

SCWA COLUMBIA CONFERENCE

FULL SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

Chapter Leaders Special Meeting 2-4 p.m. @ Convention Center
Registration 4-6 p.m. @ Convention Center
Cocktail hour 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. @ Convention Center
Open Mic Hosted by Al Black 8:00 p.m. @ Convention Center

SATURDAY

Morning fitness 7 a.m. @ Riverwalk Amphitheatre? TBD
Breakfast 8 a.m. @ convention center
Morning General Session @ 9:00 a.m. - opening remarks

- **Keynote @ 9:15 - 9:45 a.m. - Belle Boggs**

Breakouts 1-4 @ 9:50 - 10:55 a.m. -- 70 minutes long

[Keynote Workshop: Finding the Urgency in Your Writing with Belle Boggs](#)

Description TBA

[“The Power of Setting in Your Story” with Sasscer Hill](#)

This will be a hands-on fiction writing class with participation from and interaction with attendees. You will be encouraged to discuss the elements of setting and ask questions to generate discussion. We'll look at some dos and don'ts. You will be given a choice of two different exercises on a prepared, lined sheet. You will also be asked to write the scene's setting and then be encouraged to read what you write. By end of class you should have a better understanding of how important and useful setting is to your writing.

[“Dot Your I's and Cross Your T's: Don't Let Errors Ruin Your Submission” with Barbara Evers](#)

Avoid the blunders that might send your submissions to the rejection pile! Join instructor Barbara Evers, judge for Catfish Stew and chapter leader for Greenville, to attack and banish those pesky errors that out you as a novice author. Evers is a freelance content editor and former Slush Pile reader for Stupefying Stories, an online SciFi-Fan journal. She holds an MA in Professional Communication and has developed and taught writing workshops to businesses for over 20 years.

[“30 Tips to Develop Sustainable Creative Habits” with Derek Berry](#)

This workshop will explore 30 methods through which writers can develop habits that will help shape their best creative selves: tools, resources, & strategies for developing projects, finishing on time, & approaching creatively holistically. How might writers sow the seeds of creative practice, so that when the storm of inspiration arrives, something bountiful will grow?

Roundtable: The Non-Fiction Landscape

- Alexa Bigwarfe (publisher non)
- Jonathan Haupt (anthologist, editor)
- Duncan Murrell (editor)

Breakouts 5-8 @ 11:05 - 12:10 (70 minutes)

[“The Subtle Art of Suspense” with Craig Faris](#)

Setting the Scene: Suspenseful scenes and how use them. How cliff hangers to keep us hooked. Building suspense through Characters: How classic villains use our darkest fears, such as being eaten, or worse. Building Suspense in Subtle Ways: Adding suspense into any genre with subtle conflict. Building Suspense through Dialogue: How clipped dialogue can speed up the action and build suspense. Classic elements of Suspense: – The hallway – the smells – the terror – why horror works. What’s behind the Door?: Making the big reveal just as exciting as that trip down the hall. What’s in the Box? They write the ending to the opening story.

[“Memoir as a Way of Writing and Being Whole” with Cassie Premo Steele](#)

This workshop will focus on writing memoir in ways that are healthy and balanced and contribute to our well-being. Participants will have the opportunity to deepen their writing with lessons taken from poetry and fiction, so the workshop will appeal to writers across genres. Writing will not be shared, nor will critique be given, as this will allow writers to dive deeply without fear. We will also explore stress reduction techniques that will show you how to write more quickly and with less self-doubt, and this will lead to the development of memoir writing that takes risks, opens the way to healing, and makes things whole.

[“How to Make Your Manuscript Stand Out” with Michelle Buckman](#)

Using her extensive experience of developmental and line editing for publishers and private clients, Michelle Buckman will provide concrete examples of the entire scope of what an editor sees when looking at manuscripts. Beginning with examples of changing passable writing to excellent prose, then following through to the overall plot and character development of a novel, as well as examining the theme and takeaway of a nonfiction submission, this workshop explains what an editor sees when you submit a manuscript. Michelle will post both fiction and

nonfiction samples with detailed explanations of what needs to be done to improve the writing. This workshop will send you back to your own manuscript with a critical eye aimed at making your work shine.

Poetry Roundtable with Len Lawson

Bring your poems for feedback and learn some tips and tricks from renowned South Carolina poet and Carrie McCray Award Winner, Len Lawson.

“Marketing Your Published Work” Panel Moderator: Lucy Hoffman

- Alexia Paul (author, marketing pro)
- Susan Sloate (author, book coach)
- John Jeter (author)

Editors, Publishers, Agents hold critique sessions in the Lexington ballroom

LUNCH -- 12:10 - 1:00 in Lexington (200 capacity)

Breakouts 9-12 -- 1:05 - 2:15 p.m.

“Characters Who Grow for the Soil--or Life--They’re Planted In” with Estelle Ford Williamson

Characters who stay with us long after we put the book down or shut off the video are those who couldn’t come from anywhere else. It’s like they’re born from the soil where they plant their feet. Their dilemmas, their passions, their way of dealing with their conflicts are born of the geography or the circumstances from which they emerge. This workshop will include limited reading aloud of relevant passages demonstrating the above ideas; guided brainstorming to describe characters; practice with timed drills to flesh out character elements and possible plot angles. With each opportunity to write examples of the above, feedback from the group will be used to facilitate learning.

“How to get started in Your Nonfiction Project” with Alexa Bigwarfe

Self help, how-to, transformational, inspirational, and business authors welcome here! Learn from a publisher of non-fiction work, Alexa Bigwarfe, how to organize your thoughts, structure your book, and get ready to pitch. Step by step from brainstorming ideas and narrowing your topic to naming the project. When you leave this workshop, you’ll have an outline and be on your way.

“Partnering with Independent Book Sellers” with Robert Lackey

Getting a self-published book in the door of an independent book shop is a feat. Getting that book onto precious shelf space is an even greater achievement. Author Robert Lackey shares his strategy to getting into independent bookstores

through sharing the risk and marketing overhead with the shop keeper. You will gain insights to: Offer a professional product, Seek respectable reviews, Earn your keep on the shelves, Take the initial financial risk, Pursue the long game, Transition to consignment, Frequent store advertisement, Open access Blogs/Posts, In-store advertisement, Release-date window advertisement, and Events Participation.

[“Best Practices / Finding Your Writing Groove”](#)

- Cassie Premo Steele (poet/coach)
- Derek Berry (poet/instructor)
- Candace Thompson (coach)

Editors, Publishers, Agents hold critique sessions in the Lexington ballroom

Breakouts 13-16 2:25 - 3:30 p.m.

[“How to Write a Persuasive Nonfiction Book Proposal” with Alexia Paul](#)

This workshop will discuss key elements of the nonfiction book proposal and include discussion around: “Why not just write the whole book?” Get an insider’s perspective on what agents are looking for in a book proposal. Learn “Dos and Don’ts” of nonfiction proposal writing. Answer key questions, “What is a “Platform”?” and “How important is it in selling nonfiction?” Ms. Paul will teach with samples of great book proposals as well as samples of proposals that don’t hit the mark.

[“Amazon Tricks to Market Your Book Effectively” with Susan Sloate](#)

Amazon is the world's largest bookseller by far--no one else is even close--and if you succeed there, nothing else is important. This workshop includes IMMEDIATE tips you can use to start marketing ANY book that's already uploaded to Amazon and has its own page, starting with the most effective ways to write book reviews, how to create more interest in your own book by using OTHER books which have a higher ranking, and the Amazon Bestseller Day, which Susan Sloate used to make her book a #2 bestseller.

[“No Pond Life: Stepping into Action When You Feel Stuck” with Candace Thompson](#)

In this workshop, we will work to re-energize and initiate a process of Self-Accountability by processing interests and commitments over immediate and long term time frames. In this personal development workshop, you will learn about Five Major Skills: Self-Awareness, Understanding Interest vs Commitment, Clear Communication, Proper Planning (time management), and Self-motivation

(What's your WHY)? Upon completing the workshop, you will have an action plan and fresh ideas to keep you in motion and less overwhelmed.

[“The Changing Landscape of Fiction”](#)

- James D McCallister (author),
- Sasscer Hill (author),
- Dana Ridenour (crime novelist)

Editors, Publishers, Agents hold critique sessions in the Lexington ballroom

Snack -- 3:30 - 3:45 p.m.

Breakouts 17-20 3:50 - 4:55 p.m.

[“Making Messes: How Character and Plot Thrive on Mistakes” with Amber Wheeler Bacon](#)

Fiction often relies on bad behavior and making messes. In an interview about his movies, Ethan Coen said his stories often begin when he takes a problem and gives it to a character who's incapable of dealing with it. Mistakes are then made, and they pile up, moving the narrative forward. In this class, we'll look at the movie *Raising Arizona* and a few stories where characters create difficult problems for themselves and then have to solve them. ***Come to this workshop prepared to write!*** We'll be doing exercises in character development with bad behavior and mistakes in mind. Problems in fiction often stem from interactions between characters. We'll pay close attention to what kinds of interactions might create the best problems for your characters, and how these can relate to the broader narrative within your story or novel.

[“The Artistpreneur: Art vs. Commerce, or Why We Write?” with John Jeter](#)

This vivid, action-packed workshop delves into the collision of Art vs. Commerce and what it takes to make your way toward writing for a living and living for writing. How much is "work," how much is "play" and how much is that all-important networking and marketing? Together, we navigate a few roadblocks that keep you from doing what you love best and want most to do -- and be: a Writer.

[“Understanding an Editorial Critique” with Anna Edmunds](#)

Longtime professional editor Anna Gelbman Edmonds offers a brief explanation of what a line editor, substantive editor, and proofreader each does so you know what to expect when hiring professionals to get your work in shape. Writing belongs to the writer and the editor is your partner, not your boss. Through examples of actual writings she has edited with mark ups and comments in track

changes, you will see how she addresses the writer and how her suggestions strengthen the text for the reader's understanding. Among the issues we'll discuss are writing to your audience, use of jargon, tone, and strong verbs vs adverbs, and achieving clarity through proper grammar and punctuation. You should walk away with an understanding of what to look for in an editor and how to use an editorial mark-up and critique to improve your craft and build your confidence while learning new skills and techniques.

“Path to Publishing”

- Ray McManus (SCAA Prez)
- Nancy Barton (agent)
- Duncan Murrell (author/editor)

4:00 - 6:00 p.m. Exhibits / tables / bookstore in Lexington room

6:00 - 9:00 p.m. Birthday Party @ Historic Columbia's Seibels House

- Awards -- SCWA and SCAA introduce the Carrie McCray Awards 8:00 - 8:30 p.m.
- Birthday cake & party -- 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

SUNDAY

Morning fitness 7 a.m. @ The State House Lawn

Breakfast 8 a.m. @ convention center

Membership Meeting 8:15 a.m. Lexington Room

Morning General Session @ 9:00 a.m. - opening remarks

- Keynote @ 9:15 - 9:45 a.m. -- Ray McManus prepared remarks

Breakouts 21-24 @ 9:50 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. -- 70 minutes long

- Slushfest Fiction with readers Cayce LaCorte, Falstaff reader; Duncan Murrell, editor
- Slushfest poetry/non-fiction /memoir with readers Len Lawson, poet; Ray McManus, author
- “\$100 Bonus Best of Saturday” winner breakout session
- How to Give & Take Critique - SCWA primer (led by SCWA chapter leads)

Final Session -- “In Conversation”

“You Can Build a Writing Career in S.C.” 11:10 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- Jonathan Haupt, Pat Conroy Literary Center
- Ray McManus, SCAA