

**Creative Writing/ Creative Memoirs 2-4 pm Wednesday 9 September 2015**

**“Re-Write Your Life—Or Someone Else’s” workshop will again be back in our meeting room, first to the right, at Calvert Library—**

**Notations of interest in the attached—**

**Liisa/Elisavietta**

**Robyn urges us to read *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel James Brown, as part of the One Maryland, One Book project. I’m in line for the audio version, but you can also sign up for the e-book or REAL book or BIG print versions.**

**“And you can join a group of other community-minded volunteers for a discussion and food sorting at the End Hunger Warehouse. Discuss the themes of the human drama of athletic competition and the power of teamwork presented in *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel James Brown. Participants will show what a difference teamwork can make by helping to sort food after the discussion. Maximum of 15 people. Registration required. Tue, Sep 29 | 7pm-8:30pm End Hunger Warehouse 141 Schooner Lane, Prince Frederick.**

**“A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.” Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.**

**“Without poets, without artists... everything would fall apart into chaos. There would be no more seasons, no more civilizations, no more thought, no more humanity, no more life even; and impotent darkness would reign forever. Poets and artists together determine the features of their age, and the future meekly conforms to their edit.” ---- Guillaume Apollinaire**

**Several upcoming readings which at least some of you will be able to attend. Writers Reading @ AACC Fall 2015 These free events, open to the public, are sponsored by the Creative Writing Program and the Cultural Events Committee of Anne Arundel Community College. For more information contact Professor Susan Cohen [sacohen3@aacc.edu](mailto:sacohen3@aacc.edu)**



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**September 24, 2015: Poet-- Christopher Ankney in HUM 112, 2:00-3:15.**

Christopher Ankney, an AACC faculty member, is the author of *Hearsay*, the winner of the 2014 Jean Feldman Prize-winner from Washington Writers' Publishing House.

“Hearsay is a collection of poems whose experiences are verified by Ankney’s rich and subtle imagination. He has teased out the imperative (Here, say) hidden in the title, and as such Ankney’s poems provide an enduring testimony for what it’s like to be alive in our calamitous, heart-breaking and over-charged epoch.”— Michael Collier

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**October 15, 2015: Historical Fiction Writer--Erika Robuck in HUM 112, 2:00- 3:15**

Historical fiction writer, book blogger, voracious reader. Erika's first novel, *Receive Me Falling* was self-published. Penguin Random House published Hemingway’s *Girl*, *Call Me Zelda*, *Fallen Beauty*, *The House of Hawthorne*, and a short story anthology to which Erika contributed, *Grand Central: Original Stories of Postwar Love and Reunion*.

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**November 19, 2015: Poet and Essayist--Jane Satterfield in HUM 112, 2:00-3:15**

Jane Satterfield was born in Northamptonshire, England and raised in the United States. Satterfield has won a number of awards. In 2013 she received the 49th Parallel Award in Poetry from Bellingham Review. In 2011 she won the Mslexia Women's Poetry Competition for "The War Years". In 2007, Satterfield was awarded both a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Literature for poetry and the Pirate’s Alley Faulkner Society Gold Medal for the Essay. Her books include: *Her Familiars*, *Shepherdess with an Automatic*, *Assignation at Vanishing Point* and *Daughters of Empire: A Memoir of a Year in Britain and Beyond*.

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Rocky Jones has invited me to be a featured reader along with Jehanne Dubrow Saturday, September 12, at Ahh Coffee, 1015 Bay Ridge Ave, Annapolis, MD. 6:30pm. Open Mic, good food. I’ll read from *GUY*



**WIRES**, (Poets-Choice Publishing, May 2015), my recently republished translation of an Akhmatova poem, and *In Haste I Write You This Note*, winner of the 1999 Washington Writers' Publishing House fiction award, now much revised as an e-book.

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Those of you who have long considered writing your memoirs, will identify with this poem by David Ebenbach, a Washington Writers' Publishing House winner for his story collection *INTO THE FOREST*.

### **Birds, Et Cetera**

I'm going to write a memoir,  
just as soon as I get it together  
and start appreciating life.  
You know, the beautiful things:  
birds, et cetera. Flowers and  
what not. When I can hardly  
walk a block without stopping,  
wading through my own awe  
at every blade of earnest grass.  
Right now I mostly notice how  
the grass breaks the sidewalk  
as it forces its way into the open.  
Or the way my wife goes allergic  
when flowers pop up around us.  
Or the bird shit, quite frankly,  
that streaks the door of my car  
right where my hand wants to go  
to close that door. And then  
I think about how so many people  
have worked so hard to get a car  
but don't have anywhere to go,  
and just want to drive around,  
and now they've got a handful  
of excrement, and nobody's hand  
to shake anyway. And that's why  
the memoir has got to wait.



[From *WE WERE THE PEOPLE WHO MOVED*,  
Terbach Bach Press, ©2015 David Ebenbach]

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**“A writer needs loneliness, and he gets his share of it. He needs love, and he gets shared and also unshared love. He needs friendship. In fact, he needs the universe. To be a writer is, in a sense, to be a day-dreamer - to be living a kind of double life.” Jorge Luis Borges (born 24 August 1899)**

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### **=10 Tips for Writing**

**By: Chuck Sambuchino | *Writer's Digest* August 7, 2015**

**1. Don't write linearly:** Don't set out to write something from beginning to end. A story is meant to be read from front to back, but not necessarily created that way. If you have an idea for writing the sixth chapter first, then start there. The epilogue can even be the first thing you put down on paper, then work your way back. Scattered chapters will eventually be filled in, and it will force you to look at the story from different angles, which may present different ideas or new approaches. You'd be surprised how well this works when a whole book starts coming together. It's also great for getting around writer's block.

**2. Have two or more projects on the go:** Speaking of writer's block, having more than one project on the go is never a bad idea. Although focus and dedication are paramount to completing a work, sometimes you inevitably get stuck. It's good to be able to move on to something else instead of feeling frustrated and stagnant. You don't have to have a few big projects happening either ... maybe you're penning a novel, but also some short stories and an article or two.

**3. Be your own editor:** There are days where I have difficulty writing altogether, so I'll switch to editing my stories rather than trying to create them. Never assume it is someone else's job to fix your mistakes. Find all the errors first, and deal with them yourself. The more polished and refined your work is, the more favorably it will be received when you're finally ready to present it.



4. Ask for (and take lots of) punishment: It is well worth finding yourself a professional writer or editor and asking/paying them to look at your work. Tell them to give you highly critical feedback with no sugarcoating. Let them go so far as to be cruel too, just so you really get the point. There is a lot of rejection and criticism involved in the publishing industry. Getting accustomed to it sooner than later is advantageous. If you want to be serious about your writing, then you'll need to know everything wrong with your writing. Accepting and understanding the harsh realities of your shortcomings is a most important step to getting better.

5. Disconnect: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pintrest, the Internet in general ... we know how invasive social media and technology is in our lives these days. We also know that it can be good for promotion, building a brand, and having an online presence. But you know what else social media and technology is really good for? Procrastination, distraction, and countless wasted hours. Being able to unplug for long periods of time is more important than you may think. All those tweets you've posted might have added up the word-count of half a novel by now...

6. Learn what good writing is: Honestly, there's so much terrific writing out there, but there is also considerably more garbage as well. I'm constantly surprised by how many people don't know the difference between the good and the bad. Art is subjective, true, but it isn't *that* subjective when you remove ignorance and replace it with education. Duke Ellington said it best: "There are two kinds of music. Good music, and the other kind". The same applies to writing.

7. Have your own workspace: It's trendy nowadays to take your laptop to coffee shop or bar and write in public. I even advocate a change of environment/atmosphere when writing feels stifled. But I believe it's more important to have and maintain your own private workspace, a spot you can call your own with a desk and preferably a door you can close when you need to shut out the world in order to create your own.



8. Dedicate to the craft: Serious writing is not something you merely do if or when you can find the time. It's not just for Sunday afternoons, or the occasional evening, or a few hours a week when you can give it some attention. *Make* the time, and make lots of it. Tackle the craft daily and dedicate a generous portion of your existence to honing your skills. You're only going to get out of it what you put into it, and serious writing requires a lot of investment.

9. Time management: When it comes to the hours or days you've reserved for writing, make sure you stick to your guns. Consider it sacred. To most other people, your 'writing time' is merely 'flexible time'. They will invariably think that you can cancel, minimize or postpone working when it suits you (or them). Tell these people that your personal work time is not negotiable; much like theirs isn't at their day jobs. You don't need a regimented schedule, but you do need to clock in the hours.

10. Remember the Three "P's": I'll admit there's still a hell of a lot more to say on the topic of writing tips, but what it all comes down to in the end are three things I believe writers need to remember above all else: Patience, Perseverance, and maintaining your sense of Purpose.

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"Sometimes, after staying in a village parlor till the family had all retired, I have returned to the woods, and, partly with a view to the next day's dinner, spent the hours of midnight fishing from a boat by moonlight, serenaded by owls and foxes, and hearing from time to time, the creaking note of some unknown bird close at hand. These experiences were very memorable and valuable to me, - anchored in forty feet of water, and twenty or thirty rods from the shore, surrounded sometimes by thousands of small perch and shiners, dimpling the surface with their tails in the moonlight, communicating by a long flaxen line with mysterious nocturnal fishes which had their dwelling forty feet below, or sometimes dragging sixty feet of line about the pond as I drifted in the gentle night breeze, now and then feeling a slight vibration along it, indicative of some life prowling about its extremity, of dull uncertain blundering purpose there, and slow to make up its mind. At length you slowly raise, pulling hand over hand, some horned pout squeaking and



squirming to the upper air.

“ It was very queer, especially in dark nights, when your thoughts had wandered to vast and cosmogonical themes in other spheres, to feel this faint jerk, which came to interrupt your dreams and link you to Nature again. It seemed as if I might next cast my line upward into the air, as well as downward into this element which was scarcely more dense. Thus I caught two fishes as it were with one hook.

– Henry David Thoreau, from *Walden* as excerpted in [Thoreau and the Art of Life](#)

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Fishing at midnight  
Drifting in the gentle night breeze  
Serenaded by owls and foxes  
Catching both the next day's dinner  
And dreams of other spheres.  
- Rod MacIver

Just to stir the pot, muddy the waters, mess your mind, (choose your own cliché), here is an article “On Excising Adverbs” from *Writer's Digest*, 20 August 2015

“Not too long ago, on Facebook, aspiring MFAs were proudly announcing that they had spent entire revision sessions excising from their manuscripts every word ending in “-ly.” Quoting Stephen King (who was perhaps quoting Nathaniel Hawthorne), they assured each other that *The Road to Hell is Paved with Adverbs*. Well, with all due respect to Mr. King and Mr. Hawthorne, it just ain't so.

“To begin with, an adverb is not merely a word that happens to end in -ly. An adverb is one of the four content parts of speech (the others are nouns, verbs, and adjectives) which enable us to construct sentences. Every part of speech *does* something in a sentence: nouns name things, verbs provide action, adjectives and adverbs add to or limit or clarify the nouns and verbs. A writer determined to eliminate adverbs will be a seriously handicapped writer, for adverbs can make more specific, add information to, not only verbs, but also adjectives and other adverbs. Adverbs, like the other content parts of speech, are an



essential for every writer's toolkit; they can do things that the other parts of speech cannot.

“The “death to all adverbs” crew also clearly don't understand that adverbs are not only single words. Every content part of speech—noun or verb, adjective or adverb—can take different forms. That's because a part of speech is a *role* that a word, or a group of words, plays in a sentence. So the role of the adverb can be played by a single word: *Joe went home*. It can be played by a phrase: *I'll call you in the morning*. It can even be played by a dependent clause: *We'll eat whenever he gets here*. And, as in this sentence from Dickens, an adverb structure can encompass other adverbials and adjectives: *He lived in a gloomy suite of rooms in a lowering pile of building up a yard, where it had so little business to be that one could scarcely help fancying it must have run there when it was a young house, playing at hide and seek with other houses, and have forgotten the way out again*. To advise young writers to get rid of all their adverbs is like advising a pitcher with four great pitches to throw only three of them—it's professional suicide. —“

-Barbara Baig, whose new book, *Spellbinding Sentences: A Writer's Guide to Achieving Excellence & Captivating Readers*, is designed to help writers master the power of the English language. You'll learn the different qualities of words and the many way those words can be combined to craft sentences that hook readers. In this post, Barbara talks about the importance of adverbs (though some swear them off) and how to use them effectively in your writing. This is the type of information, instruction and guidance that you can find throughout *Spellbinding Sentences*.

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## ***The Rule of Opulence*** **Khadijah Queen**

Bamboo shoots on my grandmother's side path  
grow denser every year they're harvested for nuisance.  
Breezes peel blush and white petals from her magnolia,



lacing unruly roots in the spring grass. For nine decades  
she has seen every season stretch out of shape, this past  
Connecticut winter slow to relinquish cold. As a girl  
she herded slow turkeys on her Aunt Nettie's farm, fifty acres  
in a Maryland county that didn't plumb until midcentury,  
plucking chickens and pheasants from pre-dawn  
into the late night, scratching dough  
for neighbors, relatives stopping by for biscuits, and the view  
from my window changes. It's Mother's Day  
and I'd always disbelieved permanence—newness a habit,  
change an addiction—but the difficulty of staying put  
lies not in the discipline of upkeep, as when my uncle chainsaws  
hurricane-felled birches blocking the down-sloped driveway,  
not in the inconvenience of well water  
slowing showers and night flushes, not in yellow jackets  
colonizing the basement, nuzzling into a hole  
so small only a faint buzz announces their invasion  
when violin solos on vinyl end, but in the opulence of acres  
surrounding a tough house, twice repaired from fires, a kitchen  
drawer that hasn't opened properly in thirty years marked *Danger*,  
nothing more permanent than the cracked flagstone  
path to the door, the uneven earth shifting invisibly beneath it.

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**Rather good advice from Carolyn Howard-Johnson via an online freebie, *The Frugal Book Promoter* (Second Edition) How to get nearly free publicity on your own or partnering with your publisher**

**Published by HowToDoItFrugally Publishing Co.**

**Know Thyself, Know Thy Book Reread your book. Pretend you didn't write it so it feels fresh. Look at its themes to find angles you can exploit when you're talking to editors. What's different about your book? How does its plot or subject matter fit with what's currently in the news? What different demographics does it appeal to? What's happening in the publishing industry that you can exploit with your queries? A romance Web site might like my novel, *This Is the Place*, but so would a literary one. That it is set in Salt Lake City where the Olympic Games were played in 2002 was an unexpected publicity bonus. I found sports and feature editors open to it as winter games**



fervor grew and even as it waned because they still needed news and had used all the closely related material they had access to.

**Thou Shalt Cull Contacts** When you add a new file of media contacts to your computer's database, you will need to develop new habits. If you find the name of a new editor and wait to record it, that name may get lost forever. The Web site [www.gebbieinc.com](http://www.gebbieinc.com) sells targeted lists of media contacts. Some partial directories on the Web are free (check John Kremer's [www.bookmarket.com](http://www.bookmarket.com)), and so are your yellow pages. Ask for help from your librarian—a good research librarian is like a shark; she'll keep biting until she's got exactly what she wants.

But after all that, the best contacts of all are your own. You'll learn more about how to build lists and put them to good use later in this book. **Though Shalt Write Notes:** Send thank-you notes and small gifts to contacts after they've featured you or your book. Editors will pay attention to the next idea you have because people they work with so rarely remember their manners. Once you've made a good impression on a gatekeeper, stay in contact. The more pleasant you make it for others to help you market, the more likely they'll be there for you. Walk Not Alone Partnering with others is essential, especially your publisher. Ask for help. Ask for anything you need like a sample media release or an image of your bookcover. Building a good relationship and showing your associates you are willing to work with them may spur them to do more. As an example, give your publisher or agent a good reason to feature your book more prominently on their Web sites. What will benefit their visitors? Suggest that you write a feature story for them, a poem on the joys of writing, or an article on how to query a publisher.

**Publicize Thyself** You needn't be humble, just caring. Approach the gatekeepers who could use your ideas so it is evident you are concerned about their audience, not just about making a big splash for yourself. Think about your own life and career. Hundreds of thousands of books are released each year so the release of a book is no longer newsworthy; what else about you will interest an audience? Utilize the fame you may have accrued in your day job. Several editors liked the idea that I wrote my first book at an age when most are thinking of retiring; they saw me as an example that it is never too late to follow a dream, an idea that might inspire others...

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## **I Would Live In Your Love**

**Sara Teasdale**

**I would live in your love as the sea-grasses live in the sea,  
Borne up by each wave as it  
    passes, drawn down by each  
    wave that recedes;  
I would empty my soul of the  
    dreams that have gathered  
    in me,  
I would beat with your heart as  
    it beats, I would follow your  
    soul as it leads.**

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**Tom Philpott at *Mother Jones***

**Corn Fields Release Far More Greenhouse Gases Than Scientists Previously  
You've likely heard how fertilizer from the Midwest's big corn farms  
seeps into streams and causes trouble—fouling water supplies and  
generating a Connecticut-sized dead zone at the heart of the continental  
United States' most productive fishery, the Gulf of Mexico.**

**But there's another way the Corn Belt's fertilizer habit damages a common  
resource: by releasing nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas with nearly 300  
times the heat-trapping power of carbon dioxide. And it turns out that the  
region's farms are likely generating much more nitrous oxide than  
scientists previously thought.**