



Valley ByLiners

# Valley ByLiners

Volume 1, Issue 10

November 2006

## Byliners Book Project in Full Swing!

### NEXT MEETING

Saturday,  
November  
11th

1:30 pm

Harlingen  
Public Library

Program:

*Marketing, the  
other half of being  
a writer.*

**Join Us!**

This November, Byliners will get a chance to learn about the other half of being a writer – marketing one’s work!

Our book *Tales Told at Midnight Along the Rio Grande* has been sent to the printers and is getting put together for distribution.

The book project will provide LOTS of opportunities for participation, including writing, speaking, coordinating, selling, and promoting.

At this phase of the writing process, we have been “published”, and it’s now time to go out and sell our wares – the other half of being a writer.

The business side of writing includes promotions, marketing, and sales. The November meeting, will be all about book sales, marketing and publicity – basic skill for book authors. “We’re asking members to come to the November meeting with their lists and their checkbooks,” said Verne Wheelwright.

Their lists should include people they can contact that can help publicize or sell the book

as well as suggestions or ideas for events, fairs, art shows, and businesses where books can be sold. “We’d like everyone to bring ideas of places to sell books on a direct basis, from county fairs to wine tasting events,” said Verne.

It’s time to comb through

According to Eileen, “We will sort through and organize all our opportunities to sell, like to Rotary Clubs, other civic organizations, private groups, etc.”

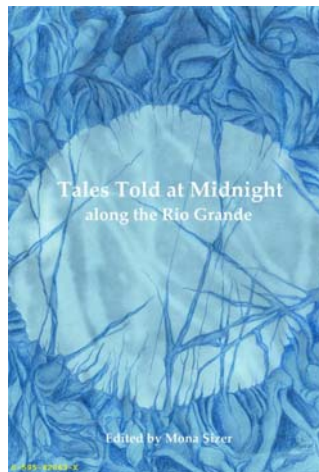
“We want people to plan to sign books whenever possible, in other words get in the business of selling the book as well as writing it,” stated Mona Sizer, book project coordinator.

Marianna is working with Mona to write a fact sheet with all the information about the book so that all Byliners will have the correct information when they promote the book to the public.

This “press kit” will include some background information about the Byliners and the book project, include information about the various authors, provide information for how to purchase the book, cost, and events information. The press kit should be ready for distribution at the November meeting and then updated for the December meeting.

### Book Sales

According to Eileen, “The



your rolodex files and ask for help in getting the word out about the book. Everyone should bring their contact lists and be ready to follow through on these contacts on behalf of the club. They can also bring names of people that might review or write about the book or the organization in local or regional papers and magazines.

### Promotions



Have you  
sent in your  
Membership  
Dues?

## Focus on Byliner Bee Orr by Marianna Nelson

“Bee Orr lived in the Milwaukee area until she was 27. In 1960, she moved to Denton, Texas, with her husband and two children. “[When] my children grew up and ran away from home, my husband followed suit,” she says.

In 1992--with a new husband in tow--Bee started motor-homing full-time. In 1997 when she and Barry discovered Fun N Sun RV Resort in San Benito, they settled there.

Not wasting a bit of time, a few months later Bee attended her first Byliners meeting. “I had written a children’s story and wanted it critiqued,” she says. “It was my good fortune to meet Herschel Whittington [a Byliners member who passed away in 2004]. He took my story home and later sent me some interesting suggestions.”

Bee’s desire to write started in Junior High School. “I remember writing a story that my English teacher didn’t believe I had written. She kept me after class and told me to write another story, which I did.” The quality of the second story convinced the teacher that Bee indeed was capable of writing original, creative prose. “My sister was incensed that the teacher doubted my ability,” Bee says.

If a person wants to start writing, Bee says, “Just do it. If you can talk, you can write. Writing is much easier than talking because you have more time to think [what] to say.

While you’re talking, sometimes your point is lost in the conversation. And if you say something that you regret saying, it is pretty hard to suck the words back into your mouth to delete them.”

Bee has been recording her life experiences since 1960.

Her writing goals are to continue chronicling the events of her life and to express her feelings, beliefs and theories about life. She has also written creative non-fiction.

Two pieces, “A Letter from Ms. Cello” and “Tommy, Her New Best Friend,” were published in *Open Windows: Glimpses of Our Lives*, a 2003 book put out by the Fun N Sun Writers Group. Her children’s story, “The Big Beautiful Brown Rottweiler Dog,” won second place in the Byliners Excellence in Writing Contest, 2005.



## October Meeting Highlights

by Marjorie Johnston

What a wonderful meeting we had in October! There were 22 people present – old members, new members and returning Winter Texan members. Everyone is excited about our new creation, **Tales Told at Midnight along the Rio Grande**. Much to everyone’s surprise, except for Mona Sizer, who has pushed and shoved it to completion, it is almost ready to send to the publisher!

All of the *ghost stories* are in Jeff Harris’s computer, and he brought proof copies to the meeting.

Most of us read our submissions before we left the room and made corrections. The authors’ bios are in. It has a Table of Contents. A

### *Book Excitement in the Air*

cover design has been selected from the work of a young Brownsville artist.

It’s not just talk anymore – we really are going to produce a book! It’s going to be an exciting one, too, and we hope that it will sell a lot of copies. It will be published by an online publisher and will be a soft cover book of about 240 pages. Start thinking about who you can sell it to (or give it to as a gift.)

We should be able to start ordering in January.

The stories in the book are “First

Rights Only.” This means that, after the book is published, you can begin to try to sell yours elsewhere.

In addition to the exciting news about the book, Jeff gave a power point presentation on developing a website. Then he showed the beginnings of the Byliners new website.

It will have information about our meetings, membership and, of course, the book when it is for sale. It will include a directory of members with email addresses.

If you do NOT want your email address included, let him know at [jharris@ispwest.com](mailto:jharris@ispwest.com).

## Poetry Section

### Through the Glasses

By: Bidgie Weber

What?! My precious baby must wear glasses!  
 Won't they hide his lovely long lashes?  
 Oh my, oh my, what will people think of me?  
 I must have done something to affect his sight.  
 I sang to him . . . I read to him . . . I told him  
 stories every night!  
 I tried, oh how I tried to do things just right.  
 Nothing I could say, nothing I could do  
 would change what was.  
 It just was! Nothing more, nothing less, it was!  
 It was . . . Just because!  
 I cried, I begged, I even argued with God.  
 He does big things, small things. . . All things  
 with just a nod.  
 How do you tell a boy of three  
 That these funny looking things  
 will help him to see?  
 Oh woe, oh woe, all I could do I  
 s feel sorry for me.  
 I never once thought how unclear and fuzzy  
 things seemed to be . . .  
 For my little boy of three.  
 The wire frames fit snug behind his tiny ears  
 I tried hard to be brave  
 and smile through my tears.  
 But my baby didn't seem to mind.  
 And I thanked God. . . He was not blind.  
 Many years have come to pass . . .  
 Since the "year of the glass."  
 Hundreds of frames have perched on his nose  
 But his most favorite from all of those  
 Is the very first pair we got when he was  
 three . . .  
 For the very first time he was able to see  
 A doodlebug digging a home for her young. . .  
 To see how a spider's web was hung.  
 He saw for the very first time  
 The dew on a rose petal sparkle and shine.  
 He saw rainbows and the colors that abound.  
 I saw a Mother so vain. . . How absurd!  
 My child's vision wasn't blurred!  
 All through his life my son has shown me  
 things I would have missed.  
 The goodness in people, the kindness all  
 around, too many things for me to list.  
 I realize now, when my son was three . . .  
 He needed glasses so I could see!

Send your submissions to

**Poetry Editor, Robin**

pbcate@aol.com



## Inspiration submitted by Sandra Vela

I was lucky enough to attend the Texas Book Festival in Austin in October . One of the programs was on the NPR project "This, I believe." which is a collection of personal essays from people all over America.

You might have heard some of these essays read on the air on our own KMBH– public radio station.

The original inspiration for this project was a series of programs presented by Edward R. Morrow in the 1950's when the political and social climate was one of fear and isolation. Reading his introduction to the original series echoes its theme with a familiar note in our present day world.

You can read essays on their website **NPR.org**, or contribute one of your own! The site also has a search engine to look for

essays that might inspire you or someone you love on a variety of themes. As a writer, this site can be a great source of inspiration to formulate your thoughts, and add your piece to the collective whole. It's an open forum for everyone to participate.

The NPR.org website also provides tips on essay writing and discussion questions for use in continuing the conversations in your community.

The modern day project has the same goal, to provide a venue from which to be heard, but more importantly a place for the rest of us to truly listen to one another, a place to be inspired by the lives and experiences of others and in listening, hear our collective voice. I hope you'll check out the sight.

## Why I Write . . . .

By Nick Hornby

***"I write because I can't do any of the following: paint, sculpt, sing, take photos, play an instrument, commute, wear a suit, remember appointments, return phone calls, work for a boss, concentrate in a meeting, serve food and drink, teach, or do anything else at all, really. Nor can I ever ignore the urge to try and get out what's in, however hard I try."***

*Author of: Fever Pitch, High Fidelity, About a Boy, How To Be Good, Songbook*

I found Nick's profile and his picture featured on a card advertising *Final Draft* scriptwriting software. I keep it on my desk because the first sentence amuses me (and mirrors me) and the last sentence inspires me.

Submitted by Marianna Nelson, 10/14/06

# Are you writing?

## STC's Interstice Now Accepting Submissions for 2007 Issue

South Texas College's Interstice, one of the Rio Grande Valley's most recent literary journals, is now accepting submissions for the 2007 issue.

The journal continues to serve as a forum for creative visual and written expression. All artists, whether part of the STC community, the Rio Grande Valley community, or the larger national and international communities are encouraged to submit materials for consideration.

### Deadline is December 8, 2006.

"We are issuing a wide invitation for anyone looking to participate because we are looking for talented writers and artists from all backgrounds and all ages," said Joseph Haske, English instructor for STC and managing editor of Interstice.

"This is an outlet for creative expression and our goal is to be a voice and evoke thought and discussion.

Last year we had more than 136 submissions, which gave us the opportunity to expand the journal.

We hope that the number of submissions increases as more people realize the creative and expressive value and opportunity offered by Interstice."

For those interested in submitting, editors of Interstice are accepting a variety of materials for consideration, including poetry, artwork, photography, prose and dramatic pieces, one-act plays and other materials.

All submissions must be original.

Additional information about submission

requirements and guidelines can be found at

<http://www.southtexascollege.edu/interstice/> or by contacting Joseph Haske at [jhaske@southtexascollege.edu](mailto:jhaske@southtexascollege.edu) or 872-8352.

If you have any questions contact:

**Helen Escobar**

**Coordinator of Public Relations**

**South Texas College**

**P: 956-872-8359**

**C: 956-369-3254**

**[www.southtexascollege.edu](http://www.southtexascollege.edu)**

***JUST DO IT!***

## More on the Book Project, Plans and Book Orders

book project will also include a sales incentive for our membership." Each member will have the opportunity to "pre-order" copies of the book for their own use, to give as gifts, or to sell to the general public for a 20% profit. To place an order, members will make a \$10 deposit per book at the November or December meeting. We should be able to order them starting in Hanuary. When they arrive, members will pay the additional \$6 per book. The list price for the book will be \$19.95 which is a net profit of \$4 per book for the member.

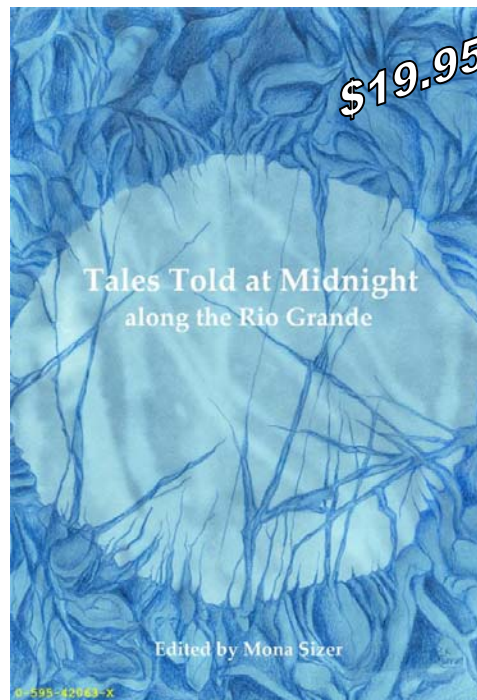
The idea for the deposit/discount is for every member to have an opportunity to 1- get a discount on copies for family and friends and 2- make 20% on books they sell. Every member will have the opportunity to be a bookseller with a profit incentive.

### Book Launch Plans

As part of the promotional plan, Mona and Eileen are planning a book launch on Market Day in downtown Harlingen. They are also working on publicity releases including doing some radio and interviews or readings. Every member promoting the book, and especially authors in the collection should plan to make speeches and readings, unless you're just scared to death to do so.

"As we make arrangements for appearances, we'll let people know and they can plan to go in groups," said Mona.

**Book Orders** Make sure you make it to the November meeting with your list and check books, but if you can't make it, send us your list and orders! We'll probably come up with some Upper Valley, Mid Valley, and Lower Valley distribution points to make the process easier.



**Makes a great gift!**  
**Pre-order for \$10.00**

### Writer's Activity

Here's a quiz for you.



- Only three words in standard English begin with the letters "dw" and they are all common words. Name two of them.
- There are 14 punctuation marks in English grammar.

Can you name at least half of them?

Can you use them in sentences?

- Reading the thesaurus is a good use of your "waiting time", carry a pocket one with you for those long lines at the post office. You might pick up a new word here or there.
- Pay special attention to strong action verbs; they can surely add a little extra zing to your prose.

Here's one

### TRY

to endeavor,  
attempt,  
undertake,  
exert oneself,  
contend, strive,  
make an effort, risk,  
wrangle, labor, aspire,  
propose, tackle, venture,  
struggle, attack,  
have a go at,  
knock oneself out,  
bust a gut,  
take a crack at . . . .

## Resources

### Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing

**Owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\_quotprsum.html**

### Paraphrase:

Write it in your own words

**Owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\_paraphr.html**



### Writing Contests

#### Northeast Texas Writers' Organization (NETWO)

2007 Short Story Contest

- Between 1,000 and 2,500 words
- Entry fee is \$8 for each adult submission
- Entries must be postmarked between January 1 and February 20, 2007
- Mail entries to: NETWO, P.O. Box 411, Winfield, TX 75493
- First Place Award is \$100
- First Place winner will be published (with author's permission) in *The Story Teller*, a magazine dedicated to helping writers.
- For more information

<http://www.netwo.org>

Thanks for sharing, Eileen!

**"We are told that talent creates its own opportunities. But it sometimes seems that intense desire creates not only its own opportunities, but its own talents."**

**-Eric Hoffer**

### A Surprisingly Good Market

I had never heard of "Desert Candle" when the editor contacted me (how he got my name I don't know) by e-mail asking me if I had a story with a West Texas setting, and if so to please send it to him. He explained that "Desert Candle," was a literary magazine published by the Desert Mountain Institute in Alpine, Texas, distributed free four times a year.

Sure enough, I had a story that would fit the magazine, so I sent it to him. When it was accepted, the editor told me that I would be sent an hono-

rarium after publication, but no amount was ever specified. All of you fiction writers know that magazines accepting short stories are few and far between, and, unless you hit the Big Time, pay very little.

Since this magazine was free, I expected perhaps \$15, an amount I've been paid for stories that I considered a whole lot better. Imagine my surprise when I received a check for \$250!

So there are markets out there if writers look hard for them. Or, as in my case, wander into them out of sheer luck.

**-submitted by Georgia Tuxbury**

# NEXT MEETING

Saturday, November 11th  
at 1:30 pm  
Harlingen Public Library

## Official Objectives of the Valley ByLiners

- to enhance and encourage writers in their professions of writing
- to provide technical aspects and information on writing and marketing
- to provide fellowship opportunities to the membership. - from the files of R.Harris

Submit your writer's fairy thought.



Ideas  
are  
Everywhere!

### Writer's Wanted

The newsletter, like any other publication needs writers to fill white space. Currently, we are looking for short and long feature articles. Share your ideas for future features. If you can't think about what to write, I have LOTS of ideas. . If you want to Volunteer for an assignment—Call me!

Sandra Vela at [mommymanager@yahoo.com](mailto:mommymanager@yahoo.com) or telephone (956)638-7203.

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Valley ByLiners  
1011 W. 6th  
Weslaco, TX 78596

Sandra Vela, Editor  
Phone: (956)638-7203  
E-mail:[mommymanager@yahoo.com](mailto:mommymanager@yahoo.com)

Writing is like breathing, you don't have to do it well, but you do have to do it.

Don't Forget  
to Write!



# ByLiners

# TO: