

Writers in the Sky
**NEWS
LETTER**



June 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. Our goal is to connect the writing and publishing community through networking.

Editor's Corner

By Yvonne Perry, Owner of Writers in the Sky Creative Writing Services
(<http://writersinthesky.com>)

Today is June 7 and I'm officially on vacation for two weeks! Lots of time with family and getting some fresh air and sunshine. Ah, life is good!

And, this is good news too: Amazon.com has lowered the price of my book AGAIN! It's now offered at an incredibly low price of only \$12.23! *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>.

I plan to give a lecture at Cosmic Connections in Nashville on June 18 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Please join me for a discussion on what it means to be an empath and how to clear your energy field.

Also, I'm putting together a free online event "Empaths Shifting into 2012: A Telesummit to Help Energy-sensitive People Understand Their Spiritual Role on Earth" for this September. There will be seven panelists sharing more than 12 hours of useful information about helping humanity shift into higher consciousness. In my presentation, "There are No Victims! Helping Empaths to See Themselves as Empowered Beings of Light," I will share why forgiveness is so important to empaths who want to stay clear of negativity and align with higher frequencies in order to accomplish their life's mission. More info at <http://dld.bz/aaK6e>.

Book marketing expert [Dana Lynn Smith](#) is the author of many e-books (including the ones listed below) to help authors promote their books online. She and I conducted a free teleconference to share some of the information in her books. If you missed the call, you can get the replay at <http://tinyurl.com/DanaWITS>. Here are some of Dana's books:

- [How to Sell More Books on Amazon;](#)
- [The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Selling Your Book to Libraries;](#)
- [The Savvy Book Marketer's Guide to Successful Social Marketing;](#)
- [Facebook Guide for Authors;](#)
- [Twitter Guide for Authors;](#)
- [Boost Your Book Sales With Twitter - Audio Program;](#)
- [Get Connected: Build Your Business With Online Networking Promoting;](#)
- [Texas Book Marketing Handbook](#)

Be sure to read the helpful articles in this issue written by the WITS team members. Considering seeking podcast and radio interviews to help market your book? WITS Podcast host Vonnie Faroqui has some tips for how to give a good interview. If you need help formatting your book for Smashwords, Kindle, or Nook [Dianna can help!](#) I think you'll especially enjoy our new column, "Grammar Hero is in the House! Say What?" I also like this helpful tip from Wendy Lachmuth on when to use there, their, and they're:

They're going to visit their parents next week, and will be there for two weeks. However, their pets, won't be there, as they're going to stay with their favorite pet sitter. They'll be very happy, though, to return to their families once they're home again. After all, there's no place like home!

Have a great month, everyone!

Yvonne Perry,

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The Grammar Hero is in the House! Say What?

By Kristen House

My mom recently sent me an email asking me to take a 10 minute survey. And although I love my mom, I simply could not do it. Say What? That's right I couldn't do it because a hyphen is needed to create a compound modifier from two nouns. Neither "10" nor "minute" could stand alone to modify "survey." You wouldn't say "10 survey" or "minute survey" because neither 10 nor minute is an adjective: they're both nouns! So I put on my Grammar Hero cape and jotted her a quick note that read, " I can't do this, Mom. But, I would be willing to take a 10-minute survey!" Grammar Hero to the rescue!

I pulled a late night and when I woke up this morning, I was devastated to find that I had run out of coffee and milk. I was also out of toilet paper. Still in my pajamas, I drove to the grocery store to purchase three items. And there, under the flickering fluorescent lights of my local grocery store, I once again donned my Grammar Hero Cape. A woman with dozens of coupons clogged aisle four, the only open checkout lane, but there was nobody standing in the "Ten Items or Less" aisle. Guess where I went? Yep, aisle four. Say What? The sign on the express lane should have read "Ten Items or Fewer." "Fewer" is used to describe a countable number of items, whereas "less" modifies measurable mass. For example, "I weigh less now than I did when I was pregnant," or "I sure wish I had fewer pounds around my middle." The cashier and her manager were very impressed. Grammar Hero 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.

Tips for Prerecorded Podcast Interviews

By Vonnie Faroqui

Prerecorded podcast interviews differ from live radio in several ways. You will need to find out ahead of time how your interview will be conducted, live or as a prerecorded podcast to be aired at a later date.

Many Web radio and podcast interviews are prerecorded for the convenience of the blog host and site management. This allows for minor editing, a “positive” in favor of prerecording interviews that a good host will use to make higher quality podcasts. Writers In The Sky pre-records its podcasts and schedules these interviews to be aired on a weekly basis.

Even the best editing can't turn Mr. Potato into a thrilling interviewee. That being the case, here are a few tips to help you on your way to becoming an interview superstar.

Get Comfortable

Live radio interviews can begin abruptly. A prerecorded interview usually allows you to get comfortable with your host and to ask questions of your interviewer before recording begins. For WITS Podcast interviews, I like to give our guests the general outline of the interview a day or two early, and then to answer questions before we begin recording. Taking the time to chat with my guests beforehand helps me gauge an author's comfort level, break the ice, and address any fears our guests may have about interviewing. Live interviews rarely have time to allow a host to put their guest at ease. Interviewing is a skill that, as with all skills, gets easier through practice. Practice your interview skills with friendly audiences. Get your friends to ask you questions about your book and themes. Play around with your responses so that you learn to answer questions on the fly.

About timing

With prerecorded interviews, there are fewer concerns or constraints about time and timing than is the case for live interviews. During a live interview, you will need to be prepared to talk at a moment's notice and to keep your answers brief so that your host can speak to other callers or break for commercial. With a prerecorded interview, it is possible to take more time with your answers as pauses and hiccups can be edited away. In both cases, help your host know when you are finished speaking by ending with a declarative sentence or by using a vocal downtick to make it clear to the host that you've completed your answer.

No prepared speeches

Don't write out speeches to read during the interview. Instead, create a bullet point list of things you would like to convey during the interview, key thoughts or themes you want to work into your responses. Read answers are never very engaging and will make you sound stilted and mechanical unless you are theatrically trained. Even good actors avoid reading from a prepared script and take liberties with their material to allow for natural, conversational phrasing. Don't make the mistake of reading prepared answers during your interview. It is a mood killer.

Listen to your host

Listen to your host and do your best to answer the questions they ask. Don't assume that they are disinterested. Give them something to work with. An unresponsive guest is a host's worst nightmare. A host will often ask follow up questions if they like what you've said, if they are trying to draw out more information from you or if they want to carry you deeper down a line of questioning they think will be of interest to their audience. If you are listening to your host, you will hear the cues they will give you. Be responsive and they will guide you through. An engaging guest is a delight to support and easy to sell. If you need a little help with energy and want to avoid sounding flat and uninspired, try matching or slightly exceeding your host's energy level. To do this you have to . . . listen.

Share your passion

If you aren't passionate about your book, who will be? Listeners will turn the dial if your interview lacks passion, but they will "hear it" if you SMILE – so get a telephone headset and free yourself to wave those arms around while you talk. Let the love you have for your book, theme, and characters come through in your voice. Standing while you speak conveys energy and confidence. Gesturing helps you convey intensity and meaning. We rely upon these things in everyday speech to help communicate clearly. Allowing for movement will help you relax during an interview and greatly enhance the sound of your voice.

Give of yourself

Being a good guest translates down to one thing. Give of yourself. When someone speaks from a place of inspiration about something they love, it is always interesting. Do you love your book? Didn't you just invest time, energy, and money in creating and publishing it? If you love your book and speak from that place, you will have something interesting to say.

Letting go of fear and embracing life is a challenge that everyone faces. The circumstances may vary, but the opportunity to move past fear comes to all of us. I have one last tip to share and it will help you overcome any fears you have about interviewing. And it is . . .

Keep breathing

Breath is life. When you stop your breath, you stop your life, you freeze your emotions, and stifle your truth. Breathing frees stuck emotion and gives you voice. It carries you through and out of fear. If you encounter a question that throws you for a second, or need to gather your thoughts for a response, take a breath. In that moment of internal silence, while you concentrate on inhaling, your answer will come. It will come from a place of truth that exists deep inside of you, a place that is inside all of us. Share what comes to you and keep breathing.

Vonnie Faroqui is a freelance writer offering author promotions services through Ink-Slingers-Whimsey.com. She is a regular host for the popular writing show, Writers in the Sky Podcast.

WITS Announcements

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

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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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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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Join Yvonne Perry as she gives a lecture at [Cosmic Connections in Nashville](#) on June 18 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. on what it means to be an empath and how to clear your energy field.

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WITS team member Dianna Calareso published her memoir, *At Ease*, in digital format through Smashwords. The book only costs \$2.49, and she's donating 25 percent of every sale to the Alzheimer's Association (the memoir is about her grandfather, a retired Marine who suffered from Alzheimer's until his death in 2005). Here's the link for downloading: <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/53669>. If you need help formatting your book for Smashwords, Kindle, or Nook [let Dianna](#) know.

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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 seven 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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WITS Book Reviews

Book Title: [*Love From the Other Side*](#)

Author: Carol Shimp

ISBN: 978-1432767907

Publisher: Outskirts Press

Reviewer: [Vonnie Farouqi](#)

Searching for Answers

At some point, most of us find ourselves searching for answers to the question of what comes after this life. We all have our own reasons for the search and it is in these times when books such as Carol Shimp's, *Love from the Other Side: a Search for Answers*, find their way to us. Sometimes a friend will recommend we read, other times it will be through a review that our attention is caught. We may not always agree with what we read, but the need to understand drives us and so we turn the first page hoping to find peace and a sense of knowing.

Carol has given the gift of her story in, *Love from the Other Side*, a memoir recounting her spiritual exploration, paranormal experiences, and quest to balance daily life with experiences of the spirit world, precognitive dreams and other worldly messages. Through this book, the reader will discover hidden groups of spiritual seekers, spiritual teachings, and have an opportunity to encounter teachings that are often obscured for the protection of the innocent. In a world that has grown skeptical of anything that cannot be scientifically weighed and measured, psychic and paranormal experiences remain a taboo subject in most homes, or a matter of ridicule and scorn. As I read, I found myself drawn into the memoir by the sincerity of the author.

The quality of writing is pleasing; the chapters are well constructed, making the story easy to follow. Great care is given in the treatment of spiritual beliefs and matters of faith. Carol does not denounce or espouse any particular faith, although she does share that her background and religious path is Catholic. She receives assistance from a group of spiritual seekers and eventually undergoes a non-Catholic exorcism of energies that were detrimental to her spiritual and mental health.

This is a marvelous book for the curious and for spiritual seekers. There are wonderful spiritual truths within the folds of *Love from the Other Side* that will enrich the unfamiliar and gratify those initiated in the practices and teachings of spiritualists and mediums. Rather than portraying the sensational, Carol's style and message are without guile. In the end what is revealed comes from a place of love and is offered without condition.

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**Book Title:** [\*\*\*Shee Willow\*\*\*](#)

Author: Claudy Conn

ISBN: 978-1613099933

Publisher: Wings ePress

Reviewer: [Vonnie Faroqui](#)

Claudly Conn's *Shee Willow*, carries us deep into the world of fae intrigue and danger . . . exciting and fast paced, this is a novel with plenty of plot twists and surprises to support the romance. This tale can stand on its own but Conn brings back the cast of faery characters we fell in love with from *Spellbound-Legend*, deepening the Seelie intrigues, romance, and dangers in part two of the series.

Once again Conn ignites the page with hunk madness, as every which way Willow turns brings hot potential for love and misdirection. A Conn story is always full of rich layers and like dark chocolate cake waiting to be licked from sticky fingers; she tempts even the most discriminating reader to escapism. I can't help but pout a little when she tortures us with characters that we want for ourselves only to find out later that our hunk of hotness is just no good for us or our heroine.

In *Shee Willow*, Conn writes from the first person perspective of each of her main characters, giving a different feel to the book than you will have encountered in reading *Spellbound-Legend*. If you like to imagine yourself in the role of the characters, this perspective and writing style might challenge you at first. It won't matter past the first chapter, because once you get reading you will find that Conn is a master of the craft and the story is a pleaser.

I didn't think the series could get better but Conn is developing the magical and political intrigue of the underlying plot connecting the books, as well as the romantic drama. Additional characters open the scope for rising action and she continues to weave in future romances and danger.

Conn is in high form and never shorts her heroine or her reader. It is pure torture deciding which of the men or fae to fantasize over, and I do so love the bad ones!

You got me again, Claudy!

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Book Title: [***I Am Going Where I Belong***](#)

Author: Hans Lindor

ISBN: 978-1592322657

Publisher: Enaz Publications

Reviewer: [Vonnie Faroqui](#)

I Am Going Where I Belong relates a fictionalized and tragic tale of life for Haiti native Hans Leger. Born into the ruling class of Haiti and a life of privilege, Hans Leger discovers a side of his homeland that is both shocking and horrifying. The narrative carries the reader through a chance encounter with a child prostitute and her son, to the murder of Han's father, and his family's flight to and life in the USA as political

refugees. This story reflects deeply on the living conditions, mental attitudes and struggles of the Haitian people. The narrative voice of the book relates and reflects upon issues of personal safety, survival, self loathing, racial and economic discrimination and political despotism.

Insightfully written, *I Am Going Where I Belong* is loosely built around aspects of the author's personal experiences, and offers a perspective and a vision of the Haitian people that have until now been given little or no voice. Author Hans Lindor eloquently weaves his personal experiences of life in Haiti and beyond into this fictionalized account, successfully capturing for his audience truths that can only be felt when shared by one who has lived and breathed them. Lindor has lifted his pen on behalf of Haiti and his native people.

I had the great pleasure of interviewing Hans Lindor after having read his book, *I Am Going Where I Belong*. Lindor will tell you that the book is about a fictional character and that it is not about his life. After having interviewed the author, I can see why he would assert this. Many aspects of the character Hans's life are fictionalized and differ from events that played out Lindor's own story. However, the book also contains events, losses, and incidents that the author has drawn directly from his personal experience. The road of circumstance traveled may differ for the character, Hans, but when you read about Marie and her son, or when a beloved character is gunned down and must be left untended in the streets, there is an aspect of reality being shared that is heartrendingly real. These are elements of the author's own story which are retold using the vehicle of fiction to soften the impact for both the author and the reader. It is in these moments that Lindor's ability to write is at its best. He transmits into words the incredible horror, loss and grief that has been his own and shares with all of us a tale of Haiti's children.

If you are at all interested in the lost boys of Haiti or in the politics and struggles surrounding this nation, you will benefit by reading *I Am Going Where I Belong*. Well written and easy to understand, this book will open your eyes to realities and difficulties faced every day by the Haitian people. The author digs deep and offers up a piece of his soul in, *I Am Going Where I Belong*.

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**Book Title: [\*The Quetzal Skull\*](#)**

Author: Margaret Gill

ISBN: 978-1432768669

Publisher: Outskirts Press

Reviewer: [Vonnie Faroqui](#)

**Superb from beginning to end!**

There is much good to be said about Margaret Gill's writing and *The Quetzal Skull* in particular. To begin, Margaret knows how to weave a delicious story that will captivate her youthful audience as well as those adults that enjoy reading the Young Adult Fiction genre of books. *The Quetzal Skull* follows, *Narwhal*, as part two in a series and is superbly written.

*The Quetzal Skull* relates the continuing tale of Gray, a young man on the verge of discovering his deepening psychic gifts and his place in the world as a shaman. After his brush with death, in Narwhal, Gray goes to the mainland to attend art school. He intends to study art that is, but it seems once again fate and prophecy have a plan for Gray which is outside of his understanding and control. Kidnapping is the least of the lengths his enemies will go in their efforts to maintain their drive for power and control. They perceive Gray as a threat to their plans and won't stop coming after him until they have eliminated the threat he poses, permanently. Follow Gray around the globe into the heart of myth and mystery, as he strives to solve secrets locked in the distant past and fulfill his destiny.

Margaret does an excellent job of depicting and explaining concepts of psychic energy work and shamanism that accurately portray the teachings, methods and practices of modern and historic shamanic practitioners. She is able to capture in words and through story telling the atmosphere of time and place, which combine to create a flavor of danger and increased tension. Her research and insight into traditional shamanic roles and practices, as well as into the healing or mystical properties of certain herbs and the political intrigue used in her story, is to be commended. There is much to be learned, about our world and its societies, which she has cleverly revealed in the story or used as a device to develop her plot.

Exciting and enlightening, full of physical and spiritual dangers, *The Quetzal Skull* takes Gray and the reader on an adventure of thrilling proportions. Discover wonder and mystery in the crystal skull of Quetzal. A cast of memorable characters waits for you. You will not want to put this book down.

## WITS Podcast

During the month of June Writers in the Sky audiences will enjoy podcast interviews with authors, from a wide spectrum of genres. June's guests share their recent literary creations and writing publishing experiences, and talk with Writers in the Sky host Vonnie Faroqui about book marketing using blogging and social media.

On **June 3, 2011**, Vonnie Faroqui interviews 85 year old author, Betsy Houser, about her romance novel, *Summer Is Her Name*. "This was a charmingly delightful novel and the author was a joy to converse with." Betsy shares an excerpt from her book and offers some encouraging words for other authors.

On **June 10, 2011**, J. C. Stevens shares his book, *The Killing Game*, a crime novel about a mob hit man forced out of retirement to become a pawn in the deeper game. Stevens talks about using a pseudonym to write in multiple genres and discusses blogging as a marketing tool with host Vonnie Faroqui. Listen in and pick up some ideas for how blogging could help you too.

On **June 17, 2011**, Jerome Peoples talks about his historical book, *Lee's Bread Machines*. Learn from this author historian about a true life, African American inventor

who changed the bread making industry of America. Jerome T. Peoples has a long distinguished career as a science teacher and now adds author to his list of accomplishments. Realizing the need for Afro-American inventors to be introduced to the general public, Jerome worked for seven years gathering the information presented in his book. "*Lee's Bread Machines* is a fascinating piece of US history that will inspire you."

On **June 24, 2011**, Writers in the Sky Podcast guest, author Allison Wynn presents her book, *The Answer, "A Journey From Anger To Peace."* Allison Wynne has spent 30 years helping people create more peaceful lives. The two questions she's been asked the most are, "How do I deal with anger in either myself or others," and "How do I create a more peaceful life?" Join podcast host Vonnie Faroqui for her interview with this exciting guest.

Writers in the Sky blog, podcast, and newsletter is a three-fold production filled with information about writing, publishing, and book publicity created by Yvonne Perry as part of [Writers in the Sky Creative Writing Services](http://writersinthesky.blogspot.com/p/wits-creative-writing-services.html). Listen to Writers in the Sky Podcast at <http://writersinthesky.blogspot.com/p/wits-podcast.html>

## Editors Are Not Out to Get You!

By Dana Micheli

In addition to my work for Writers in the Sky, I am also a teaching assistant for an online university. My job is primarily to grade English papers based on grammar, content, and whether the student has followed the assignment parameters set by the professor. Another part of my job is to answer emails from students and offer guidance whenever I can. Usually these are pleasant and—I hope—helpful exchanges.

So I was shocked when I opened an especially long email last week saw a barrage of angry words, all in capital letters. Internet yelling, directed at me. Somehow I had wronged these person, and grievously. They could not understand my comments on their paper, and felt I was somehow out to get them.

My first reaction, I admit, was respond with a lecture about Netiquette and ask how they expected to get anywhere in life if this is how they spoke to people. But I took a step back and a deep breath, and realized what I was dealing with here was the "I" in Writer.

I suddenly remembered what it was like when as an English major in college I had to distribute copies of my short story for my classmates to read. They were to take it home, read it, and return the next class to deliver their commentary. Aloud. In front of everyone. The fact that everyone had to do it didn't make it any easier. At the time, I thought this exercise was cruel, humiliating, and without merit. I was wrong, however, and it made me a better writer. It also took me down a peg and taught me I didn't know everything.

My online student, I realized, had probably poured his/her heart and soul into the paper and now felt personally attacked.

Learning to check your ego at the door, I explained, is one of the most critical things you can do to improve your writing career. You don't have to agree with the critic, but listening to (and thinking about) the criticism opens you up to new perspectives and proves that you can learn from anyone, any time. And that is useful for any writer.

*Dana Micheli is a freelance writer, editor, proofreader, and journalist. She has written and edited works of fiction and nonfiction, including novels (ghostwritten), news articles, resumes, business plans, and restaurant reviews. She also researched and wrote the legal and housing sections of New York: The Complete Resident's Guide (Explorer Publishing). She is also the business writer for WITS.*

### **WITS Tip of the Month on Microsoft Word**

In Word 2007, you can research, use a thesaurus, dictionary, language translator, encyclopedia, and Web search with the right click of your mouse. It's like having a research library on your desktop!

Highlight the word you want to know more about. Now, *right* click on the word and select "look up" to get the definition. Or, choose synonyms to get a replacement word . The thesaurus is at the bottom of the synonyms drop down list.