

OUR AUGUST 2024 MEETINGS

Compiled by Dave McChesney

Spokane Authors met on Friday, August 9th at the Sans Souci West Club House. Members present included Caryl Briscoe-Michas, Larry Danek, Mary De Bord, Carolyn Eller, Sue Eller, Denise Guy, D. J. Guy, T. Hammond, Esther Hildahl, Bob Hildahl, Suzanne Holland, Kevin Hostbjor, Marilee Hudon, Steve Lalonde, Amy Logan, Bob Manion, Dave McChesney, Jon R. Miller, Carl Northrup, Elena Smith, Mikel and Kay Stevenson, Terry Stratton, and Sarah Vail. Shandra Tanner attended as a guest, joined our organization and is now a member of Spokane Authors.

We began the meeting with several announcements. President Carl Northrup noted his children's book *The Princess Who Had No Name* was close to being ready to publish. He also told us about a Garlic Festival on September 28 and 29 near where he lives and mentioned it might be a good place to have a booth and sell some books. It was noted that members who want to have their books listed in the upcoming catalog should try to pare down book descriptions and author bios to a length that would fit. A soft deadline of the end of August was set, with a final, or "drop dead" deadline of September 21. (Our September meeting at St. Francis.) WE talked a little about creating two anthologies. One would have Christmas and Holiday related stories and poems, while the second would be of a more general nature. The original idea was to have both ready for sale during the Holiday Season, but Sue Eller suggested that may not allow us enough time to ensure quality products. Dave McChesney suggested we keep going, push forward and see what happens.

We also talked a little about Valley Fest in Liberty Lake as a place where one could have a booth. We were also told that our hosts, San Souci West would be having a Craft Fair sometime in November. Sue Eller and T. Hammond should have information on that event. Dave McChesney noted he was still waiting for the website to be updated so he could sign up for a vendor booth at Palouse Days on September 14th.

Carl then introduced our speaker, Colin Conway. He talked primarily about author branding, and mentioned products so popular they give their name to the

product. Nearly all of us refer to facial tissue as Kleenex, as an example. He suggested that those who write in different genres might want to use different pen names. If a reader expects a particular type of story from a particular writer, it might confuse them to find another type of story from that same author. He also noted that we should attempt to deliver what the reader expects, based on the genre we write, and noted that genre can often be defined by the tropes contained in it. These are the standard events and occurrences people expect when reading that type of story.

Colin strongly suggested that an author should have a website, a blog, and a newsletter. He observed that a blog and a newsletter might contain much the same thing, but a blog goes out to everyone, while a newsletter only goes to those who sign up for it. He added that one should try to avoid negativity, politics, and religion.

Following Colin's presentation, we took a short break. We resumed to draw tickets for door prizes before adjourning and going our separate ways.

Spokane Authors also met on Saturday August 17th, at St. Francis of Assisi. Present were Denise Guy, D. J. Guy, Kevin Hostbjor, Marilee Hudon, Bob Manion, Dave McChesney, Pat Moreno, and Terry Stratton. One time member Jeremiah Sargent attended as well and is in the process of rejoining.

As our president was not there, Vice-President Bob Manion conducted the meeting. He noted that the south hill County Library has a system that might allow us to have our books on their shelves. It's based on having reviews or recommendations of the books that would then go in a special local author section. Bob passed out copies of the review form. (Your editor/webmaster can provide copies of the form, should you wish.)

We talked more about the anthologies we are planning to publish. It was agreed there may not be enough time to do both the general and a Christmas themed one in time for the Holiday shopping season, so we agreed that a general one could wait until next year. We will still try and have the Christmas one out for this year. It was suggested that stories range from 1500 to no more than 3000 words. Poems can be of any length. Someone suggested a review committee to look over submissions and Jeremiah offered to participate in that. The goal would be to have twenty-four stories in the anthology. October 11 would be the deadline for submission. (It has since been suggested that that be moved up to the middle of September to allow more time for editing, formatting, and other tasks needed before publishing. It would be great to have it out and available by *Black Friday*.)

We also looked at the possibility of having illustrations done for each story, providing we can find someone willing to do so for a reasonable price. Denise and D. J. Guy said they would ask Shandra Tanner, who is now also a member. The question of distributing proceeds was brought up but not discussed in depth. It was suggested that we could donate a percentage of the income to one or more selected charities.

The catalog was also discussed. One question that was raised concerned financing the printing of the catalog. Would those whose books will be in the catalog be willing to contribute a little extra to see it printed, or should costs come out of dues already paid?

Bob talked a little about a publishing company he has been working with. Someone pointed out that the Central Valley High School Arts and Craft Fair is set for Saturday and Sunday, November 2 and 3. Finally we did a short writing exercise, prompted by a picture of two ugly fish Marilee had on her phone.

By then, we were out of topics and out of time, so we locked up and left.

