
RIO GRANDE VALLEY

BYLINERS

Next Meeting:

Saturday, May 10 at 1:30 PM

Harlingen Public Library

If you are one of the authors in *Tales Told at Midnight*, please come to the May meeting and autograph books. Jeff has a potential customer for quite a few books, but wants them all signed by authors.

Elections will be held at this meeting. A nominating committee was formed at the last meeting and will offer a slate of officers. You can nominate others or place your own name in nomination.

Jack King has arranged for our May program.

The speaker will be Garnet Gaither, chairman of the TSTC department of Digital Media Design. This department has courses in digital publishing, digital imaging, graphics, video, sound and animation. All the electronic tools for writers and publishers.

Last Meeting

At the April meeting we discussed the results of the questionnaire that was sent to all members. Some good ideas came up and there was a lively discussion.

The next Byliners book

...will be about people. People from the Valley or South Texas. Someone you know or someone you've researched, so this can be creative non-fiction, a biographical event or just someone's story.

Some of you may remember in the Reader's Digest, "The Most Unforgettable Character..." series. That kind of story will work. Or just one event in a person's life that changes them.

That leaves you a LOT of room! Send your stories to Mona at monawriter@aol.com. She's waiting!

RGV Book Festival

Six Byliners (Ruth, Marianna, Anne, Jeff, Phil, Verne) attended the RGV Book and Cultural Festival in Edinburg on the 26th. Sold quite a few copies of *Tales Told at Midnight* and have prospects for more.

The Byliners Questionnaire

A summary of the results and some of the discussion from the April meeting are on the next page.

Visit our web site at www.rgvbyliners.org. Be sure to update your information.

Byliners' meetings are at 1:30 PM on the second Saturday of each month at the Harlingen Public Library.

The Byliners Questionnaire

Last month I sent out a questionnaire, then summarized and discussed the responses at the April meeting. Following is a VERY brief summary.

Meetings

What can we do to make our meetings more interesting, educational or helpful to you?

More outside speakers; more samples of members' writing; more about other writers experiences; add a critique group

What would you like to hear about?

Anything about writing and publishing; short story writing; review bibliography and foot note requirements; organizing and plotting.

Would you like to present a meeting?

Most said no, but several would if members thought they had something interesting to say.

Can you suggest a speaker?

Stephen Schneider; VMS editors; Ruth Harris; Virginia Haynie Gauss; Randy Davidson; police, forensics; Border patrol.

Projects

Over the past two years we have written, published, promoted and sold a book, Tales Told at Midnight along the Rio Grande.

Did you participate in this project?

Most participated.

Do you think this is a good type of project for Byliners? *Emphatically yes.*

We are preparing to undertake another book project. Do you want to participate?

Mostly yes, mostly as writers and marketing.

Membership

Who do you know in the Valley that is interested or involved in any aspect of writing or publishing that is not a member of Byliners?

Not many specific names, but several said they would invite someone.

Writing

What areas of writing would you like to hear more about at our meetings?

Fictio; plotting; non fiction; critiquing; magazine articles; novels; short stories.

Are there areas of writing you would like to know more about or have help with?

Plot development; story lines; organizing; ideas for fiction; publishing; marketing; the opening hook.

What writing tools or techniques would be of interest to you for discussion at a meeting or workshop?

Covers and illustrations; computer programs and how to use them for writing

Publishing

Have you published?

Lots of Byliners have published books, chapters, magazine articles, newspaper stories, newsletters, journal articles, contest, blogs, web sites, radio and TV commercials, news and press releases, etc.. A lot of experience in this group.

Would you like to have help of any kind with publishing?

Find a good agent; editing and critiquing manuscripts,

What would make Byliners a more interesting organization for you?

More people in leadership; stronger leadership; separate the book project from the meetings.

What questions should I have asked, and didn't? Please add your comments and suggestions here.

Several people suggested critique groups. Don sent in a format for on-line critiques which is attached in a separate file. We'll discuss this at a meeting.

Strictly Personal

This past two years as president of Byliners has been a lot of fun for me.

Our Vice -president Eileen has been a very solid partner these two years, arranging for speakers and leading the meetings when I was traveling, which was quite a bit. We exchanged lots of ideas in brief emails and occasional phone calls, and she has been a real partner in this.

Jeff as Treasurer has not only counted the money, he's also taken on the project of incorporating Byliners as a non-profit, written by-laws, filed forms and made things happen. At the same time, Jeff has led the publishing effort, provided warehousing for our books, arranged marketing functions and done whatever needed to be done to sell more books.

And Mona. Mona edited Tales Told at Midnight, marketed the book aggressively and is now starting us all down the road to another book. All this while writing and marketing her own books and caring for her husband.

I've had a good team and I've enjoyed great support from the members, for which I thank you all. I'm sure you will join me in offering the same kind of support to the new officers who will be elected at the May meeting.

Verne