Minutes for the April 7, 2022 AGT meeting

The Authors Guild of Tennessee held their monthly meeting at Faith Lutheran Church in Farragut. The social time and library book exchange began at 10:30 a.m. The official business meeting began at 11:00.

Members present:

Bobbi Chapman, Bill Barbour, Patricia Crumpler, Linda Fitzpatrick, Cyn Taylor, Russ Fine, Jerry Morton, Randy Carpenter, David Nix, Art Stewart, Morris Hudgins, Sonja DuBois, Laura Derr, and Cheryl Peyton.

Visitors: Sherry Fine and Stephen Lyn Bales. Bobbi introduced Stephen who is in the process of applying for membership. Stephen told the group that he has written four books on natural history, focusing on birds, with his latest book *Ghost Birds,* being about those that are endangered or extinct.

Welcome – Cheryl.

March minutes: Minutes of the March meeting have been approved online and are available on the website.

Treasurer’s report: – Russ Fine

March: beginning balance $2,260.17. Ending balance $1,594.64.

Committee Heads reports:

**Marketing**: Jerry Morton gave an update on the writing contest AGT is sponsoring for students in Lenoir City High School LC Middle School. Jerry was pleased to report that the principals, librarians, and the high school Creative Writing teacher are enthusiastic about the project and have worked out the timeline to begin next fall. The subject will be Historical Fiction. Jerry passed around sign-up sheets for AGT members to volunteer to 1) read the first drafts, 2) mentor the winners to prepare paper for publication or regional/national writing contests, or (3) to speak to the students on the Writing Process. AGT will also provide three judges and will purchase awards which will be plaques and cash/gift certificates in an unset amount.

**Retail Stores**: Cheryl reported that Jodi Eades, who owns Knoxville Soap and Candle, has sold the business effective January 1. We need to remove our books by that date or before. Since Jodi has not sent checks to Randy for the sale of books for some time, Retail Chair Linda Fitzpatrick will schedule to meet with her at the store to go over the sales, and write down titles and the number sold, and for Jodi to write a check for the total to send to Randy.

**Publicity:** Cyn Taylor provided information about advertising in the free magazine titled *Mountain Escapes* that is distributed to libraries, shopping centers, etc. in towns in East Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and western N. Carolina. The magazine contains articles on local recreation, shops, history, and events. The cost for an ad for 1/8 page is $150, and for 1/16 of a page is $70. The Board will consider.

**Vetting/Membership:** ChairBobbi Chapman reported that Stephen Bales will be joining AGT this month and there are possibly three new members who will be joining next month.

**Fairs, Festivals, and signings:**

Cheryl – advised Horse Haven craft fair is this Saturday. Bobbi and Leoma are participating. Bobbi asked if anyone else cared to join them. Marble Springs has several upcoming outdoor events that are $25 or $30 for a 10’ space for anyone who may be interested. One special show will be celebrating Statehood Day on May 30, from 12 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Advisory:**

Cheryl related being scammed recently when she was emailed a paid receipt in the amount of $389.99 from Norton Anti-Virus for a subscription for their services she hadn’t ordered. When she dialed the number for a refund, she was asked to do several things, including to bring up her bank account to see if the refund was posted. After turning off her computer, she drove to the bank to freeze her online banking. A computer technician later found a software program the phisher had installed that allowed for backdoor access to the computer.

Program: Speaker, AGT member, Pat Crumpler, first related her experience of being scammed by a promotional service that complimented her on her books and offered to promote them to all English-speaking countries for $3,000. When she discovered her sales had not gone up appreciably, she checked them out on the website: sciencefictionauthorsofAmerica that has a list of scammers who target authors of any genre and found the promoter listed. With this and other evidence, she was able to get a refund from Capital One, her credit card company.

Pat went on to speak on the subject of “Guidelines vs. Formulas in Writing."

### Pat made the distinction between the two, noting that a formula is a rigid outline that can stifle creativity, whereas a guideline provides a general pathway to organize your story.

Aristotle wrote of three points in the plotting of a story: beginning, middle, and end. Now there’s a 13-pont plotting method. A 5-point, and a 12-point that organizes a story with a clock metaphor.

Pat advises it’s best to write with Guidelines, including these:

1. Use a hook, or enticing beginning—usually in the very first line or opening of a story—designed to capture the readers' interest.
2. Set the scene as soon as you can to orientate the reader
3. Give a minimum of information to get your story underway
4. Incorporate all five senses to bring your story to life
5. Use foreshadowing to suggest a later event
6. Keep the pace going to maintain interest for the reader
7. Alternate physical tags -- such as *John picked up his cup* to identify the speaker -- with dialogue tags like “he said, she said.”
8. End scenes with cliffhangers.

Pat mentioned different writing styles such as the Stream of Consciousness narrator like T.S. Elliot, and “Pantsers” who are writers that “write from the seat of their pants.”

Pat uses these guidelines:

Thinks through her idea to know how the story will end

Makes a skeletal outline of the action

Writes notes on her characters – descriptions, ages, names, and relationships.

In her first revision, she uses formulas as diagnostic tools to determine that her work has all the elements of a good story.

**Adjournment:**

Cheryl adjourned the meeting at 12:17. Next meeting scheduled for May 5 at Faith Lutheran Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Peyton, Secretary Pro tem