

March 2018 ESWA Newsletter

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WORDS BETWEEN BAYS NEWSLETTER

DO THE WRITE THING!

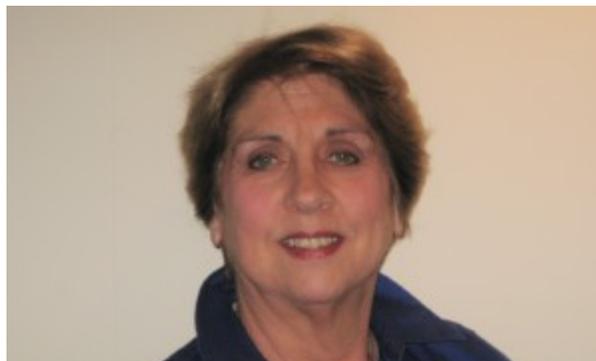
Connect with other writers and support writing across the Delmarva Peninsula!

ESWA ELSEWHERE

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Letter from the president





Greetings to all!

As I write this, the wind is howling and the rain is mixed with a seasoning of snow. In like a lion, indeed! It's a good day to stay inside, catch up on office work, and plan for the spring.

And spring for ESWA is going to be busy! BTO is March 10. We just about maxed out the number of attendees we could accommodate, which speaks volumes about the quality and variety of presenters that the BTO organizers invited. If you attend, please give us feedback. This is important as we start planning for BTO 2019.

At the end of March, we are holding a very small writers' retreat. There's been some interest in arranging a weekend of "getting away" to someplace where participants could write and research without interruption. Keeping it small, there were only 5 places, and they were taken within a day. If this goes well and interest remains high, we'll plan another for the fall. Board member Susan Parker has already identified a larger venue that sounds perfect.

Members indicated that they'd like to see the regular Second Saturday meetings include more workshop and activities. In February, we met at the Wicomico County Library for a casual chat about the craft of writing. The wide-ranging conversation covered challenges of plotting, dialog, and descriptions; favorite authors; where and when we write; and the perfect coffee-to-creamerto-sugar-to-donut ratio for maximum creative energy.

In April, we plan a [workshop on memoir writing](#), led by board member Emily Rich. That will be in the Cambridge area. Location and time TBA. Check the Facebook Page for details.

May is an experiment. We are teaming with the Art League of Ocean City for an "Artist and Writer" workshop. Participants will team with a visual artist to either create a joint project or interpret each other's ideas separately. We will probably need a list of those who plan to attend so that we have enough artists and writers to go around. Details to follow.

The biggest challenge in scheduling activities is geography. We're trying to move the monthly meetings around the peninsula so that it evens out the inconvenience of driving. We'd like to set-up more localized activities, like a regular "meet-up" or "accountability" or "critique" groups. It is a question of numbers and locations. If you want to catch up with fellow writers in your neighborhood, post something on Facebook and let us know. Writing can be a sadly solitary activity; developing a social and sharing network is only good.

Cheers!

[Fran Severn](#)

eswapresident18@gmail.com

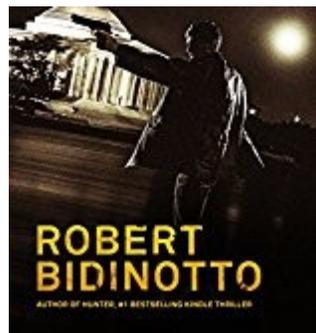


Bay to Ocean Conference has arrived!

We hope to see everyone this Saturday, March 10, 2018, for the 21st annual BTO conference at Chesapeake College, in Wye Mills, Maryland. As one of the region's premier educational seminars, the Bay to Ocean Writers Conference attracts participants from six states as well as the District of Columbia. *Look for BTO photos in the April issue!*

Meet BTO presenter Robert Bidinotto

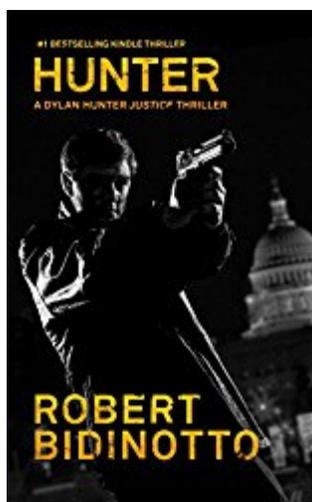




Robert Bidinotto is an accomplished thriller writer from Maryland’s Eastern Shore, but it’s his own story of success with independent publishing that many writers find thrilling.

The author has shared his success story at the [Bay to Ocean Writers’ Conference](#) held each year at Chesapeake College, and he will return again in March 2018. Here is some of the author’s story.

Bidinotto's first novel, *Hunter*, was a self-published Amazon super bestseller. The author has been a tireless supporter of other writers with his “how to” advice on his popular website <http://www.bidinotto.com/>.



For self-published writers, Bidinotto stressed the importance of writing the best books possible by using advance readers, volunteer editors to stop every typo in its tracks, and great cover design.

Bidinotto offers tips for thriller writers and readers, starting with classic examples of great thrillers, including **Peter Benchley’s** *Jaws* and *Where Eagles Dare* by **Alistair MacLean** and **Wilbur Smith’s** *Hungry as the Sea*. He also noted the thriller elements of classic films like *High Noon*.

AS BIDINOTTO points out, thrillers come in all shapes and settings, but they have a common thread of often larger-than-life characters who overcome impossible odds, whether it is stopping a killer shark or the gang of killers due to arrive in town on the 12 o'clock train.

“Your job is to keep the reader riveted in that world,” Bidinotto notes. He quotes **Lee Child**: “Write the slow stuff fast and the fast stuff slow.”

Bidinotto has written a sequel to his bestselling *Hunter*, which also has become an Amazon bestseller. Recently, a third book in the series was released, called *Winner Takes All*. The story focuses on an attempt to install a puppet president in the White House. Sounds like yet another great Robert Bidinotto thriller!

Try your hand at a short-short story

Ever since hearing that famous six-word short story, “Baby clothes for sale. Never worn,” writers have been stretching traditional boundaries. Now you can mine the craft for yourself. Beginning on March 26, between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. at The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, Delaware writer Mary Pauer is presenting a six-week course on Exploring Short Fiction. In-session writing will encourage participants to leave each week with a “finished” piece. These classes will examine various forms of short fiction, including micro and flash.

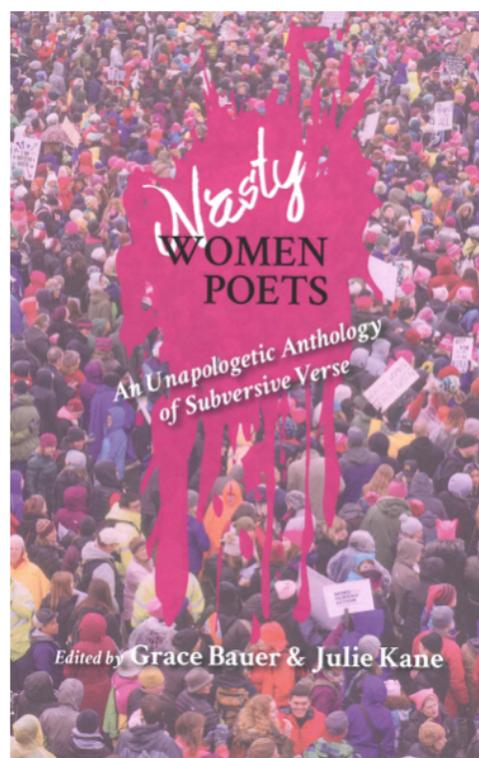
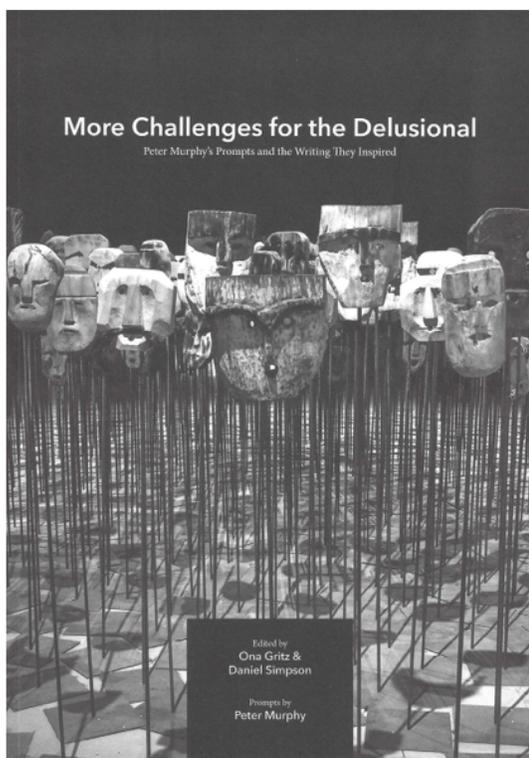
Mary Pauer, twice recipient of the Delaware Division of the Arts award as a Fellow in Fiction, has an MFA in creative writing. Widely published author of three literary collections, she currently serves as a freelance developmental editor, workshop leader, speaker and author.

The course fee is \$30 for CBMM members; \$45 for non-members. To register by phone or e-mail contact Laurel Seeman at 410-745-4947 or lseeman@cbbm.org. Enrollment is limited to eight, so hurry.

Rehoboth Beach anthology seeks entries

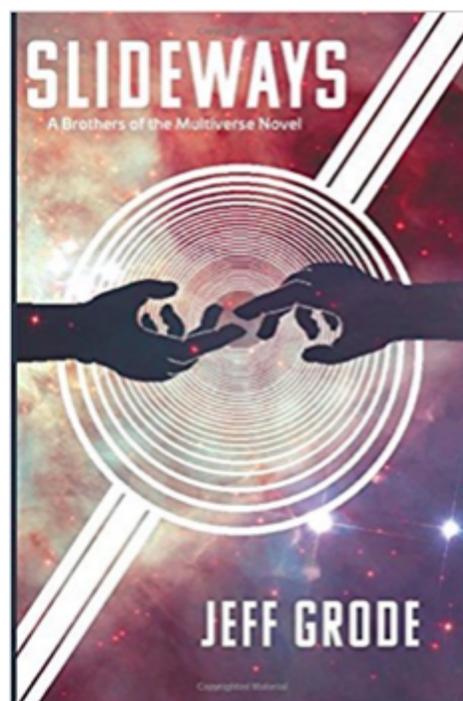
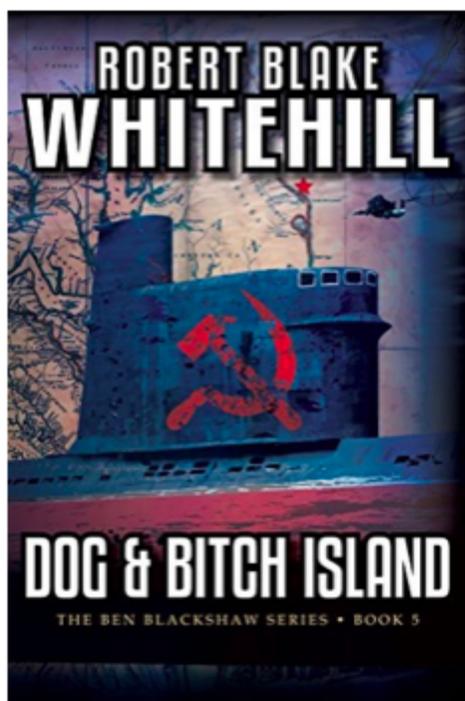
The 2018 Rehoboth Beach Reads Short Story Contest is now open! Prizes of \$500, \$250, and \$100 sponsored by [Browseabout Books](#), plus the chance to be in the book everyone will be talking about: "Beach Fun." All instructions are here: <http://catandmousepress.com/contest/>. Join the fun and give it a try. Every year new writers get published for the first time and experienced writers gain visibility and an additional writing credential.

ESWA AUTHOR NEWS



ESWA member and board member **Pat Valdata** has poems in two new anthologies. *More Challenges for the Delusional* is a book of prompts used at various workshops led by poet Peter Murphy. His prompts always include three or four required elements and a “challenge for the delusional” for poets who want to go beyond the initial prompt. The book includes examples of poetry and prose inspired by the prompts. Pat’s poem, “Renovations,” started as a draft at one of Peter’s Winter Poetry and Prose Getaways. After she revised it, the poem was published in the *Little Patuxent Review*. <https://littlepatuxentreview.org/>

The second anthology, *Nasty Women Poets*, was inspired by the Women’s March last year. It’s a poetry anthology with work by well-known poets like Kim Addonizio, Jan Beatty, Alicia Ostriker, Marge Piercy, A. E. Stallings, and regional poets Shirley J. Brewer (Baltimore), Kim Roberts (Washington, DC), and Crisfield’s own Pat Valdata. The 300-plus page book is divided into sections, each named for a song title. Pat’s poem, “Control,” is in the section titled “What’s Love Got to Do with It: Nasty Women Poets on Sex, love & lust”!



Member **Jeff Grode** has a new book out called *SLIDEWAYS*. From Amazon.com: A troubled home, a family secret, and a technological breakthrough turn a teen’s world *Slideways*. If fifteen-year-old Ben believes his life is forever shattered after his brother’s accident, he is about to be amazed. After Ben’s grandfather, GranPat, a highly regarded scientist, is mysteriously kidnapped, Ben stumbles upon GranPat’s scientific discovery – a portal to a parallel universe and a world called Terra. As Ben widens his search for GranPat, dueling government agencies from both worlds seek to confiscate the portal device and control the passage between worlds. The chase is on, but the danger mounts when new adversaries threaten Earth, Terra, and the very nature of the universe. Though ruthless enemies hunt Ben, he encounters new friends and develops relationships he never thought possible. Ben must ultimately commit to his beliefs in a stunning battle of wits, technology and

...imately, commit to his career in a burning state of war, technology, and power.

Den Leventhal's short memoir, "The Night of the Subic Bay Pirates," has been accepted for publication in *Power Ships*, the official journal of the Maritime Historical Society of America.

Robert Blake Whitehill has added another book in his Ben Blackshaw series. DOG & BITCH ISLAND is due out in April, with its action focused on the island near Ocean City, MD. This is the fifth appearance of Ben Blackshaw. Learn more at <http://robertblakewhitehill.com/>

Loriann Oberlin's latest book, WRITING TO MAKE MONEY: SHORT PROJECTS debuts at 2018 Bay to Ocean Conference. With 100+ tips and techniques on how to make money in short bursts of time, learn about projects you may not have ever thought about, including greeting cards, humor/gag sheets, on-hold messages for business, recipes, resume writing, or short work for magazines and other publications. With her knowledge being a licensed counselor, Loriann also covers practical tips on how to set goals, cheerlead oneself, work with self-defeating thoughts to turn them positive and adapt new behaviors to boost your bank account. Loriann will speak at the 2018 BTO conference.

ESWA board member **Tara A. O'Brien Elliot** has three poems in *The Broadkill Review*: "Division," "At Waterman's Crabhouse," and "Risk." Also, her poem "Astraphobia" appears in *Wildness* magazine.

Starting your novel or memoir class

Thursdays • 6:30-8 p.m.

Session II: April 5 - May 10

\$60

This six-week class will cover essential skills to help writers who want to produce a good novel. Topics include planning the book, developing interesting characters, how to sequence a plot, composing vivid scenes, tips for writing dialogue, and how to sustain momentum on a big writing project. The class will

use a mix of discussions, examples, exercises, and workshops. Writers with a novel in progress are welcome!

Register at <http://www.salisbury.edu/cell/lighthouseliterary.html>

Regional history to feature in upcoming talks

The Talbot County Public Library has several events this month of interest to readers and writers:

The Parallel Lives of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass

Thursday, March 22, 6:30 p.m. John F. Ford and John H. Miller discuss the writings of two of our nation's greatest spokesmen for freedom—Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass—uncovering the deep emotional growth behind the public images of these brilliant, prophetic, all too human men.

Author to Speak on *The Photographic Garden*

Wednesday, March 28, 1:00 p.m. Matthew Benson's *The Photographic Garden* is a comprehensive introduction to creating powerful, beautiful, dynamic images in the garden. Using his own images as examples, Benson will talk about design and aesthetics, while encouraging attendees to develop their own visual sensibility. This program is sponsored by the Talbot County Garden Club.

Holland Island: Lost Atlantis of the Chesapeake

Thursday, March 29, 6:30 p.m. A. M. (Ann) Foley chronicles life in the once-thriving, close-knit community of Holland Island, in lower Dorchester County. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the community's dissolution, when families dismantled their houses and sailed them to the mainland. The reassembled houses stand today from Somerset to Talbot Counties, so scattered that it was said they sailed whichever way the wind was blowing.

Opportunities to get the word out!

Your membership in the Eastern Shore Writers Association enables you to take

advantage of several avenues to share your publication news with others. Here's how:

1. Share your upcoming book signing or reading on the ESWA website <https://www.easternshorewriters.org/> This quick video shows you how <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16ATITb-cbFXWGlwjqsMFJr0j-eazOlc/view>
2. Submit your new book cover to be featured on the ESWA website. Please send a .jpg image, along with where you would like the image to be linked (your own website, Amazon, Goodreads, etc.) One cover per member, please! The exception would be a fiction cover and nonfiction book. Please email your book cover and link to cheswriters@gmail.com
3. Share news about your new publication or achievement in the monthly Between the Bays newsletter by emailing your news item and images to cheswriters@gmail.com
4. Please be sure to join the Eastern Shore Writers Facebook Group <https://goo.gl/cDggVE> to let others know your news and to share opportunities and inspiration for writers.

IF YOU AREN'T A MEMBER- WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?
JOIN TODAY AND YOU WILL MEET SOME OF THE BEST WRITERS ON THE
EASTERN SHORE...LIKE YOU!

From the newsletter editor

Do you prefer ebooks or print books?



The Cecil County Public Library asked me to host its first Library After Hours event, held this month to celebrate the Winter Reading program. They also sent me a few interview questions, which appeared in the [local paper](#).

The question that stood out for me concerned how I



liked to read ... on my Kindle or a print book (or an audiobook). It was such an interesting question that we can all ask ourselves as writers, because I'm sure that the way you have published your work and enjoyed the work of others has changed rapidly.

Let me just confess here that I love my Kindle. I have around 300 books on my Kindle right now. I can carry all those books in my back pocket. I tend to jump between different books so I have whatever I want right on the device. I can also switch back and forth between my Kindle and my iPhone, and it syncs to whatever page I'm on.

There are a lot of classics available as ebooks for free or at very minimal cost. These can be a pleasant surprise. *Grant's Memoirs* was one such discovery, and so was *Cape Cod* by Henry David Thoreau. Grant was a fine writer and his account of the Mexican War campaign was intriguing. Thoreau is revered as this serious writer, thinking deep thoughts off in his cabin at Walden Pond, but the Cape Cod book is more of a travelogue. Thoreau is snarky and funny in a way that reminds me of Bill Bryson's *A Walk in the Woods*. Another free ebook, if you have an interest in local history, is George Alfred Townsend's *Chesapeake Tales*.

In the end, the format may not matter quite so much as the age-old appeal of a good story.

As for *why* we read, C.S. Lewis said it best, "We read to know we are not alone."

— David Healey

David Healey, newsletter design and ESWA board member
Editor emeritus Bonnie Feldstein (who writes as *Anna Gill*)

Submit your news!

Have a new book or publication out? Have a tip on a great opportunity for writers in the region? Please send your news and photos for inclusion in the newsletter to cheswriters@gmail.com



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