

The Written Word

SUMMER ISSUE • NO. 3 • VOL. II • AUGUST 2010

“Do not expect your ship to come in if you haven’t sent one out.”



www.uppaa.org

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Annual Spring Conference a Success

Nearly forty people attended the Upper Peninsula Publishers and Authors Association conference on May 15, 2010, at the Peter White Public Library in Marquette. After Opening Remarks, participants then chose between concurrent sessions. Walt Sheil talked about opportunities with E-books, defining various kinds of e-book readers and giving a brief history of the industry, while Tyler Tichelaar gave a session on creating convincing fiction, titled “Keeping it Real.” Then, James Studinger discussed creating income as an author, while Cheryl Corey discussed book manufacturing, showing examples of various types

of bindings, formats, etc., and the advantages and disadvantages of each. Some might say the lunch conversation over sub sandwiches was an equally important time.

After lunch, participants again chose between two speakers. Frida Waara gave a talk in the community room on why authors need to be public speakers, while Deborah Frontiera presented “Making Your Writing Sparkle” in the Shiras Room.

Panel members Donna Winters, Lynn Emerick and Rich Hill shared their self-publishing experiences with all participants from 3 to 4 PM. A necessary business meeting ended the day.

Self-Publishing Pointers

A FOLLOW-UP TO THE SPRING CONFERENCE PANEL DISCUSSION

The Self-Publishing Panel at our Spring Conference consisted of Richard Hill, Jan Huttenstein, and Donna Winters.

Richard Hill, author of *Lake Effect: A Deckhand’s Journey on the Great Lakes Freighters*, made some important points about marketing and sales. Here are some of his tips in his own words:

“Approaching bookstore owners personally requires plenty of time, effort, and expense, but in most cases is worth it. Many independent owners who might easily turn down a book through phone contact seem much more willing to try out a new author who has taken the time to travel to their doorstep and make his or her case. I usually bring a few short reviews or testimonials of my book and try to be as professional as possible. I don’t badger anybody and try to respect their decision, but I might leave a copy for the owner or key employee to read, then check back a couple weeks later. I’ve worked in retail sales for twenty years, so I’ve learned that it’s important to be persistent but to not take rejection personally.

“Another marketing method I’ve pursued is post card mailings. I have gathered my own lists of Great Lakes bookstores, museums, gift stores, etc. that I thought would be good outlets for my book. That effort, I’m sorry to say, has been a colossal flop. Only a few worthwhile



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responses, not what I had expected. Perhaps that approach was too passive; I'm not quite sure.

"One thing that seemed to work well, though it seemed long in coming, was getting as many reviews of the book as possible. They seem to magically work their way through the internet, onto Amazon, and wind up in a myriad of places. In the end, these reviews promote the book without much more effort on my part, and result in steady sales through Lightning Source. (After reading Aaron Shepard's book, Aiming At Amazon, I even tried experimenting with discounts on Lightning Source and found ways to increase my profit without hurting sales.)"

"Book signings are only as successful as the work you put into them before the big day. My best sales always resulted from timely press releases in local papers, contacting radio stations to promote the signing as a community event, and posting flyers all over town. You can't always count on the bookstore owner or manager to advertise and promote your signing. They are oftentimes too busy with the responsibility of everyday store operations."

"My weakness, up to this point, has been social networking. With my new book, Hitchhiking after Dark, coming out shortly, I intend to start a blog and possibly connect with FaceBook and Twitter and a few other social sites. (Will there be any time left over for writing?) So I am currently trying to soak up as much information and tips as possible about writing an interesting blog. I'm a relatively low-tech, old-school, but willing-to-adapt person trying to turn the corner. But I'm slowly

getting there. Remember the story of the turtle and the hare ..."

Jan Huttenstein, author of *Remotely Yours: A Historic Journey Into The Whitefish Point Area*, addresses the issues of mailing lists, organization of information and photos, and L.L.C.'s. Here's her take on these subjects:

"I suggest that authors narrow their mailing lists (used to announce and/or sell a new release) to those who used to live in the region, those who don't use a computer (such as many of the elderly), snowbirds at their winter addresses, people whose interests you know align with the topics in your book, anyone you interviewed, and everyone who requested one. Current residents can be reached by news releases, websites, and events. Tri-fold flyers with an order form are generally fifty or sixty cents each, so with postage, the cost of mailing one flyer can rise to over a dollar. Generally, a mailing to all residents of an area is a waste of money."

"Since I am writing regional history with a large number of photographs and maps, I recommended choosing photographs early, by chapter, and writing the captions for them before moving to the writing of the next chapter. Doing them all at the end of all the writing can be overwhelming and also leads to more mistakes. Also, be prepared to spend extra time with your layout person helping match photos with text."

"Regarding the LLC: Authors writing non-fiction about sensitive subjects often choose an LLC (Limited Liability Company). [Rather than a sole proprietorship.]"

Donna Winters, author of the *Great Lakes Romances© Series* spoke to the issues of e-mail lists and tax filing (mostly during an e-loop discussion following the conference). Here's her advice after 21 years as a self-publisher:

"If you wonder why you shouldn't buy an e-mail list and

pump out spam to people you hope will buy your book, think of this: it defames your reputation as an individual, an author, and a business. To learn how to write legitimate sales e-mails to your contact list, messages that won't get caught in a spam filter, and to find out how often to do it and how to develop your marketing pitch, visit the icontact website and read their white paper on the subject."

"Taxes. To profit or not to profit. A question came up earlier in the day about losing money several years running and wondering if the IRS will audit or tell you it's a hobby and not a business. My take on it after losing money several years straight, having gone through an audit in 1980 way before ever being in the publishing industry, and running my for-profit business at a loss when the numbers dictate, is this:

- *Keep good records and don't deduct for anything that is not substantiated by a specific receipt*
- *Use good accounting practices in your business, preferably with a software program*
- *Use a good accountant or tax program that will guide you through tax prep year after year and estimate your chances of being audited*
- *Be particularly careful if deducting in-home office expenses, travel expenses, and/or meal expenses. These will increase your chances of an audit considerably."*

My extravagance always falls under advertising and I have not yet been told that my business is a hobby, even when my advertising expenses have exceeded my income."

Thanks to Donna for compiling these helpful tips!



eBooks! Present, Future & Opportunities

Walt Shiel (<http://SlipdownMountain.com>; <http://FiveRainbows.com>), provided an excellent list of references for e-books (which space doesn't permit including) at the Spring Conference. But here is a link to Walt's presentation slides which none of us got to see because of a malfunction in the equipment. If you'd like the file of references, send an email to dfrontiera@msn.com and the file will be sent to you by return email.

Download Presentation Slides: <http://FiveRainbows.com/uppaa/E-Books.pdf>

Business Meeting Brings Changes to UPPAA Leadership

WALT SHIEL announced he would retire from managing the UPPAA web site. Everyone in UPPAA sends a huge thank you to Walt for years of service. He managed the web site for at least the last four years and was newsletter editor for perhaps two or three years of that as well.

NEW EDITOR

Deborah K. Frontiera



Debbie is a native of Lake Linden and, in terms of the U.P., considers herself a "goose." Snowbirds live in the north and go south for the winter. Debbie lives in Houston, TX, just east of where thousands of geese spend the winter, and comes north for the summer. She has been in UPPAA for many years, but has now become more active.

Her web site is www.authorsden.com/deborahkfrontiera and you can send news to her at dfrontiera@msn.com

NEW WEB MASTER

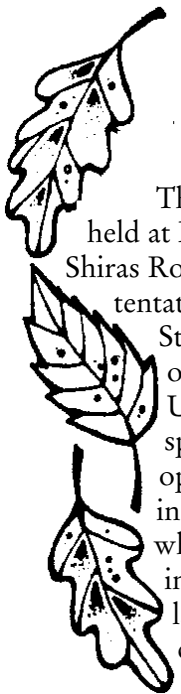
Victor Volkman



Victor R. Volkman is our new UPPAA webmaster, building on the original hard work of Walt Shiel. Victor is the owner of [Loving Healing Press, Inc.](http://LovingHealingPress.com) in Ann Arbor, MI which specializes in publishing empowering books which redefine what is possible for healing mind and spirit. LHP has published more than 100 books in hardcover and paperback and is currently converting the backlist to eBook formats. Another imprint of LHP is [Modern History Press](http://ModernHistoryPress.com).

Victor is the host of [Authors Access](http://AuthorsAccess.com), a bi-weekly podcast about marketing, publishing, and editing books in all genres. He holds a BS in Computer Science from MTU in Houghton, and fondly remembers life in the U.P. before the internet.

Victor has a lot of improvements planned for the website. If you haven't checked the site in a while, this might be a good time to do so. He also instituted a Twitter account ("UP_Authors") which will tweet book announcements, events, new editions, and reviews. A summary of the latest tweets is on the right-hand side of the www.UPPAA.org site. The next project will be refreshing the book covers with 50% larger images (200 pixels). E-mail him a JPEG file of your book cover. He welcomes new ideas for improving the site and making it more relevant, so don't hesitate to send any ideas to webmaster@uppaa.org.



The Fall Meeting

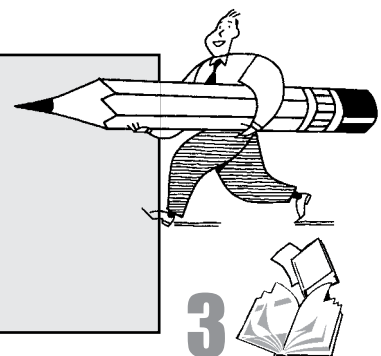
The Fall Meeting will be held at Peter White Library, Shiras Room, October 2nd, tentatively set for 2 to 4 PM.

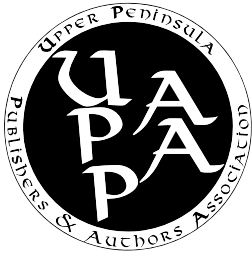
Stacey Wiley, a graduate of Northern Michigan University, will be the speaker. She owns and operates Globe Printing in Ishpeming, Michigan where she specializes in helping people with layout design and print coordination for self-published authors.

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GET IN THE NEWS!

For new books, please use the New Book Data Form, available by logging into the Member Roster page of www.UPPAA.org
Other news and article submissions can be emailed to editor@uppaa.org
Please write "newsletter" in the subject line.





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SUMMER 2010

Using Poetic Elements in All Genres of Writing

DEBORAH K. FRONTIERA

No matter whether we choose to publish ourselves or submit in the “traditional” way, our writing must sparkle, or it becomes a stew with no flavor. Poetic elements are the herbs and spices of our work. Lacking these, our writing is bland, but the statement “too much salt spoils the broth” also applies. Frontiera’s workshop at the conference addressed this topic. She had participants complete a short writing exercise, and then read brief examples of each poetic term from a variety of books for children and adults. Participants then looked at their writing exercise to see where they could add poetic elements, and finally thought about how to apply such techniques and elements to all their writing. Space did not permit printing her entire workshop handout, but members may email her requesting a copy and she will attach the file to a return email. (dfrontiera@msn.com)



Member-News

From **Jan Stafford Kellis**: *The Word That You Heard* is available on amazon.com, and is just starting to hit stores in the Eastern UP. www.bookwormsanonymous.com

Lon L. Emerick has a new book out:

