



# THE OWL'S HOOT

Official Newsletter of  
The Ozarks Writers League 501(c)(3)  
ozarkswritersleague.com  
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Newsletter Editor: Margarite Stever

ELECTIONS Oct. 28!  
CURRENT OFFICERS:  
President – Ronda Del Boccio  
Vice President – Larry Wood  
Secretary – Cindy McIntyre  
Treasurer – Veda Boyd Jones  
Nominations are open.



October 27–28! Join us in person to celebrate OWL's 40th  
Birthday!

**Change of Venue! The 2023 OWL Fall Conference will be held at  
the Grand Plaza Hotel, 245 North Wildwood Drive, Branson, MO!  
Call (417) 336-6646 to reserve your room.**



Message from the president:  
Greetings, fellow OWLs! We are  
ramping up for an exciting fall  
conference, more Happy OWLer  
Mixers, and officer elections.

## OWL Fall 2023 Conference Information

Dates: Friday, October 27 to Saturday, October 28

Location: Sunset Room of the Grand Plaza Hotel in Branson, MO

Hotel Check-in/Checkout:  
Check-in 3 PM or after  
Check-out by 11 AM

Conference Registration: No registration. Just come.

Conference Fee: All conferences are FREE to OWL Members.  
Nonmembers may attend for \$20 or just JOIN OWL for \$30.

## Book Tables

FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED: If you are a dues-paying OWL member, and you would like a book table, please contact Duke Pennell: webmaster "at" Ozarks Writers League "dot" com. You may have half a 3x6 table if you have several books or a space at a round table if you have 1

OWL Hashtag: Our # for this conference to use on social is #Fall23OWL. Please use this on your social media posts.

Share Your PHOTOS with us for the web! We need YOU!  
Please share your photos along with names of those shown to webmaster "at" Ozarks Writers League "dot" com.

As we get ready to close out another year....  
Have you met your writing goals? Have you  
submitted to at least one new place this year?  
Have you worked to improve your skills? Did  
you try anything new this year?

I certainly hope so.

As for me, I'm not as far along as I'd like to  
be on my writing project (Can you relate???),  
but I am trying something new this year. I'm  
writing a mid-grade children's book.

This year's fall conference has a theme, and  
it's all about profiting from your writing.  
Whether you dream of crafting a novel, a  
screenplay, poetry, or stories that stir the  
heart, there's something for you at the fall  
writing conference.

As you prepare to (hopefully) join us at the  
Grand Hotel this month, I hope you will  
revisit the goals you set earlier this year and  
establish a plan to peck away at them.

Happy writing!

Your 2023 President, Ronda Del Boccio



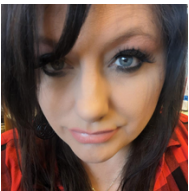
**Keynote Speaker Alan Roth** is an award-winning screenwriter. He consults with studios and producers on their works in progress

and is a fellow of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He has a passion for working with authors and bringing their work into the Hollywood mainstream.

Alan's next release, *The Book of Leah* (starring Armand Assante), will premiere soon.

Find him online at [amr-screenwriting.com](http://amr-screenwriting.com)

Want to take your book to the screen? Sign Up for a 10-min strategy session with Alan Roth on Saturday. Email Diana West 22 “at” Hotmail “dot” com to reserve your spot. Slots are 10 minutes. Diana will assign you a specific time.



**Synova Cantrell** is the owner of Synova’s Simply Biz author coaching service. She’s also an award-winning crime writer with

over 300 cases under her belt. (Or pen, whatever!) One of her books was even endorsed by a retired FBI Agent! To top it all off, a flag was flown over the Capitol in Washington D.C. to honor her cold case work!!!

Synova’s life coaching includes elements of NLP, practical psychology, biblical principles, and biochemistry. You can live a more abundant life and enjoy the journey.

Find her online at [SynovaInk.com](http://SynovaInk.com)



**Steve Weigenstein** Steve Wiegenstein grew up in the eastern Missouri Ozarks and roams its backwoods and roads every chance he gets. He is a longtime scholar of the 19th century Icarian movement in America, which provided the inspiration for his Daybreak series of novels, which includes *Slant of Light* (2012), *This Old World* (2014), *The Language of Trees* (2017), and *Land of Joys* (2023). In this series, he uses the fictional Ozarks village of Daybreak as a microcosm for the changing rural landscape in America, and follows the life of community founder Charlotte Turner from idealistic youth to wise old age. He taught journalism, English, and communication for a number of colleges and universities during his career, but is now retired from teaching and writes full-time. He also writes and blogs about rural and Ozarks issues at [stevewiegenstein.wordpress.com](http://stevewiegenstein.wordpress.com). The son of a rural librarian, he received the Missouri Author Award from the Missouri Library Association in 2022 for his short story collection *Scattered Lights*, which was also a shortlisted finalist for the 2021 PEN/Faulkner Award for American Fiction.

Find him online at [SteveWiegenstein.com](http://SteveWiegenstein.com)

### **Friday Fun – October 27th**

Friday night is PURELY celebratory and social. You may NOT set up your book table.

Dinner on your own

8 PM OWL 40th anniversary celebration and The OWLies Writing Contest Awards

OWL turns 40 this year! We will celebrate 40 years of creativity and inspiration. Our president will emcee the party and award ceremony.

OWL gives out over \$1,000 in prize money across 25 categories. After that, we can hang out and have fun. BYOB.

## **Saturday, October 28th Agenda**

7-9:30 Breakfast Buffet for Hotel Guests REMEMBER: Hotel check-out is 11 AM. NO Coffee service – get coffee in your hotel room, at breakfast, or from a vendor, please. Water: OWL will provide bottled water for a free-will offering.

Treats: There is a table for shareables. Attendees are welcome to bring snacks to share.

### **Schedule**

HOTEL GUESTS: Be mindful of the 11 AM checkout time. 8:30 AM Registration (not earlier)

9 AM Welcome, announcements, first door prize

9:15 AM Adapting Your Book as a Screenplay and Marketing it to Producers with Award-Winning Screenwriter & Producer Alan Roth. This presentation will include a discussion on how an author should approach screenplay adaptations of their work. There is much to consider, including determining if the book has commercial potential for the screen. The presentation will start with a “how to” for writing a screenplay, followed by a detailed step-by-step plan for how to market it to the industry and an opportunity to ask questions. His website is [amr-screenwriting.com](http://amr-screenwriting.com)

10:15 AM Door prize, then BREAK. Check out of your hotel room if you have not already done so. NOTE: Book to Screen strategy sessions with Alan Roth begin after break. Sign up in advance by writing DianaWest22 “at” Hotmail “dot” com.

10:30 AM Point of View: Your Powerful Tool to Shape Your Fiction OR Nonfiction Story with Award-Winning Author Steve Weigenstein When we talk about point of view in fiction writing, we often think of just "first person" or "third person." But there are a lot more variations of point of view, and your selection and use of point of view can go a long way toward making your writing effective. And not just in fiction, either! Point of view can have a powerful effect in nonfiction writing. His website is [SteveWiegenstein.com](http://SteveWiegenstein.com)

11:25 AM Door prize, announcements

11:30 AM Lunch on your own. There are numerous options in the area. 1:15 PM Door Prize, then officer elections

1:30 PM The Marketing Game with Synova Cantrell Award-winning author and entrepreneur Synova Cantrell struggled with marketing (like the rest of us) UNTIL she turned it into a game. Then it became a whole lot easier, and a whole lot more FUN! She'll teach us how to do it during her presentation. Find her online at [SynovaInk.com](http://SynovaInk.com) 2:30 PM BREAK, then door prize

2:40 PM The Turn Your Words into Cash Panel Several writers who have made money from their writing in unusual and unexpected ways will share their wisdom. Examples include puzzles, sales copywriting, and stumbling into a paid situation. They will share their BEST tips and ideas with us.

3:25 PM Closing Remarks and a Fond Farewell

## The Poetry in Our Lives

Little kids don't know a poem is a poem. Their brains are busy tracking clues about their rapidly expanding young universe. Most of the words they know wear work clothes that take care of daily needs. But sometimes those same words dress up and arranged just so spin pictures in children's minds that transport them beyond the room where they sit, spark imagination, and leave them hungry for more. Do you remember the first book you ever read? All by yourself? That was a magic moment that helped make possible the way the rest of your life turned out. I wrote a poem about my own memory of that occasion. It was in my first book of poetry (Somebody Catch My Homework, Wordsong, 1993) and is sandblasted into the sidewalk of the Burton Barr Library in Phoenix.

### My Book

I did it!  
I did it!  
Come and look  
At what I've done!  
I read a book!

When someone wrote it  
Long ago  
For me to read,  
How did he know  
That this was the book  
I'd take from the shelf  
And lie on the floor  
And read by myself?

I really read it!  
Just like that!  
Word by word,  
From first to last!

I'm sleeping with  
This book in bed,  
This first FIRST book  
I've ever read!

Eventually we all grow up, get jobs, start families. Sports pages, market trends, and recipes replace picture books. But poetry is still with us, enriching our lives in songs, plays, readings, and thousands of books. Cats, the musical inspired by T.S. Eliot's poetry, ran 18 years on Broadway and was seen by 73 million people worldwide. A 2022 survey by National Endowment for the Arts shows that 22.4 million adults in America read poetry in the last year.

Reading choices are endless both in print and electronically. Some poets write for adults, some for young people, and some for both. I don't read all poets any more than I sample all wines, and what I like you might not. To choose a book of poems that fits you, especially if it has been a while since you've read much poetry, visit a library or book store, test-read a few poems, then take home a book you like. Settle into a good chair and share a human connection with a poet, somewhere in his or her own chair, who dreamed and wrote it down.

If you have school-age kids or grandkids, don't forget them because they, too, have personal tastes about what kinds of poems they like best. Surveys have shown that in general kids like poems with short lines, poems that rhyme, and poems that make them laugh. Thousands of new titles are published each year so there's going to be something for every need and taste.

I'm Missouri's Poet Laureate (July 2023 – June 2025) and I hope to see many of you in person and electronically as I suggest and demonstrate ways to enjoy poetry. Website: <http://davidlharrison.com>; blog: <http://davidlharrison.wordpress.com>; Facebook: (<https://www.facebook.com/david.l.harrison.37>). Contact at [David@davidlharrison.com](mailto:David@davidlharrison.com)

# **Writing Contest**

## **Grades 7–12**

### **ATTENTION YOUTH!**

#### **2023 Ozarks Writers League Youth Writing Contest**

Visa gift card prizes for top three:

**1st Place \$50 – 2nd Place \$30 – 3rd Place \$20**

**No entry fee!**

- 1. Fiction Short Story:** Any genre, any topic. Limit 2,000 words. Sponsor: Larry Wood
- 2. Non-fiction Short Story:** For example, a favorite holiday story. Sponsor: Russell Gayer
- 3. Poetry:** Any form. 26-line limit. Sponsor: Veda Boyd Jones

#### **– Contest Rules –**

*You must be in grades 7–12 at the time you submit your entry.*

*Mail TWO copies of EACH entry in a large flat envelope postmarked by **November 15, 2023** to*

*Cindy McIntyre, Contest Chair*

*PO Box 356*

*Richland, MO 65556*

- Only one entry per category. All entries must be UNPUBLISHED and the original work of the writer. (If your entry has appeared in a blog, website, or other electronic outlet, it IS considered published and cannot be entered.)*
- Entries may be typed or hand-written. Use double-space for short stories and single-space for poetry. Use black ink on 8 ½" x 11" white paper.*
- DO NOT put your name on any part of the entry. Staple multiple pages together.*
- Attach a 3"x5" index card with a paperclip to the top copy of each category entry with the number and name of the category, the title of your entry, and your name, address, phone, email, current grade, and school attending or home-schooled.*

**Winners will be announced by February 15, 2024**

**Good luck to all who enter!**

*For rules, writing contests, conferences, and membership information: [www.OzarksWritersLeague.com](http://www.OzarksWritersLeague.com)*

