

Wordwrights – OKC Christian Writers

www.wordwrights-okc.com

Barbara Shepherd, Editor

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New Year = New Home, New Time & More!!

Excitement builds as we anticipate our meeting on January 9, 2016. Not only do Wordwrights’ members have a slate of new officers ready to tackle any challenges coming their way, we have launched a new website and have a new location where we will hold our 2016 meetings!

2015 President Jean Reed and Vice President Lori Williams toured the Brown Mackie College in north Oklahoma City in December and decided the facility would meet our needs. The college president gave them a tour and Lori presented him with a copy of our anthology, *Beads On a String – Peace, Joy, and Love*. Lori said, “He was delighted to have it.” Jean served as quality control and tested the comfortable seats and nice, contemporary study



7101 NW Expressway, Oklahoma City
(NW Expressway at Rockwell)

tables where members and visitors will have a pleasing view of each month’s speakers and a place to take good notes. Although we were happy to meet at Mardel’s until they could no longer offer a complimentary meeting space for groups, we are looking forward to our 2016 meetings at Brown Mackie College.

Use the main entrance (west door) and look for Wordwrights’ signs in the lobby. For an OKC street map, click on the map at wordwrights-okc.com.

Don’t forget: We meet in the morning instead of the afternoon.

Saturday, January 9th

10:00 AM - Noon

January Program – “Get Published in 2016”

Stop reading if getting published this year is not one of your goals. But, if you’d like to learn about a new market and begin preparing something for publication, read on.

There is, of course, a caveat or two. Daniel 11:32 says, “The people who *know* their God shall be strong and *carry out* great exploits.” Notice the strong verbs in this

verse. How are you seeking to *know* God? Perhaps like me, you’ve read through the Bible for the first time in 2015. (I wish I’d done this decades ago.) *continued* →

January Program – “Get Published in 2016” *(continued)*

*Lori Williams says:
“... Today’s Christian
Living article topics:
<http://todayschristianliving.org/writers-guidelines/>
Payment begins at \$25
and tops out at
\$150... The topic for
TLC’s contest is
Everyday People
Making a Difference
for Jesus... Top three
entries are to be printed
in the magazine and
receive \$100-\$300 in
prize money.”*

Reading the greatest book ever written is a good way to begin knowing God while soaking up the beautiful phrases and language of the Bible. As for the carry-out part, that’s an intentional activity. We have to write before we publish.

At the December meeting, we received complimentary copies of *Today’s Christian Living* magazine. This periodical offers two opportunities for publication: magazine articles and contest entries.

Articles include Ministry Profiles (1400-1600 words) that detail how a Christian ministry is making an

impact and Hospitality Articles (700-1500 words) that feature a recipe and an inspirational story. (For a complete listing of article topics, see <http://todayschristianliving.org/writers-guidelines/>) Payment begins at \$25 and tops out at \$150.

The contest is another publication opportunity. The topic is everyday people who are making a difference for Jesus. Due by May of 2016, the entries can be from 800-1200 words. The top three finalists are published in the magazine and prizes range from \$100 to \$300.

(Today’s Christian Living does NOT publish fiction

or poetry, but they are very interested in stories centered on real-life testimonies.)

One of the nicest benefits of publication in this magazine is that they provide a substantial author sidebar. This is your opportunity to tell about your work, include your website, your blog, or even the title of your latest book. This is a writer’s dream, and a great way to begin building a platform.

Lori Williams



This month, the light shines on the memory of three special women who left us a legacy of faith, love, and humor when they stepped onto the Road to Glory. Embracing their faith, they had put pen to paper before they left, and we have some of their words imprinted on our hearts and on the pages of our anthologies. Wordwrights’ members, Phyllis Dominguez, Barbara Hernandez, and Roz (Rosalind) Reiff wrote for Him.

Read their powerful words on our website. www.wordwrights-okc.com

Homework for January meeting



Polishing our Writing for Publication in 2016

1. Write a rough draft centered on one of the above topics.
2. Bring 3 copies of your draft to the January 9 meeting.
3. Remember to double space and pay attention to the allowed word count.
4. Try to include dialogue and a clear turning point.
5. We will divide into small groups to read and comment on each other’s work.

Meeting Minutes: *December 12, 2015*

Norman Styers opened the meeting with a devotional focusing on the command to rejoice.

Jean Reed then presented the officers ballot for 2016.
(Voting will take place at the January 9 meeting.)

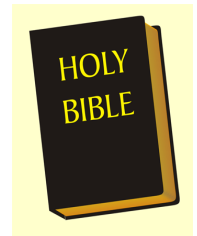
- President: Lori Williams
- Vice-President: Donna Le
- Secretary: Andrea Moon
- Alternate Secretary: Darla Hunter
- Treasurer: Milton Smith
- *Newsletter Editor: Barbara Shepherd
- Public Relations Chair: Donna Le
- Hospitality Chair: Barbara Zimmerman
- Webmaster: Barbara Shepherd
- *This position was filled after the meeting was over and an e-mail was sent notifying the members.

Milton Smith announced that Mardel will no longer be able to provide a meeting place for our group. Members shared several ideas of alternative locations and committed to pray about a spot to meet in January.

Jean Reed prayed over the Christmas goodies and invited the group to eat and fellowship together. After everyone had filled their plates, a number of members read from pieces they had written. There was a beautiful spirit in the room as members shared funny, sentimental, and above all, thoughtful writings. We were especially glad to hear from two visitors, Donna Sue Berry and Jenny Ortman.

Those attending the Christmas Wordwrights celebration included: Milton Smith, Jean Reed, Barbara Shepherd, Jean Stover, Norman Styers, Donna Le, Diane Franke, Lori Williams, Barbara Zimmerman, Andrea Moon, Barbara Culbertson, Bonnie Lanthripe, Louise Tucker Jones, Darla Hunter, Donna Sue Berry, Janine Handler, and Jenny Ortman.

Lori Williams



January Meeting

*Brown Mackie
College in OKC
10 AM – Noon*

Join us!

Writing Awards & More

Milton Smith not only won an award for his short play, he saw it produced onstage in Stillwater. The actual award is a beautiful piece of art.

Congratulations, Milton!

Bonnie Lanthripe's second novel is almost ready for its publisher, and she's in negotiations with an LA screenwriter for a possible movie based on her first novel, "The Ringleader."

Way to go, Bonnie!

Barbara Shepherd won two first place awards and a second place in Norman Galaxy's annual contest. She also spoke to the Norman Galaxy of Writers on publishing cookbooks. Her "Vittles and Vignettes" is now available.

**Wordwrights – OKC
Christian Writers**

Milton Smith, Treasurer
Address: *****

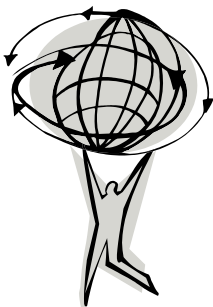
Phone:

E-mail: *****@yahoo.com

Dues are Due

Annual membership dues are \$20.00 for Wordwrights members. January-December dues provide a small honorarium for speakers, a donation for meeting space, and a portion of the cost for special events, etc. Dues may be paid at monthly meetings or by mail to the treasurer.

After serving as your treasurer since 2002, Barbara Shepherd is passing the checkbook and duties of the treasury into the able hands of Milton Smith who has been nominated for the position. After the January election, please welcome him in his new role as Wordwrights' Treasurer.



We're on the Web!
wordwrights-okc.com

The Prez Sez *(one last time)* by Mona Jean Reed

Before I leave this wonderful job you guys have allowed me, I want to say, "Thank you!"

Thank you allowing the extremely shy person that was me to stop needing to be so quiet and retiring. In fact, you insisted that I not be an introvert. Thank you for accepting moments that came out unintentionally clownish or over the top. Thank you for not criticizing me too loudly.

Thank you for making it necessary for me to stand in front of you and get things done. Do you know what? I found I needed to have a voice and a plan. Not only that, but I like having a voice and a plan. It's a very good thing when you know where you want to go and make plans for getting there. This is a

skill I'll be using and improving on the rest of my life.

Thank you for accepting my attempts to lead meetings. This being a leader is a thing I never saw myself as being able to do. But God sees us a little differently.

Apparently, He always looks for ways we can improve. Our comfort with our old ways doesn't concern Him. If it doesn't concern Him, maybe it shouldn't concern us. So I say praise His name because He always has our best interest in mind.

Thank you for teaching me to be more assertive. (Yes, I know, I still can't get everyone to be quiet quickly, but that I can do it at all is one of God's miracles.)

You know what? I've found that being assertive

is a good thing. Again, this skill is something I'll practice and use the rest of my life.

Lastly, thank you for being my friend. I like to think I've learned to be a better friend by my experiences of being your president. And that's definitely a good thing.

Jean Reed

Note from the Editor:

Articles for the newsletter must be submitted by the 25th of each month to:

*****@aol.com

Those Pesky New Year's Resolutions by Donna Le

By now we have either made New Year's Resolutions or vowed *not* to make them; after all, how many do we end up keeping, anyway? I've already broken one of mine, to watch less television. It is quite possible that God used that broken resolution to encourage me to keep other ones – to finish writing projects and to submit my writing for possible publication. While watching a true crime show, I listened as a young man professed his belief that he would *never* be forgiven for what he had done. Indeed, his actions had been horrendous and I'll spare you the details, but it distressed me to hear him talk about how he knew no higher power could ever forgive him. What a wonderful opportunity to share the story of King David, his transgressions against God, and how David's repentance led to God's mercy and grace.

God desires the salvation of all. Shouldn't we, as Christian writers, carry the message of hope for redemption? Shouldn't we make a resolution to spread the Good News—especially to the lost?

Jonah tried to avoid the Lord's call to bring an important message to those needing to turn back to God. As we can easily observe, our society needs to hear God's message and, as Christians, it is our duty to bring that message in our writings, whether we write stories, devotionals, novels, poems, plays, or songs. Setting writing goals and committing to carrying out those goals is essential for success.

What writing goals? Depending on your level of experience, you might consider some of the following:

1. Write on a regular basis. The more specific the amount of words, pages, or articles you want to produce, the better. Designate a writing area and a writing schedule. Make every effort to commit to a writing schedule.
2. Attend meetings and/or writing conferences to improve all areas of your writing. If you need to address writing weaknesses, search the internet for support, buy a book on the subject, or find a mentor.
3. Consider joining a critique group or starting one. Feedback is valuable for growth. Keep in mind that there are online groups, too.
4. Brainstorm ways to serve others with your writing. Can you produce a newsletter for use with shut-ins or in assisted-living homes? Perhaps you could write short devotionals for your church's prison ministry group. Share your writings with youth groups at your church or the adult groups.
5. Market your writing. Consider submitting writing pieces to contests. Do you have writer friends with blogs? Ask if you can occasionally be a guest writer. Network with other writers to widen your knowledge of successful marketing practices.

Whatever goals you set, the more measurable they are, the more likely the goals will be attained. Break each goal down into achievable, concrete steps. Set timelines and include a way to evaluate your progress.

Still hesitant to establish resolutions regarding your writing? Clearly Christianity is under attack and efforts are being made to remove Christ from the public square. Don't underestimate the impact your writing can have on a world that desperately needs to come to know Jesus. You may be the very one God will use to bring His message of hope and salvation to a lost soul.

Matthew 9:37-38 (ESV) Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."