



# The Owl's Hoot

Official Newsletter of  
The Ozarks Writers League 501(c)(3)  
[ozarkswritersleague.com](http://ozarkswritersleague.com) [ozarkwriters@gmail.com](mailto:ozarkwriters@gmail.com)

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**November 2019**      **Volume 31, No. 1**

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## From the Leader of the Parliament

### New President New Board

By: **Veda B. Jones**

As we plan for a shimmering new year of OWL connections, I hope you will decide to take an active part in your organization.

The board is collecting ideas for what you'd like to learn at OWL meetings. In April we'll be concentrating on craft. Submitted so far are suggestions for an in-depth blurb writing session and along with that how to write author bios, what to include and what to leave out.

Writing is a solitary endeavor, and we all know that too much isolation is not good for the soul. Take advantage of the friendships of like-minded people at OWL. We may not be like-minded in the many ways of opinions, but we are like-minded in the joy we find in writing, losing ourselves in research, or going deep inside to develop solid characters.

Writers are individuals, but we need community. We need other writers to celebrate our acceptances and commiserate over rejections and to honor the joy of writing.

Join us at OWL for that community.

*Veda Boyd Jones*

## Celebrate!

For the next newsletter, send your writing news to [ozarkwriters@gmail.com](mailto:ozarkwriters@gmail.com)

**Jim Hamilton**, columnist and former editor of the *Buffalo Reflex*, is among Ozarks writers featured in issue nine of "Elder Mountain: Journal of Ozarks Studies," published in September by Missouri State University at West Plains. The collection includes varied works by 21 writers, including seven editorial columns by Hamilton. A juried journal, Elder Mountain features Ozarks-focused manuscripts from all disciplinary perspectives (particularly anthropology, economics, folklore, geography, geology, history, literature, music, and political science) as well as interdisciplinary approaches. Dallas County native Dr. Phillip Howerton, professor of English at MSU-West Plains, is editor of Elder Mountain.

**Veda Boyd Jones** puts out an annual Christmas romance e-novella. This year's title, [The Christmas Parade](#), is available now on Amazon.

**Margarite R. Stever's** memoir, "Dollhouse" appears in the soon to be released *Chicken Soup for the Soul: It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas*. Her very first book signing was on October 26, 2019 at Joplin Writers' Faire, which was held at Joplin Public Library. She signed her new *Chicken Soup for the Soul* book along with *Anthology 2019 Sleuths' Ink Mystery Writers and Legends: Passion Pages*.

**Brenda Clem Black's** first book, *BLACK & KIDDO: A True Story of Dust, Determination, and Cowboy Dreams* (Et Alia Press, 2018) was named Best Book of the Year 2018 by Ozarks Writers League and also won OWL's President's Award trophy. The creative non-fiction has also been shortlisted for the Will Rogers Medallion Award and the New Mexico/Arizona Book Award and named a Finalist in the INDIE Book Awards.

## TO DUE LIST 😊

OWL Dues are \$30.00 for the year and our treasurer is ready to take your 2020 dues now. You may pay via the PayPal link on our website, <https://www.ozarkswritersleague.com/> or mail a check to:

OWL c/o Russell Gayer  
20053 Pug Gayer Rd.  
Fayetteville, AR 72703

## Tentative speaker lineup for April:

**Cheryl Harness** earned a degree in art education at the University of Central MO (UCM), but earned her living as a commercial artist at companies such as Hallmark, Current, Inc., and as a freelancer at a variety of others. She designed greeting cards, giftwraps, Kleenex boxes, needlework kits, and music boxes. But in the summer of 1984, a children's book workshop led by noted author/illustrator, Uri Shulevitz, set her on a new path. Over the next thirty years she would research, write and/or illustrate some fifty children's books, mostly historical, published by Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins, The National Geographic, and others. At literature festivals and at schools around the country, she speaks, draws pictures, and plays her harmonica. Cheryl lives in Harry Truman's old neighborhood in Independence, MO, with her three elderly pets (2 dogs, 1 cat), plus countless books and art projects.

**Nancy Hartney**, short story author, writes about the Deep South. She has two published collections of short fiction, numerous magazine articles (*The Chronicle of the Horse*, *Sidelines*, *Horsemen's Roundup*, *Do South*, etc.), journal publications, and free-verse poems in her writerly resume. Her first novel, *If You Walk Long Enough*, is set against the tobacco farms of South Carolina at the cusp of the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement. A

daughter of the South, she makes her home in Arkansas and can be found at [NancyHartney.com](http://NancyHartney.com). Sweet tea is her beverage of choice for summer afternoons with bourbon and branch preferred in the evening.

An award-winning short story author, **Duke Pennell** has written both fiction and nonfiction and has been named one of the Top Ten Editors of both Novels and Ezines by Editors & Predators. A many-year member and past officer/board member of OWL, he and his wife/partner, Kimberly, created Pen-L Publishing – For the Love of Writing in 2012, and they have published over 100 fiction and non-fiction books, many of which have won national and regional awards (and some of which were written by OWL members!). As founder and editor of Frontier Tales E-zine ([www.FrontierTales.com](http://www.FrontierTales.com)), he brings both new and old Western authors to a wide audience with the monthly publication, now in its 11th continuous year. The story of how he went from a degree in Computer Systems Engineering from the University of Arkansas to publish books and short stories is a tale in itself and too long to tell here. Born in East St. Louis, Illinois, and raised in Southern Illinois, Duke moved to Arkansas with Kim from California in 1985 and still wonders at the beautiful sights at every turn of these Ozarks roads. His advice to writers (today) is “Push harder, learn more, and dig deeper into yourself. That’s where the gold lies.”

**Veda Boyd Jones** credits her degrees in history for teaching her research skills for nonfiction and fiction alike. She researches fiction by going into the field--taking the citizen's police academy classes for developing a policewoman character, observing at a TV station to make up a TV newscaster character, etc. Her publishing credits include over 600 articles and short stories in magazines and 47 books, romances and children's books, for traditional publishers (Barbour Books, Scholastic, McGraw-Hill, Lucent, Learner, etc.) plus ten original e-books on Amazon. She earned an MFA in creative writing and is a member of the Authors Guild, American Society of Journalists and Authors, and Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.

## Possible Markets

If you have found a market open to submissions, please share with other writers. Send the markets to [ozarkwriters@gmail.com](mailto:ozarkwriters@gmail.com)

CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL anthologies offer great break-in opportunities for writers. Pieces must be true stories, written in first-person, 1200 words max. Topics for upcoming books include: 1) Stories about Christmas, and other December holidays; 2) Stories about Self-Care and Me Time; 3) The Golden Years or Second Wind; 4) The Magic of Dogs; and 5) The Magic of Cats. Detailed story and submission guidelines on website. (ChickenSoup.com)

AMICUS INK, the retail imprint of Amicus Publishing, is open to submissions of nonfiction picture books, fiction picture books, and board books with a “child’s-eye view.” Publisher is known for books that encourage young children to explore facts, examine ideas, and imagine new ways of understanding the world. Materials must connect with toddlers, preschoolers, or early readers, as well as adults who read with them. Submissions details at <https://www.amicuspublishing.us/news/jobs-amicus> Responds in 3 to 6 months, if interested. (AmicusPublishing.com)

FRONTIER TALES is a Western e-zine looking for frontier short stories roughly between 1500-5000 words. Complete guidelines are on the website, ([frontiertales.com/submissions.php](http://frontiertales.com/submissions.php)). Email your story to [editor@frontiertales.com](mailto:editor@frontiertales.com).

## OWL board for 2020

Veda Boyd Jones, president  
Ronda Del Boccio, vice president, contest director, social media  
Russell Gayer, treasurer  
Summer Farnsworth, secretary  
Bonnie Tesh, membership director  
April Brock, youth contest director  
Rochelle Wissoff-Fields, art contest director  
Linda Runnebaum, historian  
Ricky Yates, webmaster  
John Crawford, fundraising director  
Margarite Stever, past president

Brenda Black, member-at-large  
Diana West, member-at-large

## 2020 Art & Photography Contest Rules

- 1) You must be a member of Ozarks Writers League to enter any category. Entry fee of \$10.00 must be paid the morning of the contest and may include as many pieces as Participant would like to enter, in any or all of three categories listed below.
- 2) Each entry must have a 3x5 index card attached with a paperclip—DO NOT GLUE OR TAPE, or the entry will be disqualified. The index card should include the following:
  - Name
  - Address
  - Phone number
  - Email address
- 3) Names must not appear anywhere on any piece of art or photography entered, except on the index card which is attached with a paperclip.
- 4) All entries must be delivered to the Art Registration Desk in the meeting room at Camden Conference Center, between 8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m., the morning of the April conference.

Entries may be disqualified for not following the above rules.

- 5) Participants may enter as many pieces of art or photography as they’d like, in any or all of three categories: Photography, Art and Alternative Art.
- 6) Qualified judges, from outside the organization, will conduct blind judging. Decisions are final.
- 7) At the end of the meeting, all entries must be retrieved by the member before leaving. OWL is not responsible for anything left at the close of the day.
- 8) Ribbons will be given for First, Second and Third Place in each of the three categories:
- 9) A Best of Show prize will also be awarded, which is the best of the First-Place winners in the three categories.

### CATEGORY 1: Photography

All photos entered must be 5x7 or 8x10 and must be matted. The photos are not restricted to any theme.

### CATEGORY 2: Art

Includes watercolor, oil, pastels, pencil, acrylic and any other form. Artwork must be matted and may be any theme.

### CATEGORY 3: Alternative Art

Includes any and all other kinds of art: weaving, sewing, pottery, quilting, woodwork, crafts, etc. Follow rules above for placing owner's information on the item, as far as possible, however, information must NOT be visible to the judges.

## OWL Board Minutes

Saturday, September 21, 2019

Camden Hotel & Conference Center, Branson, MO

Members attending: Veda Boyd Jones, Ronda Del Boccio, Russell Gayer, Bonnie Tesh, April Brock, Brenda Black, Linda Runnebaum, Rick Yates, Margarite Stever, and Summer Farnsworth.

2020 President of the Board, Veda Boyd Jones, called a planning meeting to order at just after 3 pm. Treasurer Russell Gayer reported \$4,959.04 in the treasury as of September 17. By the time conference bills are paid, he expects a balance of around \$2,000.

Topics discussed:

Website: Harold Pelton took more than 200 photos of the conference so Webmaster Rick Yates will have plenty to put on the site. Because of privacy concerns, it was decided not to post the membership list on the website. Website related bills are due in January, and Russell will pay them. A website opt-in form may be used to email the newsletter.

2020 Meeting Dates: Discussion on possible dates ended with April 24-25 and September 25-26 if available at the Camden Inn. (September date later changed to September 11-12 because of Camden Inn scheduling availability by email vote.) Kadje Shutt is manager of the Camden.

Membership: Bonnie Tesh will personally contact members. Margarite Stever said that many of the email addresses are out of date, especially lifetime members.

Friday April 24 Open-Mic: Members will be urged to bring hors d'oeuvres to share with other writers.

Speakers for April meeting: Many OWL members are potential speakers. Members who speak are not paid. Veda Boyd Jones will speak on researching fiction. Cheryl Harness, author/illustrator of children's books from Independence, will speak on illustrating. Others suggested are a nonfiction writer and western writer Duke Pennell. Four speakers are all that are needed. Perhaps we could add a critique session for those who wish to stay after the end of the meeting.

Contests: Possible categories include mystery, historical, and flash fiction. Sponsors are needed. The Prose Sisters would be interested in sponsoring a 1<sup>st</sup> page/work-in-progress contest. Ronda is already working on it so categories will be ready by spring meeting. Contests are opportunities to grow and develop.

Dinner: Cater Branson out of Golden Coral was used for lunch and dinner. Those who ate the dinner on Friday night said the meal was excellent and having the server present was worth the additional charge. Having food available on Saturday was a plus so folks didn't battle Branson roads.

The meeting was concluded at 4:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted by S.V. (Summer) Farnsworth

### Put these dates on your new 2020 calendar:

The spring meeting: April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

The fall meeting: September 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

The spring meeting will be April 24-25, 2020 at the Camden Hotel and Conference Center in Branson. Friday night will be open-mic.

Members are welcome to give a 5-minute reading. If you like, bring an hors d'oeuvre (show off your culinary skills and bring the best you've ever made) to share with other writers.

This is also the meeting for the art and photography contest.

## Youth Writing Contest

Please tell any qualifying young people about this contest.

### **Attention youth, grades 7-12**

**Win gift card prizes in the  
Ozarks Writers League Writing  
Contest**

**1<sup>st</sup> \$50 -- 2<sup>nd</sup> \$30 -- 3<sup>rd</sup> \$20**

**Fictional short story.** Any genre. Any topic. Limit 2,000 words.

Sponsor: Robert Laurence

**Poetry.** Any form. 26-line limit.

Sponsor: Anonymous

#### Youth Writing Contest Rules

You must be in grades 7 - 12 at the time you submit your entry. There is **no entry fee**.

Mail TWO copies of EACH entry in a large flat envelope postmarked by December 15, 2019 to:

April Brock, Contest Chair  
1625 G St NW  
Miami, Ok 74354

Only one entry per category. All entries must be UNPUBLISHED and the original work of the writer. (If your entry has appeared in a blog, website, or other electronic outlet, it IS considered published and cannot be entered.)

Entries may be typed or hand-written. Double-space entries for fiction and single-spaced for poetry. Use black ink on 8 ½" x 11" white paper.

Attach a 3"x5" index card with a paperclip to the top copy of each category entry with the number and name of the category, title of your entry, and your name, address, phone, email, current grade, and school attending or home-schooled.

DO NOT put your name on any part of the entry.

Staple multiple pages together.

Winners will be announced in February. Good luck to all who enter!

Rules and categories also at

[www.ozarkswritersleague.com](http://www.ozarkswritersleague.com)

## OWL Writing Contests

The contest categories for OWL members will be announced by the spring meeting so you have plenty of time to enter. Our contest coordinator for 2020 is our VP, Ronda Del Boccio, and she's planning it to be our best contest ever! She wants to know what writing contests interest you, so please fill out this 2-q survey. It will only take a minute.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/73FBWXD>