

Letter From the President



The Good, The Bad and The Potentially Ugly: Last Year's Growth; Plea For Member Responsibility; We Don't Want To Lose You!

The Good

MBPA grew its membership last year to 83 total members, a record for our organization in its current incarnation! Pat yourselves on the back for staying current with your memberships and bringing new members into the fold. It's heartening to see this growth, especially when it's motivated by satisfied members. The resources this growth brings -- in terms of people's energy, brain power and funds -- will allow us to continue adding to the value we bring to our members.

The Bad

Which brings up one not-so-great thing: Of our 83 members, 34 of us -- more than a third of our total membership -- have allowed our memberships to lapse, either through non-payment of original dues or by failure to renew. Aside from being unfair to those who take the time and initiative to keep their status up-to-date, this also hobbles our ability to make future plans because it may mean we don't have the funds needed to apply for festival spaces, rent meeting rooms, etc.

We have set up our website to make it easy for you to keep your member information and your dues payment current. We send these occasional newsletter notices to remind you, and you also receive auto notification directly from the website. So, I ask you to **PLEASE LOG ON NOW** to verify that all your member information is current, and to pay any dues you may owe. We can notify and remind, but it's your responsibility to maintain good standing status.

The Potentially Ugly

We've been fairly lenient about this, but to be fair to those who are being conscientious, we'll be forced to remove anyone from our member rolls who hasn't brought their membership to current status by the end of this month. We will also enforce dues payment at the door for those who join or register via the website but choose to pay in person for meetings, festivals and events. We're sorry to have to take a hard line, but some have taken advantage of our willingness to accept excuses for non-payment in a timely manner. If you're not paid, you may not participate.

If you've allowed your membership to lapse because you felt you weren't getting enough value out of it, fair enough: For several years, we were in start-back-up mode after the group had dwindled for any number of reasons. But that's no longer the case.

- We're providing more -- and more valuable -- educational and marketing opportunities for our members
- We're offering more resources for us all to use in growing our businesses.
- We're leveraging our collective knowledge and experience for real results.
- We're even developing affiliations with related groups and suppliers to give us all a break on relevant promotional opportunities and the things we need to do our work every day. The more members we have, the more clout we have in negotiating these affiliations, so please: If it's been awhile, revisit your account, renew your membership and make any payments due.



We're making it worth your while.

Future Potential

We continue to develop the capabilities of our website as our host, Wild Apricot, implements new functionality. Right now, we're working on providing a gallery-type display of all member companies' titles (see Website Update below), with links back to your websites or online sales pages, which we will promote via our site, our social media presences, and any other opportunity that presents itself. You ARE aware that we're on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), right? We use both to inform you of interesting items that arise between newsletters and meetings, so "follow" and "friend" us, won't you?

As always, I thank those who continue to serve our group with dedication and ask that if you haven't yet invested your own time and talents into our success, you please consider doing so. We're only as strong as you make us, and we have so much potential to make 2011 our best year ever!

Board & Committee News

Two New Faces To Celebrate!

Your MBPA Board of Directors is happy to welcome two new faces to active duty for 2011. Steve Feuer of [Gihon River Press](#) was unanimously elected at our Fall Members Meeting to fill the board position vacated by Marc Gave.

We're very lucky to have Steve bring his many years in the book printing industry to the service of our group. He really knows his stuff, so if you have any questions about book production and printing, Steve's your guy. He's very generous with his knowledge, and I can attest to the fact that he knows what he's talking about.



He's also got a great Rolodex full of industry contacts that he's working to create more member benefits in his role as chair of the Member Benefits/Affiliate Relations committee. Feel free to [contact him](#) if you have any ideas or suggestions for Steve. He's a great guy to talk to, and brings an uncommon level of energy to all his pursuits.



We're also pleased to announce that Bernadene Davis of [Rhema Publishing LLC](#) has stepped up to the plate to serve as Programs committee chair. Programs is responsible for arranging our internal meetings and educational events, so you'll soon be hearing more from Bernadene about the Winter Meeting next month.

Bernadene is a very personable and capable member who has been active in meeting attendance, referring new members and sharing her ideas with everyone. Please don't hesitate to [contact her](#) with your own ideas about what you'd like to see in upcoming member meetings and educational opportunities, because we all want to bring you what you most want and need to help you become more successful publishers.

We're tremendously grateful to have members stepping forward to serve, and we encourage everyone to reach out and welcome these active members to their new service. Please visit our [Committees](#) page to find out about the positions we still need to fill, and consider signing on for a term of service yourself. We most need a Membership Development chair, but will welcome help wherever you feel most comfortable. And you needn't necessarily become a chairperson -- we're equally grateful for help from those who can't commit that

much time but who would be able to volunteer on an as-needed basis, on whatever committee(s) you find interesting. THANKS!

Member News & Announcements

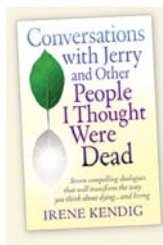
Josan Press

Joanne Aaronson, publisher of [Josan Press](#), signed copies of her book, *The Circle of Life – A Journey Through Grief to Understanding*, at the Edgar Cayce Association for Research and Enlightenment's (ARE) Ancient Mysteries Conference in October. Here, she poses next to her book in the ARE's bookstore. Check out her related [article](#) on our website.



Gihon River Press

[Gihon River Press](#) will be offering Advance Reader Copies (ARCs) of its new title, *URSULA'S PRISM*, in the next 4 to 6 weeks (placeholder cover at left). This nonfiction title tells the unique story of six children who escaped from the Nazi concentration camp, Bergen-Belsen, and their journey of more than a year and a half traveling alone on foot, attempting to reach the British lines at the Dutch border. The book's author, Anna Bilz, is the daughter of Ursula (from the title), and she tells her mother's story in this, her first book. [Contact publisher Steve Feuer](#) if you would like a copy.



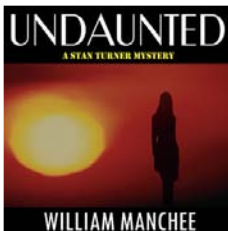
Grateful Press LLC

Publisher and author Irene Kendig of [Grateful Press](#) is pleased to announce that her book, *Conversations With Jerry and Other People I Thought Were Dead*, has won three major industry awards since its release in April, 2010. The book was named a Finalist in the New Age Non-Fiction category of the National Indie Excellence Awards, Winner in the Death and Dying category of the USABookNews 2010 Best Book Awards, and most recently garnered a Silver Medal in the same category of the 2010 Independent Publisher (IPPY) Book Awards.

Renegade Press

In December, 2010, author [Debbi Mack](#) published her second mystery novel *LEAST WANTED* as an ebook on [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#) and [Smashwords](#). The book is the sequel to her first novel, *IDENTITY CRISIS*. *LEAST WANTED* has reached #63 in the "Hardboiled Mystery" category on Kindle, and #76 in the same category at Amazon.

A print version of *LEAST WANTED* is planned for release next month by Renegade Press. Debbi blogs at <http://midlistlife.wordpress.com>.



Top Publications, Ltd.

Most of William Manchee's Stan Turner Mystery series and other novels are available on audio CD and as MP3 download from [Audible.com](#). They are brought to life by three excellent readers: Jeffrey Kafer, Arika Escalona, and William Timnick. For detailed information, visit [Top Publications' website](#) or [Audible](#).



Word Forge Books

Publisher Mary Shafer of [Word Forge Books](#) was awarded a Certificate of Excellence and a Muse Medallion from the [Cat Writers Association](#) at their annual conference in November, for the press kit she developed for *Almost Perfect: Disabled Pets and the People Who Love Them*. The title was released in 2008 under the house's Enspirio House imprint. Shafer contributed an essay to and edited the anthology of 11 true-life inspirational stories.

You can also find these announcements [on their own new page on our website](#).

Website Update



Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes...

If you've visited our website recently, you'll have noticed quite a bit of change. We've given it a visual facelift with some attractive new graphics that reflect our MidAtlantic service territory, but there's quite a bit of new content and some structural changes, as well:

- We've split internal Meetings & Programs and external Festivals & Events into separate pages to make them easier to find and to give us room to accommodate an anticipated fuller slate of activities now and into the future.
- The newsletter has its own page, where the current issue is posted in HTML format, and the previous year's issues are archived as PDF files you can download.
- We now have a Member News page, where you'll find Member Announcements both from the current newsletter and additions made for those that come in between newsletters. Feel free to contact [Mary Shafer](#) to send your news items and any accompanying photos or other graphics at any time, and she'll add them to the page as soon as possible.
- We have added feed frames to our Home page from the Events, Discussion Forum and Blog pages, so you can see at a glance the latest updates to those most active areas of our site. Remember, these are the places you can interact with fellow members at your convenience, so USE THEM! Much of your membership's value derives from interacting with other members who have experience and knowledge you need, but you must be the one to initiate that interaction. If you're stuck in a situation you can't figure out, post a call for help on the Forums -- chances are, someone else has already been there and can help you, maybe even keep you from making a costly mistake.
- If you're in a hurry for such information, you may choose to email a fellow member, and that's great. What's not so great is when non-members troll our site for contact information to add us to potentially unwanted mailing lists or -- worst of all -- spam databases. So, we've moved the Member Directory behind a firewall into a Members Only area. You won't see it show up until you've logged into the site as a member, at which time you can peruse it at leisure, as before.
- We've tried to cluster similar pages together to make navigation more logical, and moved more interesting content to the top of the navigation bar. We hope this makes it easier to find.
- Watch for the addition of a Book Cover Gallery powered by Wild Apricot's service partner, PhotoBucket. We're trying to get this function launched by the end of the first quarter, at which time we'll start promoting it online through our social media presence, press releases and any other available channels.



Winter Members Meeting

Our First Virtual Meeting!

Your board is currently researching online meeting/webinar applications to find the one most suitable for our needs in holding virtual meetings. We voted to increase our member meeting schedule to regular quarterly meetings to increase the frequency of our interaction, probably the biggest benefit of membership. We decided adding a virtual meeting in the wintertime not only sidesteps any potential travel issues due to weather, it also allows our more remote members to attend more economically, safely and conveniently, since there's no travel or lodging to worry about.



We're hoping for a record attendance at this first virtual meeting on Saturday, Feb. 26th. And since there won't be travel time to accommodate, we're hoping to add more time for presentations and group interaction. So block out a full day starting at noon, and expect content that will make it worth your while to attend. We'll give you more details as the time draws nearer, and look forward to "seeing" you there!

For Your Consideration

The following material is provided solely for your information as a courtesy to our members on behalf of a non-profit organization. The information has been deemed relevant and of possible interest to the interests of our members, but the offer and the organization extending it have not been vetted by MBPA. Respond at your own risk. We strongly recommend doing due diligence on the details of any external offers.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLISHERS & BOOKSELLERS

Publishers have the opportunity to create an additional revenue stream while supporting the job training program at Bright Spot Ventures (BSV), an innovative social enterprise created by [West End Neighborhood House](#) in Wilmington, Delaware. Through a partnership with a well-established recycling company, Bright Spot Ventures has the ability to purchase publishers' excess inventory at top dollar. Publishers benefit from:

- knowing their excess inventory is being handled properly and according to industry standards
- being paid competitively
- supporting a non-profit job training program

This business venture will serve as a nine-month paid employment experience for young adults ages 17-22, who are currently in the foster care system or who have recently aged out. These employees will operate an online bookselling and book recycling business as BSV's first youth-managed enterprise.



With the real-world, contextual work experience and support to secure meaningful work and/or education post-BSV, these young adults are less likely to face the negative outcomes that traditionally await youth aging out of the foster care system. They will gain marketable technological and interpersonal skills essential to overall sufficiency in adulthood.

Interested publishers should contact [Carolyn Gordon](#) for more information on Bright Spot Ventures:
Office: 302-658-4171, ext. 191; Cell: 518-542-4833
West End Neighborhood House ~ 710 North Lincoln St. Wilmington, DE 19805

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