

Biblio File

The Society of Midland Authors has two new board members. **Margaret Graham Tebo** has been appointed to a vacancy and will run in next year's election for a full three-year term. Tebo is an author, past president of the Chicago Headline Club, a literary agent (she represented SMA Past President Richard Lindberg) and a licensed lawyer who also worked as a writer for the American Bar Association Journal. Her latest book is *Shakespeare for Lawyers*. She lives in Lombard, Ill. The other new board member appointed to fill a vacancy is **Keir Graff**. Author of *The Price of Liberty* and three other novels, Keir also has published short stories in the Chicago Reader, Time Out Chicago!, Downstate Story and other publications. Keir is a



**Leone Castell
Anderson**

produced playwright ("Driving a Bargain," 2000) and is editor of Booklist Online. His latest book, *The Other Felix*, is due out Oct. 11. ... Welcome, Margaret and Keir. ... Forget Humpty Dumpty's great fall; **Leone Castell Anderson** has been having a great summer. Her poem, "Celebration" was featured on the back cover of the July/August Humpty Dumpty Magazine. Also, the American Library Association has asked permission to use Leone's *Wonderful Shrinking Shirt* (an out-of-print picture book) in its forthcoming New Handbook for Storytellers (October, 2011). Leone also was scheduled to be a speaker at the ABC Writers/SCBWI-IL-sponsored Writers Retreat in Rockford (Ill.) Aug. 2 through 4 and a reader on the children's stage for the In Print Book Fair at the Cherry Valley (Ill.) Barnes and Noble on Saturday, Sept. 10.

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E-books, transit history start SMA programs for 2011-12

BY ROBERT LOERZEL

A discussion on e-books and a tour of Chicago transit history will kick off the Society of Midland Authors' 2011-12 season.

The Society will host six public events at the Cliff Dwellers Club in downtown Chicago.

Oct. 11: E-books: A panel discussion on trends in electronic publishing, with **Dominique Raccah, Libby Fischer Hellmann** and **Kelly Griffin**.

Raccah is the publisher of Naperville-based Sourcebooks, the largest woman-owned trade book publisher in North America, which is known for its innovative e-books and mixed-media titles. She recently worked on BookStats, a national survey on the state of the book industry.

Hellmann is an award-winning author of seven crime-thriller novels, including the recent *Set the Night on Fire*. All her work is available digitally, and some of her books have been published first as e-books without print versions, including *Toxicity* and *The Last Page* (co-written with David Walker).

Griffin is a member of the Chicago Public Library's Collections Development Division, where she helps to develop the library's e-book collection.

Nov. 8: Greg Borzo, author of *The*

Chicago 'L.' Discover the world-famous Chicago "L" in all its grit and glory. Travel through time on one of Chicago's most enduring icons, a working antique that has contributed mightily to the growth and development of the city and suburbs.

An award-winning journalist, Borzo was editor of *Modern Railroads Magazine* and has been a health and/or science

writer for the American Medical Association, Harcourt Brace, Field Museum and the University of Chicago. He conducts public tours of the "L," local history and *The Devil in the White City* for the Chicago History Museum, Chicago Cycling Club and other organizations.

His most recent book is *Where to Bike Chicago: Best Biking in City and Suburbs*.

The Society is also planning programs in January, February, March and April 2012. Details will be announced.

All programs are at 7 p.m. at the Cliff Dwellers Club, 200 S. Michigan Ave., 22nd floor, Chicago. A social hour, with complimentary snacks and a cash bar, begins at 6 p.m. Reservations are not required.

Admission is free, but the Society will accept donations to defray the cost of programs. For more information, see www.midlandauthors.com.



Robert Loerzel

Literary
Landscape

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Literary Loudspeaker:
Tom Ciesielka

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... Susan Klonsky and **Timuel Black** have been working for two and a half years on Black's memoirs, which are scheduled to be published next year by the University of Illinois Press. Klonsky also is editing the third volume of Black's *Bridges of Memory* for Northwestern University Press. ... **James Reiss'** poem, "My Daughters in New York," was reprinted in *Good Poems American Places*, edited by Garrison Keillor (Viking, 2011). ... **Libby Fischer Hellmann**, author of seven novels, a novella and a collection of 15 short stories, will conduct a one-day crime-writing workshop titled "Anatomy of a Crime Novel: The Craft of Crime Fiction" on two different dates this fall at the Winnetka (Ill.) Community Center. Libby will discuss writing crime fiction and polishing a manuscript. The workshops, limited to 12 attendees, will run 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sept. 24 and Oct. 29. The \$375 fee includes lunch, amenities, handouts and an edit of 20 pages. To register: www.libbyhellmann.com. ... **Margaret McMullan** is the winner of the 2011 Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana Authors Award in the National Author category, which comes with a \$10,000 prize. The award will be presented Oct. 29 at Central Library in downtown Indianapolis. ... **Craig Sautter** taught a "Chicago Politics: It Ain't Bean Bag" class this summer. A featured speaker

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Saller



Lynn
Voedisch



June Skinner
Sawyers



Gail
Lukasic



Richard
Lindberg

Printers Row: The rain, the books and other things

BY RICHARD LINDBERG

It's hard to believe, but 2011 marked the 11th consecutive year that the Society of Midland Authors has hosted a table for member authors displaying and selling their work to book lovers and passers-by partaking in the sun, the fun and the showers of the June 4-5 LitFest, formerly known as the Printer's Row Book Fair.

Yes, another torrential downpour made a soggy mess of the final two hours on Saturday, as book sellers scurried to cover their wares with plastic sheeting as the skies blackened and the clap of ominous thunder was heard in the distance. The rain was flying into our tent nearly sideways for a full hour, by which time most people thought the better of it and headed home.

It happens every year.

The SMA table was located on Dearborn, just north of Harrison Street. Joining hosts **Carol Carlson**, **Rich Lindberg** and **Bob Loerzel** in the tent on Saturday was the prolific **June Skinner Sawyers**, whose 22nd book is *Bob Dylan: New York*. There was a lot of interest in John Presta and his book *Mr and Mrs Grassroots: How Barack Obama, Two Bookstore Owners and 300 Volunteers Did It*.

Later, **George Levy**, author of *To Die in Chicago: Confederate Prisoners at Camp Douglas*, was joined by **Nancy Wikarski**, promoting her two historical novels *The Fall of the White City* and *Shrouded in Thought*.

Just before the rains began to fall, **Gunter Nitsch** was in the tent selling his

two-volume memoir of a boyhood in war-torn Germany: *Weeds Like Us* and *Stretch: Coming of Age in Post-War Germany*.

Sunday dawned bright and clear. Temperatures moderated and thankfully there was no rain. The crowd seemed much larger than on Saturday as **Carol Fisher Saller**, author of *The Subversive Copy Editor* and *Eddie's War*, was joined by **Gail Lukasic**, author of several Door County - Leigh Girard mysteries including *Death's Door*.

Gerry & Janet Souter, authors of many fine historical works of nonfiction including *The Earnhardts*, and *The Founding of the United States* rounded out the afternoon with **Lynn Voedisch**, SMA board member and author of *The God's Wife*.

Helen Kossler, a fine book reviewer and blogger from the Wednesday Journal of Oak Park, stopped by the tent on Sunday to introduce her column and speak with the authors in attendance. Indeed, one of the real pleasures of the annual LitFest is one just never knows who will drop by the tent with a story or two to share with us.

Chicago is full of colorful characters, and at the end of the day, the attorney for several leading underworld figures including reputed mob boss Joey "the Clown" Lombardo, spent some time at the SMA booth sharing her impressions and swapping anecdotes from the recent "Family Secrets Trial" detailing mob murder in the Windy City - although she was careful not to reveal the really juicy secrets.

That was left for another day.

LITERARY LICENSE, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2011

'Like the Wild West out there'

Libby Fischer Hellman, the award-winning author of seven novels, will be on the panel at the Oct. 11 Society of Midland Authors Program. Literary License caught up with her for this Q&A:

Literary License: How many of your books have gone to ebook formal?

Libby Fisher Hellmann: All my books are now ebooks. I have the rights to about half. My publisher(s) have the rights to the others. I also have created and uploaded original materials, including a collection of my short stories *Nice Girl Does Noir*, Vol. 1 and 2), a novella I co-wrote with **David Walker** (*The Last Page*) and a novel that had not been previously published (*Toxicity*) that turned out to be the prequel to my Georgia Davis series. I also uploaded the stories in the collection individually, each for 99 cents.

LL: Does an ebook give you the same sense of having produced something tangible?

LFH: Sure. The format doesn't change the fact that I'm a storyteller and I'm making my stories available to readers. How they read them, or when, or on what device is immaterial. The stories are there, and I try to make sure readers know where to find them, whether they're hard copy, books, ebooks, or something yet to be invented.

LL: Are ebook economics fair to authors?

LFH: It depends. If you're talking about authors whose ebooks are controlled by the "Big 6," absolutely not: 25% of net royalties is highway robbery and authors should be up in arms about that. Independent publishers tend to be more fair by offering 50%. I think authors should get 70%, which is the royalty rate Amazon and Barnes and Noble pay for ebooks that are priced between \$2.99 and \$9.99. What galls me (and I'm sorry if I'm insulting anyone – it's not personal) are the companies that profess to "get your books to the ebook marketplace" and take 10, 15, or more percent of your earnings. A writer doesn't need another middleman to get their ebooks to market. Really, they don't. It is not rocket science. The problem is that too many writers do not consider themselves businesspersons. They are "writers" and can't be bothered with all the financial stuff. That is (at least

to me) not wise. Writers should be in charge of their careers, and thanks to all the options available these days, they can be. That doesn't mean they are necessarily going to find the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, but it does give writers an opportunity they've never had before.

LL: Have all those ebook offerings from otherwise-unpublished authors given ebooks a bad reputation?

LFH: That's a tricky question. There's no question that a lot of otherwise unpublished books are floating around the Internet. And it's depressing for authors who take pride in their prose and storytelling abilities. In fact, it kind of devalues

all of us, especially when you see those 99-cent books in the top 10 of their categories. I'm not sure what the answer is. There are no "gatekeeper" sites in the same way that reviewers were, although there are some bloggers and websites trying to break out. Essentially,

though, it's still kind of like the Wild West out there, and authors are competing against all sorts of people.

However, the bottom line is, are you going to compete and hope that good writing wins out, or are you going to pick up your marbles and go home? I've elected to stay and fight the good fight, mostly because I think ebooks are here to stay, and they are forever. They will never go out of print. I'm trying to take the long view, and hope that in 2 years, 5 years, even 10 years, my books will still be steadily selling. In that respect I try (not always successfully, mind you) not to compete. I'm there, I'll stay there, and hopefully, readers will find me.

I do want to talk a little bit about marketing, because promoting ebooks is entirely different than promoting hard copy books, but I'll save that for the SMA program. (And yes, that's what we call a "tease.")

LL: What's your next ebook?

LFH: I just released *Toxicity*, and that's it until my new thriller comes out next spring. It's called *A Bitter Veil*. It's a literary mystery set in Iran during the revolution of 1979-1980. Allium Press is publishing it both in trade paperback, ebook, and possibly a limited edition hard cover.

*Literary
Landscape
with
Libby
Fischer
Hellmann*



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who had the class enthralled: **Rich Lindberg**. The class had lots of hot debates on Rahm Emanuel and the unions. (Rich's 16th and most recent book, *Whiskey Breakfast: My Swedish Family, My American Life*, due out this fall (University of Minnesota), was reviewed in the Sept. 5 Publishers Weekly. Rich says it's a sign of how much harder it is to get books noticed these days: He says he used to get reviewed in PW every time, but it's been 20 years since the last one. As to the book, Lindberg says: "I think it's the best thing I have ever written." PW says: "Lindberg serves up captivating historical tidbits and offers a window into the immigrant experience.") ... The third book of **Bryan Gruley's** "accidental trilogy," *The Skeleton Box*, is scheduled to be published in early 2012. The first in the series, *Starvation Lake*, is in its 11th printing. (Gruley left the Wall Street Journal where he was Chicago bureau chief in July and will join Bloomberg News as a reporter-at-large in September.) New York filmmaker John Gray says he plans to adapt the second in the trilogy, *The Hanging Tree*, for the big screen. ... A second print edition has just been released, with one new story, two new illustrations and a slightly improved cover, of **Paul McComas' Unforgettable: Harrowing Futures, Horrors, & (Dark) Humor** (Walkabout Publishing, 2011). It's also now available electronically for \$8.99 on Kindle and as an e-book at www.smashwords.com. Also, webmaster Neal Katz and McComas have been revamping McComas' website, <http://paulmccomas.com>. ... Reviewing the new paperback version of **Scott Turow's Innocent**, the Lincoln Journal Star wrote: "there is a tense and excruciating trial with all the drama and surprises from his astonishing bag of lawyer tricks." ... **Jack Fuller** was one of five members of the Dow Jones Special Committee who signed a July 22 op-ed defending the Wall Street Journal's integrity. ... **Carol DeChant** has a new website, www.GreatAmericanCatholicEulogies.com The National Catholic Reporter wrote

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Aug. 26 of *Great American Catholic Eulogies* “when you hear the list of those being eulogized, you’ll understand the attraction.” ... On Sept .30, **Harry Mary Petrakis** and his wife, Diana, will have been married 66 years. “That staggers the imagination, doesn’t it?” writes Harry,



Rob Warden

who most recently penned a poignant essay in the Aug. 28 Chicago Sun-Times about finally meeting a longtime reader with whom he had carried on a correspondence. The spur-of-the-moment meeting came just days before the reader’s death. ... **Rob**

Warden will receive the Chicago Ideas Heroes Award on Oct. 13. ... Just in from Biblio File’s foreign news report: The Beirut (Lebanon) Daily Star, writing on Aug. 25 about how, “The anti-noise

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SMA Support

The Society of Midland Authors needs donations to fund its book awards and for other reasons. Thanks to these members for their contributions:

Richard and Margery Frisbie, James V. and Lynda O’Connor, Theodore Berland, Harry Mark Petrakis, Dr. Frank Gonzalez-Crussi, Michael Argetsinger, Harriette Gillem Robinet, James C. Schwab, Thomas Frisbie, Katherine McCaughan, Carol DeChant, Phyllis Ford Choyke, Liesel Litzenburger, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Charles J. Masters, Timuel Black, Alzina Stone Dale, Joey Korom, Elizabeth H. Gray, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Robert J.R. Follett, John F. Wasik, Sue Harrison, Marcia Nelson, Cynthia Rademacher, Jean Bethke Elshain, Richard Lindberg, Carol Fisher Saller, Fran Baker, Gary W. Moore, Merv Block, Stella Pevsner, Carol B. Gartner, Michael Ebner and Christopher T. Leland.

New Books

RETIREMENT PLAN: A CRIME NOVEL

What do you do when you fall through the loopholes in the system and all you have to rely on are your own wits?

In Retirement Plan: A Crime Novel, (Bold Strokes Books, May, 2011), Lois and Sophie have scrambled and saved for years, planning for their retirement in Florida. But now they’ve lost it all, and Lois’ sniper training from her long-ago service as an Army nurse leads to a desperate career choice.



Martha Miller

When Detective Morgan Holiday is assigned to investigate a spate of sniper killings, it’s just one more stress point in her already overburdened life. But as she grows increasingly solitary – coping with an Alzheimer’s-plagued mother who refuses to be confined to a nursing home, and a police partner counting the days to retirement – she comes to realize that these murders may cut close to home.

Martha Miller’s fifth book is a modern morality tale of justice, retribution, and women who refuse to be politely invisible.

A SEPARATE COUNTRY: POSTCOLONIALITY AND AMERICAN INDIAN NATIONS

In *A Separate Country: Postcoloniality and American Indian Nations* (Texas Tech University Press, Nov. 1) **Elizabeth Cook-Lynn** gathers evidence that – far from what she sees as the prevailing academic view that American Indians’ current condition is “postcoloniality” – American Indians remain among the most colonized people in the modern world. She argues that proportionately in the last last century, government-supported development of casinos and tourism

probably cost Indians more treaty-protected land than they lost in the entire 19th century.

THE GOD’S WIFE

In *The God’s Wife*, novelist and journalist **Lynn Voedisch** explores the world of ancient Egyptian women in a fact-based, magic-filled work of historical fiction, (Fiction Studio Books, Aug. 9). (Lou Aronica, the former publisher of Avon Books, left to do projects of his own and came up with Fiction Studio Books as a “boutique publishing imprint”). The book tells the story of powerful priestess Neferet, who holds the office of God’s Wife of Amun, as power-hungry palace politicians and sexual harassers threaten to take away her status, second only to the pharaoh’s. Meanwhile, Rebecca, a contemporary dancer in 2011 Chicago falls into trances in which imagines herself to be in ancient Egypt. Rebecca, slated to perform in a staged version of “Aïda,” finds her research taking her farther and farther into the world of sphinxes and the Nile. Soon she begins to see and even speak to Neferet. The women’s parallel worlds run on a collision course, and only one will survive.

SECOND NATURE: A LOVE STORY

“Normally,” **Jacquelyn Mitchard** writes, “when I’ve finished a book nearly a year ago, I’m ready to drive a stake through its heart. And yet, I love the story of Sicily Coyne, who gets a second chance 12 years after her face is disfigured in a fire that also kills her firefighter father. But Sicily’s face transplant is just the beginning of the story.” *Second Nature: A Love Story* (Random House, Sept.



Jacquelyn Mitchard

6) tells the story of medical and ethical challenges no one ever imagined await

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New Books

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Sicily. Publishers Weekly called the book "a riveting tale," and Booklist advised readers to "make no immediate plans. This book will take over your life."

"I don't want it to take over your life," Mitchard writes, "but I do hope you'll let it be a part of your upcoming season of cozy reading."

HAUNTED WISCONSIN: THIRD EDITION

Michael Norman's *Haunted Wisconsin* gathers personal interviews, credible eye-witnesses, on-site explorations, historical archives, newspaper reports and other sources dating from Wisconsin's early settlement days to recent inexplicable events. He writes about Wisconsin's most

famous haunted house, Summerwind; three Milwaukee men who encountered the beautiful ghost of National Avenue; a phantom basketball player; a spectral horse that signaled death in the pioneer era of the Wisconsin Dells; a poltergeist in St. Croix

County who attracted a crowd of more than three hundred spectators; the Ridgeway Ghost who haunts the driftless valleys of southwestern Wisconsin; a swinging railroad lantern held by unseen hands; the Ghost Island of the Chippewa Flowage; and many others. This third edition includes updates and several new accounts.



Michael Norman

CLAIM OF INNOCENCE

In **Laura Caldwell's** new book (Mira, Aug. 23), Chicago attorney Izzy McNeil has just returned to the law when she



Laura Caldwell

takes on the case of Valerie Solara, a woman accused of poisoning her best friend. Izzy's job is to present facts that will exonerate her client - whether or not she is innocent - but as she digs deeper into the web of secret passions and dark motives that surround Valerie, Izzy can't help but feel she is hiding something.

But is Valerie the only one whose passions have turned her life upside down?

Reflecting on her ex-fiancé, Sam and her criminally gorgeous younger boyfriend, Theo, Izzy can't help but wonder.

THE TIGER'S EYE: NEW AND SELECTED STORIES

Gladys Swan's 10th book, *The Tiger's Eye: New and Selected Stories*, has been published by Serving House Books, a recent imprint publishing both American and International writers.

The collection includes work published over the last 40 years in such literary magazines as the *Sewanee Review*, the *Kenyon Review*, the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Ohio Review*, *Southwest Review*, *Manoa*, *Chelsea*, *New Letters* and others. Her stories also have been published in various anthologies.

FORMULA 1 AT WATKINS GLEN: 20 YEARS OF THE UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX 1961-1980

Michael Argetsinger's new book (David Bull Publishing) recounts the 20-year period that the United States Grand Prix was held at the upstate New York track. Argetsinger's parents, Cameron and Jean, brought Formula One to Watkins Glen, and he grew up working with racing as the family business. Now, on the 50th anniversary of F1 at the Glen, he provides a firsthand perspective on the entire era. The book has spectacular photographs, accounts of dramatic race action and portraits of key drivers and team leaders.

THOMAS JEFFERSON FOR KIDS, HIS LIFE AND TIMES

Brandon Marie Miller's new book for young people (her 10th) has been published by Chicago Review Press. It includes Jefferson's original writings and hands-on activities that help illuminate his life. Jefferson was an architect, a scientist, a writer, a dreamer and the supreme believer in freedom from government. Jefferson author and adjunct law school professor R. B. Bernstein, wrote, "Altogether admirable. Brandon Marie Miller has written a concise, graceful, and accessible biography that carries lightly an astonishing amount of information and insight. This book is illuminating and brimming with respect for its subject and its readers. The activities are well-chosen to give young readers a sense of what Thomas Jefferson's world was like. Highly, and delightedly, recommended."

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movement in the West started in the 1970s" cites **Theodore Berland's** 1970 book *The Fight for Quiet* as leading to the Noise Control Act of 1972. ... **Laura**

Mazzuca Toops wrote a July 23 essay on bookstores, including **Augie Aleksy's** Centuries & Sleuths Bookstore in River Forest, Ill., for PropertyCasualty360.com. "C&S has stayed in business for more than 20 years because its owners love history, Chicago and books," Toops wrote. ...

In July, **Stephen Asma** discussed the universality of monster culture on BBC World News Television. ... **Carol Felsenthal** dropped in June 29 at WBEZ's 848 program to talk about Lura Lynn Ryan and Patti Blagojevich, the wives of

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Illinois' convicted ex-governors. ...

Kathleen Ernst was scheduled to appear at the Muskego (Wis.) Public Library on Aug. 9 and **Jacquelyn Mitchard** was to be there Aug. 24. ... Over the last two years **Marcus Sakey** has been working with an acclaimed production company to develop a television show. It will air on Travel Channel later this year, exploring cities through the crimes that define them. He's both writing and hosting, which lets him get into all kinds of trouble, from hanging out with gang cops to getting pepper sprayed on camera. ...

According to an Aug. 1 Chicago magazine staff blog, the most memorable letter that recent former editor **Richard**

Babcock received during his tenure was former SMA member **Studs Terkel's** answer to the question, "How do you get someone to open up about his life?"

Studs wrote, "They've got to believe you're interested. If it's a writer of a book, you've got to have read his book thoroughly. Or a person who is just an anonymous person – say for one of my books, say this guy is a carpenter – I'll ask him about his life and as he's talking I'm listening. I don't have written questions. It's a conversation, not an interview." ... **Richard Cahan** was quoted Aug. 3 in the Chicago Tribune about "Chicago's Gaudi," Edgar

Miller. ... Creeping Hemlock Press' new imprint dedicated to zombie fiction called Print is Dead has in the works a short story collection by

Gary A. Braunbeck.

... **Dominick Pacyga,**

John Barron and

Donna Seaman were

scheduled take part in

programs associated

with the selection of

former Society

member **Saul**

Bellow's 1953 book,

The Adventures of

Augie March, as the

latest title in the "One

Book, One Chicago program." ...

Patricia Dragisic wrote a Sept. 10 lead



Dominick Pacyga

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Promote your next book by becoming an expert

One way to communicate to a wider audience is to become an expert. Here's how to get started:

Define your niche and audience. An obvious niche is the area in which you write your books. But can you refine that even more? Plan where you are going to share your expertise and how you are going to communicate.

Prepare. It never hurts to get more education and to read even more so that you will be a good source of information. Get tips from an author who is more established in your field, or talk to a mentor. If you don't know anyone who can help, go online and look at experts' books and articles. Look at what the current experts know, and see if you can add something.

Break it down. A good way to become an expert is to simplify a complex subject for others. Post the explanation online at your own author's site or someone else's. There are also various publications that you can submit it to, online or offline.

Outlets. Experts give seminars, teach classes, appear on panels, write articles, post online, publish books, go on TV and radio, have a YouTube channel, and more. The more exposure, the more you'll be known.

After a while, people will ask you to make an appearance or write something for their publication.

Stay informed on your niche and develop superior speaking and writing skills. Your knowledge and experience, combined with your exposure, will make you a solid expert to whom people will turn.



If you want to be able to chat anywhere online, make your website more interactive, or get credit for "checking in" at various websites, try Meebo. Meebo is a free way to communicate and share online content through social networks and instant messaging.

Meebo Messenger: Use just one login to combine all of your instant messaging accounts, such as AIM, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, and more. You can also use it on your phone.

The **Meebo Bar** is on every page of your website so that visitors can drag and drop images or share links with anyone in their social networks.

Meebo MiniBar: Use with any browser so that you can chat anywhere and check in to different websites. Checking into sites often earns you VIP status.

If you don't want to log in to separate IM accounts and want to simplify communication, Meebo allows you to easily chat with your network on your computer or your phone, so you save time.

By putting the Meebo Bar on your website, your traffic can increase because your site will become more interactive. People can easily share your content with their social network, which will bring more people to your site. Meebo is convenient and easy to use and has a nice design.

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Photos. Post them online at including Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Posterous, Picplz or Flickr. Some of those sites can be linked to each other, so you only have to post the pictures at one place, and they will be dispersed among the network that you choose. Post pictures sparingly.

It doesn't hurt to maintain your communication with others at least once a day.

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Final Chapters

Mary Jane Miller

BY THOMAS FRISBIE

Children's author and teacher Mary Jane Miller of Naperville won awards for her writing but her highest accolade came from one of her young readers.

"You think like a kid," the young reader told Ms. Miller, who died Sept. 19 at 75 after a long illness.

Other children's authors in the area said they looked to Ms. Miller, who also was a teacher at St. Jane de Chantal on the South Side, for advice and support.

"She will be missed in the writing community," said SMA member Marlene Targ Brill, a Wilmette author of 67 children's books. "She was always positive, a very spiritual person. She had a lot of wisdom about writing and working with children."

In an email, Chicago children's author and SMA member Esther Hershenhorn wrote, "She was always there to support, cheer on, share and encourage us. Her warm and welcoming smile made you feel good for days."

A longtime friend, Sue Sussman, who now lives in Florida, said, "She had such a generous nature, and her friendship was a gift in my life. Mary Jane would share things she'd heard and read. 'Research is



Mary Jane Miller

endlessly seductive,' was one, mentioning when we talked about how much easier it was to do research than actually sit down and write (this in the days before computers put the world at our fingertips.) Another, which has been so helpful on those dark days of self-doubt is: 'Trust in the process.' I do, and the words begin again."

Anne Brashler

Anne Brashler, author of a collection of short stories, *Getting Jesus in the Mood*, (Cane Hill Press, 1991) and *The Talking Poems: A Family Legacy* (Lake Shore Publishers Inc., 1994) died in April.

A longtime SMA member, Ms. Brashler published many stories and poems in literary magazines.

She was a former writer in residence for the Illinois Arts Council, and was pub-

lished in Whetstone, The River Oak Review, New Letters, Other Voices, Ohio Journal, the Literary Review, Ohio Review, Pimevera, New Letters, Black Maria, Rhino, and others.

She also was co-editor of StoryQuarterly and co-editor of *The American Story: The Best of StoryQuarterly* (1990).

Ms. Brashler was the recipient of an Illinois Arts Council Fiction Award and

Ms. Miller grew up on the West Side and attended Trinity High School and two years at Rosary College, now Dominican University, in River Forest.

She married Joseph, who had the same last name, at Chicago's Resurrection Parish in 1961. When meeting children, she often introduced herself saying, "I am a Miller who married a Miller."

The couple lived in Des Plaines, Downers Grove and Maine, but spent most of their married life in Lombard before moving to Naperville.

Her middle-grade novels were *Me and My Name* (1992), which was nominated for the Rebecca Caudill Young Readers Book Award, *Upside Down* (1992), *Fast Forward* (1993) and *Going the Distance* (1994). She also contributed a chapter to *Speaking of Journals*, a book about writing journals.

In a review of *Me and My Name*, Publishers Weekly wrote, "With humor and sensitivity, Miller explores the complexity and confusion of early adolescence."

In recent years, Ms. Miller also was a children's book judge for the annual Society of Midland Authors book awards.

She is survived by her husband, Joseph; four daughters, Karen Boston Wright, Colleen Reid, Melinda Hart and Leanne Cochrane, and nine grandchildren.

was a finalist for the James Jones First Novel Contest (1995).

She also was a member of Fred Shafer's novel workshop and a member of the Writers-Books-on-Vernon.

In a review of *Getting Jesus in the Mood*, Kirkus Reviews wrote: "Brashler, who is co-editor of StoryQuarterly, is a stylist of note whose strongest efforts capture an off-kilter, dangerous world."

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letter to the editor in the Chicago Sun-Times headlined: "GOP's job ideas are discredited." ... Gary W. Moore talked

LITERARY LICENSE, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2011

with readers Sept. 17 at the Bourbonnais (Ill.) Public Library Authors Fair. ...

Arnie Bernstein reports he had a great research trip to New York for his next book. ... SMA Board Member Richard Bales is more than halfway through his

biography of Cap Streeter. ... Julie Hyzy recently tweeted that she was naming villains that day. "Always harder than I remember it being." ... "Haunted by God:

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The Life of Dorothy Day,” a one-woman play co-authored by **Robert McClory**, will be presented Oct. 3 at St.



Walter Podrazik

Norbert College in De Pere, Wis. ... **Deirdre McCloskey's** 2010 book *Bourgeois Dignity: Why Economics Can't Explain the Modern World*, was cited in a Sept. 3 Wall Street Journal article about a new anti-corruption mind-set in India's middle class. ... **Walter Podrazik** was quoted at length in a Chicago News Cooperative report in the New York Times Midwest edition on “The Playboy Club,” a new prime-time program on NBC.

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New Members

Jaimy Gordon, winner of the 2010 National Book Award for fiction, teaches in the MFA program at Western Michigan University, where she has taught for almost 30 years.

Jaimy was born in Baltimore, graduated from Antioch College (1966), earned an M.A. in English from Brown University (1972), and earned a Doctor of Arts in Creative Writing (1975) from Brown.

She is author of *Lord of Misrule* (McPherson & Company, 2010), *She Drove Without Stopping* (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1990), *Bogeywoman Circumspections from an Equestrian Statue* (Burning Deck, 1979), *Private T. Pigeon's Tale* (Treacle Press, 1979), *The Bend, The Lip, The Kid* (Sun Press, 1978), *The Rose of the West* (Woodbine Press, 1976) and *Shamp of the City-Solo* (Treacle Press, 1974).

She lives in Kalamazoo, Mich.



Jaimy Gordon

Help for Authors

Isabel Howe, executive director of the Authors League Fund and a regular reader of Literary License, sends this reminder:

“The Authors League Fund helps professional writers and dramatists facing dire financial need because of medical expenses, loss of income, or other misfortune. The Fund awards open-ended, interest-free, no-strings-attached loans. These are not grants or scholarships meant to subsidize writing projects.

Writers experiencing financial hardship because of medical or other emergencies should not hesitate to apply. The Fund is particularly concerned about older writers who are ill, uninsured, or who, for reasons of age, have been unable to continue in their profession. For more information or to request an application:

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