



THE OWL'S HOOT

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Official Newsletter of

The Ozarks Writers League 501(c)(3)

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**Have you paid
your 2024
dues yet?**

**For only \$30.00, you can enjoy
all that OWL has to offer this
year!**

April 12–13! Join us in person to for the Spring 2024 OWL Conference!
**Change of Venue! The 2024 OWL Spring Conference will be held at
the Best Western Branson Inn and Conference Center, 8514 State
Highway 76, Branson West, MO! Call (417) 338-2141 or use the
handy QR to reserve your room.**



Message from the president:

Here we are in a brand-new year. We had wanted to get you a newsletter before now,

but some things in my life went rather sideways. So, my apologies for delaying everything.

I don't know about you, but 2023 was really rough. I was hoping 24 would get off to a better start than it did. Just a few days into the new year, my mom was driving the car with me as a passenger when she crashed. We think she had a stroke. She is still in hospital and being transferred soon to a nursing home at the time of writing. I sustained only minor injuries, but of course everything is upside down. My dog is fine! That was the first thing that I checked on.

So as you can imagine, I'm rather behind on the newsletter and the conference, but we do have some great things in store!

OWL Spring 2024 Conference Information

OWL Spring Conference is April 12-13 at the Grand Plaza Hotel Branson!

We'll be back at the Best Western Branson Inn and Conference Center for our spring conference! Friday night will be a social and fun night. Saturday will be the conference!

Our keynote speaker will be current Missouri Poet Laureate David Harrison. He is also a children's writer. And what he has to say will benefit writers of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry alike.

We also have a two-session workshop with Annie Lisenby Smith and myself as presenters. She will begin with the session about creating social media graphics and attention-grabbing posts using platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram. Then we will have what I call a playshop but most people call a workshop. I like to do everything with the spirit of play. I, with Denny's help, will guide us all through some fun activities to help us promote our work period and again, it doesn't matter what you write. It doesn't even matter if you are published or pre published!



2024 Photography Contest

Also, we will have the photography contest! The theme is a piece of writing, and it is on the website and on Facebook, as well as elsewhere in this newsletter. I am very excited to report that we will have a written photo prompt from Joan Barrett Roberts, founder of the former village lake writers and poets. She is providing a written piece as inspiration. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to take a photograph that in your mind and heart represents this theme. The photos will be judged on Saturday, April 13th at the conference. The winner will be announced in the afternoon. Prizes will be \$50 first place, \$30 second place, \$20 third place. There may be some honorable mentions if the judge deems anyone else worthy. I am doing desk take out so concina and work same time messages

Never Miss a Mixer or Conference with the OWL Google Calendar

If you use Google Calendar, you can use our special OWL link and have all our mixers, conferences, and any other open events saved right into your calendar, so you won't forget and won't have to go grab the link. We're not putting that into the newsletter, but just write OWLpres "at" OzarksWritersLeague "dot" com and Ronda will get that link right over to you.

Join Us for the Next Happy OWLer Mixer!

Writing is a solitary task, but don't we LOVE talking about our characters, stories, and interesting tidbits we learned during research? The Happy OWLer Mixers started during the pandemic to keep us connected, but they're so doggone much FUN that we've kept them up!

Here is the next mixer date and time:

- Wednesday, March 13 at 7 PM

If you're already receiving our email updates, just watch for the link. If you are reading this newsletter but do NOT receive emails from OWL, just go to bit.ly/owlmixer and you'll start getting them.



Photography Contest Prompt

OZARK HIGH

by Joanie Roberts

I live up high in the Ozark trees

Where golden pine warblers perch on high

And their songs run rampant through the trees

I live up close

where I can meet the ancient skies

Adorned by white summer clouds floating by

Hallowed tree framed windows

go straight up to the top of the world

Where songbirds build their nesting homes

Feed and care for their young

And newborns learn to fly

Leaving home to find their own homes

Parents don't wait for their return - - -

Even in old age

When nature has completed its work

I choose to live

amongst new beginnings!

Putting the conference together has been another roller coaster ride. For the second time in a row, our intended conference venue was shut down, and I've had to find something last minute.

This time, I found us a hotel with a RESTAURANT on site. We'll stay at the Best Western Branson Inn and Conference Center (addy & other details below). We'll be able to hang out Friday night for visiting, which we all love to do then our conference will be in their big meeting room on Saturday.

You can virtually walk through the property using this link. <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=mnauNNnrbDV&mls=1> Just tap along and you can look into the various rooms and spaces to get familiar with the place ahead of time. **Note from Margarite: When you click the link, another will appear a bit lower higher or lower in the leter. Click the link that pops up for your virtual tour.**

Conference Details

Theme: A Writer's Treasure Trove of Tools and Tricks of the Trade

Dates: Friday-Saturday, April 12-13, 2024 t

Location: Best Western Branson Inn and Conference Center

8514 State Highway 76, Branson West, Missouri

417-338-2141

Website: Best Western Branson Inn & Conference Center - Branson West

Google Maps Link

CHECK-IN: 3 PM

CHECK OUT: 11 AM and yyou may leave bags at the desk if needed

Conference Times:

·Fri. Social gathering Fri. from 7-? In the breakfast room

·Sat. Doors open at 8:30 AM, Conference from 9-3:30 in the Branson Room (first room to right of main entrance)

Guest Room Rate: \$99/night plus applicable taxes and fees, honored for the surrounding dates

Amenities according to hotel website:

·Room Amenities include microwave, fridge, and hair dryer

·Hotel amenities include free WiFi for all guests, heated indoor pool, and hot tub.

Reservations: You may

·use our special link which we will have soon

·OR call 417-338-2141 and press 0 to talk to the front desk (don't use the reservation # because it goes to the national chain not the hotel).

Saturday's Agenda

HOTEL GUESTS: Remember to check out by 11 AM.

8:30 AM Registration, photography contest entries check-in

9 AM Welcome, announcements, and first door prize

9:15 How to Increase Your Chances of Getting a YES!

10:15 BREAK and remember that checkout is by 11 AM.

10:30 Golden Nuggets for Writers: Success Secrets Gleaned from Poetry, KidLit, and Beyond by Missouri Poet

Laureate David L Harrison

11:30 Lunch on your own. Restaurant is available on-site.

1 PM Announcements and photography contest winners announced

1:15 A Hands-On Workshop to Create Online Marketing Tools Using Free Resources: Marketing Makeover

Workshop Part 1 by Annie Lisenby

2:15 BREAK

2:30 Let's DO It! Marketing Makeover Part 2 with Annie Lisenby and Ronda Del Boccio.

3:30 Closing remarks and a fond farewell



Keynote Speaker
David L. Harrison

David L. Harrison serves as Poet Laureate for the State of Missouri as well as for Drury University. His more than 100 books for children and teachers have earned numerous awards, including Society of Midland Authors Award for Best Children’s Nonfiction Book; Christopher Medal for fiction; Texas Bluebonnet Award Master Reading List; National Science Teachers Association list of Outstanding Science Trade Books; the Celebrate Literacy Award from Missouri Literacy Association; and the Pioneer in Education Award from Missouri School Board.

Harrison’s work appears in more than a dozen languages and has been anthologized more than 200 times. David often speaks at conferences, workshops, literature festivals, schools, and colleges. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Drury, a Master of Science Degree from Emory University, and two Doctor of Letters Honorary Degrees.



Rev Dr Ronda Del Boccio

Rev Dr Ronda Del Boccio serves as president of both Ozarks Writers League and her local Lions Club. She is an international speaker and international #1 best-selling author who teaches intuitive, neurodivergent, and highly sensitive people worldwide to embrace their weird and trust their unique gifts.

Although she is “legally blind,” which she says means she’s “illegally sighted,” Ronda lives a full and active life. She travels, cooks, and tries new ventures.

Nothing stops her! She has won awards for photography, singing, cooking, translational of a Medieval Spanish manuscript, and writing everything from memoir to poetry to fantasy to articles. She has appeared on various podcasts about the paranormal, psychic gifts, business and mindset.

Connect with her all over the web and get a free training called, "Change Your Story, Change Your Life at [Hype.co/@thestorylady](https://hype.co/@thestorylady)



Annie Lisenby

Annie Lisenby is a native of the Missouri Ozarks. She has an MFA degree in Theatre Performance and has worked as a professional actor and stunt performer. Annie shifted into writing in 2018 for the first time. A Three-Letter Name was Annie's debut YA novel that won Best Independent Novel by a Missouri Author through the 2022 Indie Author Project. She has been published in Chicken Soup for the Soul and spent three years as a regular contributor to a regional magazine. Currently, Annie is the Theatre Program Director at Crowder College in Neosho, Missouri. She has blended her loves of performing and writing in her newest book *From Stage to Page*, a guidebook for writers on how to use theatre techniques to raise their writing to a new level.

Morning Sessions:

Panel: “How to Increase Your Chances of Getting a YES!” Would you like to get less rejections and more publications or contest wins? Our panel of experts will give you practical, hard-hitting gold doubloons of wisdom to help you stop making the mistakes that get you rejections.

David L Harrison:

"Golden Nuggets for Writers: Success Secrets Gleaned from Poetry, KidLit, and Beyond"

Afternoon session: Marketing Makeover! Bring your laptops!

Marketing Makeover Part 1: Annie Lisenby: “A Hands-On Workshop to Create Online Marketing Tools Using Free Resources”

Every author needs to promote yourself, whether you’re writing articles, stories, novels or nonfiction books. During this interactive workshop, Annie Lisenby will teach you how to use various free resources to create the marketing content you need.

Marketing Makeover Part 2: “Let’s DO IT!”

In the second part of the afternoon, Annie Lisenby and Ronda Del Boccio will help you put it into action. All attendees will have the chance to create content in real time, and Ronda will teach how to pump each other up to build your own audience and extending your social reach. This will be a working session, so get ready to enjoy the treasures that building your brand and increasing your reach bring!