

# Wyo-Writer

Official Newsletter of  
Wyoming Writers, Inc.

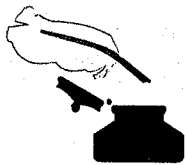


Vol. 33, No. 3

April 2007

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Submissions, comments or questions may be sent to:  
Wyo-Writer Editor,  
P.O. Box 126  
Douglas, WY 82633  
or email to [catchpen@vcn.com](mailto:catchpen@vcn.com).

Please send information about workshops, competitions, requests for submissions, etc. to the Wyo-Writer editor...anything of interest to the writing community.

The Wyo-Writer is a publication of Wyoming Writers, Inc. A member benefit, Wyo-Writer is published ten times a year. Visit our website at: [www.wyowriters.org](http://www.wyowriters.org).

## Gear Up! 33rd Annual Wyoming Writer's Conference

submitted by Chris Williams

Conference time is fast approaching, brochures have been mailed, and excitement is starting to build for the 33rd Annual Wyoming Writers, Inc. conference in Thermopolis June 1-3. To those who volunteered to make this year's conference possible, we all owe a big debt of gratitude: Susan Vittitow, conference chair; Charles Curley, hotel and bookstore liaison; Pat Frolander and Gaydell Collier, registrations; Nancy Ruskowsky, publicity; and Phyllis Dugan and Megan Johnson, as always, for their serenity and sage advice.

The site of the conference you don't want to miss is Holiday Inn of the Waters in Thermop. A block of sleeping rooms at \$89 plus 9% tax has been reserved until May 17. If you're planning on attending conference, please call 307/864-3131 and tell them you want to reserve a room in the Wyoming Writers block to get this special rate. We've had a warning from the hotel's sales representative that rooms may be scarce in Thermopolis after May 17, as well as more expensive, so consider reserving early.

Workshops will be held in two meeting rooms in the Holiday Inn, the Indian Room and the Hunt Room. A third workshop will meet across the street at the Best Western. You should have received a conference brochure in the mail by now; if not or if you need one for a friend or to distribute to your local writer's group, check the Web site at [www.wyowriters.org](http://www.wyowriters.org) or contact conference publicity chair, Nancy Ruskowsky at 331 Rd 6 RT,

Cody, WY 82414, phone: 307/587-3968, e-mail: [fvalli@smtp.180com.net](mailto:fvalli@smtp.180com.net). (You may also contact acting Wyo-Writer editor Shelagh Wisdom, 307-358-0586 or e-mail her at [catchpen@vcn.com](mailto:catchpen@vcn.com).)

One of the more important aspects of a writer's conference, in addition to the invaluable tips from the experts at the workshops, is getting feedback on your own work from a professional in your genre. Four of our panelists are offering critiques this year, but due to time and space constraints each can only fit in five critiques. **The postmark deadline for submission has been extended to April 24.** Details on submitting your work are elsewhere in this newsletter.

The bookstore will be open throughout the conference in the Western Room at the Holiday Inn. This year's bookstore is hosted by JoAnn and Gerald Gerber of Storyteller in downtown Thermopolis. Charles Curley has written of the owners of Storyteller: "JoAnn and Gerald are long-time Wyoming residents. After living in Shoshoni and Wamsutter, they think of Thermopolis as 'the big city', which goes to show that Wyoming will give you a unique perspective on just about anything. The Storyteller is their story." The Gerbers are willing to order 3-5 copies of each requested work, more if your publisher agrees to accept return of unsold copies. To have your books included in the conference bookstore's inventory, and available for purchase at the

~~~~~continued on page 2

## A view from Town's end

Sometimes, when stress piles up, when work gets too much and too hard, when present and future clash, when today inhales a relaxing breath but tomorrow's air seems thin, when knowing ends but knowledge beckons, when glass walls' shades draw - life moves.

I found the following piece in a forgotten file last week, the last writing I'd done in some time. Barbara and I had been killing ourselves working on our home in Laramie, preparing to sell it to move on in life, an adventure. We've been here six and a half months, killing ourselves working on our home. I don't know if we've reached the climax in the story, I hope so, but as 50-degree days etch winter's white and foretell spring's grand, green glory we, once again, breathe.

Last Nights in Laramie, 9 p.m, August 10, 2006:  
Sweaty from Work; Darkness Encroaches  
Green Foster's Bitter "oil can" in hand  
Sitting in the back yard's sunken garden, I see, hear.  
Tires sing on I-80's trucks, cars,  
A train whistles before a crossing, downtown.  
Jets head north, never south, fast;  
Where do the people go? Why?  
Stars, silent, pop out of their shroud,  
One, twenty-eight, thousands.  
Neighbors' screen doors screech open, closed.  
Rare - the dogs are quiet this eve.  
Sirens, too, silent. Good. Peace.  
Neighbors' back porch lights  
Brighten aspen, lilac;  
Pollute the stars' brightness, dim.  
I ponder what Atlantic City holds:  
Quiet, dark, silent, stars bright, moon,  
Fewer folks than this neighborhood,  
Eccentric, eclectic, life's characters,  
Deep, shallow, private, open, home.

Please, remember to write. Till next time,

*Slainte, Bob*

33rd Annual Wyoming Writers Conference - continued from page 1~~~~

book signing, contact Storyteller, 528 Broadway, Thermopolis, WY 82443. Phone: 307/864-3272; fax: 307/864-3291; e-mail: storyteller@rtconnect.net. Have title, publisher, and ISBN available when you contact Storyteller.

Weather permitting, the open mic sessions will be held at the pavilion at Hot Springs State Park this year. If our presenters agree, a new addition to the open mic on Saturday night will be kickoff readings from their own work. A big thanks to Mike Shay for the arrangements with the park, and his enthusiasm and ideas for open mic.

The countdown has begun. Only two more months until conference. Hope to see you all there!

Look for further conference updates in next month's *Wyo-Writer* or check the Web site at [www.wyowriters.org](http://www.wyowriters.org).

## WYOMING WRITERS, INC.

### President

Bob Townsend  
290 Atlantic City Road, Atlantic City, WY 82520  
(307) 332-0248  
[president@wyowriters.org](mailto:president@wyowriters.org)

### Vice President

Chris Williams  
1041 Cypress Circle, Rock Springs, WY 82901  
(307) 382-0617  
[cwillia1041@yahoo.com](mailto:cwillia1041@yahoo.com)

### Secretary

John Beach  
1315 Kimberly Avenue, Rock Springs, WY 82901  
(307) 362-7495  
[johnbeach@wyoming.com](mailto:johnbeach@wyoming.com)

### Treasurer

Megan Johnson  
Post Office Box 818, Thayne, WY 83127-0818  
(307) 883-4573  
[treasurer@wyowriters.org](mailto:treasurer@wyowriters.org)

### Historian

VACANT

### Members at Large

*Region 1 - Park, Big Horn & Washakie Counties*  
Tina Krejci  
565 U.S. Highway 14, Greybull, WY 82426-9721  
(307) 765-9395  
[mall@wyowriters.org](mailto:mall@wyowriters.org)

*Region 2 - Sheridan, Johnson, Campbell, Crook & Weston Counties*

Andi Hummel  
89 Strawberry Hill Road, Hulett, WY 82720  
(307) 467-5697  
[mal2@wyowriters.org](mailto:mal2@wyowriters.org)

*Region 3 - Hot Springs, Fremont & Natrona Counties*

Bonnie Sargent  
603 Lind Avenue, Casper, WY 82601  
(307) 237-9382  
[mal3@wyowriters.org](mailto:mal3@wyowriters.org)

*Region 4 - Sublette, Lincoln, Uinta, Sweetwater, Teton & Carbon Counties*

Phyllis Dugan  
P.O. Box 1017, Thayne, WY 83127  
[mal4@wyowriters.org](mailto:mal4@wyowriters.org)

*Region 5 - Converse, Niobrara, Platte, Goshen, Albany & Laramie Counties*

Michael Shay  
5318 Weaver Road #6, Cheyenne, WY 82009  
(307) 634-8586  
[mshay@state.wy.us](mailto:mshay@state.wy.us)

### Wyo-Writer Editor

Shelagh Wisdom  
Post Office Box 126, Douglas, WY 82633  
[catchpen@vcn.com](mailto:catchpen@vcn.com)

## **DEADLINE EXTENDED! April 24th Postmark for Conference Manuscript Critiques**

*Submitted by Chris Williams*

There are only five slots reserved for critiques from each of our panelists, so hurry to be the first to submit your fiction/nonfiction, poems, or screenplays. Slots will be filled by postmark date; the first five in any category to submit work for critique will be forwarded to our panelists. Since the original article on critiques was written in January, and I couldn't get word out about the critiques without a newsletter, the deadline has been extended to April 24 - so along with mailing your tax return in April, don't forget to mail your manuscript submission for critique! And please take time to thank Shelagh Wisdom for stepping in as newsletter editor, the most important position in Wyoming Writers when it comes to getting all the news out to members. E-mail your thanks and tell her how much you appreciate her.

### **Critiques:**

**Screenplay:** Tim Sandlin, author of 11 screenplays for hire, will look at the first 20 pages of your screenplay.

**Poetry:** Sandra Alcosser, National Poetry Series poet, will critique up to three one-page poems.

**Fiction/Nonfiction:** John Helfers, editor at Tekno books, will accept a one-page query plus the first ten pages of adult book-length fiction or nonfiction.

**Children's:** Toran Isom, children's/YA columnist and educator, will consider a one-page query plus up to ten pages of children's/YA literature.



*Postmark deadline April 24. Fee \$20 for each submission. Please make checks payable to the panelist who will be critiquing your work.*

Mail submissions to: Chris Williams, 3229 NW Gumwood Ave., Corvallis, OR 97330. Contact Chris at [cwillia1041@yahoo.com](mailto:cwillia1041@yahoo.com) or 541/602-0700 for more details.

## **Wyoming Writers 33rd Annual Conference Faculty Meet Sandra Alcosser**

*Submitted by Chris Williams*

"Poetry illuminates our interior life. It conveys emotion and intelligence in a lightning strike."

At the Wyoming Writers conference June 1-3 in Thermopolis, poet Sandra Alcosser will present a series of three workshops illuminating the process of capturing that lightning strike called a poem. Sandra advises those attending her sessions entitled The Image, Epiphoric Metaphor, and Diaphoric Metaphor, to come prepared to write as well as to listen and learn!

Montana's poet laureate, Sandra's work is built on her social and environmental activism. "Activism is a dialogue we have with our lives, throughout our lives, and it changes as our lives change. One critical question remains in the foreground: as poets, as members of a community, how do we extend our boundaries to include the world in our practice?"

Sandra extends her own boundaries by traveling the world teaching, and writing and researching poetry. From her cabin in Montana, to founding and directing the MFA program at San Diego State University, to a stint as poet in residence for Poets House and the Wildlife Conservation Society at the Central Park Zoo in New York City, Alcosser blurs the line between her work and her life. For six months at the zoo, she worked with Dr. Dan Wharton, Director of the Central Park Zoo and Director of the Species Protection Plan for western lowland gorillas and snow leopards. With the goal of creating permanent installations of poetry "spanning cultures and centuries . . . to inspire visitors to imagine a sustainable future for all life on earth," her aim was to weave habitat conservation philosophy with poetry, to ease the distinction between the lives of human zoo visitors and the lives of the animals. "Science and poetry inform the mystery of being," she says. "Both praise the complexity of life."

Alcosser consulted the 45,000 volume book sanctuary at Poets House for poets and poems to include in the zoo installation. Those chosen include Birago Diop of Senegal, ambassador to Tunisia in addition to being oral archivist for the folk tales of the Wolof people and a veterinary surgeon; Judith Wright, "an outspoken supporter of Aboriginal rights and environmental integrity," and excerpts from the poems of poets such as

### LAST CALL...2007 Memorial Scholarship

Emmie Mygatt was one of the founders of Wyoming Writers, Inc. Emmie believed writers can live anywhere, and she helped other believe it as well. Before her death in 1977, Emmie gave the gift of \$500 to be "joyously spent for an unusual opportunity approved by all." Wyoming Writer, Inc. used her gift to create the Memorial Scholarship Fund to offer writers financial assistance so that they can attend our conference. Every year, WW Inc. members literally "pass the hat" to build this scholarship fund.

a tuition scholarship to this year's conference, please fill out the form below and send it to C. J. Clark, 32 Harmon Road, Hardy, AR 72542. Please type or print answers to application questions. Photocopies are okay. Please use a separate sheet of paper if more space is needed. Applications must be received by April 30, 2007. If you have any questions, please call 870-257-4214 or email [armidillo72542@yahoo.com](mailto:armidillo72542@yahoo.com).

If you or someone you know would benefit from

#### MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

If you or someone you know would benefit from a tuition scholarship to the Wyoming Writers' annual conference, please fill out this form and send it to C.J. Clark, 32 Harmon Road, Hardy, AR 72542. Please print, type, or write legibly. If more space is needed, use a separate sheet of paper. Deadline for applications is the last Friday in April. Self-nominations accepted.

Name of Writer: \_\_\_\_\_ WWI Member? \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Children: \_\_\_\_\_

**State in your own words why you believe the nominee should be considered for a scholarship:**

List any unusual circumstances (i.e. illness, financial burden, etc.):

What type of writing does the nominee do?

Has the nominee been published? If yes, list publications:

Please list any other information the scholarship committee should consider:

**Application submitted by:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

*Committee Use Only:*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Approved  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Not Approved

continued from page 3  
Conference Faculty - Sandra Alcosser

Marianne Moore, Lorine Niedecker, and Gertrude Stein.

In addition to traveling as an environmental advocate and giving readings of her poetry as well as talks on writing and natural history, Alcosser teaches at National University of Ireland in Galway each summer. She has had environmental residencies at Glacier National Park, University of Minnesota, St. Lawrence University, Canyonlands Field Institute, the Orion Society, and the Sierra Club. She has given poetry workshops in New York with methadone-to-abstinence patients, directed a program using the park as a classroom in Central Park, and traveled 50,000 miles of Montana as poet in the schools to ranches, small communities, and Indian reservations.

Asked to include a poem of her own in the Central Park Zoo, she chose these lines from "What Makes the Grizzlies Dance":

Have you never wanted  
to spin like that  
on hairy, leathered feet  
amid swelling berries  
as you tasted a language  
of early summer - shaping  
lazy operatic vowels,  
cracking hard-shelled  
consonants like speckled  
insects between your teeth,  
have you never wanted  
to waltz the hills  
like a beast?

Alcosser is the recipient of the Merriam Award for Distinguished Contribution to Montana Literature, the Academy of American Poets' James Laughlin Award, and two National Endowments for the Arts Fellowships, as well as the author of the acclaimed books of poems *A Fish to Feed All Hunger* and *Except by Nature*. Poets who attend this year's conference in Thermopolis are most fortunate to have the opportunity to attend workshops presented by a poet of Alcosser's stature. We at Wyoming Writers, Inc. extend a warm Wyoming welcome to Sandra Alcosser.

(This column was written with the aid of an article on how Sandra Alcosser's life commitments entwine with her poetry, entitled "The Dialogue Between Poetry and Activism," written by Amy Ratto. More on conference faculty in next month's *Wyo-Writer*, including editor John Helfers, screenplay writer Tim Sandlin, and children's writer and speaker Dr. Toran Isom, or check the Web site at [www.wyowriters.org](http://www.wyowriters.org).)

## About Learning and Change

By John Beach

Several weeks ago in a phone conversation from Boise my oldest daughter told me that my 3 year old grandson had learned to pop corn in the microwave all by himself. While this isn't news of the sort that will change the events of the world, it is interesting to our family. This lesson of popcorn popping from a boy who learned how to unplug his mother's sewing machine with a kitchen knife boggles the family's mind. He didn't get hurt in the sewing machine incident, but the breakers in the house all crashed at the same time.

A week prior to the phone call I had stopped on the shores of Lake Loveland in Colorado to enjoy the antics of newly hatched goslings attempting to learn how to fly. They furiously flapped their wings and dashed wildly across the water only to find themselves no higher in the air than they had started. It was an amusing sight and an activity that will eventually bring these young geese success.

The point of these two diverse and seemingly unrelated incidents is to focus on learning, which is part of both examples and the possibilities of change, which might be illustrated in either. Why is it that we tend to go on relearning the same things that we already know how to do and try to learn things that we know we can't ever do? Rationality doesn't always factor into our thinking it seems.

No matter how hard any of us flap our arms and run across the water, we are never going to fly. Our only choice is to sink. We can try it again and again, but the best we can hope for is to only sink far enough into the water that we can swim around. And that's not bad, but we aren't going to fly. We might as well just learn how to swim really well. And on the other hand, once we have learned the process of popping corn in a microwave, we've pretty much got the process down. We don't have to relearn the process. My grandson will now be able to pop corn with just about any microwave oven he ever finds. We don't have to make a production of relearning things that we already know how to do.

I'm not sure why I have chosen to bring this up at this point, but it has been on my mind. All of us just keep on repeating the same old lessons and not really learning them and trying to do things that we will never be able to accomplish. Perhaps the best thing for all of us to do is find the wisdom to make the change necessary to see what we can do to "get out of the rut" of not learning and not changing. As for me, I've decided to see if I can't just look at things in a different perspective and not defend the way it has always been done just because it is the way that it's always been done.

I'd rather enjoy the geese learning to fly than try to do it myself and enjoy the popcorn that I already know how to pop. Life is just too short to keep on sinking in the water and being frustrated over and over again.

## Market News

submitted by A.M. Hummel

*(Items in this month's column come to you from The Penn Writer, the newsletter of Pennsylvania's state-wide organization for writers and The Gila Queen's Guide to Markets, an on-line service for which we thank Kathy Pateck, the editor.)*

### **Got some TRUE ghost stories you'd like to share?**

Atriad Press, LLC, 13820 Methuen Green, Dallas, TX 75240 publishes trade paperback originals dealing with nonfiction ghostly stories. They're not interested in anything on angels or UFOs. They want books written on an adult level, but might consider the teen market. Check their guidelines online at [atriadpress.com](http://atriadpress.com) and/or [hauntedencounters.com](http://hauntedencounters.com), then query senior editor Michael Whittington with a proposal package (outline, author bio, three sample chapters)-hard copy may be sent to the above mailing address, or you may e-mail [editor@atriadpress.com](mailto:editor@atriadpress.com).

### **Bowhunting enthusiasts will want to check this one!**

Bow and Arrow Hunting, c/o Action Pursuit Group, 265 S. Anita Dr., Suite 120, Orange, CA 92868-3310 is looking for how-to, interview/profile, humor, opinion, personal experience, and technical articles re: bowhunting that run 1700-3000 words and they pay \$200-\$450 for those they use. They also want fillers-things such as facts and newsbreaks-running at about 500 words, and they're paying \$20-\$100 for those. Editor Joe Bell is hoping for pieces that will help readers to be better hunters, but he wants things that are fun to read. If you can provide sidebars and/or, photos he'll consider such a plus . . . though the magazine doesn't pay extra for them.

### **Market seeking "obscure facts and unusual stories"**

The Old Farmer's Almanac, Yankee Publishing, PO Box 520, Dublin, NH 03444 is already looking for material for the 2008 edition of this old favorite! They want nonfiction: historical/nostalgic, how-to (gardening, cooking, saving money), humor, weather, natural remedies, obscure facts/trivia, history, and pop culture. There is also a need for fillers such as short anecdotes and short humor (keep these at about 100-200 words-the flat rate here is \$25). Check the guidelines published online at [almanac.com](http://almanac.com) to see more specifically what Editor Janice Stillman hopes to receive, plan to bring your articles in at 800-2500 words, and query with your published clips by mail at the address above-it might bring you 65 cents

per word on acceptance. There is also an online edition-ask about it!

### **Focus on teen relationships and real-life issues for this market!**

Guideposts' Sweet 16, 1050 Broadway, Suite 6, Chesterton IN 46304. This general-interest magazine for teenage girls (ages 11-17) is published by Guideposts and boasts a circulation of almost 200,000. The bimonthly offers TRUE, first-person stories about real teens. The watchwords here are: "wholesome," "current," "fun," and "inspiring" and this mag has it all: fashion, beauty, celebs, boys, embarrassing moments, advice columns. They will publish the occasional action/adventure story, but the ongoing focus is on friendship, romance, peer pressure, etc. They want "light" stories about finding a date, learning to drive, whatever . . . and no preaching or lecturing! If you aren't familiar with the magazine, pick up a copy and study it-the voice needs to be "teen" . . . TODAY'S TEEN! The stories need to be 400-1200 words in length. This market does publish teens, will consider boy-narrated stories but seems most interested in female POV, and there are a number of areas here where freelancers might find a home for their work. Payment is on acceptance for "all rights," generally runs from \$100-\$500, and you might even get you expenses paid if you query for approval. E-mail submissions are okay here: [writers@sweet16mag.com](mailto:writers@sweet16mag.com); <http://www.sweet16mag.com> for more info.

### **For those of you who write dark fiction.**

Dark Wisdom, Elder Signs Press, Inc., PO Box 389, Lake Orion MI 48361-0389, is a full-sized, quarterly print magazine with a full color, glossy cover and interior pages. It publishes quality dark fiction and that covers a broad range of genres, including horror, dark fantasy (not sword and sorcery), and dark science fiction. Editor William James says, "The important ingredient for publication in Dark Wisdom is originality, and well-written stories of dark fiction that examine the human condition. Stories can be set in any time period or location. Futuristic science fiction set in space or historical fiction stories are acceptable, so long as they are appropriate for the magazine's style. We are not interested in explicit violence, sex or bloodshed used simply to shock the reader. If you're unsure of what we like, review a copy before submitting. All

~~~~~continued on page 7

## WyoPoets Workshop Scheduled April 28, 2007



When Words  
Have Wings

Let words take flight in Casper on Saturday, April 28, 2007, and attend the WyoPoets workshop featuring Joan Puma Bennet's "Living to Write" presentations.

The workshop is presented by WyoPoets and partially funded by the Wyoming Arts Council. The

Hampton Inn Conference Room in Casper will be the location for the exciting, educational and informative workshops, which open with registration at 9:30 a.m. Saturday. The workshop will mark the kick-off for the new WyoPoets chapbook *Wyoming Paintbrush*, and the previous WyoPoets chapbooks will also be available.

The featured workshops "Living to Write" and "Living to Write II" will be presented by Joan Puma Bennet, who has taught creative writing for 20 years in a variety of settings throughout Wyoming and across the country.

Ms. Bennet was a staff writer for *The New Yorker* for many years, and her work is frequently published in a variety of venues. Her poetry manuscript *Om-ing in Wyoming* was a finalist for the 2006 Doubleday Literary Fellowship.

For more information or to register, please contact Lee Ann Siebken, Post Office Box 155, Douglas, WY 82633 (Phone 307-358-2898) or email her at [weelas@netcommander.com](mailto:weelas@netcommander.com). Registration after March 31st is \$35 and registrations at the door are

welcome.

Come to the Friday night (April 27) open mike poetry reading from 7 to 9 p.m.! The reading is free and open to the public, and will be held at the Hampton Inn Conference Room.

### WYOPOETS WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

*Friday, April 27, 2007*

7:00 p.m. ....Open Mike Poetry Reading

*Saturday, April 28, 2007*

9:30 a.m. ....Registration, coffee, book table

10:00 a.m. ...Announcements and unveiling of new WyoPoets chapbook

10:15 a.m. .... First Workshop Session  
*Living to Write* - Joan Puma Bennet

12:15 p.m. .... Lunch  
WyoPoets Annual Meeting

1:30 p.m. .... Second Workshop Session  
*Living to Write II* - Joan Puma Bennet

3:00 p.m. .... Break

3:15 p.m. .... Open Mike Poetry Reading

4:30 p.m. .... Closing

### Market News continued ~~~~

stories submitted must be well written and within the word count. Dark Wisdom considers reprints, but please query first. Dark Wisdom does not accept simultaneous submissions." This magazine publishes flash fiction, short shorts, and short fiction to 5000 words but they may agree to look at longer pieces if you query. They pay five cents a word for First North American Publishing Rights. They also buy poetry (250 words max and they want first rights here, too) with a dark flair, artwork, and nonfiction reviews and reports and articles of factual events that readers of dark fiction might find of interest. In an attempt to provide better and quicker responses to authors, this magazine has

established reading periods and will not consider submissions received at times other than February 1-April 1 and September 1-November 1-you're late for the first but have plenty of time to polish your work for that Fall 2007 reading period! E-mail for information: Queries: [queries@darkwisdom.com](mailto:queries@darkwisdom.com); fiction/nonfiction submissions: [submissions@darkwisdom.com](mailto:submissions@darkwisdom.com); fiction reviews: [revieweditor@darkwisdom.com](mailto:revieweditor@darkwisdom.com); entertainment reviews: [submissions@darkwisdom.com](mailto:submissions@darkwisdom.com); <http://www.darkwisdom.com>.

**2005 - 2006**  
**PATRON MEMBERS**  
*The Fence Post* - Chuck Ballou  
 Endeavor Books

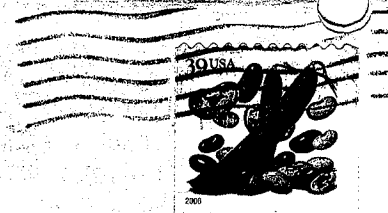
**SUSTAINING MEMBERS**  
 Joe Megeath  
 John Beach  
 Kathleen Gear  
 Michael Gear  
 Myra Mumma  
 Susan Vittitow

**Points to Ponder...**

- The Wyo-Writer welcomes material regarding all aspects of the writing life. We will consider articles of 500 words or less with advice, tips, references, resources, inspiration, instruction, techniques, etc.
- Wyo-Writer is also seeking news about WW, Inc. members. Have you or another member you know been accepted for publication or received an award? Share with other writers your successes or that of other WW, Inc. members (also 500 words or less.)
- Members want to know about other members! Consider writing a short biography about a member, and include his/her accomplishments, quotes, and interesting antidotes.
- Photos are accepted (and encouraged) with submissions provided they are sent in the proper format (high resolution jpeg), or sent via snail mail.
- June of each year begins with the annual Wyoming Writer's Conference and MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL. All memberships expire June 30th of each year, regardless of when you join. Make sure your information is updated for the Membership Directory.

**Visit the Wyoming Writers, Inc. website at [www.wyowriters.org](http://www.wyowriters.org)**

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