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The League of Utah Writers is a non-profit organization funded in part by the National Endowment of the Arts and the Utah Arts Council

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Presidents Message:

What a great year! I have been doing some reading and ran across this piece of prose I thought you might really enjoy. It was written by a committee and is from a Very Important Document:

Every person who within the State of California willfully or negligently cuts, destroys, mutilates, or removes any tree or shrub, or fern or herb or bulb or cactus or flower, or huckleberry or redwood greens, or portion of any tree or shrub, or fern or herb or bulb or cactus or flower, or huckleberry or redwood greens, growing upon state or county highway rights-of-way, or who removes leaf mold thereon; (provided, however, that the provisions of this section shall not be construed to apply to any employee of the state or of any political subdivision thereof engaged in work upon any state, county or public road or highway while performing such work under the supervision of the state or of any political subdivision thereof), and every person who willfully or negligently cuts, or destroys, mutilates, or removes, . . ." [get the picture?]

--California State Penal Code as quoted by Lanham (1992)

This *damaged* prose rambles on forever by uniting jargon, prepositional phrases, and wordiness--not to mention the fact that the *entire* document is *only one sentence consisting of 374 words*. (This is only a small chunk.) I am especially aware of this type of writing because I am reviewing and revising the State League of Utah Writers Guidelines, Bylaws, and Constitution. This project has taught me one thing: *clarity is an art form*. Although the style of writing in the California Penal Code is much more taxing to read than clear, concise prose, it is much easier to write. Could this be the reason why there are thousands of such passages in our law books?

The writing tip for this month comes from *Revising Prose* by Richard A. Lanham. Lanham describes *California Penal Code* type of writing as "Official Style" (O.S.). Defined as "a learned act," and "a stylized imitation of bureaucratic writing," O.S. seemingly tries to hide information from one who is not "in the know." Writing is often vague, jargon packed, complex, passive and impersonal. According to Lanham's definition, "nothing is called by its ordinary name. [In military O.S.] you don't decide to bomb a town; instead, 'It has been determined to maintain an aggressive and operational attack posture'" (p. 79). Politicians, military personnel directors and lawmakers love this style. Psychologists and scientists thrive on it. However, lack of membership in such bureaucracies does not insulate writers from having O.S. choke their prose. Beware! It can even infiltrate your personal journal. Lanham believes that power comes when writing is directed, concise, and clear. He zeros in on revising the individual sentence by working through a quick eight-step process to cut out all unnecessary "lard." (Most O.S. writing comes embellished with at least 50% fat.) This procedure for thinning O.S. into plain English is called "The Paramedic Method." Lanham suggests using this approach for emergency revision until you develop a sense of "verbal self-awareness". (See chart).

Your writing challenge for the month is to clip out the Paramedic Method chart and keep it in front of you as you write. Take a few minutes during editing to go through at least a few of the steps Lanham suggests. Your prose, whether it is true O.S. or journal writing will improve. Happy Writing!

**The Paramedic Method**

by Richard A. Lanham

- 1) Circle the prepositions.
- 2) Circle the "is" forms
- 3) Ask, "Where's the action?" "Who's kicking who?"
- 4) Put this "kicking action" in a simple (not compound) active verb.
- 5) Start fast--no slow windups. [i.e., "My contention here is that . . ." or "The fact of the matter is that . . ."]
- 6) Write out each sentence on a blank sheet of paper and mark off its basic rhythmic units with a "/". [Writing should flow. Too many "impressive" words in a sentence makes it bumpy.]
- 7) Read the passage aloud with emphasis and feeling.
- 8) Mark off sentence lengths in the passage with a "/". [Use variety in sentence length.]

Lanham, R. L. (1992). Revising prose. 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. (I strongly recommend this book. BYU bookstore carries it upstairs in the textbook section.)

**Special LUW Award is Back**

Each chapter has the opportunity to nominate an outstanding writer who has made a significant contribution during the 95-96 year. Your chapter president has the form listing the criteria for nomination. Please be prepared to vote on your candidate by your June chapter meeting. Deadline for your chapter to submit paperwork on your nominee to the state is June 30. Candidate need not be a member of the League of Utah Writers. The award will be presented at Fall Round-up.

<b>❖❖❖CHAPTER</b>	<b>CHATTER❖❖❖</b>
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**❖SEVIER VALLEY CHAPTER**

The chapter is putting together another book to be published in 1996. Their "Sevier Sampler, Volume 3" will be a book of memories. **Fay Starr** has been published in the forum page of the Salt Lake Tribune. **Esther Williams** would an article to the American Small Farm Magazine.

**❖UTAH VALLEY CHAPTER**

**Richard Grant Thayne** is the new president of the Utah Valley Chapter and recently had an article on "Academy Square" published in the Provo Herald. He also received the highest scouting award given in November, 1995 "The Order of the Arrow." **Vicki (Verlene) Wheeler** has been busy this past year with two publications "Spokes in the Wheel - 1995, Volume 8" by the American Fork Arts Council and information regarding the stage play "The Solomon Decision" in The Writer's Digest. She received a third place "Winter Tribute to Grandfather", serious poetry, second honorable mention "Tender Moments to Remember", incident/anecdote, second honorable mention "Waiting for the Ages", serious poetry and third honorable mention "Why Do I Want to Write", essays in the American Fork Arts Council writing contest. She also had two poems and one vignette published in the Payson Chronicle, and one serious poem published in the Spanish Fork Press. Vicki also received a forty-sixth honorable mention (801 given/100 in each of 8 categories/13,336 entrants) for the stage play "The Solomon Decision" in the Writer's Digest 1995 writing contest.

**❖OQUIRRH WRITERS CHAPTER**

Members are looking forward to an exciting

and successful year. Many of the writers are in the process of writing novels, children's books, short stories, articles and poetry.

**Thomas Christensen** had an article entitled "A Tale of Two Saloons" published in the Biker Magazine that went on the book stands January 24. **Dorothy Crofts** has self-published several books. (1) "My Life is Personally You-nique", which is actually a "how to" book on writing your own life history or keeping a personal journal; (2) "My Life: Why Is it?", a compilation of short articles which were written and published in the West Valley News and Magna Times; (3) "My Life: The Poet", a compilation of one hundred original poems; (4) "Once in a Lifetime", a review of a family reunion held in August, 1995 with 1,500 relatives in attendance. Eight generations were present to celebrate the 200th birthday of her husband's great, great, grandfather. The Oquirrh Chapter is currently working on a group book project around the theme of Utah's centennial.

**❖BLUE QUILL CHAPTER**

**Esther Phelps Parks** had one of her photographs used by the Kimball Art Center, Park City, on the cover of the program for the October 1995 exhibition. She gave two lectures in Ogden "Utah's Constitution and Statehood." **Judy Johns** received an honorable mention in the "byline" novel contest and three honorable mentions in the Ogden City Arts Council contest. **Clarence P. Sowell** had ten poems published, received six first prizes, seven second prizes (one of which was in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies' grand prize contest), seven third

☞Chapter Chatter-Blue Quill (continued)

prizes, thirty-one honorable mentions and three special recognitions in 1995. **Wanda Blaisdell** judged contests for Oklahoma, Florida and Texas. She edited "poetry Pages" for the National League of American Pen Women Magazine and was the chapter coordinator for the Utah State Poetry Society. **LaVon Carroll** read her poetry for the Phi Kappa Phi program and at the Thought Continuum (bookstore). She received one first prize and three honorable mentions in Poetry Society Contests in Arizona and Florida, two honorable mentions in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies contest and first place (adult poetry) in the Ogden City Arts Council contest. **June Krambule** had an article published in "Prime Times" magazine. **Polly Harrington** received a first honorable mention for her historical article in the National League of American Pen Women of Utah. **Helen Cook's** poetry won two second places in Poetry Society Contests in Tennessee and Washington and two honorable mentions in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies contest. **Lynn Miller** received three honorable mentions for her fiction in the Ogden City Arts Council contest. **Maxine Jennings** received six honors in the National Federation of State Poetry Societies contest and a publication in New Horizon.

☞Cedar City Nightwriters

**Corrie Lynne Player** joined the Tulsa Nightwriters in 1982, formed SLO Nightwriters in 1988 and Cedar City Nightwriters in 1991. She has written magazine articles and newspaper columns while running an environmental engineering business for the past three years. She has written a child's biography as an official centennial project

entitled "DREAMS DO COME TRUE: The Utah Farm Boy Who Changed the World."

☞Delta Chapter

Chapter member **Lorene Smith** and her sister Cheryl Roper have written a 3-act production entitled "In Our Lovely Deseret". **Karrol Corey** wrote the music and lyrics. The story is about the settling of Deseret in Millard County and the taming of the Sevier River. The play will be presented in conjunction with the Millard County Fair in August. Members of the Delta Chapter are writing articles about the history of Millard County for the Chronicle Progress in conjunction with the Utah Centennial.

☞Sandy Chapter

WELCOME- Sandy is a new chapter of the League of Utah Writers. For information about the chapter contact President, Bettyanne Gillette at 942-4209 or write to her at 2617 Creek Rd, Sandy, Utah 84093.

☞HELP! - INFORMATION REQUESTED

If any chapter, current member, or if you know of any past members that may have information or memorabilia about the last 60 years of the League of Utah Writers, please share with us for our history and display at Round-Up. Contact Dora Flack, 448 E. 775 N., Bountiful, Utah 84010 or call 295-4879.

☞The National Endowment of the Arts and the Utah Arts Council

Whenever you are doing any public relations concerning the League of Utah Writers be sure to include a sub-heading with the following information: "Sponsored by the National Endowment of the Arts and the Utah Arts Council."

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**BRIEF REVIEW OF LUW STATE BOARD MEETING**

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The State Board met in Delta on January 6th, they are working hard on projects for the new year.

Kristen Black was elected the new Membership Chairman. New members can join anytime of the year, but if they want to enter the members-only categories of the LUW contests, they must be active members May 15th by Fall Roundup. Membership is \$20 per year with \$8 being held by the Chapters, and \$12 being given to the state (regardless of the size of the chapter). Youth (18 and under) may join for \$5. Kristen will set up a home page on the INTERNET to advertise the League. A new pamphlet will be prepared to place in schools and libraries to advertise the League.

New categories suggested for LUW Contests as follows: Centennial, Holidays, and Titles. These suggestions along with others are currently being perused by the chapter presidents and board. You might ask your president what these changes entail and let your feelings be known.

The spring workshop will be held in Orem in March 30th. The fee will be \$5 for members and \$10 for non-members. This fee includes a catered lunch.

Roundup will be held Sept. 20 and 21 at the Salt Lake Hilton Hotel.

If you would like to be included on the Speaker's Bureau, submit your name to Peggy Burdett immediately.

A Membership Drive/Workshop will be presented by members of the State Board on April 27 in Logan. If you would like to volunteer to be a presenter, contact Marcia Anstead. The board hopes to present an additional workshop in the St. George/Cedar City area.

Each chapter president has been asked to contact members of the Utah Arts Council and tell them of the events coming up for their chapter and list the services the chapter renders the community.

The Directory will be issued at Roundup (members who do not attend will receive the Directory in the mail). The new direction of the League is to have all business culminate at Fall Roundup.

A Utah Writer of the Year will be presented at Roundup. Chapters are asked to submit their nomination by June 30. It is not required that this writer be a member of the League, but they must be an example to other writers through their publishing, teaching, example, and encouragement.

Marcia has suggested that the League sponsor a scholarship to be given to worthy high school graduates throughout Utah. The scholarship committee will present their ideas formally at the Spring Workshop.

It has been brought to the Board's attention that the By-laws, Constitution, and even revised Guidelines are out-of-date, and should be revised. Contact your chapter president for particulars. Some of these include: dates dues are due, date chapter presidents are elected, delegate's term, Directory deadline, etc.. The voting will need to take place by August 1. Presidents are asked to inform their members of the proposed changes so they can truly act as their representative when they cast their vote.



## WRITING CONTESTS

### *Covenant Announces Writing Contest for Christmas Stories*

Covenant Communications, Inc. Has announced an open competition for writers interested in submitting short fiction or nonfiction pieces with a Christmas theme. The contest, which runs until May 1, 1996, offers a grand prize of \$100 and publication of the author's work. Second and third place winners will receive \$75 and \$50 respectively and their work will be considered for publication by Covenant.

"Over the past few years," explained Managing Editor, JoAnn Jolley, "Covenant has developed a tradition of publishing wonderful, heartwarming little booklets each Christmas. There are many excellent writers who haven't the time or inclination to produce a full-length book, but who could do a marvelous shorter piece. We're looking for those authors." She added that while Covenant publishes books relating primarily to the LDS faith, Christmas stories submitted for the contest need not have an LDS theme. "Of course we want a warm, Christian, heart-touching message," she said, "but we'd like to appeal to a broader general audience for Christmas, so it need not be overtly LDS." The contest's winning story will be announced in August and published during the 1996 Christmas season.

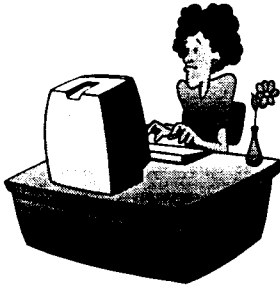
#### Contest Rules:

1. Manuscripts should be between 6,000 and 7,000 words in length.
2. Subject matter may be contemporary, historical, fiction, or nonfiction, but should project a warm, uplifting Christmas feeling and message. Poetry and children's stories will not be considered.
3. Submissions should be typed and double-spaced on 8.5 x 11-inch white paper with one-inch margins on all sides. If the author wishes to have the manuscript returned following the contest, a self-addressed, stamped envelope should be enclosed.
4. Deadline for submission of entries in May 1, 1996. Address entries to Writing Contest, Covenant Communications, P. O. Box 416, American Fork, Utah 84003-0416.

*Note from the Editor:* I know there are more contests out there than just the one mentioned here. If you have knowledge of these contests please forward information to me. The next deadline for the Lariat is April 30th.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$Fifteen Ways to Save Enough Money to Go to Round-up\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

1. Drink water not soda pop for 60 days, lose weight and save money.
2. Treat your family to oatmeal (purchased in bulk) for breakfast instead of cold cereal.
3. Revive those old recipes and cook from scratch instead of using pre-packaged foods.
4. Wash your *dry clean only* clothes in Woolite.
5. Rent videos and pop popcorn instead of going out to the movies.
6. Clip 10 coupons a week, *use them*, and keep the change.
7. Check out the library instead of writing a check at the bookstore.
8. Swap child care with a friend for a week (go for broke try two weeks).
9. Make a list of gifts you need to buy and don't purchase unless they are on "clearance."
10. Surprise your family with *no take out* for a week.
11. Offer to do your beauticians hair in exchange for a shampoo and set.
12. Sell your writing.
13. Clean out from under your children's beds and have a yard sale.
14. Offer to edit someone's writing, charge by the inch.
15. Look up the definition of *saving* and start practicing now.



## INTERNET FEVER STRIKES THE LEAGUE OF UTAH WRITERS

The League of Utah Writers is finally jumping into the information superhighway! Starting March 1, 1996, you will be able to get all the information you need about the LUW in one online location.

Information on our web site will include:

- Where and when all the chapters around the state meet and a contact name for each one
- Preview information about speakers at chapter meetings, updated monthly
- Spring Workshop details: speakers, date, cost
- State writing contest details: deadlines, categories, fees
- Roundup details: speakers, dates, cost, lodging information
- Membership application and information
- Information on non-league contests and writing-related activities

This web site will also serve as a great marketing tool for new members--writers "surfing the Net" to find writing resources will find us and be able to join in the fun.

The URL (or address) of our Internet site is:

<http://www.itsnet.com/home/kblack/writers.html>

I'll need your help to keep this site helpful and timely. I'll be contacting each chapter regularly for updates, but I would like to know about other writing events and contests that you hear of. I would also like to hear your suggestions for the types of information you would like to see published on our site.

Please contact me (**Kristen Black**) with any suggestions:

Phone: (801) 374-0105  
E-mail: [kblack@itsnet.com](mailto:kblack@itsnet.com)  
Address: P. O. Box 2303  
Provo, Utah 84603-2303

I look forward to hearing from you!

## 12 - MONTH MEMBERSHIP TERMS BEGIN

At a board meeting during Roundup last September, the state board of the League of Utah Writers voted to change the current membership renewal process to twelve months from the time you renew, just like a magazine subscription. Under the old process, each chapter held a membership drive in January and February to sign up members for the year, and chapter membership didn't always increase in the other ten months. Now, members can join year round to be eligible for member discounts on contests and workshops, and there's no confusion about pro-rating dues when someone joins mid-year.

Mailing lists and membership status will now be determined by your expiration date, which is twelve months after your renewal is received. To find your current expiration date, look on your mailing label attached to this newsletter. The date will be printed next to your name. Last year's members have the expiration date of 01-96, unless I've already received record of your renewal for 1996. All members last year, regardless of renewal status, should have received this edition of *The Lariat*. However, if you don't renew your membership before the next edition is sent out in three months, you won't be on the mailing list, and won't receive it.

Members who join or renew this year will receive a membership card which also lists their expiration date.

All chapter secretaries should send their current membership records to Kristen Black, P. O. Box 2303, Provo, Utah 84603-2303. As members join your chapter, send her that information as it is available so they can be added to the membership list as soon as possible and receive their LUW membership cards. If you have any questions, please call Kristen at (801) 374-0105.

***Note from the Editor:*** For many of us, joining an organization takes a lot of thought about why we should join. What are the benefits for my investment of time, skills and talents? The League of Utah Writers has one of the greatest benefits of all, *talented writers*, both beginners and accomplished artists, who are willing to share their skills, wisdom and time to enhance our lives. Share your organization with others and we all win.