Syracuse Veterans’ Writing Group, July 2011

Agenda:
10:00-10:30 Greetings and self-serve breakfast items, introductions, announcements, and new writing assignments
10:30-11:00 Writing time and short break
11:00-11:50 Workshop/sharing of group members’ writing
11:50-12:00 Wrap-up, plan for next meeting, possible dates: August

July Writing Prompts:

1) Point of View exercise: Write a short scene from your military service from three different points of view.

What is a point of view?

A point of view is the perspective that governs the telling of the story. Basically a point of view tells us who is speaking and narrating the story.

Of course one of those points of view will be yours or 1st person narration, which is the point of view that most of us have been writing from at past group sessions. However, let’s think about other points of view and ways of narrating a scene. What would the scene/story look like from the perspective of one or two others who were there? What would they have seen or experienced? How would the scene be different from those points of view?

You can adopt a 1st person narration for what you think these other individuals would have seen or experienced OR you can shift to writing in the third-person where you identify the person’s name and narrate from there—e.g. “It was 100 degrees in the shade at 8 a.m., and sweat beaded on Jim’s face as he waited, motionless.”

2) “Weathering”: We just experienced record-breaking temperatures in the Syracuse area on Thursday (101 degrees and high humidity). At moments like these (extreme heat or cold), we become reacquainted with the elements, with the role that weather systems play in our lives. For some, the weather controls our fates and livelihoods. For instance, I grew up on a family farm where our very livelihood hung in the balance with a sudden hail storm or freeze that could ruin our crop.

Soldiers are subject to the elements as well—to often extreme conditions and out in all kinds of weather. The expression “soldiering on” communicates the fact that military personnel are expected to “weather” (both literally and figuratively) all kind of unbearable conditions and situations.
Write about a specific or ongoing experience with the “elements” while serving, maybe it was extreme heat or humidity, severe cold or wind, monsoon conditions, or a sandstorm or storm at sea that caught you and others by surprise. Use all five senses to describe the elements and their effects on you and other soldiers in your unit (smell, sight, sounds, taste, touch).
3) 9/11 Writing prompt for the Post-Standard.

RULES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR SUBMITTING ESSAYS TO THE POST STANDARD FOR THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11/01:

1) ESSAYS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY AUG. 8TH. PLEASE SUBMIT THEM FIRST TO THE 9/11 COMMITTEE AND WE WILL IN TURN GIVE THEM TO THE POST STANDARD.

2) THERE WILL BE NO PAYMENT TO THE WRITERS FOR THESE ESSAYS. IT IS A VOLUNTEERING PROJECT IN ORDER TO REMEMBER THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TERRORIST ATTACK ON OUR COUNTRY.

3) ONLY A SELECT FEW OF THESE STORIES WILL BE PRINTED, SO PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT THE UNIQUENESS AND QUALITY OF WRITING WILL BE FIRST CONSIDERATIONS.

4) THE POST WILL BE PUTTING OUT AN APPEAL TO ALL OF THE COMMUNITY ASKING FOR SIMILAR ESSAYS TO BE SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION.

5) THE POST ALREADY HAS A TEEN PAGE OF GOOD HIGH SCHOOL AGE WRITERS, AND THEY WILL BE ASKED TO WRITE ALSO.

6) SOME THINGS TO BE CONSIDERED IN WRITING:

   A) What do you remember about that fateful day?
   B) Where were you and what were you doing when you first heard about the attack on the Twin Towers?
   C) Did you know anyone who may have been working at the Twin towers, or on a plane in the air at the time of the attack?
   D) What did you initially want to do after the terrorist attack?
   E) Now that Osama Bin laden has been killed, do you feel any safer than in 2001?
   F) If not, what could make you feel safer from another terrorist attack?

If you have any other suggestions, please include them on this list.

Contact: Pat Masten A-208 446-6228 or cell 882-1028 (out of town until July 25th.)
Send essays by August 3rd to eeschell@syr.edu for forwarding to Pat Masten.
VETERANS’ WRITING PROGRAM, CALL FOR SUBMISSION

I am the Director of the Veterans’ Writing Project at A Word with You Press (www.awordwithyoupress.com<http://www.awordwithyoupress.com/>). This is a great opportunity for our service people, active duty as well as veterans, to get their stories published in a book/anthology we will be publishing this fall. I would appreciate it if you would help us spread the word about this project. I am especially interested in the stories you have posted on your website. They’re exactly what we’re looking for. Please ask the authors, Davey, Gunnip, and Marcuson as well as all other members of your group to submit them to me at my e-mail address posted below. I will post them on our website and they will be considered for publication in our anthology.

Our organization exists to encourage writers of all ages and experience to learn to express themselves through the written word and to enjoy the craft of writing as their skills improve. To accomplish these goals, we conduct writing seminars and workshops. We also conduct monthly writing contests wherein everyone is invited to submit a sample of their writing to be evaluated by other authors on the site, giving each author a chance win prizes for their writing. Submitting stories to our contests is free and each contest is judged by the winner of the previous contest, so it is all under the control of the contributing writers.

Our Veterans’ Writing Project is currently soliciting stories from veterans and active duty service people, asking them to submit a short story or essay about their military experience, a funny or emotional event they want to share with the world.

Those stories, along with a little biographical information from the author, should be submitted directly to me at gary@awordwithyoupress.com<mailto:gary@awordwithyoupress.com>.

The stories and essays will be posted on our website to receive comments and support from peer writers. Before submitting to this site, it is important that the author understands that submitting a story or essay is giving A Word with You Press one-time publishing rights to post the story or essay on our website. As soon as the story or essay is published on our website, the copyright returns to the author. When the editors determine we have accumulated enough good stories that fit our vision of the anthology, the book will be published and offered for sale to the public. For stories accepted to be included into the anthology, the author grants one-time publishing rights to A Word with You Press to print the story or essay in the anthology and after the anthology is printed, the copyright returns to the author. Authors selected for inclusion into our anthology will be compensated by a gift of five (5) copies of the completed book. In turn, we ask you to assist us in promoting this project to your veteran friends and acquaintances, members of your writing group, and on your facebook, twitter, and web site. It is a great opportunity for veterans to tell the world their story and gain the prestige of being a published author.
Half of the money earned from the sale of the anthology will be donated to a veterans’ assistance organization. The other half will be retained by A Word with You Press to cover the expenses of publication and if any is left over from that, it will be considered profit for the company.
I invite you to visit our web site at www.awordwithyoupress.com<http://www.awordwithyoupress.com/>, and look forward to your submissions.
See my post regarding the Writing Project at http://www.awordwithyoupress.com/2011/06/17/drop-and-give-me-a-story/.

Thank you,

Gary L. Clark,
gary@awordwithyoupress.com<mailto:gary@awordwithyoupress.com>
Director of Veterans’ Writing Project
AWordwithYouPress.com
HI there.

I noticed in the SU News that you work with a Veterans’ Writing Group on campus. I don’t know if you are aware of our publication, but I was hoping perhaps some of your writers would be interested in submitting work to our journal. The name is Stone Canoe and you can get details about the journal at www.stoncanoejournal.org. We accept submissions of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, technology essays, and visual art March 1-July 31 each year. We are currently collecting submissions for our sixth edition.

All submission details are on the website. There is no submission fee and we offer an annual $500 prize in each category above. If you feel any of your vets would be interested in submitting work, please let them know about us! We’d love to see some of their pieces. The only requirement we really have is that the writer lives or has lived in Upstate New York, and obviously all your participants already fill that bill.

Thanks for your time. Please let me know if you or your members have any questions.

Best regards,
Allison

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