the Guthrie Artistic Staff (1/24)
- "Hmong in Minnesota" presented by Dr. Chia Youyee Vang (1/31)
- "Inside Altered Books: Unbinding the Book" presented by Dr. Betty Bright, book arts historian, and Chip Schilling, book artist and printmaker (2/7)

Space is limited for these FREE lectures, registration is required. To register, call 612-630-6155 or visit, www.friendsofmpl.org

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Make the Connection with NWU-TC's own Jim Wishner – once again inviting TwinCity listeners to tune into his show, "The Connection" on Saturdays, 7:00 a.m. on KTNF 950 AM aka, Air America-Minnesota.

Note: Just a reminder to colleagues that Jim is always looking for writers to interview. Preference would be non-fiction, musings or thoughts – for on-air discussion with Jim. Contact information, dejim@prodigy.net or 651-578-1967. The station also streams live online at www.airamericaminnesota.com

Marginal Notes from the Editor

I could add some colorful language here, but this is a g-rated publication.

The loss of our three elected officers at the National level represents a collective total of 70 plus years of experience in building and (more importantly) maintaining what was once a formidable champion and refuge for writers in this country – the union. On a personal level, having met these officers last summer as your delegate to the DA in Boston, this loss is deeply felt, as in tragic.

We have been officially partnered with the UAW since 2003. Plagued with declining memberships ever since, the UAW unjustly blamed those losses as the 'cause' for the lack of working revenue at the National level. To the UAW, the only focus, best solution and mantra became member recruitment. So I've asked myself why would the UAW administrator-ship) cut the stipends of the officers – when their efforts with improved communications, new programs were succeeding in bringing members back. That 'logic' in the salary cuts seems incomprehensible to me.

Take a look at <http://futureoftheunion.com/?p=6388>

It seems our National has hit the big time. Too bad it isn't a victory for writers instead.

The deadline for the February issue is January 28, 2008. Articles, comments and items of interest can be sent to the editor at, jangigi@earthlink.net

In solidarity,

Jan Alan, NWU-TC Editor/Chair

Poise & Pen

Writing, Research & Editing Services

3520 East 55 Street / 612.727.2750

“If writing were easy, everybody would be doing it.”

~ Andy Rooney ~