



# Live Your Writing Dream

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2011

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

As the year moves forward, I hope your writing focus and work follows a similar path.

I've started a new feature which will appear in each issue this year—**Writer's Fun Sector!** This issue shares ways to help you create new story ideas (see page 1).

In this issue, I share more thoughts about what makes a good story from a different perspective... The second article in this series is on page 2, **The BIG PICTURE—Building STORY.**

I have updated the workshop information (see page 3) and have a new novel writing class starting in July 2011 (see page 2).

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Visit my website for information about upcoming workshops and classes (link on page 3).

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Please feel free to forward this newsletter in its entirety to others.

Best wishes!

June

## Writing in Community

Often times writers work in isolation. This can be a good thing. A lot can be accomplished working alone. But writers don't need to do this 100% of the time. In my year-long fantasy novel writing class, the students are doing writing sprints, where they gather in a chat session, talk a bit, go off for a set amount of time to write, and return to check in. This builds a sense of community.

The writers in my class have individual writing journal threads, which can be read by anyone in the class, and another thread where they can only come to post as one of their characters. All these activities build a sense of community while also afford-

ing the time needed to write.

Each writer in the class is assigned a writing buddy for support and a small group where they give feedback for the writing they post.

All of this is to help keep these writers engaged in the process of writing their novel over the course of the year.

So how do you connect to others?

Writing groups, whether online or local, also provide writers with opportunities to come together.

Maybe you have a friend who is also a writer.

Online social media can also provide the writer with support. I use Facebook to build relationships with other writers. Some have taken my workshops, others are authors I've done editing for through one of the publishers I work for, and others are writers who I have met online at various places.

Seek out other writers. Find a group that you're comfortable with and whom you trust. Search for a special buddy who you can give and receive support, focus, and inspiration.

## Writer's Fun Sector!

While we all take our writing seriously, sometimes we need to step back and do something fun with our writing. This helps to keep us fresh, to remind ourselves that creativity is FUN.

### Fun with Spam!

Take a look through at the subject lines of your spam folder. Collect ten subject lines and use two or three of them for a new story idea. Ask yourself "What if" questions to get you going. What connections can you build

between the different subjects? Write a brief summary of your new story idea.



### Character Miss-Match

Take a character from a previously written story and put them in a setting that's way out of their league. For example, if your character is from a fantasy or science fiction story, try putting them in today's mundane world or in a historical setting. If you have a historical character, move them to another time period or into a fantasy. If your character is a detective, what might happen if you move him or her to a setting that is foreign to the character?

# The BIG PICTURE—Building STORY

If story and storytelling are organic – are wired into our brains – than why do we somehow lose that when we sit down to write? When we read the stories of others, we know a GOOD story as it happens. We are totally involved. We are connected on multiple levels. The story shows us something about being human.

Good storytelling allows the reader to *feel* and *experience* what the character is going through. The reader is *living* the experience of that story character. This happens seamlessly when the reader is involved in the story. The same regions of our brains that process the reality around us day in and day out are the same regions that are active when we read a good story.

Because we are curious, we want to know how and why this takes place. What are the parts that make up the whole? But if we get lost in looking at individual parts, we lose the wholeness that is good storytelling. (Yes, and I can't repeat this often enough: ALL the parts – craft elements, story structure, and emotional content – have to work together.)

**“Good storytelling allows the reader to feel and experience what the character is going through.”**

Why and how does this change when we slip from reader to writer?

When a writer sits down to write the story begging to be told, she sees everything through her own eyes, out of her own personal perspective. What is lost is the knowledge that

this is the writer's reality (little “r”) and not the greater Reality around her. What she thinks is that everyone will understand her story, right? There's not a lot of explanation to be given. Readers will understand the WHY behind what is going on. And it just doesn't work that way.

Since the world does not see through the writer's eyes and knowledge, when Jane starts throwing everything she can lay her hands on in the kitchen, including the steak knives, at her brother, the reader sees a woman gone mad, without understanding the events that lead up to her explosion at this point in time. The writer is aware of this shared history, the WHY behind the current event, but the reader is clueless. The writer has lost connection to the reader. (And one way to show this shared history is by the effective use of backstory – in small bits – and with the use of foreshadowing.)



This is the part of the story that the writer cannot leave out. It is essential – as are craft elements, story structure, and emotion content – in building this WHY part of the story. Adding the WHY gives the reader access to the

reality of the writer and the story world she creates.

**“Story is the weaving of various craft elements together, supported by a story structure, and emotional content that moves from writer, to character, to the reader.”**



## Six Month YA Novel Writing Class:

New Class Starting July 2011

Start and complete a young adult (YA) novel in six months!

Learn how to target your story for the YA reader and the elements necessary for that to happen.

Learn the craft elements and work on writing exercises during the first three weeks before we begin the intensive writing of the draft and then revising your novel. During the first three weeks the focus will

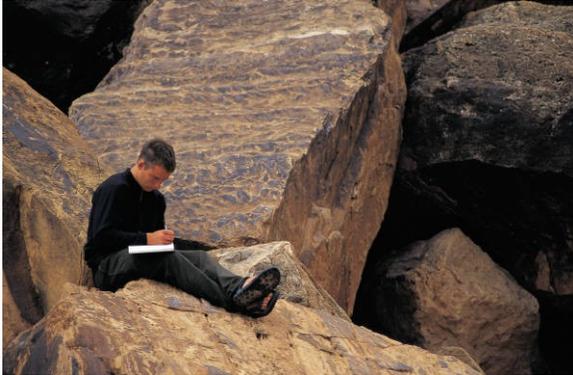
be on developing your writing skills. No instructions will be given while we work on the draft and the revision. The last week of the class will focus on submitting and marketing your novel.

We'll make use of small groups, writing buddies, word count checkpoints, mentoring, chats, and personal chats or phone calls to keep you motivated and on track during this six month class.

The small writing groups will help, encourage, and provide additional feedback for your novel-in-process and for your revision.



## Live Your Writing Dream



Supporting fiction writers past  
obstacles on the way to  
publication

Live Your Writing Dream  
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## Upcoming Workshops and Classes

March 7, 2011—Discovering  
Your Writing Process

April 2011—The Truth Be-  
yond Writer's Block

May 2011—Make It Horror!

June 2011—Building a Success-  
ful Submission Package

July 2011—Nonverbal Com-  
munication for Writers

August 2011—Editing for Suc-  
cess

September 2011—Cyberpunk  
It!

October 2011—Re-vision  
Your Manuscript

For information on workshops

that I'm teaching at Savvy Au-  
thors and other workshops,  
go to:

[http://www.savvyauthors.com/  
vb/workshoplist.php](http://www.savvyauthors.com/vb/workshoplist.php)

For the class I'm teaching be-

ginning July 24, 2011, go to:

[Information coming soon.

Check out: <http://>

[www.savvyauthors.com/vb/  
savvyulist.php](http://www.savvyauthors.com/vb/savvyulist.php) ]

I also post a craft-related blog,  
**A Novel Approach with P  
June Diehl**, at Savvy Authors  
once a month. You can find it  
here:

[http://www.savvyauthors.com/  
vb/content.php?144-A-Novel-  
Approach-with-June-Diehl](http://www.savvyauthors.com/vb/content.php?144-A-Novel-Approach-with-June-Diehl)



**Savvy University:**

<http://SavvyAuthors.com>