



# The Inkwell

Madison County Writers Guild  
In partnership with  
the Madison County Arts Council  
invites you to participate in

## Meet the Authors

Book Sale & Signing  
Saturday February 20, 2010  
Kimbrow Center – on the Square  
Downtown Madisonville  
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

**Writing Workshop**  
With Mark Troy, "Plotting Your Novel"  
& Sylvia Dickey Smith, "Character Development"

The Madison County Writers Guild  
In partnership with the Madison County Arts Council  
Invites you to a writing workshop  
Saturday April 10, 2010  
Kimbrow Center – on the Square  
Downtown Madisonville  
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM  
Admission is \$35 – Bring your own lunch

For additional information contact:  
M. Elizabeth Gage - mregage@comcast.com - 936-851-2668  
or Sylvia Dickey - sdecie@comcast.com - 936-282-3232  
or visit us on the web at www.madisoncountywritersguild.com

The *Madison County Writers Guild* sponsored two events this season: Meet the Authors Book Sale and Signing and a Writing Workshop. The February 20, 2010 book signing brought 16 writers from East Texas to Madisonville's Kimbro Center. A dozen members and four guest attendees participated in interactive presentations on "Plotting Your Novel" led by Mark Troy of the Brazos Writers and "Developing Characters from the Inside Out" by Sylvia Dickie Smith at the April 10, 2010 writing workshop. (Graphics by Kim Davis)

## Congratulations to the 2009-2010 Guild Choice Award Winners

2010 Winner – Anthology	Frieda Michael
	<i>Summer of 1886</i>
Runner Up – Anthology	Darlene Parker
	<i>Selected Poems</i>
2010 Winner – Open Readings	M. Elizabeth Gage
	<i>The Remembering</i>
Runner Up – Open Readings	Kimberly Davis
	<i>Christmas Winds</i>

Judge: Helen F. Sheffield

## The President's Message

The theme of this issue of *The Inkwell* is "reading like a writer." It all started with a morning workout and a viewing of The Teaching Company's *The Art of Reading*, lecture 16, "Dialog–The Good, the Bad, the Ugly" on the DVD player beside the treadmill. I have gleaned quite a bit from this course and wanted to share it with you (see page 3). Then, checking to see what the Brazos Writers were up to, I clicked on the link to the "Want to Read like a Writer?" workshop (see page 2). The newsletter practically wrote itself.

We've had a busy year at the Madison County Writers Guild. I hope you found something worthwhile in the mix.

Our 2011 Anthology is *Autumn*. Consider writing a narrative on school days, harvest times, or Halloween trick or treats. How about a ghost story or a back in time tale? (I delight in that extra hour when we turn back the clock hand.) Perhaps a poignant story of change or growing older? A notable Thanksgiving remembrance? The anthology is a special part of what we do. I hope you will be inspired to contribute to our next publication.

It's been a pleasure to serve you these last three years. A blessing. Really.

M. Elizabeth Gage

## WRITERS GUILD SHORTS

A special welcome to new members **Rachel Dacus** of College Station and **Kendra Privett** of Madisonville.

Sixteen published writers from Eastern Texas participated in the Writers Guild **Meet the Authors Event** at the Kimbro Center on February 20, 2010. Displaying their most recent works among the gathered historians, scientists, mystery writers, novelists and educators were Guild Members **Betty Storie Strawther, Gala Nettles, Terry Keeling, Joan Escamilla, Lloyd Perry** and honorary member **Debra Clopton**. A veritable feast for eyes and palates was prepared and served during the event by member **Rita Fannin Spencer** and members of the MCAC fund raising committee.

**Marielle Gage**, a freshman at Thomas More College of Liberal Arts in New Hampshire, was awarded a Champion Scholarship to the Oxford Studies Program, a three-week course in England that delves into the lives and thoughts of five great English writers: G.K. Chesterton, John Henry Cardinal Newman, poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, Hilaire Belloc and J.R.R. Tolkien.

Congratulations to **Betty Storie Strawther** who now has self-published two books with Trafford. Betty's new release for 2010 is *Fear Comes: Eight Short Stories Long on Fear*. Her first

book was *Dreams and In-Between* (2008).

## WORKSHOPS AROUND TOWN

### Want to Read Like a Writer?

A free writing seminar by author  
Bethany Hegedus and  
Sponsored by Brazos Writers  
and  
Barnes & Noble Bookstores

711 Texas Avenue, College Station

**Saturday, June 5, 2010  
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Are instruction and practice the only ways to learn to write? Or can some parts be self-taught? In the multitude of ways a writer can learn the writing craft, one important and often overlooked tool is reading like a writer.

Join Bethany Hegedus for a presentation on reading books, magazines, and other material with an eye toward finding markets and developing your own writing style. Many of the topics are discussed in: *Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and Those Who Want to Write Them* by Francine Prose.

Bethany Hegedus is co-editor of the Young Adult and Children's section of the literary magazine, *Hunger Mountain*. Her second novel, *Truth, With a Capital T*. (Delacorte Press/Random House) will be released on Oct. 12, 2010. *Between Us Baxters*, recently published, is her first young adult novel. You can find Bethany manning the office at the [Writers' League of Texas](#) or online at [www.bethanyhegedus.com](http://www.bethanyhegedus.com).

## SCBWI Brazos Valley Workshops

### Novel Revision Retreat with Darcy Pattison

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

November 12-14, 2010

LaSalle Hotel, Bryan, Texas

Enrollment limited to 24.

To attend the Novel Revision Retreat, writers must have a completed draft of a novel. The length may vary according to each writer's work. Participants must agree to read three other manuscripts before the retreat and be ready to discuss them.

## Brazos Valley Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators

### 2010 Monthly Schmooze Schedule

- May 26 Picture Book Use in the Classroom
- Jun. 30 Writing from Platforms: It Ain't Yo Mama's Shoes
- Jul. 28 TBA
- Aug. 25 What is an Essential Book?
- Sept. 29 Friending, Tweeting and Blogging Your Writing Life
- Oct. 27 Setting Priorities

Meetings are held in the College Station Barnes & Noble in the art corner at 10 a.m. Open critique time follows each meeting. See website for guidelines.



**Recommended**

**THE ART OF READING  
THE TEACHING COMPAY**

Taught by **Timothy Spurgin**  
Lawrence University, Ph.D.,  
University of Virginia

This informative and lively course teaches: how a story's particular narrative style affects your connection with its characters; why authors choose to hint at meanings instead of just writing them out for you; how the organization of a novel into distinct chapters can affect your engagement with its plot, and much more.

Learning the skills and techniques of artful reading can improve your life in many ways. If you're a fiction reader, they can make your first reading of a new novel or short story feel as rewarding as a second or third reading, and they can give you new perspectives on works you already cherish. If you're an aspiring writer, they can help you understand the methods that great writers use to tackle literary concepts—successful methods you can then apply to your own writing.

**Master the Fundamentals of Fiction**

An artful reading experience relies on a concrete grasp of the basic elements of fiction, and **The Art of Reading** is a great way to master them. Throughout the first half of the course, you learn the definitions and characteristics of terms such as authorship, master

plot, theme, genre, and metafiction.

**The Art of Reading** gives you a veritable toolbox that you'll find essential to mining everything you need from a novel or short story. Whether you're someone who loves curling up with a good book, a writer who is looking for insights into how to get inside your readers' minds, or a student who wants to contribute to class discussions, there's something for you to find in this course.

(Selection above was condensed from [www.teach12.com](http://www.teach12.com))

Of the 24 lectures in this course those of particular interest to writers include:

Authors, Real and Implied

Narrators—Their Voices and Their Visions

Characters—Beyond Round and Flat

Descriptions—People, Places, and Things

Minimalists to Maximalists to Lyricists

Explosive Devices—Irony and Ambiguity

Reading for the Plot—Five Simple Words

Master Plots—The Stranger and the Journey

Chapters, Patterns, and Rhythms

Scene and Summary, Showing and Telling

Subtexts, Motives, and Secrets

Dialogue—The Good, the Bad, the Ugly

(24 lectures, 30 minutes per lecture)

**DVD \$254.95**  
**Audio CD \$179.95**  
**Audio Tape \$129.95**  
**Audio Download \$129.95**

**Note:** Every Teaching Company course is offered at significant discount (70% off) at least once annually.

**REMINDER**

Please complete your annual membership survey, available online, and return it to the guild secretary.

Your responses help the Madison County Writers Guild Board of Directors plan for the upcoming year.



*Guidelines and Deadlines for Submissions to the 2011 anthology*

Theme: *Autumn*.  
Maximum word length: 2500  
Restrictions: no obscenity, vulgarity or erotica  
  
Standard manuscript preparation with submission via email preferred by February 1, 2011. Returned manuscripts must be resubmitted to the committee by February 15, 2011.  
  
An Anthology Submission Author's Agreement must be completed. Contracts are available on the bookshelf.

*Writers Guild Meetings*

*The Writers Guild meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from September through May at 6:30 PM in the small annex building behind the Madison County Library. Annual dues are individuals \$20, families \$30, and students \$10.*  
  
*The guild is generously supported by its members and by the Madison County Arts Council.*

**CHEERIOS®  
NEW AUTHOR  
CONTEST**

DEADLINE: JULY 15, 2010

The Cheerios® New Author Contest encourages aspiring authors to write and submit an original story for a book for children ages 3 to 8.

**Grand Prize**

One (1) Grand Prize of \$5000 cash will be awarded. In addition to the cash prize, the Grand Prizewinning story submission will be offered to Simon & Schuster, Inc. for future publication. The \$5000 will be awarded as a check made payable to the Grand Prize winner. Publishing terms and contract will be handled independently by Simon & Schuster; if there is any additional compensation it will be negotiated between the author and the publisher.

**First Runner-Up Prizes**

Two (2) First Runner-Up Prizes of \$1000 each will be awarded. The stories of the First Runner-Up Prize winners will appear on [www.SpoonfulsofStories.com](http://www.SpoonfulsofStories.com).

*Tentative 2010-2010  
Calendar*

**Annual Business Meeting**  
August 17, 2010

**Membership Meeting**  
September 21, 2010  
STC Chapter 8

**Membership Meeting**  
October 19, 2010  
STC Chapter 9

**Membership Meeting**  
November 16, 2010  
Annual Budget due to MCAC  
STC Chapter 10

**Christmas Social**  
December 21, 2010

**Membership Meeting**  
January 18, 2011

**Membership Meeting**  
February 15, 2011

**Membership Meeting**  
March 15, 2011

**Special Event**  
April 2011  
Writers Workshop

**Membership Meeting**  
April 19, 2011  
Annual Report to Membership  
Nomination of Officers

**Membership Meeting**  
May 17, 2011  
Election of Officers  
Spring Social with guest author



*2010-2011 Officers*

President	Joan A. Escamilla
Vice President	Lou Popowskyj
Treasurer	Kimberly Davis
Secretary	Frieda Michael
Newsletter Editor (May'10)	M. Elizabeth Gage
President Emeritus	M. Elizabeth Gage