



August 2011

Whether you are a published author or a writer-wanna-be, this e-zine is for you. Here, you will find articles, book reviews, announcements, poetry, and information about the craft and business of writing, publishing, and book marketing written by our readers. <http://writersinthesky.com>

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Editor's Corner

By Yvonne Perry

What a wonderful month—past *two* months actually. Two of my grandsons turned two years old and had fabulous birthday parties. Now we have all new toys to play with. Yay! No matter how old I get, I will never lose my love for children—I even act like one at times. Hopefully, that doesn't mean I'm child-*ish*, but that I'm child-*like*. Hahaha!

Speaking of children, I have completed the audio story album for *The Sid Series ~ A Collection of Holistic Stories for Children* and these sweet stories are now available individually (99¢ each) or all 12 stories as one MP3 download (\$8.99) on Amazon.com. Try a few for traveling with the kids this summer. I think you'll like the sound effects!

Two WITS team members have recently taken full-time jobs and are only available part-time. I hadn't planned to take on a new writer, but this occurred about the time I decided to take a sabbatical from working with clients. (I want to focus more on my spiritual endeavors.) I had a student enroll in my 6-week freelance writer training program. After reviewing her work and professionalism, I realized she was highly skilled and well prepared to work well with clients. So, please welcome Tracey Brackett to the Writers in the Sky team.

One of the things I'm focusing on is organizing "Empaths Shifting into 2012: A Telesummit to Help Energy-sensitive People Understand Their Spiritual Role on Earth" to be conducted all four Tuesdays in September 2011. The purpose of this telesummit is to help people understand the science of the Earth's shift in consciousness as we approach 2012 and how this is affecting all people—especially empaths. A panel of eight experts will give tips for getting free from detrimental energy and staying joyfully clear. Sign up at <http://live-spirit.com/empathytelesummit> or read more about the free event and the expert panelists at <http://dld.bz/adU8s>

Yvonne Perry,
Owner of Writers in the Sky Creative Writing Services
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The Grammar Hero is in the House! Say What?

By Kristen House

Perusing an email from my husband this morning, I found my red-pen hand twitching. There, hiding among properly punctuated sentences, hid this chafind example of a comma splice: "I hope you like it, this is my favorite record of the year." And I thought I'd already told him that when he wanted to join two independent clauses together he needed super-strength sentence glue: the semi-colon! Commas are light-weight phrase-joiners. They can only bring an independent clause together with a dependent clause.

"Darling," I said in my reply, "I love the album; don't splice me again!" Grammar girl to the rescue!

Kristen House is an Adjunct Instructor of Writing at Belmont University, and the Chief Executive Muse of A Novel Idea. She writes fiction every day for hours, even when there isn't anything to write about. Kristen lives in Nashville with her husband, Andrew, sons, Holden and Shephard, and a yippy little dog named Osie. Check out her writing classes, A Novel Idea, at www.anovelideanashville.com

Where Do You Like to Write?

By Sarah Moore

While I appreciate the wonderful technology that is the home computer, and consider it an indispensable tool of my chosen profession, there is still something to be said for grabbing a spiral notebook and a pen and putting ink to paper. I love to write outside while sitting on a blanket that is spread in a field or perhaps on some flat rocks by the side of the lake. There is something about communing with nature that helps me to tap into the artistry that comes from the written word. Beyond the scenery, I simply love the smell of paper and ink. I feel more connected to the sentences I am crafting when I see each letter formed from my own hand.

Through my work with Writers in the Sky, I have had the opportunity to interview dozens of authors about their work. One question that I always like to ask is, "Do you have a specific way that you like to write?" Some people with whom I spoke dedicated the same three hours to progressing on their manuscripts every morning without fail. One gentleman opted to do his writing while sitting at the kitchen table and listening to a baseball game on the radio. (I'm not sure what he did during the off-season.) Yet another author had created a space in her home that she only entered to write, and she made sure it was painted and decorated in such a way to pull out all maximum creative energy.

Writing is a very personal and emotional process, whether you are writing a graduate thesis for a chemistry program or your memoirs. You leave a piece of yourself on the page. You are forming something and then presenting it to the world for their enjoyment and scrutiny. Where you choose to create is important.

So, what about you? In what environment do you feel that your writing is best able to develop and flourish? I would love to hear from you!

Sarah Moore has nearly a decade of experience in higher education administration, having worked at University of Maryland, Boston University, and Middle Tennessee State University. In addition to her administrative responsibilities, she taught research and writing courses at these institutions. Sarah also taught high school government and history for several years, and always included a strong emphasis on writing in her students' assignments. Sarah was raised just outside of Washington, D.C., but has called Nashville home for nearly eight years and enjoys life there with her two young children.

WITS Announcements

Check out the e-books designed especially to help authors promote their books online. <http://tinyurl.com/DanaWITS>.

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Each story in *The Sid Series ~ A Collection of Holistic Stories for Children* focuses on life skills such as environmental awareness, helping others, being true to one's self, overcoming fear, and following inner guidance. <http://TheSidSeries.com>

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Kristen House has developed a summer writing program called "A Novel Idea." It is aimed at teaching middle-grade students (rising 7th, 8th, and 9th graders) and high-school students (rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors) to write a novel in a month during their summer break. [Contact Kristen](#) for details.

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"Empaths Shifting into 2012: A Telesummit to Help Energy-sensitive People Understand Their Spiritual Role on Earth" is scheduled for four consecutive Tuesdays this September. There will be eight panelists sharing more than 12 hours of useful information about helping humanity shift into higher consciousness. More info at <http://dld.bz/aaK6e>.

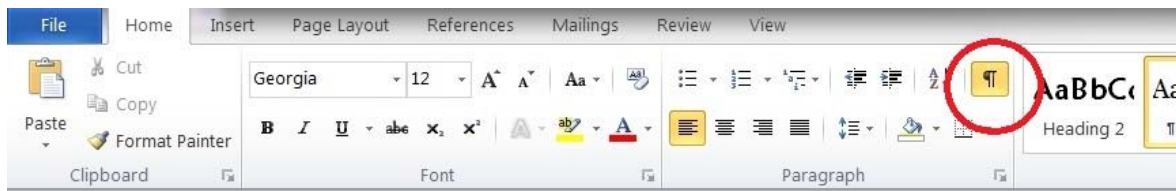
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Whose Stuff Is This? Finding Freedom from the Thoughts, Feelings, and Energy of Those Around You is a guidebook for empathic people who have been unknowingly carrying energetic burdens that belong to someone else. See all purchasing options at <http://whosestuffisthis.blogspot.com/p/purchase-book.html>.

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Read the first chapter for free and then decide if you want to download the 3-hour-long mp3 audio book of *More Than Meets the Eye ~ True Stories about Death, Dying, and Afterlife* for only \$7.00 <http://deathdyingafterlife.blogspot.com/p/chapter-1.html>

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Tracey L. Brackett has joined the Writers in the Sky team as a ghostwriter. After thirty years as a high-level executive assistant, which placed her in a position of becoming the sole editor and proofreader for company proposals, presentations, and business correspondence, Tracey decided to take Yvonne Perry's six-week course "How to Start and Manage a Freelance Writing Business." Through the knowledge she gained in that course, she successfully opened The Feather Walker Customized Writing Services and is now affiliated with WITS. She is excited to be a part of such a phenomenal team of writers.

WITS Tip of the Month on Microsoft Word

An index lists the terms and topics in a document, along with the pages they appear on. First you must mark the index entries: Select the text and press ALT+SHIFT+X then “mark all.” Microsoft Word will insert an XE (Index Entry) field formatted as hidden text. The hide/show feature will automatically pop up. To hide the marks, click on the backwards “p” (paragraph mark) on your toolbar.



Once you mark your index entries scroll to the place at the end of the document where you want the index to appear. Then go to insert/reference/indexes and tables and select the index tab. Click ok. Word then collects all your index entries, sorts them alphabetically, references their page numbers, finds and removes duplicate entries from the same page, and displays the index in the document. Don't modify index entries in the finished index; if you do, your changes will be lost when you update the index. If you make changes in your document and want to add new entries to your index you can right click your mouse somewhere inside the index and click “update field.”

WITS Book Reviews

Book Title: [*The Pineville Heist*](#)

Author: Lee Chambers

ASIN: B005DST2U8

Reviewer: Dana Micheli

In Pineville, Nothing Is As It Seems...

Lee Chambers' novel *The Pineville Heist* (based on his award-winning screenplay of the same name) may have been intended as a teen thriller, but anyone who reads it--regardless of their age--will find it impossible to put down. I know *I* did, and I absolutely loved it.

Seventeen-year-old Aaron Stevens has everything a kid could want. As the son of wealthy mill owner Derek Stevens, he lives in a luxurious mansion, surrounded by hi-tech toys and a designer wardrobe that most people only dream about.

But underneath this idyllic surface, Aaron's life is anything but perfect. He's lost his mother to cancer, and his relationship with his workaholic father is turbulent, to say the least. To make matters worse, the Recession has taken its toll on the small town of Pineville. Businesses are closing, people are losing their homes, and they've begun to look upon Aaron's father—and Aaron—with a combination of jealousy and distrust. Aaron's wealth has begun to feel like a prison, and his father, a warden. He finds solace only when he is rehearsing for his lead role in the school production of Hamlet, or when he is walking in the woods on the outskirts of town.

One day, after a particularly nasty fight with his father, Aaron is hiking among the trees when he discovers a mysterious white van with two security guard uniforms and two Halloween masks on the seat. He wants to investigate further, but he's late for play practice and continues to school. It is only after he overhears the sheriff talking about a \$5 million heist at Pineville Savings and Loan that he realizes he has found the crooks' getaway vehicle. Along with his two friends, Mike and Steven, Aaron returns to the forest. But when they get there, the van is gone, along with any proof of Aaron's story. The boys are about to leave when they stumble upon the robbers' hideout and are pulled into a web of violence, intrigue and murder that threatens everything that Aaron holds dear.

As he races to uncover the truth about the robbery, Aaron is faced with the realization that everything he had believed about his life, his town, and those closest to him may be a lie. For every layer he peels back reveals yet another secret, and Chambers' tight prose promises—and delivers-- a hairpin turn with every page.

Learn more about Chambers' work at <http://leechambers.com>
[Purchase for Kindle Reader](#) only 99¢.

Title: *L.A. Blues*

Author: Maxine Thompson

ISBN: 978-1601623072

Publisher: Kensington Publishing Corp., 2011

Reviewer: Yvonne Perry

Healing the Racial Divide

Nine-year-old Black/Spanish Zipporah Saldano (a.k.a. "Z") made a panicked phone call to her father, who lived across town, to let him know that her mother, Venita, was being beaten by her latest live-in boyfriend. That phone call changed Z's life forever. Even though Z was sent to live in a loving, foster home, she blamed herself for getting her father killed, having her pregnant mother put in jail, and sending her siblings into multiple foster homes. She turns to alcohol to cover the pain she refuses to feel.

Z decides to become a cop and join the LAPD, hoping to stop some of the gang violence she and her people have seen way too much of. Her time on the force is cut short when her drinking problem causes her to be fired after her partner is killed. Her downward spiral lands her at rock bottom where she has no choice but to deal with the pain that is destroying her life. She joins AA and finally begins sorting through the years of emotional agony she has buried within her heart.

This story takes the reader deep inside the home and hearts of Z's infertile foster parents, Daddy Chill and Shirley, who love all their foster children unconditionally. Even after Z and her foster siblings reach adulthood, Shirley continues to provide emotional support during the hardships this bunch experiences quite often. Shirley even takes in the children of her drug-addicted foster child, Chica, and raises them as if they are her own grandkids.

When death hits close to home and nearly devastates the entire family, Z, who has become a private detective, begins her search for their loved one's killer. That search turns up more answers and secrets than she ever anticipated finding. I'm thankful for a happy ending to this tragic story that caused tears of compassion to well up in my eyes as I read.

The storytelling skills of this author are great. The story is told in first person. While I was a bit puzzled by the narrator's shift from present to past tense (sometimes in the same sentence), I must admit it helped define the protagonist's character. I finished the book in one weekend even while tending to my young grandsons because I couldn't put the book down. I had fallen in love with the characters and had to see what was going to happen next. The pace of the story is perfect.

Knowing that inner healing can change an entire culture—and ultimately our world—I recommend this well-researched book to all races because it gives hope that our Black and Latino brothers and sisters can take responsibility for their choices and find peace within themselves. There is no place love cannot reach!

Title: *Ghost Rider: Travels on the Healing Road*
Author: Neil Peart
ISBN: 1-55022-546-4 (cloth) 1-55022-548-0 (paper)
Publisher: ECW Press
Reviewer: Tracey L. Brackett

At the tender age of sixteen I was introduced to a band called Rush. The Canadian trio filled my ears as well as my soul and to this day Rush still rocks my world.

Unfortunately, after the tour to support their album, *Test for Echo*, ended on July 4, 1997, the band disappeared. Rumors spread that one of the trio had cancer while others heard they simply broke up.

In 2002 the explanation about the band's hiatus was finally revealed to the world and the truth was exposed. Neil Peart, Rush's King of Kings drummers, lost his nineteen-year-old daughter to a car accident on August 10, 1997 and his common-law wife went into a deep depression and died of cancer ten months later.

So, on a rainy, late summer morning on August 20, 1998, just two months after his wife's funeral, without any reason to carry on and having no interests in his work or his life, the drummer of drummers secured his home, revved up his BMW R1100GS motorcycle and rode down the driveway of what used to be a happy home. He didn't know where he was going, but he would let his bike lead the way.

For fourteen months, Neil ventured 55,000 miles of highways and byways from eastern Canada to the American west coast and Mexico. All the while, keeping a journal of everything he experienced.

When he finally placed the kickstand down on his bike in early autumn of 1999, he began piecing together the notes from his journal and titled the book to describe how he felt about himself. Thus, *Ghost Rider: Travels on the Healing Road* was born.

This book will warm the hearts of Neil's long-time fans as well as anyone who wants to read a sad, yet uplifting story. While Neil details out the events of his travel, he sprinkles in the memories of his once-happy life. By the time you finish the book, the entire picture is before you—and you understand.

Neil divides his piece into two books: Book One is titled *Riding the Healing Road*, which specifically records every rain drop and winding turn he experiences on his journey. Book Two *Homeward Angel, On The Fly* is peppered with his reflection and his determination to look and move forward.

The author brings humor and intimacies into the book and allows the reader to watch the dissection of his spirit, his mind, heart, and his “little baby soul.” Neil introduces us to his best friend, Brutus, and his alter ego, Ellwood, which is actually his middle name. We also become acquainted with Carrie Nuttall, the woman who was “. . . the answer to a prayer I hadn't dared to voice, or even *dream*” and on September 9, 2000 became his wife.

The only frustration I had with the book is the amount of ad nauseam and unnecessary detail. I found myself many times in frustration screaming “GET ON WITH IT” and would rifle through pages of description-overkill of a rock or how the wine tasted on his tongue.

Many words the author uses such as nadir, majordomo, euphoniously, gelid, and vicissitudes were so unfamiliar to me that I found myself looking to Webster for clarification. The extremity of pointless detail became so exhausting that it took me quite a while to get through the book. I found his writing style arrogant and vain.

I've labeled Neil a narcissistic wordsmith as I now realize how much he loves his words. It is very clear to me after reading this book and listening to his lyrics for the past thirty years that he wants his readers and listeners to know just how much he loves his words and how well he can put a plethora of complicated words together to invoke a simple meaning.

Ghost Rider: Travels on the Healing Road, although frustrating and sometimes exhausting, is a must read for any Rush fan, rocker, or those who like a complicated read with a good ending. Delightful and fun, yet heartbreaking, this book will not only give you a new outlook on life, but will motivate you to buy a motorcycle and “Take off to the Great White North.”

WITS Podcast

August 19 – Ian Anderson speaks to Dana Micheli about *Modern Disciples Vol. I*, his first novel and the first in this fantasy series about a group of mythical heroes.

August 26 – Lynee Davis sits down with Dana Micheli to speak about *A Widow's Walk: From Pain to Peace*, a memoir chronicling her journey to healing after the untimely death of her husband.

We Are One in Spirit Podcast

August 11- Carl Bozeman will be joining LavendarRose to discuss his new book, *On Being God Beyond Your Life's Purpose*. Carl is a spiritual pioneer who's message is to provide new ways to inspire, uplift and challenge everyone to see through the limiting illusion they accept as life - to challenge their beliefs and all limiting behaviors in such a way that a new awareness surrounds them; an eternal awareness where no boundary exists. *On Being God* is a testament to our divine nature and a guide to show us how to find that place inside where God dwells. We can find our way back and many will find the words of the book compelling and uplifting as they rediscover that under all the trappings this reality provides there is so much more.