

Writers League of The Villages®



*Information, education,
and networking for writers.*

Laurel Manor Recreation Center
1st Wednesday of the Month
8:30AM-10:30AM

www.WLOV.org

Writers League of The Villages®

WLOV NEWSLETTER

January 1, 2019



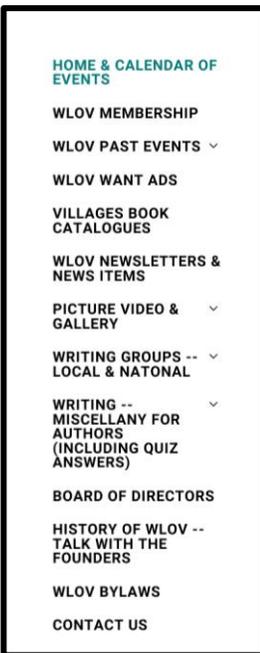
Message from Your Newsletter Editor

By Larry Martin
drlarry437@gmail.com



HAPPY NEW YEAR! WLOV is off and running for another great year. We now have about 25% more members than 12 months ago. This is a good time to remind old members, and inform new ones, where to find information about our club and its activities. Apart from our monthly meetings, there are three principal sources:

- WLOV website: www.wlov.org (see below for more info)
- WLOV monthly newsletters (except for summer months)
- WLOV Facebook page, for many pictures of past events; see <https://www.facebook.com/The-Writers-League-of-The-Villages-162776817086391/>



The home page of the WLOV website includes a Calendar of Events at the bottom and a menu column on the left side, shown here. The menu has clickable headings for additional information. For example, click on: “WLOV Newsletters and News Items” for links to our previous newsletters and to news Items about WLOV members; “Villages Book Catalogues” for a link to our WLOV alphabetical-by-author book catalogue; “Writing Groups – Local and National” for a list of Villages writing critique groups; etc.

If you can't find the information you seek in these sources, email one of the WLOV Board members, whose emails are included on page 9 (and on the website, under “Board of Directors”).

There is a lot of information (and pictures) in this edition of the newsletter, all, I trust, interesting and relevant to our readers. If not, let me know. Your feedback is appreciated. And if you have something you want to contribute, please email it to me. Our goal is to keep WLOV members informed – about where we've been and where we're going.

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MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT, Paula Howard



Hello Everyone! Welcome to 2019!

Well, we've all made it to the newest year in history. That either makes us pioneers, or People of the Future...or just plain old. Well, no matter, we're all here as we welcome the future together.

This being my year as 2019 President of the Writers' League of the Villages, I welcome your input, your comments, and your help in making this a sparkling year of fun, learning and surprises.

Our programs will include topics such as learning **How to Format a Book Ourselves** (a show-and-tell presentation to start the year during our January meeting), **How to Write with a Partner** (February), **How to Make a Movie on our Smartphones** (March) and a **Meet a Character Fair** (April).

The Meet-a-Character Fair is a new concept for our meeting. We plan to bring in 10-15 people from different backgrounds, who will present points of interest about their lives onto posters. You will be able to talk with them at tables, to ask about facts you can use to write characters into your books. The latest person we signed up for this event spent 17 years in prison. He'll reveal what you should know if you plan to write about prison life. We'll also have a psychologist, a cyber security professional, an artist and more. Please make your own suggestions when you see me at the January meeting.

The rest of the year's programs are shaping up to be just as much fun: **How to Get on the Speaker's Circuit**, a **Gong Show** (!?) and we are

even looking into going on a **Five-Hour Casino Cruise** in the summertime. (That might make some snowbirds want to stick around awhile.) I can hardly wait to talk with you about these events, as I continue my individual phone calls to each member to discover what genres you write, and what secrets you have to share. That's because I'm a firm believer in sharing, and we all have gathered great knowledge over the years in our individual lives. So, **I'm asking everyone to share what they know** so the rest of us can learn from your experiences and shorten our own life's learning curves. (There are so many experiences to learn!) Does that make sense?

My theme for this year, therefore, will be **Sharing Secrets Together**. I'm available to hear yours anytime at either my email address: pflower777@gmail.com or on my cell phone: 407-432-9931.

There is so much ahead!

With a quick look behind, I want to, again, express a **huge thank you to the 2018 Board members of WLOV** who have carried the weight of the organization's growth last year. They have done a magnificent job in continuing the tradition of Writers Helping Writers.

-AND-

Don't forget to mark your calendar for **Thursday, February 14, at 6 PM for our LOVE STORIES at Odell Recreation Center**. It's a special evening sponsored by WLOV and efficiently run by our Board member Millard Johnson, who is also in charge of our club's Communications efforts. Happy New Year, Everyone! Let's make it great!

Paula

WLOV Calendar of Upcoming Events

Wed, Jan 2, 2019 - General Meeting, Laurel Manor Rec Center, 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 and his books are available on Amazon.com.



Wed, February 6 - 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 and their books are available on Amazon.com and TheWildRosePress.com.



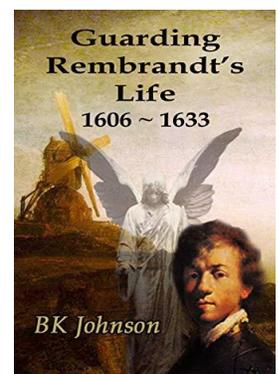
Thursday, February 14 - Valentine's Day Love Story readings, Odell Rec Center, 6 – 8 pm.

Wednesday, March 6 - General Meeting, Laurel Manor Rec Center, 8:30 am – 10:30 am. Anthony Rao, professional photographer from Style Magazine, will speak on **“How to Make a Movie on our Smartphones.”**

Wednesday, April 3 - General Meeting, Laurel Manor Rec Center, 8:30 am – 10:30 am. **Meet a Character Fair** (For plans about this event, see President's Message, previous page.)

December 5th Breakfast Meeting – Elvis and More

Before the entertainment, by Elvis (Dave Mauer) and his singing partner Betsy Starr, there was a short business meeting. This included a presentation by Phil Walker of a special recognition award to Bev Johnson. Bev recently published the first of 3 planned volumes on the life of Rembrandt, *Guarding Rembrandt's Life, 1606-1633*. The award was for her “fierce determination to finish the book despite significant health challenges.”



More pics from the breakfast meeting are on the next page.

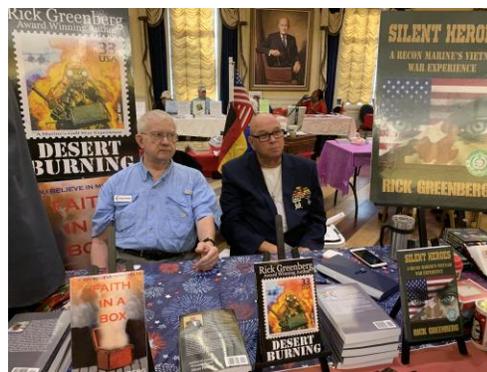


Expo December 8, 2018

92 authors, including 65 WLOV members, participated in the EXPO. Four rooms offered a variety of genres and a receptive public appreciated their efforts. Santa & Mrs. Claus made their appearance. Toojay's provided our food choices. All in all everyone enjoyed the event. Below are just a few of our authors at their tables. The EXPO committee thanks everyone for attending and we want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Jim Meyer, Expo Chairman (at Expo, pictured left)





New Look to WLOV Book Catalogue

By Larry Martin

<http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/wlov-bookcatalogue-dec172018.pdf>

Books by WLOV Members Published in 2016-2018
Prepared by WLOV Members Larry Martin & Robert Campbell

Authors are listed in alphabetical order, for books they published during years 2016-2018. F = fiction, NF = non-fiction. For primary audience, C = children, YA = young adult, A = adult. To get to Amazon for any book, simply click on the link. (If that doesn't work, hover over the hyperlink with your mouse or trackpad pointer, then right click and select "Open WebLink in Browser.") Recently added titles (past two months of 2018) start on page 26. If you are a WLOV member and have recently published a book not listed here, and wish it included, please send me the information (drlarry437@gmail.com). Include a high resolution cover photo, a short blurb about the book, and the Amazon link where the book can be purchased.

Beard, Jenny		Jenny D. Beard (Donna Beard), <i>A Leaf From the Wisdom Tree</i> (F, A) https://www.amazon.com/dp/B079888117 A continuation of Jenny D. Beard's saga, <i>Higher Up The Mountain</i> , in that elderly Edith Salmer resides her memoirs about mysterious deaths and steamy sex that took place in the early 1900's. Before beginning her story, Edith relates the cloak and dagger life of her young neighbor, pretty Debbie Van Doren, who has come into possession of a satchel during a one-night affair. The heavy satchel causes Debbie to watch her back at all times.
Bender, Tom		Tom Bender, <i>Avengeing Allison</i> (F, A) https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0899658391/ In a museum in a town in southern Illinois, an exhibit of erotic art opens. Some people are furious. Meanwhile, in the Shawnee National Forest, south of the town, a 16-year-old boy believes he sees a man falling in the sky. Nothing better to do on a Sunday, a reporter—a man named Morrison—goes looking. None of this seems connected. Then, somebody blows up the art museum. Dead in the rubble is Morrison's lover. "Collateral damage," say the police. Then, Morrison's daughter Allison is hit by a car. Sparks from a bonfire of hate, greed, lust, and fury light up the sky in this second Morrison mystery by Tom Bender.
Best, Peggy		Peggy Best, <i>Unsung Hero</i> (NF, A) https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08347988/ This book is a tribute to all service members who have supported support our country throughout our history. It is the story of <i>one man</i> , Major Albert V. Greene, who was a prisoner of war during WWII, and later served in Korea and Vietnam. His life story, couched in the backdrop of American and world history, awakens the spirit of patriotism, duty, and honor all unsung heroes display.

WLOV member Robert Campbell, a college computer professor, recently reformatted our unwieldy book catalogue into a slicker and more manageable format (first page shown here). This new format promises to be an easier and faster way to update the catalogue, which is now up to 32 pages. If you've published a book in the last two years and don't see it in the catalogue, email me the cover, a short blurb and the Amazon internet link (drlarry437@gmail.com). Find the book catalogue on the WLOV website, www.wlov.org, or use the direct link above.

WLOV Marketing Committee Seeks Your Book Genres

(2nd Request – This notice was also published in the December Newsletter)

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/bisacedition>.

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 codes at cedarcliff@earthlink.net before January 10, 2019. Results will be provided to participants and published in a future newsletter.

Paul Garneau Clark

WLOV Board Members for 2019

This year we have two new (*), and several returning WLOV Board members. You'll find brief bios of the board members at www.wlov.org (click on "Board of Directors" in the home page Table of Contents). The Board meets once a month to go over the club's budget and plan for future events. Your input is always appreciated, so feel free to contact any member with ideas or suggestions.



Paula Howard



Phyllis Walters



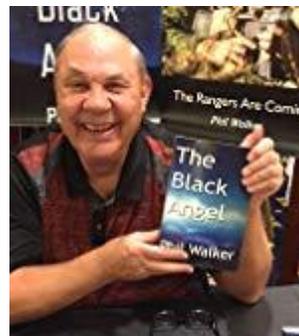
Angela Love



Larry Martin



Millard Johnson



Phil Walker



Rita Boehm

***Paula Howard**, President

pfhoward777@gmail.com; 407-432-9931

***Phyllis Walters**, Treasurer

pkuehnlwalters@aol.com; 937-219-1143

Angela Love, Secretary

angelaclove@gmail.com; 352-396-4069

Larry Martin, Past President (2017), Newsletter Editor and Website Manager

drlarry437@gmail.com; 440-715-3275

Millard Johnson, Communications Chairman

zendog3@mac.com; 317-584-5071

Phil Walker, Membership Chairman

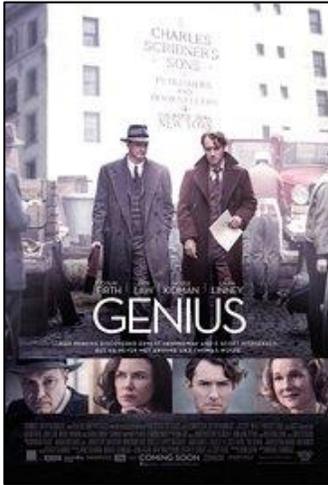
walkhouse@yahoo.com; 325-775-8402

Rita Boehm, Past President (2018) and Facebook Page manager

ritanbob2@aol.com; 240-751-3978

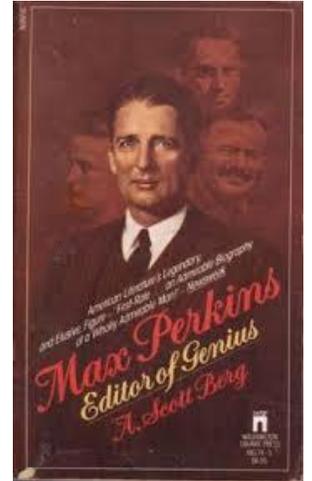
Movies About Writers

Larry Martin
drlarry437@gmail.com



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

Genius is the story of the relationship between author Thomas Wolfe (1900-1938) and famous Scribners' editor Max Perkins (1884-1947). It is based on the 1978 National Book Award-winning biography, *Max Perkins, Editor of Genius*, by A. Scott Berg.



Perkins was also editor for Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald (whose characters briefly appear in the film), but “Genius” in both titles applies to the authors, and in this movie to Wolfe specifically. Still, it’s apparent that without Perkins there would likely be no Wolfe novels. Perkins was no ordinary editor, and his kind probably doesn’t exist today. Wolfe delivered his manuscripts with hugely excessive word counts, far beyond what could be published. It was up to Perkins to cut the fluff and show Wolfe how to craft something readable. Wolfe’s first novel – previously rejected by other publishers but accepted by Perkins – was “Look Homeward, Angel,” which became a best seller.

Wolfe’s second novel, published in 1935, was “Of Time and the River.” The submitted manuscript was reportedly 5000 pages! Perkins managed to cut 90,000 words from the book, but that led to some bitterness between the two men, and Wolfe eventually left Scribners for another publisher.

Wolfe is portrayed in the movie as manic and somewhat of a jerk at times, dissing on his girlfriend (played by Nicole Kidman) and also Perkins. Some of this may be Hollywood hype. Still, it makes one wonder if you have to be an SOB to become a great writer, since Hemingway, Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, Saul Bellow and so many other “greats” were not nice to family and associates, and/or were addicted to booze. Happily married? Strike One against your chances for greatness. Good relationship with your kids and grandkids? Strike Two. Not an alcoholic? Strike Three. (Here’s a random question: How many times was Saul Bellow married? Answer: Two more than Hemingway.)

Wolfe wrote four novels before dying at the young age of 38, from tuberculosis. Ironically, he isn’t read much anymore, but is still considered a major twentieth century author. His boyhood home in Asheville, NC is a popular tourist attraction.

The movie drags a bit, and reviews (by critics and regular viewers) were mixed; it scored only 6.5 on IMDB.com. But for writers, it is enjoyable and, frankly, instructive. It shows that the creative process is messy, and at times, painful. Sean Penn as Wolfe and Colin Firth as Perkins give credible performances, and the period scenery (1929-1938) is well done.

Winners of Starbucks gift cards

We had only two winners of last month's quote quiz, **Mark Pryor** and **Leigh Court**. Each won a Starbucks gift card for correctly identifying the authors of the following 6 quotes embedded in the December newsletter.



"The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read."

Mark Twain

"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."

Kurt Vonnegut

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

W. Somerset Maugham

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

Toni Morrison

Writing is an exploration. You start from nothing and learn as you go."

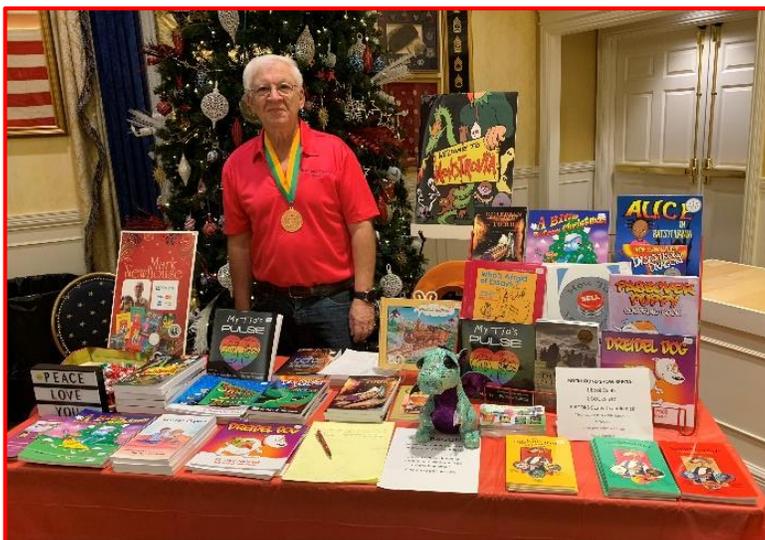
E.L. Doctorow

"Writing is like sex. First you do it for love, then you do it for your friends, and then you do it for money."

Virginia Woolf

Mark Newhouse - Writer, Publisher, and Founder of WLOV

Interview by Larry Martin



It's fair to say that there is no better-known Villages author than Mark Newhouse, shown here at last month's Expo. He not only founded WLOV (along with Ken Kincaid 8 years ago), he also started the very popular Writers 4 Kids club 11 years ago, which now meets weekly at Hibiscus Rec Center. Mark has been a tireless promoter of Villages authors, and for many years chaired our annual Book & Author Expo, which he originated. Here he gives some insight into his writing career before and after moving to TV, and also into TV's vibrant writing community.

LM: Mark, you've been a Villages resident for 16 years. Give us a brief trajectory of your own writing activities before and since you moved here.

MN: I began to write stories and poems for myself at an early age, largely because most of my family was killed during the Holocaust, and my parents, concentration camp survivors (Auschwitz and Buchenwald), were struggling as new immigrants in a tenement in the Bronx. My father was a hard worker and when I was ten moved us to Whitestone, Queens, where I lived until graduation from Queens College. During those early years writing helped me cope with my problems, such as my parents' troubled marriage and an abusive father. It was this difficult background that makes me want to create stories and books that show how children can survive and overcome the problems, the loneliness and fear that were so much a part of my early life. I continued writing, but never thought my work was good enough to submit to publishers. When I became a teacher by accident—another story—in Central Islip, Long Island, I became known for my 'crazy' lessons and student-performed plays.

LM: So you were writing plays way back then? [Editor's note: if you've sat through any of Mark's hilarious WLOV skits, you can see this is a long-honed skill].

MN: Oh, yes. My students never knew what I'd come up with next. I was constantly creating new activities and materials and volunteered to work with so-called 'below-level' 6th grade readers. I still have a thousand of my 5th and 6th grade students follow me on Facebook, I'm retired almost 19 years! It was for them I created my earliest books, *The Rockhound Science Mysteries*, but I never thought about becoming a published author. All of my writing was to help my students. Looking back on it now, I can honestly say most of my work was triggered by just trying to do a good deed. That effort, and becoming president of Suffolk Reading Council, a chapter of the International Reading Association, paid off when, in 1989, I was honored by the New York State Reading Association as their Elementary/Secondary Teacher of the Year. Despite this honor, and more, I still didn't think anything I wrote back then worthy of publishing.

LM: When did that thinking change?

MN: The big change came again by accident, another good deed. A teacher wanted to raise money for starving children in Ethiopia with a jog-a-thon, having children running around a track. I refused to release my students for what I felt was not an educational experience. Instead, I decided to turn it into something far more valuable, an event that would be worth their time and effort. I designed a "Research-a-thon," where students became UN ambassadors and received pledges for each answer they got right, based on their reading a collection of newspaper articles from Newsday about the subject. When my superintendent informed Newsday [Long Island's daily newspaper] of the project and invited them to attend the mock General Assembly, a reporter asked if I could provide a write-up. Newsday published it and subsequently asked me to write a teachers' guide for the Statue of Liberty, with a Research-a-thon to raise money for the statue's restoration and centennial in 1985. As an immigrant, I was proud of this opportunity.

LM: Earlier you said your parents were immigrants. Where were you born?

MN: After my parents survived the Holocaust, they were moved to a displaced persons camp in Weisbaden, Germany, and that's where I was born, January 28, 1947. We came to the U.S. in 1948. As an immigrant, you bet I was excited to honor Lady Liberty. I wrote that teachers' guide in just two weeks, on a Commodore 64 computer. More teachers' guides followed, for Newsday, Cobblestone Press and others, and Newsday invited me to join their educational advisory board. The paper later hired me as a teacher trainer, which boosted my confidence and led to my becoming

an adjunct professor in the education department at SUNY Old Westbury in the late 90s. All because of a good deed.

LM: And after you retired from teaching?

MN: Once retired, I knew I had to do something where I could still make a difference, and that something was my writing. In The Villages, with the support of so many fellow writers, I've produced more than twenty books. But what I'm proudest of is that I've helped many others also achieve their dream, by starting Writers 4 Kids, Writers League, The Central Florida Book & Author Expo and now serving as state chairperson for the Florida Writers Association Youth Program (FWAY). I love being involved and volunteering. I think it keeps me young and excited.

LM: What about the community of Villages authors? How has that changed?

MN: When I moved here in 2002, there was only one official writing club. About a year later, a few children's writers met in one of our houses. It was so helpful, I felt that children's writers would benefit from an official club dedicated to their needs. So, ten years ago, I started the Children's Authors Team, CAT, known today as Writers 4 Kids. I'm still known as TC, or Top Cat, which is funny since I'm violently allergic to our feline friends. In our club we stress the TEAM approach, which has been so helpful to me and many of our members.

As other writing clubs formed, I realized we have thousands of wordsmiths in The Villages and saw the need for a central organization to support them. My friend Ken Kincaid, and I, were skeptical of how it would succeed, but together we established Writers League of The Villages, which I was honored to serve as the founding president.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The March 2017 Newsletter has an interview conducted by Rita Boehm, with WLOV founders Mark and Ken. Access it at:

<http://wlov.weebly.com/history-of-wlov----talk-with-the-founders.html>]



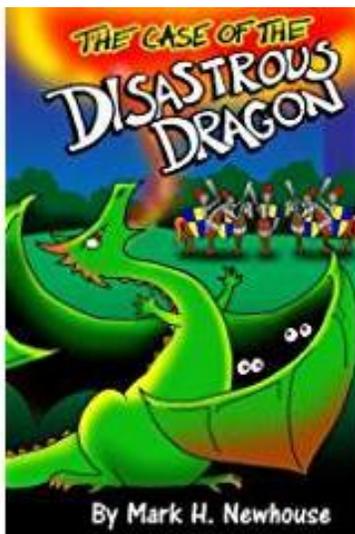
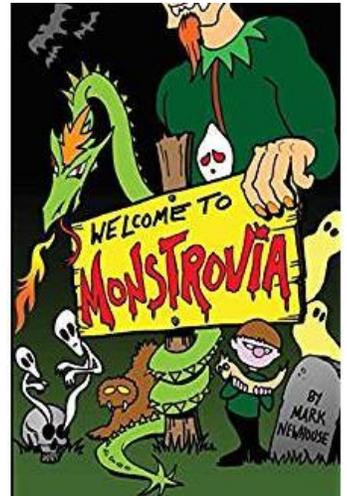
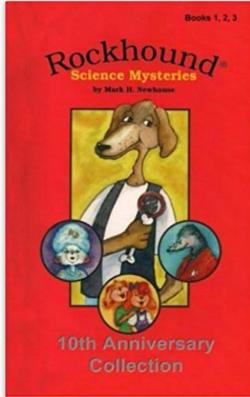
To our surprise, we soon had 175 members and a mission to unite all Villages writers (published and unpublished), publicize events, support our clubs, and offer educational presentations. Writers are dedicated artists who often face obstacles to achieve recognition, perhaps more so than artists in the visual fields. I believe they deserve the same respect and opportunities as artists in any other medium and Writers League has been instrumental in making that happen.

LM: And that led to the annual book Expo?

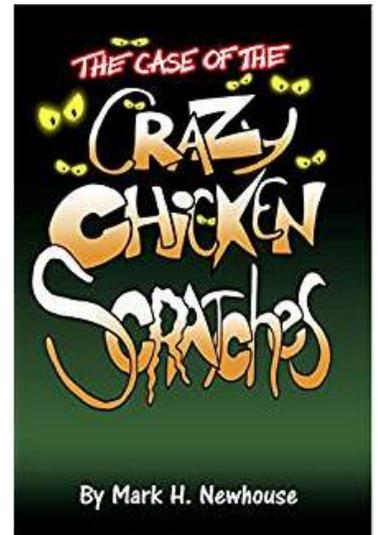
MN: It was to recognize and promote our love of writing, and the talented writers in The Villages, that I approached John Rohan with the idea of an annual celebration, which was initially called The Villages Literary Festival. Three years ago, we retitled it The Central Florida Book & Author Expo, and the event now includes authors from surrounding communities, and as far away as Orlando and Jacksonville. I'm proud that the Expo attracts thousands of book lovers and this year we had more than 90 authors. I ran about a dozen of these showcases, but for the recent event Jim Meyer generously volunteered to take it over. He and his team showed again how important it is to get new 'blood' and ideas. Authors from outside TV attest to The Villages' growing reputation as a cultural center. I'm proud to have been a part of that incredible story and urge everyone to experience the rewards I've received from working with so many caring people.

LM: Give us a rundown of the books you've written. I know several have won awards.

MN: When I was forced to teach science one year, I almost set fire to my room with an experiment. Who knew hairspray was so flammable? Most of my sixth graders hated the textbooks and some couldn't read them. Science is solving mysteries, so I created my first Rockhound mysteries for my students and sold them to the first publisher I met with at an educational bookseller exhibition. The series won Learning Magazine's Teachers Choice Award, as well as several others. I've had many parents and teachers tell me that the short, easy-to-read mysteries solved by fun experiments, such as making orange juice ice pops, have gotten even reluctant readers asking for more. They were sold for a media series, but that fell through. It happens, and can be discouraging, but I soon found other projects to keep me going.



My fantasy courtroom mysteries, *Welcome to Monstrovania*; *The Case of the Disastrous Dragon*; and my latest, *The Case of the Crazy Chickenscratches*, have won awards from the Florida Writers Association, Readers Favorite, and Benjamin Franklin Book Awards, with *The Case of the Disastrous Dragon* being named A Top Ten Children's Book in the P&E Readers Poll. These comical mysteries were inspired by my love of Perry Mason and Sherlock Holmes and feature the lawyer for mythical monsters and fictional folk in Monstrovania, a secret sector of the United States. The plots are based on plays I wrote for my so-called 'below-level' students to build their self-esteem. They performed the



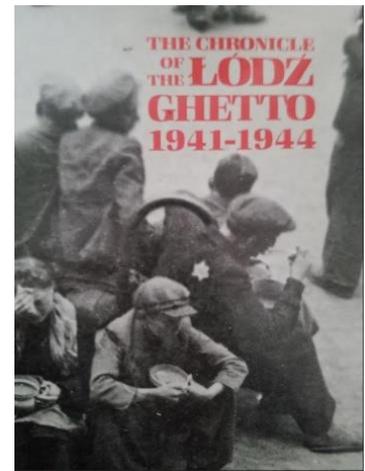
plays for our school and the local senior center. I am honored by awards my books have won, but my favorite accolade was a note from a mother who wrote, "Now my son wants to be a lawyer." I'm glad my books may help children today learn more about family relationships, the law, and how to solve problems using their intelligence and courage, with humorous plots they can't put down.

LM: So would you consider yourself primarily a children's author?

MN: I think I have a split personality because I love writing for children, but also enjoy writing adult stories for contests, many in anthologies. I recommend the contests run by the Florida Writers Association (www.floridawriters.net) as a great way to challenge your abilities. I am working on the fourth book in my middle grade mystery series, *The Case of the Killer Knights*. I'm also completing *The Devil's Bookkeepers*, a novel about the Lodz ghetto, which my parents were among the less than 5,000 of 250,000 residents who survived. I'm grateful for the wonderful help from my friends in the Creative Writers Group on this emotional novel about love and friendship under terrible circumstances.

LM: I know this must be painful, but could you tell us something more about the Lodz Ghetto, and perhaps what your parents shared with you growing up?

MN: I recently had the honor of speaking to the Humanist Club in The Villages and admitted to some guilt that my parents' story will forever be unknown. Struggling with their marriage, trying to learn English, and working hard to survive in their new home, they never filled in their story. They also may have wanted to protect us from what they suffered. It was my fault for being too frightened to ask, so it took seventy years before I began to understand what they survived, but I'll never know how they did it when so many others died. I always believed the Lodz ghetto was a village, such as you see in *Fiddler on the Roof*, in which Jews lived in Poland for centuries. But in fact it was created by the Germans as a holding tank for Jews forcibly transported from all over Poland, from 1941 to 1943. I recently came upon *The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto 1941-1944*, translated and edited by Lucjan Doboszyki, (Yale University Press, 1984). While reading this book – a collection of seemingly mundane entries of anonymous writers working “under the noses of the Nazi ghetto authority -- I could feel the tightening of the Nazi noose around this barb-wire sealed-off slum. I experienced the nightmare of hunger, disease, and fear, as people like my parents dealt with terrifying uncertainty.

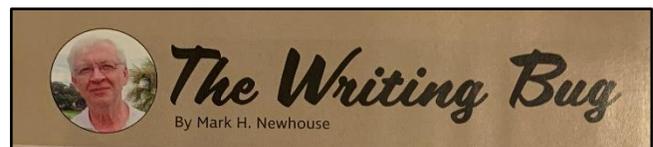


LM: And that led you to...?

MN: After reading *The Chronicle*, I knew this was a story I had to tell. I wrote 600 pages in thirty days, a fictionalized account against an historically-accurate backdrop. It was as if the spirits of my family were dictating their story to me. I'll never know how my parents survived, but I'm hoping my historic fiction, which I've titled *The Devil's Bookkeepers*, will honor their struggle and all the victims of hate and genocide, past, present and future. I also hope it will remind others how important it is, even if you're not a writer, to capture your story before it is lost forever.

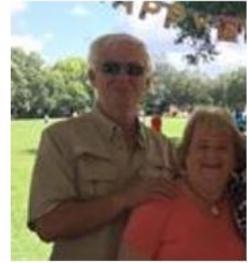
LM: You also write a monthly column in Villages Neighbor Magazine, The Writing Bug. How did that come about?

MN: Most of the good things that have happened to me were accidents borne of my trying to do a good deed. Two years ago, while promoting the first Central Florida Book & Author Expo, I sent a press release to Denise Lasley, editor of Villages Neighbors Magazine. I never imagined she'd ask me if I'd be interested in writing a monthly column. Like most writers, I'd love to spend my time working on my latest book, but the opportunity to continue to promote other authors and WLOV, even unpaid, was too tempting to turn down. Previously, Don Canaan and I had produced Authors' Beat, where I interviewed more than seventy-five authors and learned so much, so this was impossible to resist. It is two years later and I'm proud that Writing Bug has featured so many of our talented authors. I invite anyone to contact me with a new book or idea for the column. I'm always eager to promote our authors.



LM: When you're not writing or sleeping, what activities do you do in TV? Any hobbies?

LM: I think for my golf cart I should get a license plate that reads, "I'd prefer to be writing." That reminder would also be good for my shower, where I love to sing my heart out, but not anymore on local stages. I love socializing with Linda, my patient bride, who I married on the 4th of July, 36 years ago. It's been fireworks ever since. And, of course, I love restaurants and movies, but truthfully, writing and helping other writers achieve their dream, takes a lot of time. And this year, I did the insane thing of accepting the chairmanship of the Florida Writers' Association Youth program (FWAY) and that has kept this Energizer Bunny very busy.



Mark and Lin

LM: You always come up with ideas for promoting authors and their books. Give us the good, the bad and the ugly. What's worked, what's not worked?

MN: Great question. I love getting the 'crazy' ideas from other writers and I think that's why Writers League and the Expo have grown. I would love to see every member of Writers League buy into my motto: "If we all do a little, we will all benefit a lot," and I appreciate the many who have stepped up to help WLOV grow. My dream is to harness all the talent and energy in TV. With each of us contributing a tiny amount, we could accomplish so much for all Villages writers. Expo is a great example, as are the educational programs WLOV presents each year.

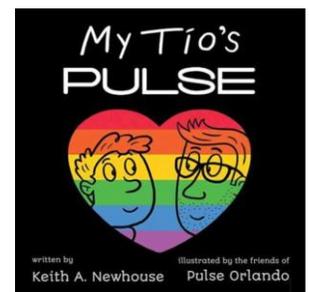
I think my greatest disappointment is in not being able to build an on-going outreach program for Writers League. My dream is to hook up WLOV with a school or organization we can help: e.g., It Takes A Village Club, Dollars 4 Scholars, or the High School Music Boosters are examples. I believe such a mission would help us as an organization and show others we are interested in much more than just selling our books. I think this kind of altruism is important for our continued success and will help WLOV as well.

LM: Any other "crazy ideas" you're pondering?

MN: I still would like to see us create a community outreach program to bring our authors and books to local schools, churches, and organizations. We could offer them table fees or a percentage of our sales for their fund-raising. I'd also like to see the Daily Sun sponsor a literary contest with our authors as the judges. We did that one year with a different sponsor and everyone loved it. I'd also love to have an Author Day Read-In on the Square during the summer. You're right. All crazy ideas. But so was Don Quixote, my patron saint.

LM: You're recently started a publishing company with your son. Please tell us about that.

MN: After several 'interesting' situations with traditional publishers, including a failed television deal, I started my own company. Last year, my son, who works for a publishing firm, agreed to 'risk' working with his crazy father part-time. He's wonderful and has already made great progress learning the ropes of this complex and frustrating business. The first question he asked me is if we can help schools and worthy organizations. So you can also guess how I felt when the first book he wrote, *My Tio's Pulse*, showed how to talk to children about tragedies like the Pulse Nightclub massacre. He got more than twenty authors to donate illustrations. I couldn't be prouder that he donates all profits from this hot-selling picture book to such a worthy cause. I guess I did something right.



The new company we formed is Newhouse Creative Group (NCG), and our new children's imprint is called AimHi Press. In addition, we have established NCG Cares, which is our department to create ways to help schools and other worthy causes with fund-raising and other ideas.



AimHi has already published a number of books from other authors, including several Villagers, and we have more books in the pipeline. Because Keith is currently working on marketing and our NCG Cares program, we're not actively seeking new authors to publish right now. But we're always interested in new ideas and are open to submissions. NCG also offers free consultations and ala carte services at very reasonable prices. It's exciting to know my son is keeping my passion alive. You can learn more at newhousecreativegroup.com. Authors may also contact us if interested in submitting or getting help with your publishing dreams.

LM: Where do you see WLOV going as a club over the next few years?

MN: I am very optimistic, but also realistic. Every organization today faces difficulty finding leaders to assure its future. Writers League has already done so much for all Villages writers, so I believe our members recognize its value and will add their support and step up and offer their ideas and leadership. I see us growing in numbers and am excited by the new marketing subgroup and such activities as Millard Johnson's wonderful Valentine's Love Story Readings and this important newsletter. With more members, WLOV has the clout to continue earning respect for our writers, publicity for our events, and representing us when there are problems. I see it as a union, helping The Villages become even more of a magnet for writers and readers.

LM: If you could change one thing in TV to help writers, what would it be?

MN: Newer members may not be aware of the struggles to gain recognition and certain key rights for our authors, which motivated us to create WLOV. The hard work of our leaders, the success of Expo, our growth as an organization, have been a huge help. Increasingly, we are being recognized as talented members of The Villages artistic community, but there are still things that I would like to see changed so authors are able to enjoy all the opportunities afforded to all the arts. Without going into specifics in this article, let me just say that without WLOV, it would have been a lonely battle. We're fortunate to have WLOV as our advocate.

LM: What is your latest project and goal?

MN: I'm starting my second year as FWA's Youth Program chairperson and already working on the next youth conference, October 19, 2019, in Orlando. I've just been elected to the FWA Board of Directors and am excited to work with such dedicated authors from all over Florida. Yes, I'm crazy, but it keeps me going. I'm doing a final edit on the most important book I've ever written, the Lodz Ghetto novel. This book is dedicated to my parents, my family members who did not survive, and all the victims of hate and genocide, past, present and future. I'm hoping when people read it, they will say, "never again to anyone." Thank you to all my friends for allowing me this opportunity to share my passions. Please, let me know if I may ever be of help.

LM: And thank you, Mark.

More Signs



The previous two newsletters showed signs where the writing either insulted your intelligence or led to an unintentional message, like the one on the left. In this edition of "More Signs," the writing is clear...and meant to elicit a chuckle or two. Yes, you can be funny with just a few words.

