



# Literary License

September, 2006

## TAILORING YOUR MESSAGE FOR THE MEDIA

TOM CIESIELKA

TC PUBLIC RELATIONS

You worked for months or even years to develop your ideas, organize your book, and get every word in the right place. Now it's time to take your message to the public. The first step, and often the greatest challenge, is translating your material into headlines and topics that interest the media.

Reporters, editors and producers receive thousands of calls, E-mails

and faxes from authors and publicists hoping to put their names and ideas in front of readers. Here are a few ways to stand out and be heard:

**Know Your Target:** If you call Ed at your community paper, do a little research to find out what he writes about and how he communicates. Let him know how much you liked his latest column and offer to be a resource in the future.

**Make it Quick:** You have about 30 seconds to get Susan to book

you on her radio show. Get right to the point and offer only details that help her hear the interview in her head. Ask her questions frequently and adjust as you go.

**Use Bullet Points:** Andi edits the business section of a newspaper, and she doesn't have time to read every sentence of your e-mail. Make your information easy to read, bold face your main points, and italicize for emphasis.

If you want to reach the media, you must learn their language. Take time to study each contact and let

## THE FUTURE OF THE U.S. JOB MARKET

Introduction: Tom Frisbie, SMA President. Speaker: Edward E. Gordon, author of *The 2010 Meltdown: Solving the Impending Jobs Crisis* (Praeger). Mr. Gordon will discuss his book which indicates how technology, globalization, and a major demographic shift will drastically change the U.S. workforce and explores promising models for implementing change. Mr. Gordon's website: [www.imperialcorp.com](http://www.imperialcorp.com)

**Where:** Chicago Athletic Assn., 12 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago

**When:** 6 p.m. social hour, 7 p.m. program, Tuesday, Oct. 10.

**Reservations NOT needed.** Public invited. Reception and presentation \$5 for nonmembers. SMA members and teachers and students with ID free. Snacks and cash bar.

### Other Coming Events

Nov. 14—"How to Get Your Book Reviewed."  
Introduction: Tom Frisbie, SMA President. Panel Moderator: Tom Ciesielka of TC Public Relations. Panel: Elizabeth Taylor, *Chicago Tribune* (tentative); Cheryl Reed, *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Jan. 9—"The Bradbury Chronicles and the Life of Ray Bradbury." Introduction: Tom Frisbie, SMA President. Speaker: Sam Weller, winner of the SMA's 2006 biography prize for his biography of the noted Ray Bradbury science-fiction writer.

Feb. 13—Children's literature, details to come.

March 13—"Researching and Writing Biographies of Dead Artists." Introduction: Tom Frisbie, SMA

President; Jim Schwab, Program Chair. Speaker: Gerry Souter, president of the Midwest Writers Assn. and author of 31 books, including adult biographies on artists: Frida Kahlo, Alexander Calder, Edward Hopper, Diego Rivera and Mark Rothko. Mr. Souter's web site: [www.avril1.com](http://www.avril1.com).

April 10—Poetry, details to come.

May 8—92th Annual Banquet and Awards Presentation.

### Board Meetings

Usually on the third Wednesday of each month: Sept. 20, Oct. 18, Jan. 17, Feb. 21, March 21, Apr. 18, May 16.

#### LITERARY LICENSE

©2006, Society of Midland Authors,  
P.O. Box 10419, Chicago, IL 60610

**Editor:** Richard Frisbie, Suite 104,  
445 W. Erie St., Chicago, IL 60610  
Phone: 312/397-0992  
Fax: 312/255-9865  
richardfrisbie@sbcglobal.net

**Associate Editor:** Carol Jean  
Carlson

[www.midlandauthors.com](http://www.midlandauthors.com)

him or her know how you are the best resource on your topic. If you take the time to adjust your message, you multiply your chances of getting coverage and selling your book.

---

---

#### CAROL'S IN-BOX

BY CAROL JEAN CARLSON

---

---

#### What's a Poke?

*Waltur Buys a Pig in a Poke and Other Stories* (Houghton Mifflin, 2006) by Barbara Gregorich is a humorous book for early readers (7-10 years) designed to explain the meaning of three common English language idioms. In the title story, Waltur, a bear, and his best friends, Matilda and Darwin, learn the wisdom behind the saying, "Don't buy a pig in a poke."

The book continues in the same vein with "Waltur Counts His Chickens Before They Are Hatched" and "Waltur Leads a Horse to Water."

Gregorich is the author of many storybooks, activity books and filmstrips for children. Her best known adult book is *Women at Play: The Story of Women in Baseball* (Harcourt, 1993).

She also conducts workshops on writing adult fiction, adult nonfiction and children's books.

#### Hoop Dreams

Taylor Bell, retired sports writer for the *Chicago Sun Times*, just signed a contract with Sports Publishing in Champaign for his third book, *The Tom Lemming Story*. Tom Lemming is a nationally recognized college football recruiting expert.

The book is due out in September 2007. His second book, *Glory Days: Illinois High School Basketball*, also with Sports Publishing, made its appearance in September. That book is a result of conversations with Bell by 50 of the state's best high-school basketball players. The players not only relive their days on the court, but also share what happened to them after that.

According to Bell, *Glory Days* grew out of his first book, *Sweet Charlie, Dike, Cazzie and Bobby Joe: High School Basketball in Illinois* (University of Illinois Press, 2004).

For the uninitiated, the title characters are Sweet Charlie Brown, Dike Edelman, Cazzie Russell and Bobby Joe Mason. Bell's research for that book included 350 interviews with coaches, administrators, family members and fans.

#### Room at the Table

On Sept. 18, The Poetry Center of Chicago debuted the first CD from the Center's Audio Archive project at a benefit in the ballroom at the School of the Art Institute.

Featured at the event were readings by SMA's Mark Perlberg and two Pulitzer Prize winners, Yusef Komunyakaa and Lisel Mueller.

Perlberg is the author of four books of poems: *The Burning Field*, *The Feel of the Sun*, *The Impossible Toystore* and the upcoming *Waiting for the*

#### *Alchemist*.

He is a past president of the Poetry Center and currently serves as a director emeritus.

#### More from the Poetry Center

The Poetry Center invites regional poets to submit their unpublished work for consideration in the 13th Annual Juried Reading.

Eight finalists will be selected to read at an award ceremony at the Chicago Public Library on April 29, 2007.

One poem by each finalist will be published in a chapbook and on The Poetry Center's website. The Juried Reading is open to all poets residing in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota or Wisconsin.

Details at [www.poetrycenter.org](http://www.poetrycenter.org).

#### Coup by Third World Press

Congratulations to Haki Madhubuti, poet, college professor, political activist and owner of Third World Press, for the Press's release, *The Covenant with Black America*, reaching the top of *The New York Times* paperback bestsellers list.

The book is the first nonfiction book by a Black publisher to achieve that position.

Growing out of the 2005 State of the Black Union symposium, *The Covenant with Black America* is "a national plan of action to address the primary concerns of African-Americans today from health to housing, from crime to criminal justice, from education to economic parity."

The collection of essays by black scholars and professionals was edited by Tavis Smiley, PBS broadcaster.

### **Scholarships for Homeless Teens**

Mystery writer Sara Paretsky participated with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless at an event at Women & Children First bookstore, 5233 N. Clark St., where \$2,000 scholarships were awarded to Chicago teenagers who are succeeding despite their homelessness.

Paretsky was invited because her "writing shows a sensitivity toward people experiencing homelessness, and her famed detective, V. I. Warshawski, is a progressive woman who shares these sensitivities," according to Laurene Heybach, director of the Law Project at the Coalition.

The event fell on Warshawski's fictional birthday, so the event included coffee and cake.

### **A Goat and a Curse**

In the summer of 1934, a baby goat fell off a truck and limped into a Chicago tavern owned by a Greek immigrant, William Sianis, and the rest is history.

(Because Sianis and his goat were once evicted from Wrigley Field, a curse is said to explain lack of success by the Chicago Cubs.)

The Billy Goat Inn became a watering hole and gathering place for newspaper reporters, policemen, politicians and the like.

The tavern and its owner and host, "Billy Goat" Sianis, the famous curse and "Cheezborger, Cheezborger! No fries...chips!" are the subjects of Rick Kogan's latest book, *A Chicago Tavern: A Goat, A Curse and the American Dream* (Lake Claremont Press, 2006).

### **Life After Death?**

Around the turn of the 20th century, philosopher and psychologist William James and his colleagues in the Society for Psychical Research in America

risked ridicule and loss of reputation to pursue the paranormal, trying to close the gap between faith and science as the theory of evolution and a new scientific thought process took hold.

In *The Ghost Hunters: William James and the Search for Scientific Proof of Life After Death* (Penguin Press, 2006), Deborah Blum presents the history of these seekers of truth and their research, unveils the passion of their friendships and debates and exposes their doubts.

Although many of their efforts were attempts to expose charlatans, the strange and unexplainable stepped forth.

Blum, who was nominated for a *Los Angeles Times* book award for *Love at Goon Park*, provides a vivid and moving account of this group, achieving poignancy rather than making them the objects of derision.

### **The Book Bus**

If you saw a highly decorated bus that wasn't a bookmobile parked near a library in late May or early June in the Chicago area, it was most likely the Book TV Bus promoting C-SPAN2's weekend programming of nonfiction books and authors.

The 45-foot customized bus has a traveling TV studio, complete with an interview set in the first half of the bus that includes two chairs, three camera units, TV monitors, and a plasma screen with live C-SPAN programming.

During this year's Wheeling, Ill., stop, C-SPAN2's Anne Haller taped an interview with Mount Prospect writer Candace Fleming, author of a biography of Eleanor Roosevelt: *Our Eleanor: A Scrapbook Look at Eleanor Roosevelt's Remarkable Life* (Atheneum/Anne Schwartz Books, 2005).

Fleming's book was a runner-up in Children's Nonfiction in this

year's SMA Literary Competition.

### **Brokeback Mystery?**

Mark Richard Zubro's mystery, *Everyone's Dead But Us* (St. Martins Minotaur, 2006) is the latest in his Tom & Scott mystery series.

Tom Mason and Scott Carpenter are partners in crime and in life. Tom, a teacher, and Scott, a professional baseball player, take a trip to an expensive resort catering to a gay clientele on an island in the Aegean. (*In Here Comes the Corps*, Tom gave Scott a yearly visit to this resort as a wedding present.)

Shortly after they arrive they find a dead man in their rooms. The killing continues and a catastrophic storm cuts off all contact with the rest of the world. A frantic attempt on the part of the heroes to find the villain ensues.

Zubro retired from teaching earlier this year. He began his Tom and Scott series in 1987. Zubro also has a series featuring the openly gay Chicago police detective Paul Turner. He is currently entertaining thoughts of translating his books to the screen.

---

---

## **OTHER MEMBER NEWS**

---

---

### **Replaces Stan Freberg on Radio**

Chuck Schaden, who has kept the "Golden Age of Radio" alive on Chicago's airwaves for more than 35 years, will replace satirist Stan Freberg as host of *When Radio Was*, a syndicated nightly showcase of old-time radio shows airing in more than 200 markets nationwide.

"Even though I've been trying to take things easier during the last few years or so, I just couldn't pass on the offer to do a national program," Schaden told the

*Chicago Sun-Times*. "It's the one thing I haven't done in the world of old-time radio, so it becomes the frosting on my career cake."

Schaden continues to host *Those Were the Days*, now in its 36th year on the air, from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturdays on the College of DuPage's WDCB-FM (90.9).

### **Ghost Writer Who Isn't**

Michael Norman has three new books out this fall. *Haunted Homeland* ( Forge Books/Tom Doherty) is the latest installment in his popular Haunted America series of true ghost stories.

Previous volumes have included *Haunted Heartland*, *Haunted America*, *Historic Haunted America* and *Haunted Heritage*. A separate collection of ghost stories north of the border, *Canadian Hauntings*, was published by Scholastic Canada in 2004. He writes that all his titles are still in print.

Earlier this year he co-authored *WordWise: A Vocabulary Guide to Enhance Your Real-World Conversations* with Carol Roecklein. It's a set of two vocabulary enrichment books published by MindWare, a leading publisher of educational materials.

Norman is scheduled to be in the Chicago area in early October for a series of readings and book signings. His website: [www.michaelnorman.us](http://www.michaelnorman.us).

### **Recalls 1960s Chicago**

Neal Samors has just finished another book about Chicago's history. *Chicago in the Sixties: Remembering a Time of Change*. Life in Chicago was a continuation of the 1950s until around 1965, he says..

"Then, as if a tornado roared through the area, the period from 1965 and throughout the 1970s

shifted dramatically in its social, economic and political directions. The city's residents became more aware of a changing city and national and international events like Southeast Asia and the Civil Rights Movement."

### **"Best Small Publisher" Profiled**

Ivan R. Dee has been described by the *Washington Post* as "one of the country's best small publishers of serious books." Profiled recently in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, he said: "We get things that in older days used to go to places like Knopf and Viking, even Basic Books, but they are much more commercially minded now."

One-time chief editor of Quadrangle Books, Dee stayed in Chicago when *The New York Times* bought Quadrangle. He launched his own publishing house in 1988. Although he sold it to Rowman & Littlefield in 1998, he remains in charge.

### **Speaking of Fiction**

Michael Raleigh will be speaking on fiction writing at the Barrington (Ill.) Writers Workshop on Wednesday, Oct. 4, from 7 to 10. He'll also be giving a seminar on novel writing at the Newberry Library in Chicago on Saturday, Oct. 7, from 10 to 4.

### **Three Poets for Price of One**

Ron Offen's *Free Lunch* poetry journal presented three poets on Sept. 17 in its ongoing series of programs at the Wilmette (Ill.) Public Library. Nina Corwin, Molly Meacham and Idris Goodwin demonstrated examples of performance, slam and hip-hop poetry.

### **Beginning of Checkered End**

Why do they wave a checkered flag at the end of an auto race? Why

not a gasoline can or a tire pump or maybe an old hubcap? That question troubled Fred R. Egloff, who is a motorsports enthusiast as well a historian and award-winning author of several other books.

So he researched it and produced a new book, *The Origin of the Checker Flag*, published by the International Motor Racing Research Center.

The reviewers aren't giving the whole story away, but Egloff did learn that a Packard Motor Car Co. employee in 1906 had the idea of using a checkered flag at "checking stations" to help prevent speeding along the route of an early rally.

Egloff is noted for his extensive writings on the American West.

### **Good and Evil**

Carol Rausch Albright has been named Visiting Professor of Religion and Science at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. She and her husband, physicist John R. Albright, will co-chair a seminar entitled *Evil: Perspectives from Theology and Science* at LSTC in Spring, 2007.

Expert guest speakers will cover themes of good and evil, not only from traditional sources but also in myth and even pop culture (think computer games).

Added to the mix will be insights from the sciences--including physics, evolutionary theory, ecology, primatology, psychology, sociology and medical science--tracing the co-mingling of causes and outcomes.

The series will conclude with some insights for our time. The seminar will be offered for graduate credit through seven Chicago area schools of theology, and will also be available to auditors and visitors.

For more information, call the

Zygon Center for Religion and Science, 773/256-0670.

Carol Albright has edited, authored or co-authored four books and numerous articles on the interplay between religion and the sciences.

### **How to Talk and Travel Free**

Rita Emmett, author of *The Procrastinator's Handbook*, *The Procrastinating Child* and *The Clutter-Busting Handbook*, has been selected as an "Expert Coach" on AOL. This means that Rita's books and web site (RitaEmmett.com) will be featured on the AOL "Welcome Page."

Also, Rita has been invited by a major cruise line to speak on her books' topics. She just returned from a cruise to the Scandinavian countries, plus Russia, Poland, Estonia and Germany. Last year she spoke on cruises to Hawaii and through the Panama Canal.

Speaking on cruises in exchange for free trips might be something that other members would like to explore, she says.

### **Science Fiction Analyzed**

A film maker, writer and teacher, Dan Dinello recently published his first book *Technophobia!* - a critical analysis of science fiction visions of 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies.

Dan also directed several episodes of the Comedy Central TV show *Strangers With Candy* as well as making a number of award-winning short films, including *Wheels of Fury* (starring Amy Sedaris and Paul Dinello) and *Shock Asylum* (starring Stephen Colbert as a mad doctor and Paul Dinello as a normal guy whose psychological exam goes horribly awry).

Dan also runs a web site -

shockproductions.com - and writes about pop culture and science for the *Chicago Tribune* and *Salon.com*.

A faculty member in the film and video department at Columbia College, Chicago, Dan received a M.F.A. from the University of Wisconsin Madison. He will do a lecture/presentation on "Mad Scientists" at the November Chicago Humanities Festival. Currently, he's writing a horror/thriller novel.

### **President Clinton Update**

Carol Felsenthal writes: "I've just signed a contract with William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins, to write a book about President Bill Clinton since he left the White House. I have less than a year to do all the interviewing, research and writing because the publisher wants it out in the fall of 2007 or winter of 2008 to catch the interest in the primaries, etc.

"I have written several biographies; my subjects have included Katharine Graham, Alice Roosevelt Longworth and S.I. Newhouse, Jr. I have also written many profiles for *Chicago* magazine, among them pieces on William Daley, Donald Rumsfeld, Ann Landers, Roger Ebert and Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich.

"For the past two years, I have taught a nonfiction writing class at the University of Chicago."

### **Chicago History Republished**

The fourth edition of Irving Cutler's *Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent*, written under the auspices of the Geographic Society of Chicago, has been recently published by Southern Illinois University Press.

Cutler is also the author of the award-winning *Jews of Chicago: From Shtetl to Suburb* and four

other books.

He is the retired chairman of the geography department at Chicago State University and now gives talks and bus and boat tours about the Chicago area.

---

---

## **RECENT NEW MEMBERS**

---

---

BY THOMAS FRISBIE

### **Andrea Beaty**

New children's book writer Andrea Beaty is author of *When Giants Come to Play* (Abrams, 2006). In the book, a pair of giants come to play with a girl named Anna "only when the sun shines just so and the wind blows like this and that on its way to somewhere else."

One of six children, Andrea Beaty grew up in southern Illinois. She now lives in Naperville.

### **Karen Coates**

Karen Coates is author of *Cambodia Now: Life in the Wake of War* (McFarland). She is an award-winning journalist and editor with more than a dozen years of experience.

She is a correspondent for *Gourmet Magazine* and a regular contributor to publications around the world, including *National Wildlife*, *Archaeology*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Wildlife Conservation*, *Kyoto Journal* and *Orion*.

She and her husband, Jerry Redfern, frequently collaborate on projects examining post-conflict countries, as well as travel stories on obscure and tantalizing places.

### **Ann Durkin Keating**

Ann Durkin Keating is an associate professor of history at North Central College in

Naperville.

She was previously a research associate for the Public Works Historical Society of Chicago. She is author of *Building Chicago: Suburban Developers and the Creation of a Divided Metropolis* and is co-editor of *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*.

**Linda Hoffman Kimball**

A columnist for the Webby Award-winning online interfaith magazine, Beliefnet.com, and *Exponent II*, an LDS women's quarterly newspaper, Linda Hoffman Kimball is also the author of two humorous novels for

LDS adults, *Home to Roost* and *The Marketing of Sister B*. She lives in Evanston, Ill.

**Willis Regier**

Willis Regier is director of the University of Illinois Press. He previously was director of the University of Nebraska Press from 1987-1995 and the Johns Hopkins University Press from 1995-1998, and was a visiting scholar in the Department of Comparative Literature at Harvard University.

He is author of *The Book of the Sphinx* (University of Nebraska, 2004). He edited and wrote the

introduction for *Masterpieces of American Indian Literature* (Bison Books, 2005). He lives in Champaign, Ill.

**Daniel T. Parker**

Daniel T. Parker, who has more than 400 works of African, African-American and Caribbean art in his Chicago home, is author of *African Art: Beyond the Diaspora*.

He is a professor emeritus of African-American studies at Olive-Harvey College.

---