

# WLOV NEWSLETTER

December 1, 2018

**Read the Newsletter, win a Starbucks gift card. See Editor's Message - page 2**



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# Message from Your Newsletter Editor

By Larry Martin  
[drlarry437@gmail.com](mailto:drlarry437@gmail.com)



Rumor has it that some (?many) of our members don't read this monthly newsletter, or even bother scanning it for useful info. But what if merely reading it offered a chance to win, say, a million bucks? Bet that would get a lot of eyes. How about something a little less, perhaps a \$15 Starbucks gift card? No, we're NOT giving out gift cards just for you to read this missive. Well, almost.

## \$15 GIFT CARD



What we are doing – in a onetime ‘experiment’ – is offering a \$15 Starbucks gift card to the FIRST THREE PEOPLE who email me with the correct names (first and last) of famous authors quoted in these pages. And by famous, I mean famous *and deceased*, so club members quoted herein don't count. The authors are all historical figures, and in various sections of the newsletter you'll find one of their popular quotes. If it's not obvious who the author of the quote is, a quick Google search should provide the answer. The first three people who send in the correct FULL NAMES of the authors of these quotes will each win a \$15 Starbucks gift card, via email. (If you list the names in the *correct order of the quotes as they appear*, you don't need to repeat the quote; if not in order, make sure you associate the author with the quote.) How many famous unattributed quotes are there for you to identify? Just six. No more, no less. And here is the first one!

**“The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read.”**

Now for something more sensible, or at least less maniacal. Our upcoming Calendar of Events lists events through February, 2019. On December 5<sup>th</sup> we will have our annual Holiday Breakfast bash. And for entertainment at that event – if you haven't heard by now you must live in a cave (or, heaven forbid, you didn't read last month's newsletter) – we will have ELVIS! (See full page spread on page 3.) Then to close out the year we have WLOV's Central Florida Book & Author Expo – December 8<sup>th</sup> at Eisenhower Rec Center. With over 90 authors displaying hundreds of books, we anticipate several thousand visitors. There is still time to hand out bookmarks, and inform all your friends, relatives (at least those close by), and casual acquaintances about this stupendous event.

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## WLOV Calendar of Upcoming Events

Wed, Dec 5

Laurel Manor Rec Center, 8:30 – 10:30 am. **HOLIDAY MEETING & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST.** Open to all members and their guests who sent RSVP form or email to Paula Howard (pflower777@gmail.com). Dave Maurer, a TV resident, will perform as “the gray-haired, 21st century Elvis.” Performing with Dave will be singer Betsy Starr. Below is more about Dave – from the August 2017 edition of The Villages Magazine



### DAVE

DAVE MAURER - VILLAGE OF HEMINGWAY

**WHAT'S YOUR EARLIEST ELVIS MEMORY?**

I was 10 years old when I saw Elvis on “The Stage Show” in 1955. They introduced a new type of singer who had unusual dance moves and a very distinct style. He got the crowds excited. I remember my father saying, “I don’t know who that fool thinks he is.” But I enjoyed the show and I followed his career after that.

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE ELVIS SONG?**

That’s tough. Many have made a lasting impression on me, especially “Suspicious Minds.” It’s upbeat and requires a strong Elvis voice. It tells a story, so it has some depth. When I perform, I generally play 16 to 18 songs in an hourlong show, and I break up the music in several categories: fast rock, moderate rock, ballads, true slow ballads, big voice songs and so on. “How Great Thou Art” is a wonderful gospel song.

**WHAT DO YOU AND ELVIS HAVE IN COMMON?**

Elvis appreciated and enjoyed songs that tell a story. You can see that in some of his music. I think we have that in common. I like songs that move people and have a message.

**WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU’RE NOT PLAYING ELVIS?**

I’m a creative writer. I meet with a writers’ group at Laurel Manor (Recreation Center). I have gotten to know some good quality writers and have improved my own writing. I also am a member of the Elvis Remembered Club, and I have recording equipment at home so I create music and do karaoke locally.

**HOW DID YOU BECOME AN ELVIS PRESLEY IMPERSONATOR?**

The first time I sang in front of an audience was at 4-H camp when I was 12. The girls and boys would gather together at the dinner meals and I would sing. They told the camp counselor and one day during announcements, he called me up to sing. He said, “I heard we have a celebrity in the audience. Come up and show us what you can do, Elvis Presley.” I sang “Don’t Be Cruel” that day, and after that, I sang regularly in church choirs and throughout high school and part of college.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR PERFORMANCES.**

I came to The Villages in 2011. A good friend of mine who is a DJ and performer was contracted to do music for a local club. He asked me to perform Elvis songs at a party. I found a professional costume from an online vendor that makes clothing for entertainers. I feel like Elvis when I put it on. Since that party, I’ve performed at the Savannah Center and Lake Miona (Recreation Center), SeaBreeze (Recreation Center), Colony Cottage (Recreation Center) and other places in the area. I would say the best show I do is a casual show, and I like to share tidbits about Elvis and his music as I perform. People find those things interesting.

**HOW DO YOU LOOK THE PART?**

I have a great costume, which gets attention quickly. Elvis built such a visual image for himself; it was his trademark, so people like to see that.



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**Sat, Dec 8** WLOV Central Florida Book & Author Expo (“Holiday Expo”), Eisenhower Rec Center, 10 am to 3 pm – See Holiday Expo Update, page 6.

**Wed, Jan 2, 2019** - General Meeting, Laurel Manor Rec Center, 8:30 am - 10:30 am. Speaker will be **Paul Garneau Clark**, a writer, photographer, and traveler who has produced both travel guides and photo books with Blurb.com a desktop publishing application. He also independently produces his non-fiction books with Amazon’s KDP for publication. His Powerpoint presentation will show us how to use Blurb.com’s application to create and produce just one -or many- photographic coffee table books, travel guides and other print books. He will also teach how to format a book with Amazon’s Kindle Direct Publishing application. Originally from South Carolina, Paul comes to The Villages after a 32-year career with 3M Corporation in Minnesota, where he was a Business and Marketing Manager. A member of several writing and photography groups in The Villages, Paul’s web site is [www.paulgarneauclark.com](http://www.paulgarneauclark.com) and his books are available on Amazon.com.



**Wed, February 6, 2019** - General Meeting, Laurel Manor Rec Center, 8:30 am - 10:30 am. Speaker will be **Leigh Neely**, who is one half of a writing duo known under the pseudonym *Neely Powell*. Leigh (on left, in picture) and her writing partner of many years, Jan Powell (on right), met while both worked at a radio station. They discovered many interests in common, including writing romance novels. That was before they also discovered their husbands were boyhood friends. Leigh will present a program on how to successfully write with a partner, including the benefits and pitfalls. Next, she will take us into the world of writing for magazines. Neely Powell’s latest book is *Haunting Magic* in The Connelly Witches stories. Their website is [www.neelypowellauthor.com](http://www.neelypowellauthor.com) and their books are available on Amazon.com and TheWildRosePress.com.



**Thursday, February 14, 2019** - Valentine’s Day Love Story readings, Odell Rec Center, 6 – 8 pm. See below. As you write your story, consider one famous author’s rant about semicolons. “Here is a lesson in creative writing. First rule: Do not use semicolons. They are transvestite hermaphrodites representing absolutely nothing. All they do is show you’ve been to college.”

## Call for Submissions - Feb. 14, 2019 Love Story Readings

Millard Johnson  
[zendog3@mac.com](mailto:zendog3@mac.com)  
(317) 584-5071



WLOV’s second annual Valentine’s Day Love Story Readings will be held at Odell Rec Center, Thursday, Feb 14, 2019, 6 to 8 pm. Last year’s event was in Fenney Rec Center and was sold out. Tickets are \$2 a person, and they typically go on sale two weeks before the event. The ticket price is to help pay for refreshments.

For those who plan to submit a story, poem or song to be read/sung at the event, please check the guidelines and use the submission form – both on the web site home page, [www.wlov.org](http://www.wlov.org), under Feb 14. Call or email me with any questions.

## President's Message



As I write this, my final message as WLOV president, I am appreciative for the opportunity to help guide WLOV over the last twelve months. As President, I've had the honor of meeting many of the talented writers who are members of WLOV and I'm proud to call some of them friends. I'm thrilled to announce that, thanks to the support and dedication of a great team (and the constant growth of The Villages!) WLOV's membership increased by 25% in 2018. There are exciting new opportunities for our members in the coming year (as one example, see page 8).

I hope you were able to attend our November meeting. The large turn-out had us rushing to add more seats to accommodate the crowd. From the attentive expressions and note-taking that I witnessed, Greg Sharp's informative presentation on the importance of marketing and business plans for self-published authors was well-received (see pics on page 7).

Lots going on this month. December 5<sup>th</sup> is our annual holiday breakfast meeting. This year WLOV will fund the continental style breakfast (thanks to all who contributed to the 50/50 raffle). After a short business meeting, and some special awards, we will be entertained by Elvis (or a reasonable facsimile thereof!) It should be a fun morning. I hope you'll plan on joining us for the final get-together of the calendar year

December 8<sup>th</sup> is, of course, our annual Central Florida Book & Author Expo. It is shaping up to be a huge event. I have reached out to folks I've met in places as diverse as doctor's offices and restaurants, and they've all been receptive and, dare I say, excited to check out the event. I'd like to acknowledge and thank the Expo committee for the incredible job they've done in both planning and advertising the Expo.

- Jim Meyer, Chairperson
- Bill Russell
- Jack Hayes
- Barbara Phillips
- Donna Beard
- Dan Kinkaid
- Bill Pullen
- Barbara Miller

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the WLOV Board, without whose help and support I would have stumbled. They've helped smooth over the rough patches as I dealt with some difficult personal issues this year. Thank you – Angela Love, Verna Walker, Phil Walker, Larry Martin, Millard Johnson, and our newest Board member and our 2019 President, Paula Howard.

Having seen the program that Paula is developing for 2019, I can tell you that WLOV is in great hands. I am happy to hand off the baton and offer Paula my full support. Stay tuned...

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season, and a happy, healthy, and successful 2019!

Rita Boehm  
[Ritab1423@gmail.com](mailto:Ritab1423@gmail.com)  
[www.ritamboehm.com](http://www.ritamboehm.com)

[Editor's Note: See Interview with Rita on page 11]

## HOLIDAY EXPO Update

Jim Meyer, Holiday Expo Committee Chairman

[jacobsgrampy@msn.com](mailto:jacobsgrampy@msn.com)



Links to important information for our exhibitors is on the home page of [www.wlov.org](http://www.wlov.org), under December 8. This information includes:

[EXHIBITOR GUIDELINES](#)

[SALES TAX FORM](#)

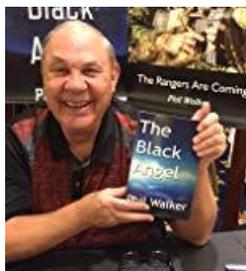
[AFTER ACTION REPORT FORM](#)

This year we have had a traveling Book Cover Display at several venues, including Mulberry Recreation Center, Savannah Center, Lake Miona Rec Center and Fenney Rec Center. The last location, starting December 2<sup>nd</sup>, will be Expo's venue, Eisenhower Rec Center. The display consists of multiple poster boards containing the book covers; three of the boards are shown below. Also on each board is an announcement of our Expo, with all the details. Unlike last year, this is NOT a book cover contest, but only a traveling display to advertise our Expo. Each participating author has a single book cover.



## WLOV is Growing

Phil Walker, Membership Chairman



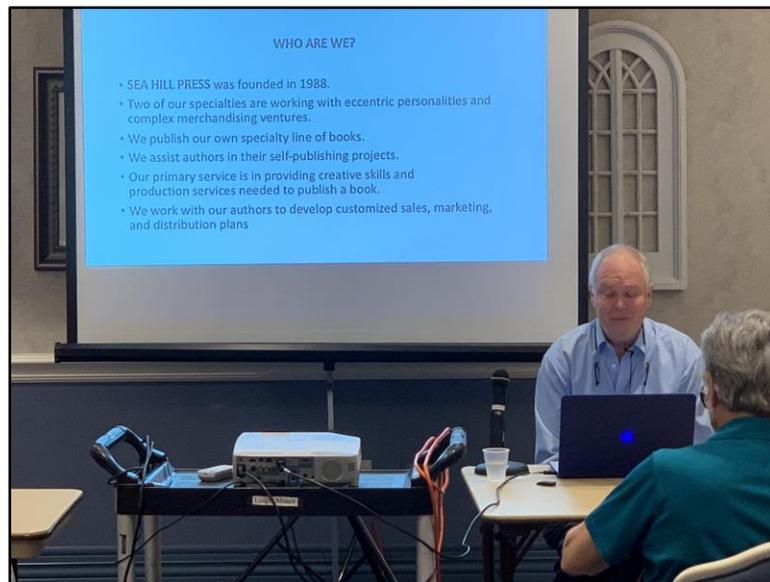
So far in 2018, WLOV has grown by 25%, and we still have a month to go before 2019. Our roster now shows 161 members, with 39 added this year. Just a few years ago, we only had 39 members total! There were over seventy people attending our November meeting at Laurel Manor. Soon we may need a bigger room.

I believe this expansion will allow WLOV to continue to refine the Holiday Book Expo, our largest annual project. A more robust series of programs next year are a reflection of the larger audience speakers can expect. The

WLOV umbrella helps tie the many Villages critique groups together into a communications network. More people are stepping forward and volunteering to help maintain current projects and initiate new ones. A strong WLOV board for 2019 will keep our organization on an even keel. Get ready for an exciting year.

## November 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting – Sea Hill Publisher on Marketing Rita Boehm

Wow, what a turnout! Our November 7th election meeting, followed by an excellent presentation on the importance of budgeting and marketing plans for self published authors by Greg Sharp from Sea Hill Press, was standing room only. We had to add chairs at the last minute to accommodate our close to 70 attendees. Thanks to all who came out. Looking forward to our December holiday meeting.



More pics of WLOV events are on our facebook page.

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/The-Writers-League-of-The-Villages-162776817086391/photos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/The-Writers-League-of-The-Villages-162776817086391/photos/?ref=page_internal)

# WLOV Marketing Committee Asking for Your Book Genres

“There are three rules for writing a novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are.”

The WLOV Marketing Committee has been formed to help our members market their books. As a first step, we would like to survey all the genres represented by our club. This will help us accomplish “target marketing.” For example, readers interested in romance are one group, whereas readers who focus on mysteries are another. Once we identify the genera groups, the committee will try to suggest genre-focused opportunities to market WLOV authors’ books. If you are interested in this effort, please provide the following information about your published books.

**Author** – Your name or pen-name used for each title.

**Title** – Include both the title and the sub-title if one is used.

**BISAC** – This code will define the genre and must be selected from the list at <https://bisg.org/page/bisacediton>. Please select only ONE code that best describes this titled work. Include both the code and its description. Copy and paste works well and saves a bunch of typing.

Record this information in an Excel spreadsheet or in a table in your word processor like example below.

Author	Title	BISAC
Capt. P. G. Clark	Letters Never Written - South Vietnam, 1968	HIS027070 HISTORY / Military / Vietnam War
Paul Garneau Clark	The Buried Papers	JUV001000 JUVENILE FICTION / Action & Adventure / General
Paul Garneau Clark	The Lost Talisman	JUV011040 JUVENILE FICTION / People & Places / United States / Native American
Paul Garneau Clark	Return of the Talisman	JUV011040 JUVENILE FICTION / People & Places / United States / Native American

This can be a little bit of work; hopefully, it will be worth the effort. Please email me your at [cedarcliff@earthlink.net](mailto:cedarcliff@earthlink.net) before January 10, 2019. Results will be provided to participants and published in a future newsletter newsletter.

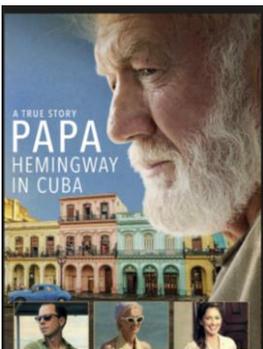
**Paul Garneau Clark**

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## Movies About Writers

Larry Martin

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There are several movies about writers (as there are about artists, explorers and serial killers – just a different genre). If you’ve seen any and want to write a review of one you like, let me know. Here is my review of *Papa Hemingway in Cuba*, released in 2016.

The story takes place in the late 1950s, just before Castro came to power. “Papa” and his wife Mary are living on a lavish estate in Cuba. By this time he has won the Pulitzer (1952) and the Nobel Prize (1954), and published *Old Man and The Sea*. Now we see him as overweight and washed up, an alcoholic with his marriage on the rocks, and no longer able to write. He and Mary are verbally

abusive to each other, including in front of guests at his 59<sup>th</sup> birthday party. He has EDS in the era before Viagra, and she reminds him of his inability to perform.

Okay, that's the backdrop. The story is also about a Miami newspaper reporter named Ed Myers in the movie (real name Denne Bart Petitclerc, ). Ed is a great admirer of Hemingway, in particular the way EH's writing helped him deal with a difficult upbringing (abandoned as a child, raised in an orphanage). Ed sends Hemingway a fan letter and as result is invited to visit Papa in Cuba. Ed does so and ends up becoming part of Papa's "family." Thus we see part of Papa's time in Cuba through the eyes of his acolyte.

Papa is not only an alcoholic, he is depressed, and actually tries to kill himself with a pistol. He is thwarted by Ed. (Hemingway does commit suicide 18 months later, while living in Idaho).

Hemingway's situation at age 59 is fascinating, all the more so because most Villages writers are not only older than that, but didn't *start* writing fiction until in their 50s or 60s. I'd like to think that Papa's washed-upness at 59 had much to do with alcohol and too much fame too fast. Of the latter, Hemingway agrees, and says in the movie: "Don't become famous. Let your writing become famous, but not you." (That is NOT one of the newsletter quiz quotes.) For Ernest Hemingway fans in particular, but really anyone interested in movies about writers, I recommend "Papa in Cuba."

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## Links to News Items About WLOV Members

You will find recent news items about WLOV members on the web site (www.wlov.org), under WLOV Newsletters and News Items (see Contents image on right). Below are the recent additions.

### 5 WLOV Members – RPLA Winners, Villages-news.com, Oct 25, 2018

<https://www.villages-news.com/six-authors-from-the-villages-honored-with-prestigious-royal-palm-literary-awards/>

### RPLA Winners – Villages Daily Sun, Nov 4, 2018

<http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/dailysun-nov42018.jpg>

### Jim Meyer, Villages-news.com, Nov 17, 2018

<https://www.villages-news.com/villages-author-brings-generations-of-fictional-cooper-family-to-life/>

### Robert Campbell, Villages Daily Sun, November 18, 2018

<http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/campbellnewsitem.jpg>

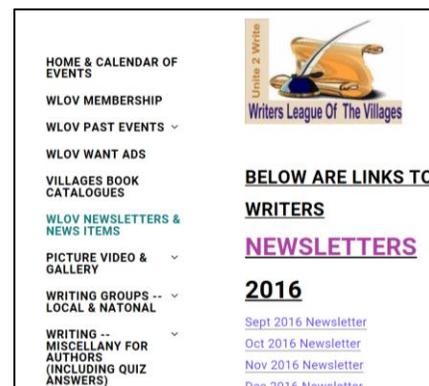
### Dan Kincaid, The Villages Magazine, Nov 2018

<http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/kincaidcolumn.jpg>

### Villages Writers Who Are Veterans – Villages Neighbors Magazine, Nov 2018

Page 1 - <http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/villageneighbors-page1.jpg>

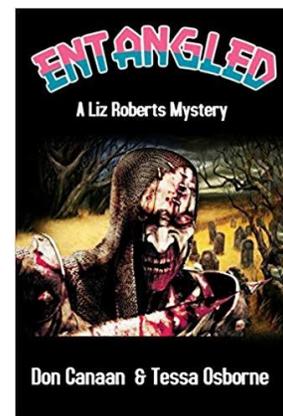
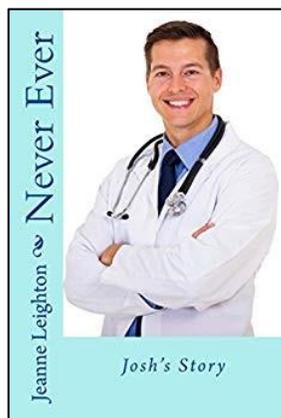
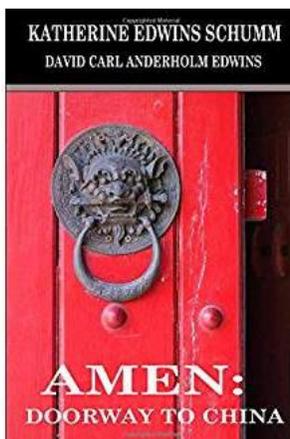
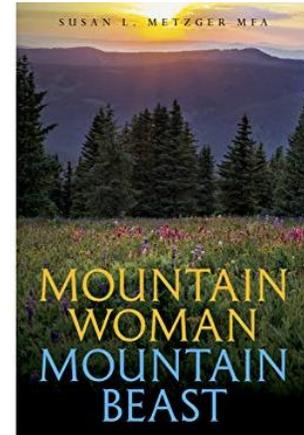
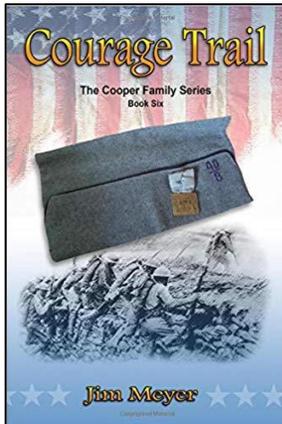
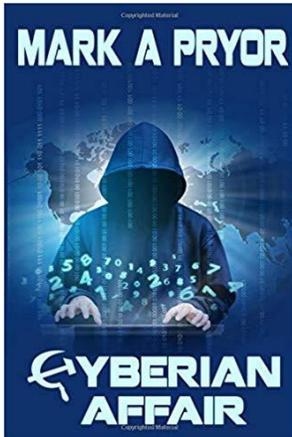
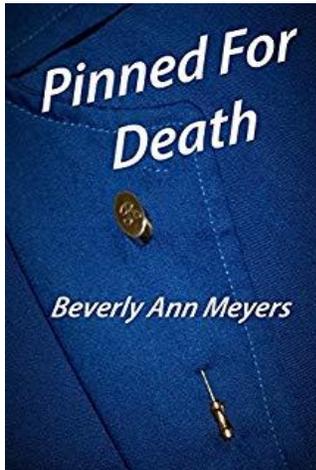
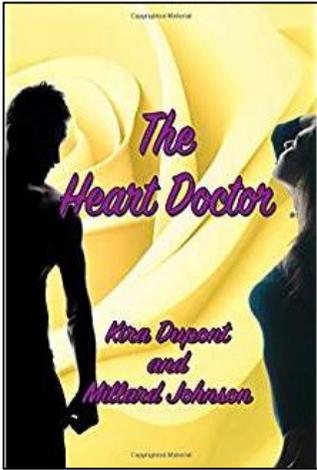
Page 2 - <http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/villageneighbors-page2.jpg>



# New Books By Members

“If there’s a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.”

Published a book recently? Send me the cover and a blurb (drlarry437@gmail.com), and I’ll put it in the WLOV book catalogue, which is on our website, [www.wlov.org](http://www.wlov.org). Below are books published in 2018, made known to us since our last newsletter. Check the book catalogue for blurbs and Amazon links.



## Writer and Rider – Interview with Rita Boehm



Since retiring to The Villages in 2016 (after two years as a Villages Snowbird), Rita Boehm has pursued two long-standing passions: writing and horse riding. The location here is ideal: a very active writing community in The Villages, and close to Ocala, horse country USA. For the past year she has been president of WLOV, a period during which our club membership has grown by 20%, in no small part due to her leadership.

### **LM: Which came first, your interest in writing or in horses?**

RB: That's actually a hard question to answer. I fell in love with horses when I was eight years old and my family lived next to a duck farm (of all places) on eastern Long Island. The farm owners had two horses. Their daughter, only slightly older than me, became my riding 'mentor'. We moved a couple of years later, and although my actual interaction with horses was limited until I was an adult, horse ownership was always at the top of my wish list. I purchased my first horse at age 26, and I still revel in the experience.

Now to writing. I was a young reader, a voracious absorber of more mature fare when many of my classmates were still reading about Dick and Jane. Of course, I read all the horse books (*Black Stallion*, *Misty of Chicoteague* and many others). I think I read every story about animals in our local public library. And what young girl of my generation didn't follow Laura Ingalls Wilder's 'Little House' series? Mysteries were also on my list. I dedicated my latest novel, *Missing on Maple Street* to all fellow lovers of Nancy Drew mysteries. As a kid I was, and remain, an eclectic reader.

In High School, the small town of Center Moriches, on Long Island, I regularly contributed to the school's literary magazine, and also edited our *very* small newspaper. My plans to be a writer and journalist were sidelined during my freshman year at Dowling College. Though a declared English major, my work schedule conflicted with the available English classes—and none were taken that year. I ended up on a different career path.

### **LM: While our readers can easily define categories of writing, most of us are probably not familiar with categories of horse activities. Give us a rundown.**

RB: It amazes me how wonderfully versatile our equine friends are. They willingly partner with humans in so many ways. Of course, everyone is familiar with Thoroughbred racehorses, so I'll skip those. The two primary categories in riding fall into what most folks call 'Western' and 'English'.

Western riding includes activities you see in rodeo competitions, such as barrel racing, reining, and cutting cattle, for example. It also includes general pleasure and trail riding. Quarter horses are probably the most well-known of the horse breeds in the Western arena.

I'm more familiar with the 'English' riding disciplines. Those include jumping, dressage, endurance, and eventing, which is a combination of cross country jumping, stadium jumping, and dressage. And, of course, many (maybe most) horse owners skip all of the above and just enjoy the pleasure of trail riding with their horses, whether it be in a Western or English saddle.

**LM: What exactly is “dressage”?**

RB: Dressage comes from the French word dresser meaning ‘to train’. All horses benefit from dressage training, which works on balance and suppleness in the horse.

Competition dressage focuses on riding a set pattern in a 20x60 meter rectangular dressage ‘ring’. Competition starts at Training Level and rises to higher levels. Most amateur riders top out at Second or Third Level. At the highest international Olympic sport level, the Grand Prix, extremely talented and well trained competitors team with equally talented and well-trained equine partners (specifically bred for dressage and expensive – six and even seven figure prices!).

In my younger days, I loved to jump. Over the years, I think I used up most of my nine lives (assuming humans are granted the same number as our feline friends. And why not?) in some rather spectacular—and a few not so spectacular—falls. I was fortunate to never get seriously hurt. I switched to a sport where the horse’s feet are supposed to stay closer to the ground, i.e., dressage, about twenty years ago. I’ve competed somewhat successfully through Second Level dressage and planned to debut at Third Level this winter. For reasons noted below I’m postponing those competition goals until mid-2019.

Until retirement, my riding was limited to weekends and occasional evenings after work. Fortunately, for the 16 years I lived in Maryland, my horse was only five miles from home.

**LM: Where do you keep your horse now?**

RB: I board my horse Kosi (a 17-year old, Trakehner – a warmblood breed) at Felicity Farm, a wonderful facility in Ocala, although I wish he was closer to home. The boarding barns closer to The Villages are not focused on dressage. There is a Villages riding club but it is mostly for trail riders. So Kosi lives at a beautiful, well-run farm with a spectacular outdoor dressage ring. The trainers I work with live in Ocala. When I’m competing, it’s a short drive (less than 3 miles) to the Florida Horse Park and only a few miles further to other show venues such as Grand Oaks in Weirsdale. There are other venues in Ocala, Gainesville, and Apopka where I haven’t yet competed.



**Rita and Kosi, her dressage horse**

I purchased Kosi (registered name: Kosmisch) in 2011 from Valhalla Farms in Wellborn, Fl. This is the same farm that bred my last horse, Elijah, (another Trakehner) who I owned and loved for 13 years. Elijah unfortunately died in 2014 in Maryland at the age of 26, from liver disease. Like their human partners, many horses are enjoying long retirement these days and a significant number live well into their 30’s. Most don’t compete much beyond their teens or early twenties but can stay healthy and fit through many more years of less stressful riding.

**LM: What was your career before retirement?**

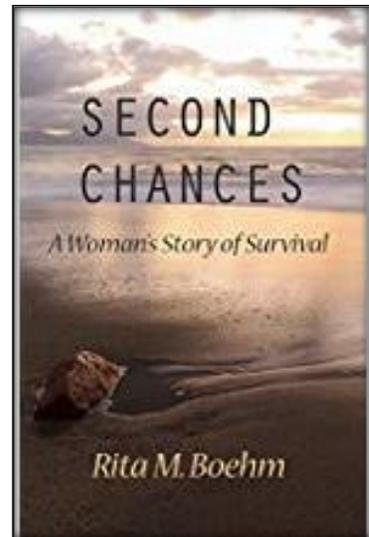
RB: Like many young people graduating from college, I struggled for a while before finding my niche. When I did, I ended up in a forty-year career in Contract Management—retiring as Director of Contracts and Compliance for a division of DRS Technologies, a defense electronics company. My writing in those years was limited to mind-numbing legal agreements, terms and conditions, memos, and reports.

**LM: When did you move to The Villages?**

RB: My husband and I had a condo in St. Augustine for a number of years. He retired before I did and spent his winters there while I continued working up north. I was fortunately able to continue riding my horse in the indoor arena through the winter months. While we both loved the St. Augustine area, when it was time to focus on a permanent retirement home, we looked at other Florida locations. On a trip from St. Augustine to Spring Hill, where my sister-in-law lives, we drove past TV and decided to take a tour. Its proximity to Ocala and a vibrant horse world, as well as all the amenities that TV has to offer, made the decision relatively easy. The day we closed on the sale of our condo in St. Augustine, we drove to TV. We purchased our Courtyard Villa that weekend in August of 2013, and moved here permanently in 2016.

**LM: What made you get into writing?**

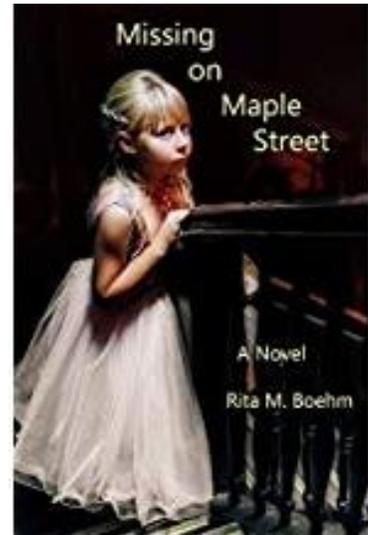
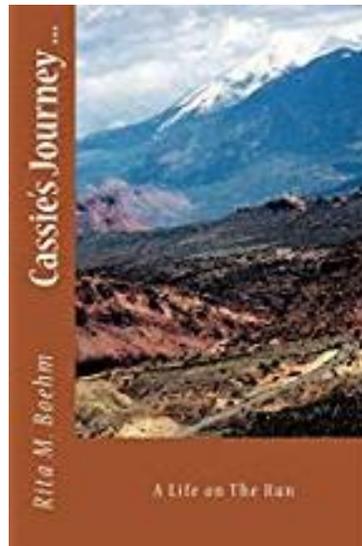
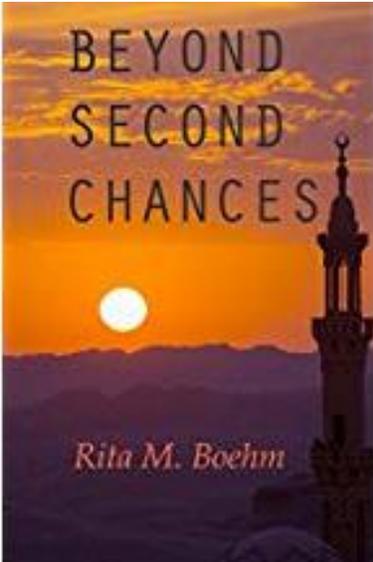
RB: By the time I was ready to retire, I was eager to dust off my dreams of writing more creative fare. I started my first novel a couple of years before retirement (when I had run out of intellectual curiosity with my job, it was just what I needed). I published that book, *Second Chances*, in 2015.



I think becoming a creative writer was just an extension of my fascination with all things written. I always loved the way a story transported me to another place and time. Ever since I wrote my first story as a young girl, I enjoyed the experience of that creativity. I have to admit though that it took a while for me to get used to the idea that maybe, just maybe, I could write a novel. I spent a couple of years following the ABNA (Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award) contest and actively hung out in the authors' chat room. I learned a tremendous amount about the process from those authors and as a result built up the nerve to submit a draft of my first book to the contest (along with 10,000 other people). Amazon ended the contest a few years ago. (I'm sure this was part of their business plan. They had built up a base of Createspace users and had a stable of thousands of manuscripts that they could use in their initial publishing imprints.)

**LM: Sort of reminds me of that famous quote: “Writing is an exploration. You start from nothing and learn as you go.” How many novels to date?**

RB: Three others after *Second Chances: Beyond Second Chances*, *Cassie's Journey*, and *Missing on Maple Street*. I am currently working on “Another Chance – Peter's Story,” the third, and final book, in what will become the “Chances” trilogy.



**LM: What are the themes of your novels? Any of them about horses?**

RB: The first three fall loosely into the romantic suspense genre. Although my protagonists always have some kind of a relationship with a pet, it's usually been a house pet, like a cat. "Cassie's Journey"—which follows a woman's twenty-year cross country escape from a psychopathic murderer (her husband) before she faces a violent confrontation with her past—marries my love of horses and the Rocky Mountain west where I lived for six years. Both the horses and the mountains are minor characters in the story.

**LM: A common refrain among Villages authors is that 'writing is the easy part' in book publishing. Care to share what you've done to advertise, market and sell your books?**

RB: My marketing plan, such as it is, revolves around keeping my Amazon author page updated, occasional ads through my Author page on Facebook (@author Rita Boehm), my website: [www.ritamboehm.com](http://www.ritamboehm.com) (where my blog is updated sporadically), a quarterly newsletter, Hometown Reads.com, occasional giveaways on Goodreads, and handing out bookmarks and business cards that advertise my books. My children's picture book is sold at the Wild Bird Store in Lady Lake.

**LM: I know you're an advocate of Hometown Reads. In case some of our members aren't familiar with this website, care to expand on its features? I've captured a screen shot of the The Villages' section, which includes one of your books.**

RB: I think Hometown Reads ([www.hometownreads.com/](http://www.hometownreads.com/)) is an underutilized marketing tool for WLOV. The site, which now hosts over 110 cities and town across the United States, provides a free home page for authors on which each author can include their bio and post pictures and information for up to seven books – including "buy now" button links to Amazon.com. Hometownreads.com also has a Facebook page and offers free seminars and other marketing support for authors. In 2019, I'm committed to expanding my role as a Hometownreads.com ambassador by helping more WLOV members get involved.

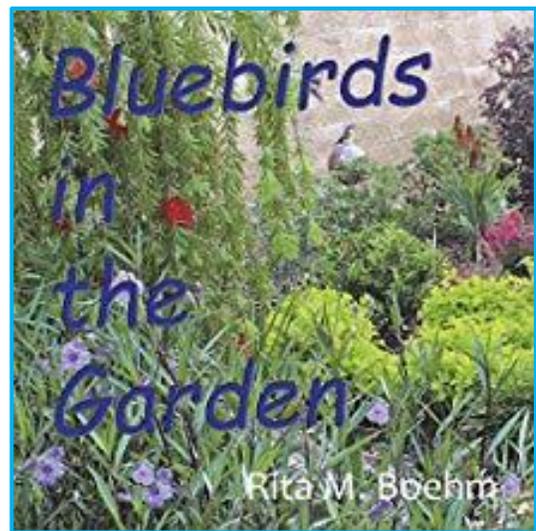


**LM: Any plans to write a book about horses?**

RB: No. Perhaps if a story line presents itself. For now, though, I'm content to have my two passions run parallel courses.

**LM: You also recently produced a picture book on birds. How did that come about?**

RB: I usually say that "Bluebirds in the Garden" wrote itself. I'm an amateur photographer (mostly horses, gardens, birds, and the like). When a bluebird family moved into a decorative (as in metal, not intended for occupation) bird house in my garden, directly in front of my living room window, I had a literal 'birds eye view' as two colorful, dedicated, and never-tiring bluebird parents prepared a nest and raised their brood. I was fascinated by their behavior. When I realized I had a full set of photographs, I decided to create a colorful picture book. It was an opportunity to combine my photography, Photoshop skills, and writing. I enjoyed the experience and was thrilled when the Wild Bird Store in Lady Lake offered to carry the book.



**LM: Now that your tenure as WLOV president is about over, what are your plans for 2019?**

RB: I thoroughly enjoyed my tenure as the 2018 WLOV president, and I encourage other WLOV members to get involved. As is usually true of such endeavors, I gained more than I gave. I met a group of talented writers and am happy to count a number of them as friends. I increased my knowledge in a variety of areas thanks to the insightful and well documented speaker presentations.

This is a great opportunity for me to thank our board members: Verna Walker (Treasurer), Angela Love (Secretary), Phil Walker (Membership Chair), Millard Johnson (Communications Chair) and you (Newsletter Editor/website manager). Thanks to all of you for your dedication and support this past year.

Additionally, I am indebted to the two superb and ultra-dedicated Expo teams for the run-away success of our January 2018 Expo and what I'm sure will be equal or greater success of our 2018 Holiday Expo this month.

I am excited, however, to be turning the reins over to a capable new President, Paula Howard. Paula brings new insights, a considerable amount of writing experience, and a high level of energy to the position. I'm looking forward to working with Paula in 2019.

On a personal note: As some of you may be aware, at the end of September I was diagnosed with breast cancer. It's been a roller coaster few weeks as I learned more than I ever wanted to know about the disease. I won't bore you with all of the details. In summary: I started a six month chemo series on October 30<sup>th</sup>. Surgery follows in the spring, followed by radiation. When all is said and done, I will begin the first day of the rest of my cancer free life by July 2019. Meanwhile, I'm focusing on the good things in life. I have been blessed with overall good health which will help in my battle. My husband has been my rock (and my driver to long days at the Orlando Health Cancer Center). I have a great team of doctors, supportive family, good friends, and of course—my equine therapist, Kosi, to support me on my journey. I'm looking forward to enjoying the next thirty years (yes, I'm counting on making it to 96!) cancer free. Thoughts and prayers are, however, always welcome.

**LM: Thanks, Rita. And on a personal note, I've thoroughly enjoyed working with you this past year, and wish you all the best over the next 30 years.**

# More Signs

...showing good, clear writing is not just for books and short stories. Duh!



And the last quote for the Starbucks gift card: "Writing is like sex. First you do it for love, then you do it for your friends, and then you do it for money."