



Issue 6

June 22, 2008

The Quill

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A Winning Story

During the next few Quill issues, you'll have the chance to read the high

Conference registration starts soon

Conference guru Susan Boyer offers another helping of everything we need to know about the upcoming conference. Have you registered yet?

Conference registrations are coming in at double last year's rate thus far! In the first two weeks of registration, more than 100 attendees registered. With a registration from Canada, our event is already an international conference again this year. Welcome to all our new members who joined when they registered!

While the Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort can accommodate conferences many times larger than ours, the board of directors wants to preserve the intimate feel of our conference as much as possible. To accomplish this, and prevent overcrowding, the board has decided to limit registrations. If registration follows last year's trend, we will sell out the conference before the September 1 early-bird cutoff. SCWW members who plan to attend the conference, please register and make your reservation at the Hilton as early as possible.

Other conference news:

- Although registration is up, not everyone is selecting extended length critiques, so we do still have some left. If you have a manuscript ready, this is a fantastic opportunity to get the crucial first thirty pages critiqued by a professional -- don't miss it!

- We've changed the course title of the panel discussion **Michael Connelly**, his agent, his editor, and his publicist will be conducting on Saturday afternoon. The new title is: *A Life of Crime: Ask the Experts*.

school contest winning works. Let's hope you enjoy it as much as the judges did! Speaking of judges, keep an eye out when reading the next *Quill* for biographical information on those judges.

In the meantime, happy writing! And keep sending good news my way. Relish in your peers' successes.

Therapy

By Sammi Bryan
First Place, Non-fiction

Donna, my therapist, keeps stacks of old *People* magazines in the waiting room. Today, she wants to try something called a joint session. Talking to my mother and me at the same time.

Donna says there needs to be more communication between us. Mom and I sit in the waiting room for a few minutes, thumbing through magazines until Donna calls us back to her office. She sits in a big swivel chair, while Mom and I have stiff plastic ones, separated by a metal table with a yellow lamp and a cup holder full of pens. Donna asks, "What do you appreciate about your mother?" I look down at my shoes.

I want to say that I appreciate her arms. I remember how much I loved my mother's arms when I was little. They were soft and warm when she picked me up, like sheets just out of the dryer. I remember the game we played. She would scoop me up and

Everyone writing for the mystery, suspense/thriller, or crime genre, please be thinking of questions you'd like to ask. We'll call for questions later in the year.

- Please remember to send **two** hard copies of your manuscript pages for critique, **seven** copies if you're in a group critique. It's very important that we have **one** copy on file for emergencies. Several situations developed last year which resulted in attendees being grateful that we had a copy on hand at the conference.

- The Hilton has a new reservations telephone number: **(800) 876-0010**. This number will ring reservations on site at the Myrtle Beach Hilton, but will ring through to the Hilton's central reservations desk in Tampa after 8:30 p.m. You can also make your reservation online at our personalized reservation page:

http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/myrbh_hh_swr/index.jhtml

Remember, the group code is **SWR**.

- We have added one additional editor and one agent since the last Quill. Please join us in October to meet:



At Thomas Dunne Books, **Kathleen Gilligan** had the extreme fortune to dive head-first into an exciting list of fiction -- both commercial and literary -- from the sassy private-eye in T. Lynn Ocean's *Southern Fatality*, to the poignant, provocative work of Michelle Wildgen, *You're Not You*, about a young caregiver who grapples with the devastating effects of ALS, to *Smart Girls Like Me* by McSweeney's alum Diane Vadino -- who penned the quirky and poignant character of Betsy who gleefully topples all notions of what constitutes commercial women's fiction.

Though she mostly acquires fiction, she's had the great (and hilarious) pleasure to work with Susan Konig -- whose memoirs on motherhood (*Why Animals Sleep So Close to the Road and I Wear the Maternity Pants in the Family*) have *USA Today* calling her "Bombeckian." Most recently, Kathleen acquired Giller Prize short-list nominee, *Effigy*, by Alissa York; the South African hit *Strange Nervous Laughter* by the delightful Bridget McNulty; and a laugh-out-loud novel, *Was It Planned?*, by Maureen Lipinski about a married couple whose unexpected pregnancy disrupts their happy, IKEA-furnished, pub-crawling, honeymoon years.

Kathleen is constantly on the look-out for more women's fiction, particularly with curious, genuine narrators whose quirks resonate with her own; moving literary fiction; or non-fiction projects that inspire her to cook delicious food.

Matthew Mahoney was raised in Mobile, Ala., and graduated with a bachelor's degree in English from Vanderbilt University. After a brief foray into the world of finance, he joined Ralph M. Vicinanza, Ltd. in early 2007, where his interests include literary and commercial fiction, Southern novels, humor, narrative non-fiction, current events, and pop culture. He enjoys discovering new writers with unique and authentic voices, and is thrilled to have turned his love of reading into a career.



Note: You won't find much about Matthew on a Google search. He's a relatively new agent, building his list. His agency, Ralph M. Vicinanza, Ltd, is well established, and handles Stephen King's foreign rights.

This conference is for everyone, regardless of where you are on your writing journey. While we do have A LOT of editors and agents this year,

throw me on top of the mattress. I would bounce a little and then lay on my back with my arms at my sides and my toes in the air. Mom would take the sheets and fan them over me until they rose and fell like waves, lifting into the air and coming back down on top of me in my Disney princess pajamas. My mother's arms still smell like those warm cotton sheets.

I could also tell Donna about Mom's laugh. I heard it a few minutes ago on the way over. We were stopped at a red light. There was a silver suburban in front of us with a pink Palmetto sticker on the bumper. A homeless man with a torn green baseball cap walked on the sidewalk beside us. He looked over at me, and I smiled. He smiled back, eyes bloodshot. Mom pointed at something and started to laugh really loud and deep, her smile pushing her sunglasses higher on her cheeks. She was pointing at a sign on a stand in front of the convenience store across the street. It read "Homade Hot Dogs" in big, scrawling black letters. I don't really know if she was laughing at the misspelling or if she had stopped to think what actually goes into a homade hot dog. Mom laughed so hard I had to tell her that the light changed to green.

When Mom picked me up from school today, she was wearing the red t-shirt she got from Murl's Fish House in Beaufort, South

we also have courses for those that are figuring out what they want to write and how to get it on paper. Not just one or two classes -- there is something in every time slot for:

- those who are getting started;
- those who have a work in progress, and need help with a variety of craft issues;
- those who are trying to break into the industry with a completed project;
- those who are trying to market what they've already published.

I hope to see each and every one of you in October!

Ready to Learn this Summer?

From Bob Strother, coordinator of summer workshops

The Greenville Chapter's Summer workshop has been tentatively set for Saturday, August 9, 2008, at the Greenville County Public Library Main Branch from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The speaker will be well-known science fiction/fantasy author, David Weber.

David's Web site is under construction right now, but Wikipedia has plenty of information on the author of the Honor Harrington series, and many, many more.

More details will follow in the July issue of *The Quill*.

In the meantime, here's a short report from the Rock Hill workshop:

The Rock Hill chapter of SCWW hosted their second annual one-day workshop on Saturday, May 3, in the basement of Grace Lutheran Church in Rock Hill. Chapter leaders **Luis Rodriguez** and **Kim Blum-Hyclak** presented "Writing and Other Disasters" as this year's workshop. The workshop theme revolved around the idea of "How Not to get Published: The most common mistakes people make . . . and how to avoid them."

A keynote address, "Here is My Letter to the World: Finding and Nurturing Your Creative Voice," was delivered by Kay McSpadden, high school English teacher and author of *Notes from the Classroom; Reflections on Teaching*, a collection of essays she wrote as a regular columnist for the *Charlotte Observer*.

Lunch was donated by Jersey Mike's of Rock Hill, which was followed by a book signing and three break-out sessions.

Lisa Zerkle hosted a session on poetry; **Betty Beamguard** hosted a session on non-fiction and magazine writing; and **Craig Faris** hosted a session on how to find the positive in query errors.

Finally, members of the group presented the panel discussion "I'm Writing What?" It was an overview of the genres so people might know the difference between commercial/literary fiction, different kinds of genre fiction, the difference between sci-fi/sci-fantasy, mystery and suspense.

Wise Words from the Webmaster

With chapters starting blogs and more authors moving their writing from pen-and-paper to keyboard-and-monitor, SCWW Webmaster offers some light on blogging.

Carolina, and a pair of jean capris. It was 70 degrees outside, warm for December. She walked ahead of me on the way over to our car. Cosmos was growing red-orange beside us, and she reached out to touch it. Her hand brushed against the leaves. A few fell off and swirled on the concrete for a moment before the wind carried them away.

The miniature animal bobble heads on the dash shook when the engine started. Mom bought them years ago from PetSmart. A purple and white spotted cow and a yellow and blue dog, made of wood and brightly painted. Mom had been listening to Mannheim Steamroller on the way over. I could tell because the stereo started playing it when the car turned on. The CD case was lying open on the floor by me feet.

We drove to Otis Street. Mannheim played The First Noel, the bobble heads bobbed when we drove over manhole covers and speed bumps. We passed the CVS that's never open and a ceramics workshop called You're Fired. I remembered the pottery class I took last year with my school. Our teacher was Mrs. Abrams, a stout Lebanese woman who yelled a lot. I made three or four ill-formed pots and painted them obnoxious colors like bright turquoise or hot pink. Mom was still proud of them. After all, she was the one that pushed me to join that class. I hated it. I cut my

Recently two chapters have created an internet presence. Columbia II has launched a blog and Greenville now has their own Web site. Links to both of these are on the Chapters page of the SCWW Web site (<http://www.myscww.org/chapters.htm>) and below.

Launching your own blog is easy and free with Blogger. Columbia II took it a step further by creating their own design, but you can start with one of the standard Blogger templates. Visit the Columbia II blog at <http://columbiawritersworkshop.blogspot.com/>.

Sign up for a free blog at www.blogger.com. Another popular blogging service is TypePad (www.typepad.com), while it is not free, it is very affordable.

Greenville created its own Web pages and SCWW is now providing free Web site hosting for all chapters who wish to have sites. The Greenville Web site address is www.greenville.myscww.org.

This type of address (adding a name in front of the myscww.org domain name) is called a subdomain. Your chapter can have a subdomain for hosting a Web site. SCWW will provide a subdomain and FTP account to upload your pages free of charge. The chapter will be responsible for creating and maintaining the pages.

Some of you may ask what is the difference between a Web site and a blog. At first glance these elements can appear very similar. A blog (short for "web log") is organized in reverse chronological order, the latest posting being first and older posting below or archived into periodic (usually monthly) folders. A blog is usually updated often, such daily or weekly. The blogging system handles this organization so all you do is post something new. Visitors often have a way to leave comments. The purpose of a blog is to build readership by offering something new on a regular basis.

A Web site is usually organized by topic and will have pages that provide a wider and deeper variety of information on the topics. The content is more static, more like a brochure or book. The content is not archived or organized chronologically.

Blogs can have Web site features and Web sites can incorporate blog features, so you will often find both types of content on one Web site.

If you create a blog, please send me the link to post on the SCWW Web sites Chapters page. If you wish to have a subdomain or have any question, please contact me.

And the winners are...

It is with great pleasure that The Quill not only announces the winners of the SCWW high school competitions, but also the winning works will be published in The Quill. Congratulations to the winners and to Kim Kim Blum-Hyclak, our wonderful contest chair.

2008 SCWW High School Writing Competition Winners Fiction

fingers a couple of times with the tools. I never could get the hardened clay completely out of my fingernails. I wanted to tell Donna I appreciated her making me join because I had tried something new.

Mom had the sun roof open, and the wind battered through it. She turned the dial on the radio, cranking up Mannheim even louder. The sun was beginning to set. We were driving straight into the light by then. Mom said, "Whoa," and something else while she reached above for the sun visor blindly, only I could barely hear her because it was so noisy inside the car. When we went around a curve, the sun switched to our left. When I turned to look at Mom, the sun was right behind her head, breaking through the trees. I looked away and blinked, Mom's silhouette still in my mind, framed by bright light. The outline of her head was temporarily everywhere I looked until the sun spots blurred together and disappeared. I wanted to tell her that I do not have a memory that doesn't include her.

Donna asks Mom if there is anything she needs from me, I want to interrupt and tell her I'm sorry about the dress, even if it was two years ago. It was for a semiformal my school held for 8th graders. Everyone would be wearing a Lilly Pulitzer sundress. I wanted so badly to fit in that year. It was my first year there, and I had made barely any friends. Mom took me by

1st Place: Healthy by John Ott, Jr., South Carolina Governors' School for Arts and Humanities, Teacher: George Singleton

2nd Place: A Silent Heart by Cecelia Ward, Deseret Meadow Homeschool, Teacher: Denise Ward

1st Honorable Mention: Loyal Blood by Abby Horn, Treasured Times Homeschool, Teacher: Claudette Horn

2nd Honorable Mention: The Gentle Giant by Jon Palyok, Carolina Forest High School, Teacher: Cristy Nickel

3rd Honorable Mention: My Father, My Town by Maggie Creech, SC Governor's School for Arts and Humanities, Teacher: Scott Gould

Non-Fiction

1st Place: Therapy by Sammi Bryan, SC Governor's School for Arts and Humanities, Teacher: George Singleton

2nd Place: Liner Notes by Taylor Davidson, SC Governor's School for Arts and Humanities, Teacher: Scott Gould

1st Honorable Mention: Open by Mike Roberts, SC Governor's School for Arts and Humanities, Teacher: Scott Gould

2nd Honorable Mention: The Boys by Jacob Beaver, Myrtle Beach High School, Teacher: Michelle Tallada

3rd Honorable Mention: Anna by Andrew McCraw, Gaffney High School, Teacher: Kristie Camp

Poetry

1st Place: The Reason by Taylor Davidson, SC Governor's School for Arts and Humanities, Teacher: Scott Gould

2nd Place: Rough Draft by Wei-Huan Chen, Daniel High School, Teacher: Nancy Swanson

Honorable Mentions, in alphabetical order

Wretched by Jessica Countiss, Carolina Forest High School, Teacher: Cristy Nickel

Boy by Hannah Jarrett, SC Governor's School for Arts and Humanities, Teacher: Scott Gould

Panes by Mike Roberts, SC Governor's School for Arts and Humanities, Teacher: Scott Gould

Member chatter

Myrtle Beach

Richard Lutman recently had stories published in the April *Green Silk Journal* ("The Butterfly Lovers") and *Verdad* ("The Medalist"). He was also a semi finalist in the 2007 Writers for the New Millenium short fiction competition. Richard also just received word from *Scratch* that his story "Lopez and the Colonel" placed second in May's contest and will appear in the year-end anthology.

Rock Hill

Betty Beamguard, who has already done three features for **The Writer**, has another due for publication later in the year, and has just received word that they want a fifth written around J.L Miles' novel, *Roseflower Creek*. This month Betty had two short stories accepted, "The Stranger Watched" for the *Magnolia Quarterly*, a publication for members of the Gulf Coast Writers Association and "Ina Galbreath Remembers" for the November/December issue of the e-zine, A



the store and spent two-hundred dollars she didn't really have. She said she didn't mind and that I could consider it an early birthday present, but I still felt guilty. And spoiled. The dress was overpriced. We both knew it. I remember the night of the dance. She curled my hair and showed me how to put on make-up for the first time. I remember arriving at the school and how the street in front was painted like a boardwalk. I also remember coming home and crying because no one had danced with me, not even people I thought were my friends. Mom wiped the tears and mascara streaks from my face as I sat with her, wrapped in her cotton arms in Grandma's rocking chair on the deck. "You're beautiful baby," she said. I felt even guiltier. She had spent too much money on a night that didn't work out.

But most of all, I want to tell her to never leave me. She's already fifty-seven and I'm not even in college yet. When I talk about the future, I tell her that she will be proud of me. I will have a family and she will love her grandchildren. She smiles but says, "I might not be there." And that's what I'm afraid of. I don't say any of these things in therapy. It doesn't seem like the right time or place and it never will.

Southern Journal. One of her humorous anecdotes appears in the July/August issue of *Writers' Journal*, and her short fiction "Me and Buff" is now out in the anthology, *Teacakes and Afternoon Tales: New Stories from Mississippi*, an excellent and varied collection of Southern stories.

Columbia II

About the Columbia II blog by **Bonnie Stanard**

The biggest obstruction to our setting up a blog was the idea we couldn't do it. We debated the subject for several meetings and before we knew it, **Vikki Perry** appeared with her laptop and showed us the blog we were so tentatively considering.

She selected the template and formatted the page. However, you don't need a techy guru to do it. It's almost as easy as opening a bank account. Wait a minute...don't get nervous. It's not expensive. In fact, if you have a computer and internet service, you don't need to buy anything else. Just Google "free blog" for a choice of services. If you can send e-mail, you can learn to blog. And you'll like this — you can always change it (text and format) or delete it and start over.

Our blog was launched June 8 with introductions to most members who attend the Columbia II workshop. One of the benefits of this project is that we have worked together as a group to make it happen. Since we couldn't plan the blog within the time limits of our usual workshops, we held a special meeting. Out of that came our guidelines.

We expect to post new material once a week, more often if special events warrant. We're working on a schedule to give everybody a chance to contribute. Submissions are emailed to a committee of three persons responsible for keeping the text to a reasonable length (about 500 words) and the subject to writing.

As Nathaniel Hawthorne said, "Easy reading is damned hard writing." If there's anything hard about blogging, it's the writing. Check us out and see how we're doing. <http://columbiawritersworkshop.blogspot.com>.

In other Columbia II news . . .

Mike Long's manuscript titled "Dobey and the Boss" has been accepted by Juggling Board Press. The fictional story follows a couple of Confederate soldiers making their way home to Texas at the end of the war. This novel is one in a series he is working to complete.

Laura Valtorta, who is revising her screenplay based on the life of Giordano Bruno, an eccentric Renaissance heretic, recently submitted it via an online forum to producers. She discovered the Web site VirtualPitchFest.com (where the cost is \$10 per pitch), and of the 14 pitches she made, four responded asking for the screenplay (So far, no word since the requests).

Ilmars Birznieks' novella has been accepted for publication by the periodical Cadillac Cicatrix. Assuming a normal schedule, it will be available this summer. Ilmars, a retired professor of German, has

published two novels and is working on another.

Charleston

Congratulations goes to **Kim Catanzarite**, whose short story, "The Father," is one of the twelve winners in this year's S.C. Fiction Project.

Joanne Calhoun's book, *Circular Church: 3 Centuries of Charleston History*, published by the History Press came out in April.

Heidi Strantz is a contributing writer for *Charleston Style and Design* as well as *GO! AirTran's* inflight magazine.

Jason Deierlein is doing really well with his book, *Return From a Comatose Mind*. The College of Charleston bookstore carries it and Jason will be doing book signings there that day as well as June 23 and 24. The book is also selling at the Happy Bookseller in Columbia where he has a signing on June 27. In Greenville, it is being carried by The Open Book which will host a signing on June 28 and 29. To find out more visit <http://jasondeierlein.com/> Also check out Jason's media interviews at <http://youtube.com/jasondeierlein>.

Cree Forman has self-published her second book, *The French – Captured Completely* a travel diary. It is an extension of her first book, *Phil and The French Country Inn*, a cookbook/memoir/travel book, published in 2004.

Camden

"Dogs: The Musical," created by **Paddy Bell** (Camden's new chapter leader), was presented by Workshop Theatre in April to standing room only audiences. Paddy, who wrote the script, and **Dick Goodwin**, composer, were featured in last year's Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston.

Another chapter member, **Raymond Mullholland**, has announced he will be starting his own publishing company in the near future. Ray, who is completing a second novel, is available at sales@rjwargames.com should any SCWW member like to contact him for details on his new company, Sonic Sword Production.

Greenville

Chapter member **John Kingsbury** has been crafting and marketing his novels for at least the last fifteen years. This month, his perseverance paid off big. After working for several months with an editor from Capstone Fiction, the publishing house not only accepted his novel, they offered John a deal for three of his books: *Riding With Amanda*; *The M&M Kid*; and *Jake's Journey*.