



# 2017 CONFERENCE



## MISSOURI WRITERS GUILD ANNUAL CONFERENCE & BUSINESS MEETING

MAY 5-7, 2017  
HOLIDAY INN EXECUTIVE CENTER  
COLUMBIA, MO

Registration Now Open

# INVITATION

The Missouri Writers Guild wish to invite you to our Annual Conference and Business Meeting on May 5-7, 2017. This is going to be a tremendous weekend. Between the diverse faculty, different topics to be discussed in our breakout sessions and master classes, and tools being offered to writers in all stages, I couldn't be more excited to see it all come together.

- George Sirois,  
Vice-President & Conference Chair, Missouri Writers Guild



## [MO Express.com](http://MOExpress.com)

MO-X is a scheduled service providing ground transportation between Columbia and the Saint Louis and Kansas City Airports.

Our NEW schedule includes twelve roundtrips daily to Saint Louis and five roundtrips to Kansas City, MO.



## CONFERENCE VENUE HOTEL RATES

**Holiday Inn Executive Center**  
**2200 I-70 Drive S.W.**  
**Columbia, MO 65203**  
**573-445-8531**

Ask for the Missouri Conference Guild or MCG rate of \$99 per night.

Rates cannot be guaranteed after  
04/17/2017

# CONFERENCE FACULTY

## **Whitley Abell - Literary Agent**

Whitley Abell (Inklings Literary Agency) is an editorial agent, supporting her authors through all stages of the writing and publication process. Her publishing career began as an intern with Carol Mann Agency and P.S. Literary Agency, and she also interned at Inklings Literary Agency before working her way up to agent.

## **Margo L. Dill - Women on Writing e-zine Representative**

Margo L. Dill is the author of *Caught Between Two Curses*, a YA light paranormal romance novel involving the Curse of the Billy Goat on the Chicago Cubs; *Maggie Mae, Detective Extraordinaire: The Case of the Missing Cookies* (picture book); and *Finding My Place: One Girl's Strength at Vicksburg*, a historical fiction, middle-grade novel. Besides being a children's author, she is also a freelance editor with the business, Editor 911: Your Projects Are My Emergency! and she is part of the WOW! Women On Writing e-zine's staff as an editor, blogger, contest judge, instructor, and social media manager.

## **Donna Essner - Amphorae Publishing**

Donna Essner holds a BS in Horticulture and an MA in Creative Writing, graduating with honors from Southeast Missouri State University. While serving as an associate editor in grad school, she discovered her love of editing, and after graduation, she worked as the assistant editor and book production manager at Southeast Missouri State University Press. Donna's writing (and reading) interests run the gamut, but her passion is historical MG and YA fiction and nonfiction. She has written book reviews, short stories, poetry, essays, and two novels.

## **Nicole Evelina - Faculty Member**

Nicole Evelina is a multi-award-winning historical fiction and romantic comedy writer. Her most recent novel, *Madame Presidentess*, a historical novel about Victoria Woodhull, America's first female Presidential candidate, was the first place winner in the Women's US History category of the 2015 Chaucer Awards for Historical Fiction and her debut novel, *Daughter of Destiny*, the first book of an Arthurian legend trilogy that tells Guinevere's life story from her point of view, was named Book of the Year by Chanticleer Reviews in 2016. Nicole's writing has appeared in several national publications including The Huffington Post, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Independent Journal and numerous historical publications.

## **T.W. Fendley - Faculty Member**

T.W. Fendley is an award-winning author of historical fantasy and science fiction for adults and young adults. Her debut novel *Zero Time* is a 21st Century Celestine Prophecy that melds ancient Maya history with New Age spirituality and time travel. Readers chose *Zero Time* as the 2011 Best Science Fiction/Fantasy Novel. Fendley's short stories have earned national recognition, including a Writers Digest award. She began writing fiction fulltime in 2007 after working more than 25 years in journalism and corporate communication. Fendley serves on the board of the St. Louis Writers Guild and belongs to various other writing organizations. When she's not writing, she travels with her artist husband and tests practical uses of precognition.

## **Sheri Fink - Keynote Speaker & Faculty Member**

Sheri Fink (keynote speaker) is an inspirational speaker, a #1 best-selling author, an award-winning entrepreneur, and the creator of "The Whimsical World of Sheri Fink" brand. Sheri writes books that inspire and delight kids of all ages while planting seeds of self-esteem. All five of her children's books have become #1 best-sellers, including *The Little Rose*, which was a #1 Amazon Best-seller for over 60 weeks. CBS Los Angeles selected her as one of the top three authors in the local area, a distinction she shares with Dean Koontz. Sheri's brand is the recipient of the prestigious Mom's Choice Award for the best in family friendly entertainment. She was recently named an inspirational beauty by supermodel Cindy Crawford's "Beauties Give Back" campaign. Her newest adventure is a contemporary romance, *Cake in Bed*.

## **Jennifer Geist - Pen & Publish, Inc.**

Jennifer Geist is the publisher at Pen & Publish, Inc., and its imprints: Brick Mantel Books, Open Books Press, and Transformation Media Books. With experience in editing, book compositing, photography, graphic and web design, marketing, writing, and more, she manages every book from acquisitions to publication and beyond. Geist received her bachelor's degree in creative writing with a focus in small press publishing through Southeast Missouri State University. She has worked with numerous small presses and her stories and photos are published in a variety of literary magazines.

## **Jennie Goloboy - Literary Agent**

Jennie Goloboy is a literary agent at Red Sofa Literary in St. Paul, MN with a particular interest in representing history and science fiction and fantasy. A Harvard-educated historian, she is the author of *Charleston and the Emergence of Middle Class Culture in the Revolutionary Era*. She enjoys writing fiction under her pen name, Nora Fleischer, and jogging, very slowly.

## **Jennifer Haskin - Literary Agent**

Jennifer Haskin is a portrait artist who lives in Olathe, Kansas, and began working for Metamorphosis Literary Agency in August 2016. She assists in a Creative Writing Workshop, and is actively seeking new clients focusing on YA Fantasy, but has a crush on Romance. She watches #PitchWars like a hawk, and can spot an entertaining voice miles away. She is a member of Saavy Authors, Missouri and Nebraska Writing Guilds. She won the Young Author's award two years in a row, and has had poems published in school magazines, Lodestar, Inklings and Read. Her debut novel, *The Key of F*, was just named a winner in the Ink & Insights literary contest of 2016.

## **Derek Taylor Kent - Faculty Member**

Derek Taylor Kent is an author, screenwriter, and performer based out of Los Angeles, California. He graduated from UCLA with a degree in theater and playwriting. After working for many years as a struggling actor and a children's drama teacher, he received a three-book deal from HarperCollins for his middle-grade book series *Scary School* (written under penname Derek the Ghost). His bi-lingual picture book *El Perro con Sombrero* was released August, 2015 through Holt/Macmillan and quickly became a best-selling new picture book. His latest book titled *Kubrick's Game* came out September 2016 and has become an international bestseller.

## **C. David Milles - Faculty Member**

Although not a superhero, C. David Milles does have a dual identity. He is a teacher by day and a writer by night. He enjoys exploring the building blocks of stories, especially through the lens of the Hero's Journey. He is the author of four young adult novels: *Paradox*, *Redemption*, *Legacy*, and *New Miller's Grove*. He writes regularly for the web site based on the best-selling book series on screenwriting, *Save the Cat!*, and has contributed chapters to *Lost Thought*, based on the hit TV show.

## **Ben S. Reeder - Faculty Member**

Ben S. Reeder grew up in South Texas reading Tolkien, Asimov, and Robert E. Howard. He has always loved telling stories, and in high school, he wrote pulp style action adventures for his friends. Ben has been filling notebooks and hard drives with stories and ideas ever since.

## **Liz Schulte - Faculty Member**

Liz Schulte didn't always want to be an author. In fact, she had no clue. Liz wanted to be a veterinarian, then she wanted to be a lawyer, then she wanted to be a criminal profiler. In a valiant effort to keep from becoming Walter Mitty, Liz put pen to paper and began writing her first novel. It was at that moment she realized this is what she was meant to do. When Liz isn't writing or on social networks she is inflicting movie quotes and trivia on people, reading, traveling, and hanging out with friends and family. She has a love for all things spooky, supernatural, and snarky. Her favorite authors range from Edgar Allan Poe to Joseph Heller to Jane Austen to Jim Butcher and everything in between.

## **George Sirois - Faculty Member**

George Sirois has yearned to be a storyteller all his life, no matter the medium. That drive first led him to drawing his own characters while in grade school, and then – when his skills never advanced beyond the most primitive sketches – writing about them in various short stories and screenplays before moving on to novels such as *Excelsior* and the five-part serial *From Parts Unknown*. He is a regular contributor to Write Pack Radio ([www.windingtrailsmidmedia.com](http://www.windingtrailsmidmedia.com)), and was named Vice-President of the Missouri Writers Guild in 2016. As a voice actor, he has narrated the audiobooks for *Excelsior* and Suzanne DeWitt-Hall's children's book *Rumplepimple*. After living in New York City and Richmond, Virginia, George, his wife, and their two dogs now happily call St. Louis their home.





### **Kim Staflund - Faculty Member**

As founder and publisher at Polished Publishing Group (PPG), Kim Staflund works with a professional team of editors, designers, indexers, proofreaders, and writers to help authors produce audiobooks, ebooks, paperbacks, and hardcovers. Think of PPG as a skilled project manager for authors. They assist both individuals and businesses in producing professional grade books by guiding authors through the entire process from conception to publication. PPG provides online distribution opportunities throughout the world. Copy writing, advertising, sales coaching, marketing, and publicity services are also available.

### **Wayne Ude - Faculty Member**

Wayne grew up in northcentral Montana and attended U of Montana, graduating in 1969 where the MFA in creative writing was getting started. Over the years, Wayne has held full and part-time faculty positions at various colleges and universities. In 1996 he began teaching online for Writers' Digest's new online courses. In 2002-3 he designed low-residency MFA program for Whidbey Island Writers Association, later Northwest Institute of Literary Art. Wayne held position as Program Director and Chief Academic Officer from 2004 - 2016 until the institute announced its closure.

### **Tim Waggoner - Faculty Member**

Tim Waggoner wrote his first story at the age of five, when he created a comic book version of *King Kong vs. Godzilla* on a stenographer's pad. It took him a few more years until he began selling professionally, though. Overall, he has published close to thirty novels and three short story collections, and his articles on writing have appeared in Writers' Digest and Writers' Journal, among other publications. He has recently written the movie novelizations for both *XXX: The Return of Xander Cage* and *Resident Evil: The Final Chapter*. Tim teaches creative writing at Sinclair Community College, and he hopes to continue writing and teaching until he keels over dead, after which he wants to be stuffed and mounted, and then placed in front of his computer terminal.

### **Justin Wells - Literary Agent**

Having started his journey into the world of publishing over six years ago as a young adult book blogger, Justin Wells has been able to work his way into his career as a literary agent. Starting as an intern with the Corvisiero Literary Agency, Justin quickly moved up the ladder and is now working as a literary agent apprentice under his mentor Marisa Corvisiero. Justin accepts queries for a wide range of genres within the realms of young adult, middle grade, new adult and adult fiction.

### **Robert Yehling - Faculty Member**

Robert Yehling is an award-winning author, journalist, poet and book editor who has written eight books (as of April 2011), ghostwritten five books and edited nearly 100 others. More than 40 of his clients have landed publishing contracts and brought their books to market. Bob teaches Creative Writing, and Social Media/Online Publishing at Ananda College of Living Wisdom in Nevada City, CA. He has taught writing workshops at conferences and events throughout the U.S. for 12 years. Part of his work is to help authors develop and polish their books, find agents and publishers, and develop marketing and promotions programs that SELL their books.

## **MISSOURI WRITERS GUILD 2016-2017 BOARD**

**President  
ROBIN TIDWELL**

**Vice-President / Conference Chair  
GEORGE SIROIS**

**Secretary / Membership Committee  
SHARON BUZZARD**

**Treasurer / Membership Committee  
LIZ SCHULTE**

**Publicity Director  
CHRISTINE TAYLOR-BUTLER**

**Historian  
LARRY E. WOOD**

**Board Liaison Officer  
RICHARD SNELSON**



# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## Friday, May 5

Hotel Check-In Time Begins at 4:00pm

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 3:00pm - 6:00pm | Conference Registration                 |
| 6:00pm          | Opening Session, Speaker Robert Yehling |
| 7:00pm          | First Page Friday Night                 |
| 8:00pm          | Reception                               |

## Saturday, May 6

Book Room Opens 9:00am - 12:00pm and 1:00pm - 4:30pm

### **BREAKOUT ROOM 1**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 9:00am - 9:45am   | "POV I: What Can You Do with First Person?" (Wayne Ude) |
| 10:00am - 10:45am | "Writing the Query Letter" (Jennie Goloboy)             |
| 11:00am - 11:45am | "Dealing with the Fear of Writing" (Kim Staflund)       |

### **BREAKOUT ROOM 2**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 9:00am - 9:45am   | "Writing Historical Fiction" (Nicole Evelina)  |
| 10:00am - 10:45am | "So, You Want an Agent? How to Get Noticed by an Agent in Today's Publishing Market!" (Justin Wells) |
| 11:00am - 11:45am | "Marketing Yourself as a Writer" (Jennifer Haskin)   |

### **BREAKOUT ROOM 3**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 9:00am - 9:45am   | "Transitioning to a Full-Time Writer" (Ben S. Reeder)                         |
| 10:00am - 10:45am | "Breakout Session 2" (TBA)  |
| 11:00am - 11:45am | "Enhancing Your Story Structure with <i>Save the Cat!</i> " (C. David Milles) |

### **LUNCH**

|         |                      |
|---------|----------------------|
| 12:00pm | Speaker Tim Waggoner |
|---------|----------------------|



# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## Saturday, May 6 (continued)

### BREAKOUT ROOM 1

1:00pm-1:45pm PITCH SESSION 1—limit 10 per agent/publisher

Jennie Goloboy: Red Sofa Literary  
Justin Wells: Corvisiero Literary Agency  
Whitley Abell: Inklings Literary Agency  
Jennifer Haskin: Metamorphosis Literary Agency  
Donna Essner: Amphorae Publishing  
Jennifer Geist: Pen & Publish, Inc.  
Margo L. Dill: Women on Writing e-zine

2:00pm-2:45pm PITCH SESSION 2—limit 10 per agent/publisher

Jennie Goloboy: Red Sofa Literary  
Justin Wells: Corvisiero Literary Agency  
Whitley Abell: Inklings Literary Agency  
Jennifer Haskin: Metamorphosis Literary Agency  
Donna Essner: Amphorae Publishing  
Jennifer Geist: Pen & Publish, Inc.  
Margo L. Dill: Women on Writing e-zine

3:00pm-3:45pm PITCH SESSION 3—limit 10 per agent/publisher

Jennie Goloboy: Red Sofa Literary  
Justin Wells: Corvisiero Literary Agency  
Whitley Abell: Inklings Literary Agency  
Jennifer Haskin: Metamorphosis Literary Agency  
Donna Essner: Amphorae Publishing  
Jennifer Geist: Pen & Publish, Inc.  
Margo L. Dill: Women on Writing e-zine

### BREAKOUT ROOM 2

1:00pm-1:45pm “Guide to Self-Publishing” (Liz Schulte)

2:00pm-2:45pm “Silver Screen, Blank Page: Writing Movie Novelizations”  
(Tim Waggoner)

3:00pm-3:45pm “Mastering the Elevator Pitch” (Kim Staflund)

### BREAKOUT ROOM 3

1:00pm-1:45pm “POV II: What Can’t You Do with First Person?” (Wayne Ude)

2:00pm-2:45pm “Writing Romantic Comedies” (Nicole Evelina)

3:00pm-3:45pm “Writing an Effective Opening” (Ben S. Reeder)



# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## Saturday, May 6 (continued)

### BREAKOUT ROOM 1

4:00pm-5:00pm MWG Members' Annual Business Meeting

### BOOKSTORE / LOBBY

4:00pm-6:00pm Book Signings/Networking

### BREAKOUT ROOM 2

4:00pm-6:00pm Author Portraits by Appointment with Cheryl Sirois

### BANQUET HALL

6:00pm Dinner with keynote speaker Sheri Fink

## Sunday, May 7

### BREAKOUT ROOM 1

9:00am-11:00am “The Business of Children's Books: The Writing is Done and the Work Has Just Begun” (Sheri Fink with Derek Taylor Kent)

### BREAKOUT ROOM 2

9:00am-11:00am “Writes of Life: Adding Personal Experiences to Our Stories” (Robert Yehling)

### BREAKOUT ROOM 3

9:00am-11:00am “Audiobooks: From ACX to DIY and Everything in Between” (George Sirois & TW Fendley)

### LOBBY

9:00am-12:00pm One-on-One 10-Minute Sessions All faculty will be available for 10-minute-long private sessions with attendees \$10 for 10 minutes

12:00pm

### HOTEL CHECKOUT



