



Twin Cities Chapter Newsletter ~ November 2007

Inside this issue: A thought-provoking dialogue aimed at NWU members concerning e-publishing. Follow-up reports on the Twin Cities Media Alliance and the ongoing Midwest conference calls.

Looking for grants? You may find help in our Classifieds. For upcoming workshops and readings, go to the Calendar of Events section within or visit www.nwu.tc.org

Letter to Twin Cities Writers

Fuji-ya is a Japanese term meaning 'second to none' (not to be confused with the local restaurant of the same name), and is often used to describe exceptional places, people and things. In this instance, it aptly describes our NWU-TC Steering Committee.

Due to the collective efforts of our steering committee; two notable events headlined earlier this month. One event enhanced our chapter and union's visibility; through our presence at the well-attended public forum, presented by Twin Cities Media Alliance. (Please see follow-up report). The other, a workshop given by Ian Graham Leask, promises an on-going association for personal enrichment and professional growth through possible future coaching classes specifically for NWU-TC members.

Please welcome newest SC member, Michael Kelberer. Michael's interests are to re-establish a Biz/Tech Division for our chapter; he will also be working with us to enhance the NWU-TC website. For involvement with either of these; the added division or changes to the website, consider attending the upcoming SC meeting on Tuesday, November 20, 2007, 1:00 p.m., at the East Lake Library, in Minneapolis, or forward your concerns or ideas onto jangigi@earthlink.net

This is your union. Join us as we continue to grow.

In Solidarity,

Jan Alan, NWU-TC Chair

First Things First ~ This column will reserve space for NWU members who wish to respond to the invitation below. We welcome your comments, rebuttals and ideas.

Dialogue anyone? Regarding e-Publishers of Short Works

By Jane Gilgun

I'd like to start a dialogue about the wisdom of NWU members writing for e-publishers who don't pay much.

I've been having fun publishing short literary pieces on Amazon Shorts and on helium.com. I thought this was a great way to get my name out there to sell books I am working on. These e-publishers are also outlets for ideas that have circulated in my head but have gone nowhere, or, if somewhere, to academic journals. I haven't made a lot of money, but I get a buzz from how others rate my articles on helium and where my Shorts are on the best-seller list. I also think that if a lot of people know my name, I may sell more books.

Then I recently heard faint drumbeats that some writers think NWU members should not write for these e-publishers because of the tiny amounts of money we earn. This struck a cord in me. I have wondered how much money helium makes. I get a penny when someone reads my one of my article. A million readers mean a million pennies. How much money is that?

Helium makes all its money from advertisers, while the articles are free to read. I think Amazon makes money from ads and also 60% of the 49 cents they charge for the Shorts. Writers get 40%.

So, what do you all think? Are these e-publishing outlets a great way to market larger literary works or are they one more example of the exploitation of writers eager to find markets? Join me in dialogue. I hope you inform yourself about these e-publishers. There are also a couple of articles about Amazon Shorts on the internet; and can be found by googling Amazon Shorts. Helium's address is www.Helium.com

Life after Newspapers, the November 3, 2007, Public Forum presented by the Twin Cities Media Alliance, examined the ongoing transition from traditional print news to online media.

Steve Perry, former *City Pages* editor, compared the current state of online media to the "wild west" days of the 1970s, when the alternative press flourished. Perry

is among locals who are joining the revolution: he has just launched the www.dailymole.com.

Former *Star Tribune* Publisher, Joel Kramer is about to launch his own new media venture, www.MinnPost.com, but arguably, the star of the day was Robert McChesney, founder of Free Press, the media reform organization. McChesney used his floor time to explain Free Press's goals and campaigns, and brought with him two staff people who will be organizing a major conference at the

Minneapolis Convention Center, June 6-8, 2008. Many audience members signed up to learn more about the conference and to network with each other about issues such as media consolidation and net neutrality. More information is available at www.freepress.net Twin Cities chapter members; Jan Alan, Mark Connor and Sue Grieger staffed a table at the forum and spoke with many of the writers who stopped by—many of whom had never heard of the NWU before. Grieger and our national External Organizing Vice President, Ken Wachsberger, are conferring about his giving a presentation at the June conference.

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Midwest Coalition Ongoing Conference Calls

Mark Connor, NWU-TC delegate to the 2007 Delegates Assembly in Boston; has joined together with Chicago Chapter Co-Chairs, Karen Ford, Larry Goldbetter, along with Amy Rose, Co-chair, Southeast Michigan as a Midwest coalition with the goal of coordinating efforts and building mutual support. Through conference calls that will continue monthly - the following is a synopsis of what was expressed.

In addition to the various Twin City NWU-TC programs already underway, Mark's commitment is to begin an outreach with both the Spoken Word community and the Blogger community. The primary concern for all with the ongoing conference calls and this Midwest connection is the Media Reform events coming to the Twin Cities area in June of this year. Plans for this major event includes, strategies for increased attendance and the importance of the union itself.

The Chicago Chapter's presence at the recent FCC hearing there and contact with Robert McChesney, founder of media reform organization Free Press, at the National Council of Churches. The Free Press convention upcoming in Minneapolis in June of next year, will include workshops on copyrights and the necessity of the union and its part in media reform. Participation in this event is crucial. This event takes place two months before the Republican National Convention is visited upon St. Paul, where press access will be a key issue.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Please mark your calendars for the following workshops and activities confirmed for the coming months. 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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Trends in Editing II – Technology's Impact is the panel presentation offered by the Professional Editors Network (PEN) on Tuesday, November 13, 2007, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Location is the Edina Community Library, 5280 Grandview Square, Edina. Contact person is Lynn Johnson, ljmn6000@yahoo.com

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Wednesday, November 14, 2007 – The Midwest Independent Publishers Association, (MIPA), meets at 6:30 p.m., for social and networking; with business meeting at 7:00 p.m., at the St. Anthony Park Library in St. Paul Visit www.mipa.org for additional information.

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If your business/livelihood is writing; and building a contact base your goal, the cost for both is the price of a business card at the following event:
The UpSwing Business Expo, Thursday, November 15, 2007, is a networking event and mini-trade show for leaders of companies in various industries. It is the largest business networking event in the Twin Cities. This event is held at the Metropolitan Ballroom, 5418 Wayzata Boulevard in Golden Valley.

NWU-TC Series Readings ~

Back by popular demand, the next NWU-TC Free Form Reading is scheduled for Thursday, January 17, 2008 at 7:30 at Magers and Quinn independent book store in Uptown, Minneapolis. With one or two remaining slots for readers that date, interested members should contact Marly Cornell, by November 19, 2007, with information on the selected reading, (time allowed, 10-12 minutes).

Your reading may be from published or unpublished material. Magers & Quinn will include your name to their press release and they would like to be able to sell your books if your reading is from a book.

If you are unable to participate in the Jan 17, 2008 reading, but you would like to participate in a future reading, please let me know - Marly Cornell, for the NWU-TC Steering Committee. For more information: www.nwu-tc.org

COMING IN DECEMBER and JANUARY

Monday, December 3, 2007, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., Allen and Linda Anderson will be doing a presentation, answering questions, and signing their revised and reissued classic book, *Angel Animals: Divine Messengers of Miracles*, at Magers & Quinn Bookstore, 3038 Hennepin Avenue South, in Minneapolis.

New World Library has published a second, revised edition of Allen and Linda Anderson's popular classic, *Angel Animals: Divine Messengers of Miracles*, with a foreword by *Good Morning America's* resident veterinarian, Dr. Marty Becker. The Andersons won ASJA'S Outstanding Book Award in 2007 for their previous book, *Rescued*. (www.angelanimals.net)

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January Workshop: Finding an Agent: Advice from Two Agents

Wednesday, January 9, 2008 at NOON, (please note time change), 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.

This workshop takes place 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!

CLASSIFIEDS

Progressive Artists Supported - Puffin Foundation

<http://www.puffinfoundation.org/>

The Puffin Foundation seeks to open the doors of artistic expression by providing grants to artists who are often excluded from mainstream opportunities due to their race, gender, or social philosophy. The Foundation makes grants that encourage emerging artists in the fields of art, music, theater, dance, photography, and literature whose works might have difficulty being aired. The Foundation is interested in supporting creative and innovative initiatives that will advance progressive social change. Proposals for 2008 grants will be accepted until December 30, 2007. Visit the website listed above for more information.

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18th Annual Midwest Book Awards - Presented by the Midwest Independent Publishers Association (MIPA) – **Call for entries.** Publishers and authors are invited to enter the 18th Annual Midwest Book Awards competition for excellence in books published in 2007. **The deadline is February 1, 2008.**

For more information, please contact Marly Cornell, Chair, MIPA Midwest Book Awards, 3914 Ottawa Avenue South, St. Louis Park, MN 55416
animarly@aol.com

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Rebecca Frost, former co-chair of the NWU-TC Literary Division, and longtime performer and educator, now writer, offers private sessions and consultation in LearningMethods™.

This systematic and rigorous approach will help you to clear up fuzzy thinking, unearth misconceptions and overcome fears. Rebecca will coach you to improve public presentation skills and read your work with pizzazz. Call 612-827-7956 with questions, or to set up an appointment. For further information, visit FFI www.learningmethods.com and www.embodiedarts.com

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Make the Connection with NWU-TC's own Jim Wishner – once again inviting Twin City 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

Through current events and an ever-spiraling economy crisis within our country to date; the following passages are a reminder that the more things change, regrettably, the more they stay the same, whether at home, or abroad:

November 11, 1918, originally known as Armistice Day, honored those who lost their lives in a war considered then to be 'the war to end all wars'. November 12, 2007, Veterans Day, recognizes the seventh year of conflict and loss of American lives in a land we do not know. The November 10, 1982, dedication to the

Vietnam War Memorial in Washington DC, and long-awaited recognition to the losses of service personal in a land we did not know.

Supported by our union, and President Jerry Colby, the Writers Guild strike, began November 5, 2007 – repeats the necessity of meeting the wage scales and conditions, as did the strike of 1988.

Finally, *Harper's Bazaar*, celebrates its 130 year anniversary as the publication that defined 'what looked good' in the clothing industry. Referred to as of late, this magazine is also known as the 'Allen Greenspan of fashion'. Hemlines up, economy good; hemlines down – you guessed it.

Without active participation in seeking changes within our government; or policies – watch for hemlines to reach ankle-length. Unions, meaning united with one voice, aren't just for writers anymore. It is for our country too.

"Labor was the first price, not bought with silver, but by labor, that all wealth of the world was originally purchased."

~ *Adam Smith* ~

The deadline for the December issue is November 30. Articles, comments and items of interest can be sent to the editor at, jangigi@earthlink.net

In solidarity,

Jan Alan, NWU-TC Editor