

## **PUBLIC SAFETY WRITERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**

### **VOLUME IV EARLY SUMMER**

#### **THE PUBLIC SAFETY WRITERS LISTSERVE**

Upon joining PSWA, a new member will receive an invitation to join the PSWA listserve, which is under [policewriter@yahoogroups.com](mailto:policewriter@yahoogroups.com). It is to your advantage to sign up for this listserve. It gives you the opportunity to keep in touch with fellow members. Your email address will never be shared with anyone outside of the organization. If you ignored the invitation and would like to be invited again, please contact [tim@timdees.com](mailto:tim@timdees.com) and ask him to resend the invitation to the listserve. Only members should be on this listserve, so if you need to pay your dues, now is the time.

#### **PSWA BOARD MEETING BRIEF REPORT**

Your PSWA Board met in Reno NV to discuss issues designed to strengthen the organization. Plans for next year's conference and writing contest were discussed. We also need volunteers who are interested in helping with the contest, the conference, the website and other committees.

A more comprehensive report about this meeting will be forthcoming in July from our president, Marilyn Olsen.

#### **YOUR NEWSLETTER**

This is your newsletter. Please contribute to it. We want to know your news. Send in reviews of your own book or books you've read, your articles about writing or promotion are welcome. In the future newsletters, Tim Dees, our webmaster and computer guru, has promised to give us tips about computer usage.

#### **MEMBER NEWS**

The anthology "Windows Into My World: Latino Youth Write Their Lives" will be launched on May 11, 2007 with Andrea White, the wife of Mayor Bill White beginning the program focusing on the contributing authors in the Houston area. This anthology brings together thirty-six young (high school or college-aged) Latinos writing memoir essays about their life experiences. Edited by Sarah Cortez, this volume is introduced by Cuban-American author Virgil Suarez and is published by Arte Publico Press, the world's largest publisher of Hispanic authors.

Dos Gatos Press in Austin, Texas has chosen one of Sarah Cortez' poems for the 2008 Texas Poetry Calendar. Visit the website for ordering information, [www.dosgatospress.org](http://www.dosgatospress.org).

From Denny Griffith:

The first installment of the Chicago Channel 7 interview with Frank Cullotta aired on June 6.

You can find the Channel 7 piece, including both text and video, at:  
<http://abclocal.go.com/wls/story?section=investigative&id=5371396>

More of that interview will air during the Operation Family Secrets trial in Chicago starting in late June. You will note that the attorney for Joey "the Clown" Lombardo, one of the defendants Frank will testify against, doesn't think much of the book. Under the circumstances, that shouldn't come as a surprise.

At Denny's appearance with Frank Cullotta at a Las Vegas Library, 225 people attended and 123 books sold.

### **ABOUT MEMBER BILL WILHELM**

William W. Wilhelm was born and grew up on a farm in Mc Donough County, Illinois near Macomb. His wasn't a farmer, but had his own automotive repair garage where he did minor repairs and major overhauls on cars and tractors. People from miles around came for his services. Bill grew up helping him in that garage. He learned fractions on wrenches. By the time he was in high school, he could do a complete engine overhaul.

With his parents' permission, he went to live with relatives in St Louis where he became a helper in the erection of high steel. WW 2 began and he joined the US Marine Corps and went off to war. Returning from that adventure, he became a journeyman structural iron worker, traveling all over the country to erect bridges and large structures.

After seven years, Bill became disenchanted with that job. He's always wanted to be a policeman. A buddy from the Marine Corps was a policeman in Los Angeles encouraged him to come to L.A. and try out for the police department. He became a motorcycle officer. He'd found his niche and career.

After his retirement from LAPD he became a body guard for the entertainer, Kenny Rogers, for a couple of years. For several years he also worked for FEMA on a part time basis as an interviewer of victims of typhoons, floods, earthquakes, etc. from Guam to Puerto Rico. This included the Loma Prieta earthquake in the San Francisco area. The next six years he served as a special deputy US Marshal.

His marriage ended and Chuck Yeager of Mach 1 fame, a personal friend, invited Bill to move his Airstream travel trailer on Yeager's nine-acre estate at his home in Grass Valley, Ca. He spent five pleasant years there until he met and married Ruby June, a former Flight attendant from Pan American Airlines. She owns a home in Nevada City, California where they are living happily ever after.

Bill is the author of *Code Two and a Half*. The book is available at Amazon and <http://www.oaktreebooks.com> , plus Ingram Book wholesales so that readers can ask for it at their favorite bookshop.

### **WRITING TIPS**

## On Never Giving Up

The difference between a non-published and published author is the published one didn't give up. I'm proof of that statement. Back when I began the publishing process, was in the days of typewriters and carbon copies. My first book I sent out nearly thirty times before it was accepted by a publisher. Every fifth rejection, I rewrote the book. Finally, I received a slim envelope with a contract rather than the box with the manuscript inside. There is another lesson here—be sure the book is as good as possible before sending it out.

The editor who accepted that book left the house and the one who took her place wasn't impressed with my next book. I did find another publisher and the book came out—but before I received any royalties, the man and his son who owned the company were jailed for fraud. Fortunately, before it was all over, I was sent all the books that had been printed and the proof sheets.

I sent my first Christian horror novel to a small independent publisher who asked me to make the book camera ready. This meant I had to learn how to use a new computer program. To do this, I enlisted the aid of a friend who owned a computer store. He taught me what I had to do and let me come to the store every day before he opened for business. Not only did that mean I was in the store every weekday from 6 to 9, it was hard work. Once I was done, I called the publisher. His wife answered with the news that her husband had died and she didn't want to continue with the business. (Several years later, I found an electronic publisher, Treble Heart Books, who was brave enough to publish two of my Christian horror novels.)

Everyone says to find an agent first. That may be good advice, but for me, having an agent didn't help. Over the years I've had five agents. One who had a great reputation, took on my Deputy Tempe Crabtree series. Every year I'd send her the next novel and she'd send me encouraging words. Finally, after four years, I asked for a list of my rejections. She sent me three rejection letters. I decided I could do better on my own.

My first mystery was published by a Canadian company. A booksigning was arranged and the store ordered fifty books. In the meantime, that publisher also went out of business. Those fifty books were the only ones printed. I met a small independent publisher who was willing to republish the book. Fortunately, she also was interested in publishing my mystery series. We had a great relationship for four books. Sadly, she had a stroke and passed away.

Electronic publishing is another venue I've tried. I wrote a police procedural, found a publishing house and sent in the manuscript. It was accepted and when I received the contract I learned the house only published electronically. This was at the very beginning of the e-publishing. Since that time I've been published by four e-publishers and most of them have now branched out into doing print books as well.

Once again, I began the search for a publisher for my series. I'd met the publisher of Mundania Press at Epicon (the conference for electronically published authors) and was impressed by his knowledge of the publishing industry. I submitted my next Deputy Tempe Crabtree novel, *Calling the Dead*, and it was accepted.

This is merely an overview. There were many more struggles, upsets and

disappointments. The point is, if I'd been discouraged by any of the many rejections, less than honest publishers, the death of publishers, and the other problems along the way, I could have given up.

Because of the many stories in my head that I'm compelled to put into writing, I never let any of the bad events stop me. If you are a true writer, you have to write and nothing should stop you. Write the best you can, don't let anything discourage you, and you will be published.

Marilyn Meredith <http://fictionforyou.com>

## BOOK REVIEWS OF MEMBERS' BOOKS

One of the perks of attending the PSWA Conference, is the opportunity to peruse new books written by our members—and of course buy them. One of the books we purchased this time was new member Leonard Schonberg's novel, *Morgen's War*. He told me though it's a novel, it is also a bit autobiographical. In the story, the hero is a physician who goes to Pakistan on the Afghanistan border to train physicians. While there he is faced with a totally different and sometimes disturbing culture. The climax is a thrilling account about the hero crossing the border into Afghanistan. Reading the book makes me want to talk to Leonard and find out how much of this he experienced himself. I recommend the book as a thrilling read.—Marilyn Meredith

The book is available at Amazon.com

### Three Reviews of *Code Two 'N' a Half*.

*Code Two 'N' a Half* by William W. "Bill" Wilhelm, (ISBN 978-1-8-892343-01-7 Oak Tree Press) was read by Arthur Farrar who had this to say about it—It's a great look back at a career with the LAPD that spanned twenty-plus years of a motorcycle officer from the 1950's to the 1970's. Great job, Bill! Thanks for your dedicated service to Los Angeles; writing the book; and letting us have an inside look at the LAPD. Also available at Amazon.com and from the publisher.

Another review:

### *Code Two 'N' A Half*

By William W. Wilhelm

Ever wonder what it was like to be a motorcycle cop for the Los Angeles Police Department in the 1950's and 60's? Then pick up Bill Wilhelm's book and read of his experiences.

Presented as an anecdotal account of his day-by-day duties during his twenty years of service, Bill writes in rich detail what he faced patrolling the streets and highways of Los Angeles fifty years ago. He pulls no punches in describing the duties he performed during his time with the LAPD and does a great job in personalizing his experiences so the readers will run the same emotional gamut. He relates the satisfaction he felt in the job, as well as the anger and frustration, and at times, the grief for fallen comrades. From the mundane traffic duties, to murder cases, to earthquakes and riots, Bill has done it all. Interjected with personal insights and thoughts, based on what he calls his "country boy logic", the book is a fascinating and enjoyable read.

I thoroughly enjoyed *Code Two 'N' A Half* and can highly recommend this engaging saga. You won't be disappointed!

John Schembra  
Author of *M.P. and Retribution*

"Bill Wilhelm, an LA motor officer during the heyday of LA's growth, wrote a book about his

many different experiences and the people he worked with. It is a ride down memory lane, but hold on, because you're on the back of his motorcycle while in the fast lane.

My time in patrol cars goes back to no air conditioning, no power steering and wearing your hat while driving the patrol car. Bill's time goes back to when LA didn't provide the officers with car heaters or defrosters, things that are now taken for granted.

Everyone knows when you're stopped by a cop on a motorcycle wearing boots and britches, you're not talking your way out of a summons. Bill tells of many different encounters with people from all walks of life and even a few that he let go.

Take a ride with Bill on an LAPD Harley and see the growing city of Los Angeles and it's people through the eyes of a motor officer."

Keith Bettinger [keithbett@cox.net](mailto:keithbett@cox.net)

Author of: **FIGHTING CRIME WITH "SOME" DAY AND LENNY**

**M.P. A Novel of Vietnam** by John Schembra and published by Writers Exchange is another terrific read. My husband (another Vietnam veteran) enjoyed it thoroughly. Though I'm not a fan of war novels, this was exceptionally well done, following two M.P.s though the horrors they faced. The vivid portrayal gives the reader a first hand account of what our men faced during the Vietnam war.—Marilyn Meredith, author of **Calling the Dead** and **Fringe Benefits** aka F.M. Meredith.

Denny Griffin had this terrific review in Publishers Weekly on 5/21/07.

***Cullotta: The Life of a Chicago Criminal, Las Vegas Mobster, and Government Witness***

Dennis N. Griffin and Frank Cullotta with contributions from Dennis Arnoldy, foreword by Nick Pileggi. Huntington ([www.huntingtonpress.com](http://www.huntingtonpress.com)), \$19.95 (292p) ISBN 978-0-929712-45-1

Mystery and nonfiction writer Griffin covered the Vegas reign of kingpin Tony "the Ant" Spilotro in *The Battle for Las Vegas: The Law vs. the Mob*. Digging deeper into mob history, he now focuses on Spilotro's lifelong pal, career criminal Cullotta, who appeared in Martin Scorsese's 1995 film, *Casino*, recreating an actual murder he committed in 1979. Spilotro and Cullotta met in Chicago as teenage troublemakers, and early chapters detail the violent escapades of Cullotta's youth before he escalated to major crimes. Spilotro rose in the ranks of the mob and became the Chicago Outfit's man in Las Vegas, and Cullotta eventually joined him, running a robbery and murder crew. Together, Spilotro and Cullotta extorted illegal bookmakers and drug dealers throughout Vegas. But in the early 1980s, Cullotta became a government witness, bringing down the house. In addition to poring through newspaper archives, Griffin interviewed various sheriffs, attorneys, agents and detectives, while primarily relying on information from retired FBI agent Arnoldy and what Pileggi calls the "phenomenal" memory of Cullotta himself. Griffin's flat, unemotional yet potent writing makes the bloodletting, murders and mayhem chilling and unnerving throughout. 30 b&w photos.

(Promo Tip: Be sure to use snippets of reviews on your website and in other promotion about your book.)

## COMPUTER TIP

by Tim Dees

### Templates

Many editors have very specific requirements for drafts and manuscripts. If you produce multiple submissions for the same outfit, you might save time by creating a template in Word. Templates are, as the name implies, a framework of your document. You can insert all of the formatting that you want, as well as any standard ("boilerplate") text, such as a biographical statement, that goes with every draft.

To create a template, start with a blank Word document. If you have a document that is already pre-formatted, such as an article you've composed previously, start with that one to save time. Open the file, then immediately save it under a new name, so that your original document will be unchanged. Delete the unique content of the article, leaving standard headings, closings, etc. Make sure the area where your text will go retains its formatting. This means that paragraphs are indented, or not, depending on the requirements, lines are single- or double-spaced, tabs are set where you want them, and so on. If you're starting with a new document, type in all of that text, including some dummy text for the body of your article, and then format it the way you want. Use the formatting commands under the Format menu in Word. Never position text with multiple spaces or hard returns. That's not formatting, that's typing. It's also very time-consuming for the editor to remove later.

*Hint: to generate dummy text, start with a new line and type*

`=rand(x,y)`

*where "x" is the number of paragraphs you want to create, and "y" is the number of lines per paragraph. Hit "Enter" after the close parenthesis and the text will appear.*

When you have all of the text of your template in place and formatted, click File|Save As. The familiar file list window will appear. At the bottom of the window, there will be a dropdown list opposite the label "Save as type:" Click the downward-pointing arrow and find "Document Template (\*.dot)", then click on this. The file display will, in most cases, change to the Templates folder on your hard drive. If it doesn't, stop and use the Search feature of Windows to see where the \*.dot files reside. In most Windows installations, they will be at C:\Documents and Settings\username\Local Settings\Application Data\Microsoft\OFFICE\Templates. Save your template in that Templates folder, naming it "True Crime" or whatever the name of the magazine, editor, or publisher is. Close the template document.

To use your template, click on File|New in Word, and if the list of available templates doesn't appear, look to the Task Bar at the right of the window to find "Templates on My Computer." Click on this, then on your template name. Word will open a new, unnamed file with your boilerplate text and formatting already in place.

Send mail to [tdees@policewriter.com](mailto:tdees@policewriter.com) with questions or comments about this web site.  
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