



LEAGUE OF VERMONT WRITERS, INC.

League Lines

The League of Vermont Writers Newsletter

Join us!

**April 16,
2016:**

**Franklin Howe
Conference Center**

Rutland, VT

SPRING 2016 PROGRAM

KERRIN MCCADDEN

PRESENTING:

**"Beside the White
Chickens":
The Prepositional
Phrase and the Lyric
Poem**

Continued on page 6

Lyric poets are wary of modification, but what of the prepositional phrase, a modifier lyric poems seem to love? After a brief walk through the history of the prepositional phrase and its linguistic role in the English language, we'll focus our attention on syntax. We'll uncover how the prepositional phrase delivers imagery, locates the lyric poem on the planet, and manipulates how we perceive the poem's materials. Don't be afraid—but we'll even diagram some sentences in order to better visualize what the prepositional phrase does to a sentence. Are you a prose writer? Don't worry, there are



GINA TRON

PRESENTING:

**A Non Fiction Proposal
that can attract
an Agent
– A How To**

Continued on page 6

Gina Tron has written two non-fiction book proposals with the assistance of two literary agents. The second is currently being shopped around by her literary agent. She began calling editors about it mid-March and it's already under review by Simon and Schuster, Crown, Penguin Press, Hachette Books. Whether or not any publisher will actually want it is another story.

In this workshop, Gina will explain the structure and purpose of a nonfiction proposal. She will explain how to create one on your own to attract an agent and will also explain what the process of working with an agent on a proposal is like. Spoiler: it is not a fast process. It can take months to perfect a book proposal, and often the proposal is



ELLEN PERRY BERKELEY

PRESENTING:

**Writing Memoir —
Questions,
Answers,
and Fun**

Continued on page 6

This workshop begins with some facts – how a memoir is different from an autobiography, for instance, and what the process can bring to the delighted writer, and whether a memoir can be about someone other than the writer – and more. We move on to answer many questions (and even experienced writers will have many questions). Finally, we do a brief memoir-writing exercise, followed by still more questions, and by gentle critiques for the few participants who will be sharing what they've written. For any writers who have thought of doing a memoir at some point, but have postponed



Letter from the President

Dear Members,

My last president's letter I wrote nine-months pregnant, well in advance of this newsletter, so not to forget or struggle to find time to write it after my son's birth.

This one, I type with one hand as I hold my four-month-old with the other. There's been no shortage of ways I've attempted to multitask since November, no ceasing to try to find the balance between home, work, and LVW.

I'm afraid that balancing act is imperfect, better some days than others. As a result, League activity is happening more slowly than my usual tempo. Still, people behind the scenes are hard at work:

- The programming committee is announcing April's program in the pages of this newsletter.
- The Writers Meet Agents subcommittee --led by new Board member and organizer, **Shawn Anderson**-- is diligently and furiously making plans for this July's biennial event. **(Mark your calendars for July 23rd at the Double Tree Hotel in**

South Burlington.)

- Membership chair, **Tommy Walz**, and committee member/Board member **Wendy Heilig** are preparing a presentation to the Board, so we can begin digging in and improving upon an array of membership issues.
- We are in pursuit of new volunteers to help with League Lines and have a couple of amazing leads.
- A new member came forward to offer her services at grant writing and she's working on a grant proposal for funding to hire a consultant to help with strategic planning.
- **Elizia Meskill**, treasurer, is preparing our taxes, while immediate past president, **Deb Fennell**, and I move towards renewing our 501(c) 3 status, as is required every two years.
- Our intern, **Amanda Wedegis**, is still plugging away at sending out monthly Mail Chimps and is going above and beyond the call of duty, facilitating a networking event (see more on page 4) to serve Leaguers while also

serving as her graduating capstone project.

I am appreciative of the work others are doing to keep things moving along as I work to straighten out and strengthen my new-mommy-working-full-time-and-staying-the-LVW-President legs. Thank you for your support and your service.

For the good of the cause,

Alyssa Berthiaume



LVW ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Pat Goudey O'Brien is looking for someone with editing and graphics skills to help out with (and eventually take over) the workings of *League Lines* and the League's web site.
- The marketing committee, programming committee, and membership committee are also actively taking new volunteers

If you'd like to put your skills to use for the League in one of the above ways please drop us a line at lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org.

WINTER 2016 PROGRAM RECAPS

RECAP TITLE

by xxx



Gary Miller, Writers for Recovery

by Julia Hoover

Gary Miller is the Creative Director of the relatively new substance abuse recovery program *Writers for Recovery*. He is also a writer and substance abuse counselor at *Writers for Recovery*, which offers a creative treatment alternative to those suffering from substance addiction issues.

Clients come to sessions and are given writing prompts such as “I am From...” which they then use to begin free-writing. Rules are set to allow participants the greatest amount of security and likely benefit. Among the rules: there is “positive-only feedback;” grammar and spelling don’t matter; there is no way to do it wrong.

The idea is that clients “just go”—often clients have learned that writing is punitive and, moreover, that their writing is terrible. But by having them just sit down and go, Miller’s team has given clients no room for self-doubt. Healing ensues.

Writers for Recovery came about after the filming of *The Hungry Heart*, a film Mil-

ler worked on with Bess O’Brien that is changing how viewers see the face of addiction in Vermont. Working on the film together spurred O’Brien and Miller to find people who would tell their stories through film, photography, radio, podcasts—and in writing. O’Brien got a call from Burlington Labs, wanting to fund a writing workshop; O’Brien and Miller started *Writers for Recovery*.

Workshops now take place throughout Vermont in community centers, in prisons, and in rehab centers from Barre to Burlington to St. Johnsbury and Rutland. They range from five to ten weeks in length, and invite not only those in recovery but families, as well.

Critical to the process is the unmasking of addiction. In AA, the anonymity of addicts is central; but in *Writers for Recovery*, participants are encouraged to take hold of their addiction and remain known. Miller feels that by keeping addicts anonymous and secret, addicts remain depersonalized. Americans feel free to demonize what they do not know, and as long as addiction remains “the other,” society remains free to see addiction as someone else’s problem. But if addicts own their

addiction and give their names, it won’t be so easy for society to dismiss them—or their problems.

Writers for Recovery has seen some significant successes and has been featured in the *Burlington Free Press*. One client who had done very little writing previously, within three weeks, came to divulge the suicide of a loved one. He had repressed this memory, a memory that took place during his early adulthood. Through writing, he was able to bring up and face this event among a group of supportive peers.

The program has also published a book, *One Imagined Word at a Time*, available through their website, WritersForRecovery.Org, or on Amazon. They also give public readings and have a blog featuring the work of their clients.

In time, Miller hopes that *Writers for Recovery* will not only help addicts change their own self-perception, but will also help change society’s perception of addicts.



WINTER 2016 PROGRAM RECAPS

RECAP TITLE

by xxx

WMA 2016 SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, July 23, 2016 at the DoubleTree Hotel in South Burlington

WRT NETWORKING NIGHT

Tuesday, April 12 from 6 to 9pm in Perry Presentation

251 S Willard St, Burlington, VT 05401

What would you tell a room of aspiring writers on the brink of joining the career field? On April 12, **Amanda Wedegis** is hosting the first Champlain College WRT Networking Night to give students and professional writers the opportunity to mingle and discuss writing careers. This is a chance for students to gain advice, build relationships, and learn more about the LVW.

For more information, contact Amanda:

amanda.wedegis@gmail.com.

INTRODUCING GRAVEDIGGER'S PEN

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

You and Your Credits

Annalisa Parent: featured on *The Liberated Woman Podcast* – Why it's time to invite your creative, imaginative self out to Play, Paint, Write, Create. Available on iTunes.

Ellen Perry Berkeley: regular contributor to a newsletter distributed to members and potential members of grief groups. Sharing the celebrations and the irritations, her writing is described as “personal and yet universal.” [Ellen is on the agenda for the April 16 LVW Spring Program.]

Margery Sharp: continues to report for *Shelburne News*, including play reviews and personality profiles, and more.

Shawn Thomas Anderson: 1.) story, “Tricks and Treats and Chicken Feet,” in the anthology *Halloween Night: Trick or Treat*, released in Oct. 2015. 2.) Story, “Pandora’s Super-Sparkly Doom-icom Blink Box,” in *Fossil Lake III: UNICORNADO!*, released in Feb. 2016. 3.) Three stories, “Peeka-boo,” “Vasilisa,” and “Lure of the Night Parade,” in anthology *Not so Local Legends of Triumph and Terror*, releasing Spring 2016.

Jerry Johnson: CD companion to his book available free with book purchase, *Up the Creek without a Saddle*, with songs by John

Gailmor and Pete Sutherland. And general release of children’s book, *Noah’s Song*, with illustrations by Adrien Patenaude (book was originally released in limited edition and sold as fund-raiser for Patenaude scholarship).

Maggie Thompson: article in *Green Mountain Trading Post*, “Snowshoes, Snow Angels, Ben and Me” (Dec. 2015). And Amherst Writers and Artists Affiliate, leading writing workshops in Montpelier.

Kara Joyce: Copy editor, *The First Century: Jacob Edwards library 1914-2014*. And editor, *The Ghost of Good Intentions*, by Tim Brookes.

Stephen Russell Payne: *Cliff Walking, A Novel*, from Cedar Ledge Publishing. “Riding My Guitar: the Rick Norcross Story,” “Ties that Bind Us,” in a Vermont short story collection coming in 2016. Many short stories published in *Vermont Life*, *Vermont Magazine*, *the Tufts Review*, and more.

Ron Thompson: “On Cue Managing Anxiety, Inviting Excellence,” from *Masterful Life-Performance Press* (2015).

Nancy Kilgore: author of the novel *Sea Level* (was a Foreword Review “Book of the Year”), and “The Revolution and Egg Salad Sandwiches,” a memoir in *Times They Were*

A’changing: Women Remember th 60s & 70s (from She Writes Press).

Nancy is 2016 winner of the Vermont Writers Prize from *Vermont Magazine* and Green Mountain Power for her short story, “A Thousand Half Loves.”

Justine O’Keefe: memoir about her mother, *This is Where I Leave You*, available as ebook from Kindle.

Ted Tedford: spoke at several libraries and historical societies on his historical novel, *Incident at A St. Albans*, chronicling the Civil War raid on the city of St. Albans in 1864, the northernmost land action of the war.

As a member of the League of Vermont Writers you have access to a free manuscript critique service!

Visit the website for more details.

Please note that the address for sending your manuscripts has changed. Please send to:

LVW Manuscript Critique Service
Director c/o **Sharon Putnam**
108 Waterford Lane
North Springfield, VT 05150

Book Distribution-a collaborative Effort for LVW Author- Members at VermontPress.org

Promotion and publicity are not in the constitution or the strong suit of most writers. Tasks such as visiting bookstores, writing and sending press releases, applying for awards and business aspects of publishing tasks quickly colonize precious hours that should be devoted to the craft of writing and are to most annoying.

As the publishing industry has changed emphasis, authors find themselves torn, frayed and oscillating between choices of excelling at their art or promoting their accomplishments. Hours and days that could be devoted to prose and carving new stories are eaten away with emails, phone calls, packaging, post office trips. The process dilutes the diligence, discourages many good authors. Consequently, many excellent writers may remain nameless.

The Vermont Press took on the challenge of addressing that need and kicked off a web site for Vermont Writers. Its aim is to organize a collaborative force to promote and distribute books to small bookstores across the state and perhaps beyond. If you are a member of the League and deem that such approach could be of benefit to you, please express your interest at: <http://vermontpress.org>.

Do You Write Plays? Are you Looking for a Group of Playwrights?

Please send LVW member, **Marge Sharp**, an email with your interest. Marge is looking to start a playwriting group. She can be reached at:

margehsharp@gmail.com

2016 Spring Program, continued

KERRIN MCCADDEN, CONT.

uses for you in this too. We are talking about freezing the moment.

About Kerrin: Kerrin McCadden is the author of *Landscape with Plywood Silhouettes*, winner of the Vermont Book Award and the New Issues Poetry Prize. She is the recipient of fellowships and awards from The National Endowment for the Arts, The Vermont Studio Center, The Sustainable Arts Foundation, The Vermont Arts Council, and The Vermont Arts Endowment Fund. Her poems have appeared in *Best American Poetry*, *The Academy of American Poets' Poem-a-Day series*, *Verse Daily*, *American Poetry Review*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and elsewhere. A graduate of The MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College, she teaches at Montpelier High School and lives in Montpelier, Vermont.

GINA TRON, CONT.

between 50 - 100 pages.

About Gina: Gina Tron is an author and reporter whose articles have been published in *The Washington Post*, *VICE*, *Politico*, *The Daily Beast*, *Xojane*, *Salon*, and *Ladygunn*. She is daily reporter for the *Barre-Montpelier Times Argus*. One article, a personal reflection in *VICE* about being an accused school shooter, received international recognition and is in the process of being optioned into a feature film. Another *VICE* article about sexual assault led to Gina being the subject of *UnSlut: A Documentary Film*, produced by WWE wrestler and feminist Mick Foley. She has spoken on *NPR*, *MPR*, and *VPR* several times, often about the heroin epidemic. *Seven Days* has credited her with helping to break the story about heroin being an issue in Vermont.

You're Fine.—Gina's memoir about her own time struggling with addiction—was published in 2014 with Papercut Press of Brooklyn. *Interview Magazine* called the book "vibrant, darkly funny, and courageously candid." It has received positive reviews from *Interview Magazine*, *Seven Days*, *Pank Magazine* and others. It has received 4.5 out of 5 stars on Goodreads. The book is sold nationally, including in seven indie bookstores in the New York City area. The Strand in Manhattan had placed it in its "Best of the Best" section for months, and Denver bookstore Mutiny sold out virtually once a week in 2015. Ann Coulter recommended the book on her website for over a month. Gina collaborated with photographer Jena Cumbo on a book published in 2015, *We Met On The Internet*, about couples who met online two years ago. It was called "an anthropological study" by *The New York Times*. A small press in Denver will be publishing a collection of dark comedic short stories she wrote in June 2016. In 2015, Gina started working with literary agent Roseanne Wells, of the Jennifer De Chiara Literary Agency. Together, they are working on upcoming book projects.

ELLEN PERRY BERKELEY, CONT.

doing it – or even thinking about it – this workshop will be encouraging, educational, and fun.

About Ellen: Ellen has been writing for more than five decades. She worked in New York City on several architectural journals, and enjoyed considerable recognition as a Senior Editor on the esteemed *Architectural Forum*. When these magazines began struggling in the recession of the early 1970s, she and her husband moved to a house of her design in Shaftsbury, VT, and she began a rewarding free-lance career – many articles, much teaching, and five published books. Her book *Maverick Cats: Encounters with Feral Cats* received the book-of-the-day review in the *New York Times*. Her book *At Grandmother's Table*, with herself as Volume Editor, attained a sales rank in the top 100 on Amazon.com. (Several Vermont women were contributors to this book, writing about their grandmothers and enclosing "heirloom recipes" from the grandmas.) She has taught a three-credit elective on writing and architectural criticism at some of the nation's leading architecture schools. More recently, she has conducted memoir-writing workshops in various local venues: libraries, retirement facilities, arts fairs. By the way, Ellen loves writing. She has been honored with a fair number of awards for her work, and while she works fiercely on every project, she never considers it "work."

TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE LEAGUE!

HAVE THEM VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

www.leagueofvermontwriters.org

Registration Form

LVW 2016 Spring Program

Register online at www.leagueofvermontwriters.org or fill out the form below and mail with a check to: **PO Box 5046, Burlington, VT 05401.**

Make check payable to: *LVW Spring 2016 Program*

Registrar: info@leagueofvermontwriters.org

DATE: April 16, 2016

TIME: 9:30am - 2:30pm

LOCATION: One Scale Avenue Rutland, Vermont 05701 Bldg. 3

Schedule at a glance:

8:45 - 9:30am *Registration*

9:30 - 10:30am **Kerrin McCadden**

10:30 - 10:45am *Break*

10:45-11:45am **Gina Tron**

11:45am - 1:00pm *Break/Lunch*

1:00 - 2:00pm **Ellen Berkeley**

DIRECTIONS: From North - Take US-7 South to Rutland. Turn right onto Madison Street. Turn left onto Strongs Avenue, and right onto Scale Avenue. Howe Center is on the right.

From East - I-89 South to Exit 3 for Rutland. Follow VT-107 West and VT-100 South to US-4 West in Killington. Take US-4 West into Rutland. Turn left onto US-7 South.

From South - I-91 North to Exit 6. Follow VT-103 to US-7 South to Rutland.

Conference Center is located in Building #3 on the right side of the tunnel from the entrance.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Members: _____ @ \$50 ea. registration = \$ _____

Nonmembers: _____ @ \$55 ea. registration = \$ _____

[Students, ask about our student discount]

Tax deductible donation: \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Check # _____

Do you have special dietary needs? _____

LVW Board: Alyssa Berthiaume, president; Bobbi Jo Davis, vice-president; Julia Hoover, secretary, Deb Fennell, past president; Elizia Meskill, treasurer; Pat Goudey O'Brien, Shawn Anderson, Wendy Heilig, Annalisa Parent, and Lisa Halvorsen at large.

Membership: Tommy Waltz; Critique service: Sharon Putnam.

League Lines is published four times per year, in January, April, July, and September. Questions or information can be emailed to us at lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org

Tommy Waltz
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Barre, VT 05641