

Write Your Best Newsletter

October, 2008 Newsletter

Greetings,

You received this newsletter because awhile back you expressed an interest in writing. Enjoy!

Quotes for Writers

"Writing is the only thing that, when I do it, I don't feel I should be doing something else."

Gloria Steinem

"Close your eyes and dream the dreams your heart desires and they stay right there. Open them and turn them into reality and they go with you for life. Darkness is no place for God's plans."

Bob Perks, author of "I Wish You Enough"

Recommended Book of the Month

"78 Reasons why your book may never be published and 14 reasons why it just might" by Pat Walsh. Penguin Books, 2005. Don't be fooled by the title. This book is all about how to think and express yourself clearly and effectively. What writer has perfected that? With chapters on managing your information, your structure, your internal writer and editor, your sentence economy, among others, it is well organized, practical, and filled with writing exercises.

BE DARING! ENTER A WRITING CONTEST

[Note: Two days after I wrote this, I got an excited call from Teresa Cravens, a client. She just won Honorable Mention in the Writers Digest Writing Contest. 4th place out of 17,000 entries! CONGRATULATIONS, Teresa!]

Does your writing life need a shot in the arm?

Have you stopped submitting your work (or never started)?

Do you want a concrete project to jump start your engine?

Does your resume as a writer need beefing up?

Entering a writing contest may be exactly what the doctor ordered.

Don't pooh pooh this idea immediately. There are lots of benefits:

- you have a writing assignment, the topic is clear;
- you have a time deadline, which motivates you to sit down and write; because it's a contest, you'll stretch as a writer, maybe even try out new skills and be more creative;
- in many contests you get feedback on your entry; you get practiced at putting your work out there;
- you end up with a finished product that can be submitted to magazines;
- you might win, which usually results in publication, and looks good on your resume.

What's the worst that can happen? You don't win? Big deal. Keep entering contests and working on your writing, and one day you will. Besides, you still get all the other benefits, and a tougher skin.

Most writing magazines announce writing contests all the time. Check out "Poets and Writers" and "The Writer".

DOES MY INVOLVEMENT MATTER?

by Candyce Ossefort-Russell

[Note: The article below is excerpted from "Does My Involvement Matter? Some Thoughts On Why It Does." The author is a therapist and writer in Austin, TX. To read the full article, which appeared in her September newsletter, or to subscribe to the newsletter, just go to <http://www.candycecounseling.com>]

A couple of weeks ago I worked to register voters at The Pecan Street Festival, a local arts fair that attracts a huge cross-section of Austin's population. I was unprepared for how moving this seemingly mundane experience would be.

One man who registered was foreign-born, and had received his

American citizenship less than a year before. Tears moistened both of our eyes as he asked me how to go about voting, telling me that this was his first time to register and would be his first time to vote.

"I've never had a way to voice my desire for change before," he said with a quavering voice.

Another young couple in their early twenties with a 7-year-old child in tow stopped me to ask what I knew about one of the candidates. I told them briefly, and they responded, "I've been hearing about that, and I think I want to do this [register to vote]."

They had never registered before and had difficulty understanding the registration forms. They hadn't had much schooling or many opportunities to learn about the process. They had never felt included before, but having me accessible as a regular person made them decide they wanted to take part. The pride was palpable in their posture as they solemnly signed the registration forms.

These and other experiences of registering people who viewed their right to vote as a gift humbled me. I was further humbled by an email my mother forwarded to me re-telling the story of how women in 1917 struggled and paid for the right for women to vote. I think this humility is what stopped my cavalier attitude in its tracks when I was bemoaning cheering in a crowd.

I know I can be a relentless optimist. But really, too many sacrifices have been made by people who came before us for us to lightly toss off our right to vote. It feels like a duty to the people in the world who still don't have a voice that we people who live in a free country express our opinion through our vote, even if we're in the minority. And I'm also reminded of a line from an old Rush song that says, "If you choose not to decide, you still have made a choice." Whatever your leanings, I implore you—exercise your right to make your choice known.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WRITING HELP

I encourage you to take advantage of the all the writing help that is out there. If you're interested in how writing coaching helps you solve writing problems, check out my [Introductory Special](#) at my website www.WriteYourBest.com

Happy Writing!
Cindy Barrilleaux

If you know someone who is writing or wants to write, and think they'd be interested, forward this newsletter to them.

If you want to receive monthly newsletters with writing tips and advice, sign up at www.WriteYourBest.com .



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