



Writer's Connection

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Quinte Writer's Guild Newsletter

Editor: M. E. Wood

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962-3899

REMINDERS

- *Mark Your Calendar with these Upcoming Meeting Dates 2004:*
 - **March 2**
 - **April 6**
 - **May 4**
 - **June 1**
- *Monthly Dues are \$3.*
- *Membership is \$15/yr*

WHERE WE WRITERS MEET: WHARF STREET DEBATING CLUB 36 S. FRONT ST.

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Board & Executive

President:
 Pamela Stork
 pstork@hotmail.com

Vice President:
 Ruth Howard

Treasurer:
 Maureen Wood
 imagery@sympatico.ca

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 Angela McPherson
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 Susan Brannigan-Rampp
 rampp@sympatico.ca

Hello Guild Members!

The Writer's Workshop was a great success. Over 40 participants in all and we covered our expenses.

Yippee! Maybe next year we will do a weekend event.

All the best to you.

Maureen

From Our President!

Maureen asked me to keep this message down to 3-6 sentences, so, I shall, despite my propensity toward long-windedness. I missed you all in February; drat the winter weather, and I am, therefore, looking forward to the March meeting with more than the usual anticipation. Let's hope that March does NOT come in like a lion and that we'll have a full house on March 2 with lots of readings for our almost-spring meeting. (Ha, Ha, Maureen!...clever use of punctuation let me sneak lots of words into those 3 sentences!)

PAM (editor's note: looks like 4 to me. :)

How Long Should Your Story Be? By Lee Masterson

Recently we received several emails asking the question: "How long should my story be?" The simple answer is: As long as it takes to tell the whole story. However, there are certain word lengths that most editors prefer to see when submitting work. Here is an approximate guideline for story lengths.

Micro-Fiction (up to 100 words) This very abbreviated story is often difficult to write, and even harder to write well, but the markets for micro fiction are becoming increasingly popular in recent times. Publishers love them, as they take up almost no room and don't cost them their budgets. Pay rates are often low, but for so few words, the rate per word averages quite high.

Example: 6 word micro-story: "For Sale: Baby shoes. Never Worn." - Attributed to Ernest Hemingway

Flash Fiction (100 - 1,000 words) This is the type of short-short story you would expect to find in a glossy magazine, often used to fill one page of quick romance (or quick humor, in men's mags) Very popular, quick and easy to write, and easier to sell!

Short Story (1,000 - 7,500 words) The 'regular' short story, usually found in periodicals or anthology collections. Most 'genre' zines will feature works at this length.

Novellette (7,500 - 20,000 words) Often a novellette-length work is difficult to sell to a publisher. It is considered too long for most publishers to insert comfortably into a magazine, yet too short for a novel. Generally, authors will piece together three or four novellette-length works into a compilation novel.

Novella (20,000 - 50,000 words) Although most print publishers will balk at printing a novel this short, this is almost perfect for the electronic publishing market length. The online audience doesn't always have the time or the patience to sit through a 100,000 word novel. Alternatively, this is an acceptable length for a short work of non-fiction.

Novel (50,000 -110,000 words) Most print publishers prefer a minimum word count of around 70,000 words for a first novel, and some even hesitate for any work shorter than 80,000. Yet any piece of fiction climbing over the 110,000 word mark also tends to give editors some pause. They need to be sure they can produce a product that won't over-extend their budget, but still be enticing enough to readers to be saleable. Imagine paying good money for a book less than a quarter-inch thick?

Epics and Sequels (Over 110,000 words) If your story extends too far over the 110,000 mark, perhaps consider where you could either condense the story to only include relevant details, or lengthen it to span out into a sequel, or perhaps even a trilogy. (Unless, of course, you're Stephen King - then it doesn't matter what length your manuscript is - a publisher is a little more lenient with an established author who has a well-established readership).

Page Counts In most cases, industry standard preferred length is 250 words per page... so a 400 page novel would be at about 100,000 words. If you want to see what size book is selling in your genre, take a look on the shelves. If the average length is 300 pages, you're looking at a 75,000 word manuscript (approximately)

One reason it's harder for a new author to sell a 140,000 word manuscript is the size of the book. A 500+ page book is going to take up the space of almost two, 300 page books on the shelves. It's also going to cost more for the publishers to produce, so unless the author is well known, the book stores aren't going to stock that many copies of the 'door-stopper' novel as compared to the thinner novel.

Remember, these word- and page-counts are only estimated guides. Use your own common sense, and, where possible, check the guidelines of the publication you intend to submit your work to. Most publishers accepting shorter works will post their maximum preferred lengths, and novels are generally considered on the strength of the story itself, not on how many words you have squeezed into each chapter.

*** **Lee Masterson** is a freelance writer from South Australia. She is also the editor and publisher of Fiction Factor (<http://www.fictionfactor.com>) - an online magazine for fiction writers, offering tips and advice on getting published, articles to improve your writing, market listings, free ebook downloads, author interviews, heaps of writer's resources and much more. In what little spare time she has, Lee also writes science fiction novels.

Member News

The New Membership Year Begins April 2004.

Your membership for 2003 expires the end of March.

That means your yearly membership fee will be due in April. At the moment the yearly membership is \$15 plus the monthly dues of \$3/month. That works out to a total of \$45 a year for your membership. To make things easier for accounting and so you don't have to worry about scrounging up \$3 for every meeting I'm proposing a consolidation of the two fees to a once a year \$40 membership fee.

This was mentioned at the last meeting. And will be discussed again at the next meeting. Please let me know what you think. You can either call (962-3899) or email (imagery@sympatico.ca) me with your thoughts. If you call, please leave a message.

Thanks

Maureen, Treasurer

Quinte Arts Council Poetry Contest

Sharpen up those quills and start agonizing over your alliteration and assonance: we're going to have a poetry contest!

- Open to all except the judges
- Any theme or subject
- No more than 2 pages of work - do not put your name on the poems, but rather on a separate piece of paper with title (s)
- 3 judges - their selections are final
- \$10 entry fee, one entry per person
- 3 prizes
- Results to be announced at a poetry event during May's Spring Focus on the Arts
- Deadline for entry 4:30 p.m., April 19, 2004
- Any submitted poems may be published in Umbrella
Amp up your angst, and good luck!
Mailing Address:
36 Bridge St. E.
P.O. Box 225
Belleville, Ontario K8N 5A2

Writing Websites

- **French Word-A-Day** delivers a French word, phrase and quote each weekday to your e-mail box. Kristin Espinasse shares her struggle to fit in among the French and to speak their language; in doing so she highlights French culture while sprinkling more French vocabulary throughout the daily story ("A Day in the Life") so as to give readers an idea of how the French words are used. A great vocabulary builder all around. **Visit** <http://french-word-a-day.com> to sign up for the free service or email Kristin at: kristi@french-word-a-day.com
- **32 Poems** is easy to carry and inviting to read. Each issue contains only 32 poems so that readers may give intimate, unhurried attention to each. The editors of 32 Poems feel that a poem's publication should not begin its disappearance; it is their mission to promote the work of contributors by placing 32 Poems with editors, nominating writers for recognition and prizes, and commending work to widely read online poetry sources. **Visit** <http://www.32poems.com>.
- **Words Without Borders** undertakes to promote international communication through translation of the world's best writing--selected and translated by a distinguished group of writers, translators, and publishing professionals--and publishing and promoting these works (or excerpts) on the web **Visit** <http://www.wordswithoutborders.org>

Market of the Month

BRICK

Brick is a Canadian Literary Magazine. It's available at Chapters if you want to have a peak.

Brick accepts nonfiction on a variety of topics: personal essays, memoirs, interviews, creative non-fiction, letters, diaries, journals. No fiction or poetry.

Here is their website:
<http://www.brickmag.com>

Pays anywhere from \$75-500.

"Brick prefers to receive submissions typed and double-spaced, and we appreciate your including a computer disk, with the file in either a Word format for Macintosh or as an "RTF"—Rich Text Format—for ease of typesetting. We also accept submissions by e-mail. For mailed submissions, include an email address or a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish to hear back from us!"

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**SUCCESS IS LIKING
YOURSELF, LIKING WHAT
YOU DO, AND LIKING
HOW YOU DO IT.
—MAYA ANGELOU, POET**