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# The Write Stuff

A quarterly publication of the Columbia Chapter of the  
Missouri Writers' Guild

October 2009

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## Inside this Issue:

- 1 From the President's Pen
- 2 Upcoming Meetings / Submissions/President's Pen continued
- 3 Noteworthy Stuff (Member News) / Conferences /Of Interest
- 4 New CCMWG Officers / Help Wanted / Inspirational Stuff
- 5 Conference Registration Form/ Agenda/ Session Details/Bios

## *From the President's Pen*

### Why I Blog

We writers need to find the fine line between what helps us in our writing and what cuts into our time. If we find ourselves too wrapped up in Facebook to write, we may need to rethink time management.

Two years ago, I set a goal to write a personal essay each month. Work, family, social and civic activities fill most waking hours, and I normally set aside writing goals as something I don't absolutely have to do.

At the beginning of 2008, I set up a blog and found the obligation to post weekly made me a more disciplined writer. I chose Early Onset Alzheimer's as my blog platform. Some of my posts are serious and intended to pass along important information while others are humorous.

Initially, I worried about writers block, but found that instead I had to pare my ideas down to a manageable level. Writing triggers can be momentous events or just a passing thought. Two things happened this week noteworthy enough for the blog. First, I've made a Herculean effort to clean my house for my family reunion. The other event was the death of my co-worker's husband. These two events prompted me to write "Putting my House in Order." I made a connection between how I needed to put my house in order because company is coming and how we put our spiritual house in order when death is imminent.

Of course, I didn't want to blog and throw it onto the Internet without attracting any readers. If I comment on other blogs with a similar topic, those bloggers often read mine. I always sign my name followed by my blog address. I am a health blogger on WellSphere's Alzheimer's and Dementia Community and a member of About.com's Alzheimer's Community. I post articles linking back to my blog and make comments on discussions.

Continued on page 2

## Upcoming Meetings

### November Meeting

\* **Saturday, October 24th, 2009**

**Write Direction Conference**

8 a.m.-4p.m.

Dulany Hall, Columbia College Campus  
(This will replace our November Meeting)

### December Meeting

**December 6, 2009**

Celebration with readings and snacks

2 – 4 p.m.

Orr Street Studios

## Submissions

Submit your entries to **Well Versed 2010** by October 31, 2009. **Well**

**Versed** is the principal literary publication of the Columbia Chapter of the Missouri Writers' Guild. It is published annually and features original poetry and prose by area writers.

Submissions are invited from published and unpublished authors, members and nonmembers.

### Annual Columbia Chapter of the Missouri Writers' Guild Prose and Poetry Contests

Submissions of prose, poetry and graphics for Well Versed are open and all submissions are automatically entered into a contest. Prizes will be awarded in three categories: Poetry, Fiction and Nonfiction.

1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$50

2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$30

3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$20

Honorable Mentions – Certificates

Deadline: October 31, 2009

See the CCMWG web site for submission guidelines:

## From the President's Pen ( continued)

I self-published my 2008 posts on CreateSpace and used the book as part of my sponsorship for our Memory Walk. Today, my eight-year-old great-nephew told me he had finished reading *Early Onset Blog: Essays from an Online Journal*. I was surprised that an eight year old would read the blog book. "I like 'Green Apple Gum' the best!" he said.

Blogging has kept me writing no matter how hectic or busy my life is. Like my fellow writers, I like to be published and read. Blogging helps me accomplish this on a regular basis.

If you don't already blog, have you thought about it? Blogging can help you polish writing and self-editing skills. Unlike a website, a blog is free and easy to maintain. You can find good articles about blogging on the Internet. Do your research and see if blogging is a way you can hone your writing skills and have fun at the same time.

**Linda Fisher**, CCMWG President



[www.lsfisher.com](http://www.lsfisher.com)

<http://earlyonset.blogspot.com>

**Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**The Fall Conference: The**

**Write Direction**

**8 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**\*Don't miss it!**

## Noteworthy Stuff

**Evelyn Aholt** recently had a poem, entitled "The Door is Open", published in *Famous Poets of the Heartland*.

**Liz Davis's** column "Historically Yours" continues to run in the *Boonville Daily News Weekend edition*. Liz enjoys getting the comments from her fans, including many Civil War history buffs.

**Liz Davis** and **Judy Stock** continue to write the majority of the book reviews for the "Gift of Story" column which is published in the *Boonville Daily News BDN Extra* on Fridays. The column was started August 1, 2008. It is written to give the public information on what is available in print and on audio and video at Boonslick Regional Library. In addition, **Judy Stock** will offer a Life Stories class to be held in November and/or December.

**Linda Fisher's** story "The Cat and Toad Exercise Plan" is in the new Chicken Soup book, *What I Learned from the Cat*, which was released on September 22.

**Ida Fogle** has had a short story "The Writing on the Wall" accepted for publication in Main Street Rag's 2010 short fiction anthology, titled *Coming Home*.

The Missouri Center for the Book selected *The Feedsack Dress*, a middle-reader novel by **Carolyn Mulford**, as the state's recommended read at the National Book Festival in Washington, D.C., September 26. Last year 120,000 people attended the festival. President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama serve as honorary co-chairs. *Midwest Book Review* called the book "a charming, original, and deftly written novel by an author who has a readily discernible talent for storytelling and an impressive ability to make her readers care about her characters." The book is available locally at Columbia Books and online from Amazon.com and the publisher, Cave Hollow Press ([www.cavehollowpress.com](http://www.cavehollowpress.com)). The first chapter of *The Feedsack Dress* is posted at [www.FeedsackKids.typepad.com](http://www.FeedsackKids.typepad.com).

## Conferences

Plan to attend  
**THE WRITE DIRECTION  
CONFERENCE!**

**Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

*We've got a great line up coming your way with break-out sessions, and a tea time for conference goers to mingle and authors to sign and sell more books.*

*Last year was a great success and this year's presenters and our new location at Columbia College are our best yet! Conference goers can register at the door. Walk-ins are welcome – an advance email to Cathy Daily at [enchanted\\_ghost2001@yahoo.com](mailto:enchanted_ghost2001@yahoo.com) is appreciated.*

See pages 5 - 9 for an updated copy of the Agenda, Session Details and Registration Form. Presenter bios are pages 10-13.

*See you there!*

## Of Interest

**November is National Novel Writing Month.**

The web site describes it as a fun, seat-of-your-pants approach to novel writing. Participants begin writing November 1. The goal is to write a 175-page (50,000-word) novel from scratch by midnight, November 30.

**How can you get started?** You can sign up anytime to add your name to the roster and browse the forums. Writing begins November 1. To be added to the official list of winners, you must reach the 50,000-word mark by November 30 at midnight. Once your novel has been verified by the NaNoWriMo web-based team of robotic word counters, the partying begins.

Visit the [How NaNoWriMo Works](#) page for details.

## Congratulations to the new CCMWG Officers!

Your new officers will take office at the conclusion of the Write Direction Conference.

We have a great lineup for 2010:

President: **Larry Allen**  
 Vice President: **Judy Stock** (*Well Versed* Editor)  
 Secretary: **Catherine Daily**  
 Treasurer: **Debbie Parker**  
 Adm. Assistant: **Carol Buckels** (Newsletter Editor)  
 Membership Chair: **Lori Galaske**  
 Member at Large: **Evelyn Aholt\***

\*Evelyn will schedule our speakers for the coming year, so if you have ideas for speakers, please contact her: [evelynaholt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:evelynaholt@sbcglobal.net)

Thank you to the outgoing officers for making the past year a great success! And special thanks to outgoing president, Linda Fisher, for her dedication, enthusiasm and commitment to helping CCMWG flourish!

### Workshop Leader Needed!

Cate Dodson is looking for anyone in the Writers Guild who might be able to help her out. She was scheduled to give a workshop on Jan. 9 at the Churchill Memorial on self-publishing, but will be unable to give that presentation due to another commitment. If any member would be willing to present this workshop, it would be a good chance for promotion of books. If you can help out, please contact Cate at: [crdodson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:crdodson@sbcglobal.net)

### Inspirational Stuff

"I don't wait to be struck by lightning and don't need certain slants of light in order to write."  
 -Toni Morrison

"A poem begins with a lump in the throat; a homesickness or a lovesickness. It is a reaching-out toward expression; an effort to find fulfillment."  
 -Robert Frost

"Find something you're passionate about and keep tremendously interested in it."  
 -Julia Child

### Wanted: Newsletter Items:

Send information; awards, accomplishments, and publications for the next newsletter to the Newsletter Editor, Carol Buckels at [cgb@centurytel.net](mailto:cgb@centurytel.net) with the subject line: **CCMWG Member News** by December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

***Are you headed in “The Write Direction?”***  
**The Write Direction 2009 Writing Conference**  
**Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Dulany Hall, Columbia College, Columbia, MO.**  
**Registration Form**

**Registration includes:**

- Registration Packet
- Breakfast Snacks/Lunch/Afternoon Tea
- Your choice of break out sessions
- The chance to win fabulous, writing related, prizes

Please fill out the form below and mail along with check or money order **payable to CCMWG:**  
**The Write Direction 2009**  
**CCMWG**  
**P.O. Box 7628**  
**Columbia MO. 65205-7628**

**Walk-in Registration (Pay at the Registration Table):**

CCMWG Member cost \$35.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Non CCMWG Member cost \$40.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Students not affiliated with Columbia College cost \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

A cafeteria lunch will be provided with registration. If you wish for a guest that is not attending the sessions to go through the cafeteria line there will be a \$5.00 charge for their meal.

More information can be found on our website at <http://columbiawrites.co.in.org>. CCMWG membership is \$15 and provides monthly meetings, a quarterly newsletter containing member accomplishments and opportunities, as well as other members’ only benefits. New membership dues paid at the conference runs from date of conference to 12/31/10. Join today or inquire at the conference about the benefits to you!



# THE WRITE DIRECTION

## 2009

Presented by Columbia Chapter of the Missouri Writer's Guild with  
Columbia College,  
Saturday, October 24th, 2009, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Dulany Hall, Columbia College Campus

**8:00-9:00 a.m.**  
Banquet Room

**Welcome, Author's Hall Opens for Set Up**  
Coffee and breakfast snacks

**9:00-9:15 a.m.**  
Banquet Room

**Welcome/Opening remarks: Dr. Robert Boon, Columbia College,  
Linda Fisher, President CCMWG**

**9:15-10:00 a.m.** **Keynote: Mary Kay Blakely**  
Banquet Room

**Are Narrative Writers An Endangered Species in the Twittersphere?**  
(Why Stories Will Endure, Even if Today's "Book" Doesn't)

**10:15-11:00 a.m. Session I:**

Cougar Room (Poetry)  
Lee Room (Prose)

**Marta Ferguson: Creative Calisthenics**  
**Mary Kay Blakely: The Pleasures and Perils of Writing Personal Essays**

**11:15-12:00 a.m.**  
Cougar Room (Poetry)  
Lee Room (Prose)

**Session II:**  
**Marta Ferguson: The Art of Revision**  
**Debra Brenegan: Setting: Where Are We Anyway?**

**12:00-1:15 p.m.**  
Banquet Hall

**Luncheon Address:**  
**Walter Bargaen: Getting Poetry Published/The Power of Silence and The First Line**

**1:15-2:00 p.m.**  
Cougar Room (Poetry)  
Lee Room (Prose)

**Session III:**  
**Wayne Zade: Playing Tennis with the Net Halfway Up: The Abecedarian as a Poetic Form**  
**Trudy Lewis: Out of Character**

**2:15-3:00 p.m.**  
Cougar Room (Prose)  
Lee Room (Prose)

**Session IV:**  
**Alex George: Time to Write-How to Find It and What to Do With It**  
**Carolyn Mulford: Interviewing for Fact and Fiction**

**3:00-4:00 p.m.**  
Banquet Room

**Closing Comments: CCMWG 2010 President**  
**Prize Drawings/Social Hour and Signings**

## The Write Direction 2009 Session Details:

**Mary Kay Blakely:**

**Keynote: Are Narrative Writers An Endangered Species in the Twittersphere?**

**(Why Stories Will Endure, Even If Today's "Book" Doesn't)**

As an editor at the *New York Times Magazine* waited in line at the neighborhood coffee shop, he noticed the patron ahead of him reading a story he'd just published that Sunday on his cell phone. The editor-along with the writer and the staff-had labored long months polishing the introduction, the headlines, the designs, the typeface, the length and the layout of the 7,000 word story, now rapidly being scrolled through a two-inch LED screen. For the editor-and anyone else who feels the urgency of literature and the need for creative words that keep us thinking and striving-the digital reader can inspire bouts of apoplexy. Although it's already true that new technologies have altered books and magazines and newspapers and documentaries as we've known them, stories will endure even if familiar publishing practices do not. So: Are long form narrative writers today required to start speaking in shorthand if they want an audience?

### **Session I: The Pleasures and Perils of Writing Personal Essays**

Some of Virginia Woolf's most creative nonfiction began with what she called "Moments of Being"-those riveting memories embedded in every life that reveal the world and what it requires of us. These moments-sometimes exhilarating, often painful-can become the seeds of thoughtful and insightful essays. "This shock-receiving capacity that makes me a writer," Woolf wrote. By putting difficult experiences into words, "I make them whole...this wholeness means they have lost the power to hurt me." So, too, for her readers. This workshop will offer examples of some of the best, and worst, techniques writers employ in memoir writing.

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### **Walter Bargaen: Missouri's first Poet Laureate**

#### **Lunch Session: Getting Poetry Published/The Power of Silence and the First Line**

Walter Bargaen, of Ashland, Missouri, has published nine books and two chapbooks of poems over the last 28 years. Among his work is *The Feast: Prose Poem Sequences*, which won the 2005 William Rockhill Nelson Award for best poetry book by a Missouri writer. His work has appeared in more than 100 magazine publications, including *American Literary Review*, *International Quarterly*, *Missouri Review*, and *River Styx*. Bargaen has been recognized for his literary achievements as a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts poetry fellowship in 1991 and as winner of the Quarter After Eight Prose Prize in 1996, the Hanks Prize in 1996, and the Chester H. Jones Foundation poetry prize in 1997. Bargaen holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a master's degree in English education from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He has worked for 20 years at MU as a senior coordinator for the Assessment Resource Center.

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### **Marta Ferguson:**

#### **Session I: Creative Calisthenics**

Join us as we stretch our brains with some poetry exercises. The idea behind a good poetry exercise is less starting a new poem and more starting a new approach to poetry. If you're feeling creatively a little stale, or think everything you write has started to sound the same, then it's time to refresh your

routine with some word yoga. We'll complete two or three exercises in the workshop and I'll provide a list of exercise books to take home.

### **Session II: The Art of Revision: Seeing It Again for the First Time**

It's so easy to think of revision as something we have to do, some cruelty to which we must subject our words. But it doesn't have to be that way. A healthy writing process can make room for revision and can make revision a creative and enjoyable part of the endeavor. Join us to find out more!

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**Debra Brenegan**

### **Session II: Setting: Where Are We Anyway?**

Eudora Welty said of setting that it is the writerly element that "saves her." She calls it both a definer and a confiner of story. Many writers agree that setting is a crucial component of any good piece of fiction, but beginning writers sometimes think of setting strictly as flowery descriptions of raindrops on elm trees or velvet parlor ornaments. Setting can do so much more than describe place. It can develop character, augment conflict and reinforce theme. In this session, we'll explore the uses of setting and will practice techniques to make setting work on multiple levels.

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**Wayne Zade**

### **Session III: "Playing Tennis with the Net Halfway Up: The Abcedarian as a Poetic Form."**

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**Trudy Lewis:**

### **Session III: Out of Character: Personalities in Fiction**

Who are the people inside the stories we love and write? As authors, how can we convey the power of our own dream figures, ego ideals, avatars, antagonists, heroes and /or fools on the page? How should fiction address individuality in an era of social networking sites, celebrity gossip, reality programming, and the commercial regulation of human relations? In this session, we will work on practical exercises for developing character in fiction and nonfiction and discuss the social and philosophical implications of each approach.

We will begin our conversation with examples from *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by Milan Kundera, recent short-short stories by Paul Theroux, and the Missouri classic *The Moonflower Vine* by Jetta Carleton. Writers will participate in reading, discussion, and several creative writing exercises. I encourage you to arrive with your own characters in mind and work on developing/exploring them within the context of the workshop.

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**Carolyn Mulford:****Session IV: Interviewing for Fact or Fiction**

Life teaches writers many of the skills needed to conduct the informal interviews typically needed while writing fiction. This session tells how to apply those skills and gives techniques for casual and in-depth interviews for fiction and nonfiction.

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**Alex George:****Session IV: Time to Write- How to Find it and What to Do With it**

Alex George wrote his first two and a half novels while working full-time as a corporate attorney in London. He has just completed his fifth novel while running his own law firm in Columbia, MO. Here he will share some tips, techniques and suggestions that will help you:

- Organize yourself and your life to give you the time you need to write
- Maximize productivity and efficiency when writing
- Make steady progress in your work
- Stay motivated
- Manage your expectations
- Develop stamina and not lose heart
- Find a way out of writer's block
  
- Enjoy the process!

## The Write Direction '09 Presenter Bios:

### Mary Kay Blakely:

**Keynote:** Are Narrative Writers An Endangered Species in the Twittersphere? (Why Stories Will Endure, Even if Today's "Book" Doesn't)

**Session I Title:** The Pleasure and Perils of Writing Personal Essays

**BIO:** MARY KAY BLAKELY joined the Journalism School faculty in September, 1997, and teaches Advanced Writing in the magazine sequence. A contributing editor to *Ms.* magazine since 1981 and former "Hers" columnist for *The New York Times*, she is the author of the critically acclaimed *Wake Me When It's Over* and *American Mom*. Her essays on social and political issues have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Mother Jones*, *LIFE*, *Vogue*, *Family Circle*, *Self*, *Parents*, *Newsday*, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, *Lear's*, *Glamour*, *Working Woman* as well as other national publications. Her work has been collected in fourteen writing anthologies and published in Australia, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany and Japan. Blakely is on the National Advisory Board for Women's Enews, the National Writer's Union and MOMbo, a syndicated radio program. She has been on the Board of Directors for the Journalism and Women's Symposium (JAWS) and is currently serving on its Minority Mentor Program. She received the EMMA (Exceptional Merit Media Award) and Sigma Delta Chi Award from the Society of Professional Journalists. Her television appearances include news commentaries on the Today Show, Oprah, Larry King Live, CBS This Morning, Charlie Rose, C-SPAN, Good Morning America, CNN and other news programs.

## Walter Bargaen: Missouri's first Poet Laureate

### Lunch Session: Getting Poetry Published/The Power of Silence and the First Line

**BIO:** Bargaen, of Ashland, Missouri, has published nine books and two chapbooks of poems over the last 28 years. Among his work is *The Feast: Prose Poem Sequences*, which won the 2005 William Rockhill Nelson Award for best poetry book by a Missouri writer. His work has appeared in more than 100 magazine publications, including *American Literary Review*, *International Quarterly*, *Missouri Review*, and *River Styx*. Bargaen has been recognized for his literary achievements as a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts poetry fellowship in 1991 and as winner of the Quarter After Eight Prose Prize in 1996, the Hanks Prize in 1996, and the Chester H. Jones Foundation poetry prize in 1997. Bargaen holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a master's degree in English education from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He has worked for 20 years at MU as a senior coordinator for the Assessment Resource Center.

## Marta Ferguson:

**Session I Title:** Creative Calisthenics

**Session II Title:** The Art of Revision

**BIO:** Marta Ferguson's work has appeared in many literary magazines over the last decade, including *5AM*, *Rattle*, *Pearl*, *Prairie Schooner* and *Puerto Del Sol*. She's had a reprint at Poetry Daily and has twice been nominated for Pushcart prizes. In the fall of 2005, her first collection, *Mustang Sally Pays Her Debt to Wilson Pickett*, was published by Main Street Rag. She holds a Ph.D. in English from the University of Missouri-Columbia and is a former poetry editor of *The Missouri Review*. Marta has been the sole proprietor of Wordhound Writing & Editing Services, LLC, for seven years. She offers classes in poetry, editing and creativity through the Columbia Area Career Center and Orr Street Studios.

## Alex George:

**Session IV Title:** Time to Write-How to Find it and What to Do With it

**BIO:** Alex George is a writer and a lawyer. He was born in England, but presently lives in Columbia, Missouri. He has published four novels: *Working it Out* (1999), *Before Your Very Eyes* (2000), *Love You Madly* (2002) and *Wonderful You* (2005). In addition to being published by HarperCollins in the UK, his books have also been translated and published in France, Germany and Italy. He has recently completed his most recent book, *Paradise*. Alex has been named as one of Britain's top ten "thirtysomething" novelists by the *Times* of London, and was also named as the *Independent on Sunday's* "face to watch" for fiction in its Fresh Talent feature. Alex worked for

eight years as a corporate lawyer in London and Paris. He moved to the United States in 2003, and re-qualified as a US attorney. He now runs his own law firm in Columbia, Missouri. He gets up at 5 o'clock every morning to write. Alex has been married to his wife, Christina, since 1998. They have two children, Hallam and Catherine.

Trudy Lewis:

**Session III Title: Out of Character**

**BIO:** Trudy Lewis is the author of the short story collection *The Bones of Garbo*, winner of the Sandstone Prize in Short Fiction (Ohio State University Press). Her work has appeared in *Atlantic Monthly*, *Best American Short Stories*, *New Stories from the South*, *Carolina Quarterly*, *Cream City Review*, *Fence*, *Five Points*, *Greensboro Review*, *Meridian*, *New England Review*, *Southwest Review*, *Third Coast*, and others. Her first novel, *Private Correspondences*, won the William Goyen Prize (TriQuarterly Books/Northwestern University Press), and her short stories have received the Lawrence Foundation and Glenna Luschei Awards from *Prairie Schooner*. Trudy is currently a Professor of English-Creative Writing at the University of Missouri-Columbia and has served as the Viebranz Visiting writer at Saint Lawrence University in Canton, New York. Trudy has recently completed a novel, *The Empire Rolls*, and a short story collection, *Boonslick County*.

## Debra Brenegan:

**Session II Title:** Setting: Where Are We Anyway?

**BIO:** Debra Brenegan received a doctorate in creative writing from The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. For her fiction, she received a Ragdale residency and was a recent finalist for the John Gardner Memorial Fiction Prize and the *Crab Creek Review* Fiction Prize. Her work has appeared in *Calyx*, *The Laurel Review*, *RE:AL*, *The Cimarron Review*, *Milwaukee Magazine*, *Phoebe*, *The Healing Woman*, *The Association for Research on Mothering Journal*, and others. Debra is currently an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Westminster College in Fulton, MO.

## Carolyn Mulford:

**Session IV Title:** Interviewing for Fact or Fiction

**BIO:** Carolyn Mulford has interviewed hundreds of people for magazines, newsletters, newspapers, nonfiction books, and novels. Currently most of her interviews are for *Writing That Works*, a national subscription newsletter, and for mystery novels. The Missouri Center for the Book chose her middle-reader historical, *The Feedsack Dress*, as Missouri's recommended read at the 2009 National Book Festival in Washington, D.C.

## Wayne Zade:

**Session III Title:** "Playing Tennis with the Net Halfway Up: The Abecedarian as a Poetic Form."

**BIO:** Wayne Zade has taught creative writing, American literature, and jazz studies at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, since 1976, where he serves as chair of the Humanities division. He has published poems in *POETRY*, *AMERICAN POETRY REVIEW*, *NOTRE DAME REVIEW*, *SHENANDOAH*, *ANTIOCH REVIEW*, and other journals. He has also published interviews and essays on jazz in *ALL ABOUT JAZZ*, *BELLES LETTRES*, and *JAZZ TOKYO*. With Carolyn Perry, he will publish an interview with the poet Pattiann Rogers in the Winter 2010 issue of *THE MISSOURI REVIEW*.