

The 31st Year of

A Rally of Writers

April 14, 2018

West Campus, LCC
5708 Cornerstone Dr
Lansing MI 48917

8:30 Registration and Coffee Conference Center

9:00 Opening • Linda Peckham
Keynote • Terry Blackhawk (free to the public)
Reflecting on Creativity: Getting it "Right"

10:00-11:00 Session 1 - Letters represent rooms

- A. Pitching a Story • Des Cooper**
How to pitch a feature story for newspapers and magazines.
- B. Writing a Novel • John Smolens**
An act of faith, hope and stupidity: a discussion of why we write novels anyway.
- C. Fantasy & Adventure for MG • David Strickland**
Conception, rollercoaster writing and distribution of independent middle-grade fiction.
- D. The Clumping Theory • Linda Peckham**
A linguistic strategy for understanding sentence style and punctuation, without rules.

11:00-11:30 Authors' Alley: Break & Books
(Tables by invitation only)

11:30-12:30 Session 2

- A. Hand-Eye Coordination • Terry Blackhawk**
Practicing the art of seeing to write poems that are grounded in concrete, physical detail. For all ages.
- B. Screenwriting • Lisa Grady**
Technical basics of scriptwriting as a structure for letting your creativity blossom.
- C. First Page • Alice Speilburg, Elana Parker**
The opening page of a manuscript often determines if an agent or editor will continue. Learn why from agents.
At this session, eight people will be chosen by lottery to read their first page; others will learn by observation
- D. Writing Mysteries • Lev Raphael**
The key elements a mystery needs to be complete and compelling.

12:30 Feeding the Soul: Lunch & Networking

1:15 Authors' Alley: Break & Books

1:45-2:45 Session 3

- A. Flash Fiction • Des Cooper**
Reading and deconstructing a piece of flash fiction to see how it works.
- B. Crossing the Bridge • Patrice Johnson**
Moving from business writing to creative non-fiction: learning new tools.
- C. Worldbuilding Workshop • Colleen Gleason**
It's not just for fantasy writers! Any fiction writer can create a compelling, deeply layered world.
- D. First Page • Alice Speilburg, Elana Parker**
Repeat of Session 2C.

2:45-3:15 Authors' Alley: Break & Books

3:15-4:15 Session 4

- A. Psychological Thrillers • Karen Dionne**
Six steps to writing unputdownable suspense.
- B. Ethics in YA • Greg Baldino**
Exploring the challenges of ethical and responsible researching and writing of nonfiction for young adults.
- C. Metaphysical Description • Michael Byers**
How to describe the invisible world we all inhabit in fiction
- D. Post-Publication Pitfalls • Whitney Spotts**
An author events coordinator offers great advice on how to promote your book.

4:20 Closing: Last Words & Drawing

Bring this schedule to Rally
Contact on Saturday only: 517-285-7444
Need more info now? 517-372-3385

The program is funded in part by Lansing Community College, the MSU Press, the WSU Press, and the Michigan Humanities Council, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



www.arallyofwriters.com

Register online or send registration panel below with check to:

A Rally of Writers
P.O. Box 4253
East Lansing MI 48823

After April 7, check website for availability of conference

Richard Bradley Scholarship
Registration and Lunch for Rally
For people 15-22 years old • Submission guidelines online
Deadline: March 1, 2018

Rally Speakers, April 14, 2018

Presented by the Skaaldic Society
www.arallyofwriters.com

Terry Blackhawk, Keynote • Teacher, poet, and essayist, Terry is the founder of Detroit's InsideOut Literary Arts Project in poetry that serves 5000 youth each year. She has won the John Ciardi and the Pablo Neruda prizes for poetry. She was named Creative Writing Educator and Detroit Bookwoman of the Year (2007), and holds a Humanities Award from Wayne County Arts, History, and Humanities. She serves on AWP and WITS (Writers in the School) Alliance. www.terryblackhawk.com

Greg Baldino • Greg is the author of books for teens on *Investigating the Boston Marathon Bombings*; *The Early History of the Gay Rights Movement*; and *Art, Technology and Language Across the Middle East*. He also has written articles on folk music, Italian cooking, graphic novels, queer sexuality, experimental psychology, anti-fascist activism and art history. www.facebook.com/fashionbeast

Michael Byers • U-M author of two novels, *Long for This World* and *Percival's Planet*, and the story collection *The Coast of Good Intentions*, Michael's fiction has appeared in *Best American Short Stories* and *Prize Stories: The O. Henry Awards*. His novella *The Broken Man* was a finalist for the World Fantasy Awards. www.michaelbyers.org

Desiree Cooper • Des is a former attorney, Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist, and Detroit community activist. Her fiction and poetry have appeared in *Callaloo*, *Detroit Noir*, and *Best African American Fiction 2010*, among others in print and online. She was a founder of *Cave Canem*, and her flash fiction, *Know The Mother* (WSU Press 2016), was a Michigan Notable Book selection. www.descooper.com

Karen Dionne • Karen's international bestselling psychological suspense novel and 2018 Michigan Notable book, *The Marsh King's Daughter* (Putnam's Sons), won *Suspense Magazine's* Crimson Scribe Award and was named a Best Book of 2017 by Hudson Booksellers and *Library Journal*. This cofounder of the writers' community Backspace has also served as a director of the International Thriller Writers. www.karen-dionne.com

Colleen Gleason • A *New York Times* and *USA Today* best-selling author, Colleen has written over 40 novels as mysteries, historical, romance, paranormal, YA, and thriller, with NAL/Penguin, HarperCollins, Chronicle Books, and Harlequin/MIRA. A "hybrid author," she writes for a traditional publisher and also indie-publishes both backlist and frontlist titles. www.colleengleason.com

Lisa Grady • This Michigan native studied acting in NYC, then booked several bit parts in Los Angeles on shows like *Mad Men* and *Criminal Minds*. She has written stage plays, scripts and her own web series, "Lisa and Her Brain." In 2017 she produced a YouTube talk show, "Bit Part Stars." www.lisagrady.net

Patrice Johnson • Author of *The Fall and Rise of Tyler Johnson*, 2017, Patrice taught college writing, then spent 16 years in the computer industry where she founded three companies and served as vice-president for a Fortune 500 company. Her weekly articles in the industry's largest trade publication received six first-place awards from Michigan Press Women. She's editor of the *Stockbridge Community News*.

Elana Roth Parker • An agent with the Laura Dail Literary Agency, Elana specializes in children's and YA fiction. Clients include Kiera Cass, Vern Kousky and Alexa Donne. Degrees from Barnard College and the Jewish Theological Seminary in English literature and the Bible add up to her love of books that combine the timely and the timeless. www.ldlinc.com

Linda Peckham • A retired writing professor from LCC, Linda had articles published in *Michigan History*, the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, the *TETYC* journal, *Controlled Burn*, and others. She also co-authored *Saw Mills and Sleigh Bells*, creative nonfiction stories of mid-Michigan pioneers for children, and *The Pocket Hotline*, a handbook for writers. She is a co-founder of Rally.

Lev Raphael • Lev is the author of 25 books in genres from memoir to mystery. He is best known in Michigan for his Nick Hoffman academic mystery series set in the town of Michiganopolis. Reviewer and blogger at *The Huffington Post*, he teaches creative writing and other courses at MSU and had his own radio show on WLNZ. www.levraphael.com

John Smolens • Former head of Creative Writing at Northern Michigan U, John has published ten works of fiction, most recently *Wolf's Mouth*, a 2017 Michigan Notable Book selection. Four of his earlier novels were reissued in paperback in 2017 by the MSU Press. In 2010, he received the Michigan Author of the Year Award from the Michigan Library Association. www.johnsmolens.com

Alice Speilburg • The founding agent of Speilburg Literary Agency, Alice has worked in publishing since 2008. She's a member of Mystery Writers of America, Romance Writers of America, SCBWI, and serves on the board of Louisville Literary Arts. She represents narrative nonfiction and commercial fiction for adult and YA readers. www.speilburgliterary.com

Whitney Spotts • A member of Schuler Books marketing department for 12 years, Whitney is currently Author Tours Coordinator for all three locations and has worked with such authors as Caroline Kennedy, Mitch Albom, Khaled Hosseini, and David Sedaris. On weekends she sings in the '80s band "Starfarm." Google: Whitney Spotts

David Stricklen • David was an airport police chief with 30 years in law enforcement. Now he has written three middle-grade fantasy adventure books in the Blackwater Pond series. His books and school visits are filled with magic and creativity. David is an active SCBWI advisory committee member. www.blackwaterpond.com

Rally Warm-Up

Friday April 13 • 7:00 pm • Free
Schuler Books, Meridian Mall, Okemos

"Storypalooza"

Several Super Storytellers



In partnership with WKAR