

President's Letter

This is the year of The Donald. No, not Trump, but Donald Margulies, one of Connecticut's best playwrights. His newest play, *Times Stands Still*, received good reviews and just ended a respectable run on Broadway. In between a Broadway revival of *Collected Stories* and the Westport Country Playhouse revival of his Pulitzer prize-winning play, *Dinner With Friends*, we will honor him with our annual Mark Twain Award.

Some people may raise eyebrows at the idea that an association with journalists and editors at its core would honor a playwright over perhaps an investigative reporter or historian. Theatre combines the age-old art of storytelling with insights into contemporary events while engaging scores to thousands of people in synchronization with the playwright's story, the director's interpretation and the actors on stage. When that happens, the result is exhilarating.

During the 1980s, there were kidnappings of Americans who were living in the Middle East. Many people who got their news from newspapers, radio and television became inured to the reports. Lee Blessing wrote a play called *Two Rooms* which told the story of a wife's love for her husband, who was being held hostage by terrorists. The set was made up of two rooms -- his cell in Lebanon and his office in Washington, D.C., where his wife was in contact with a government official and a newspaper reporter about his return. She dragged all the furniture out of that room except for a small mat in order to feel more connected with him. Anyone who saw or even read that play could not forget about this couple as one might after tossing out the newspaper. That's the power of theatre.

Margulies, a professor of English at Yale University, also teaches play readers and audiences a thing or two about telling both sides of the story. He doesn't take sides in his plays because people are complex and events are not always as linear as they may first appear to be. If you are not familiar with his plays, you are in for a very pleasant surprise.

Sherry Shameer Cohen

Special Report

Writing Green by Harriet Weinstein

The headline, "New Office Buildings Aim for Green Advantage," came over the Internet from the Waltham, Mass. *Daily News Tribune*, touting the advantages of green commercial buildings. Green buildings are hot.

"Twenty to 30 percent of all commercial buildings will be green in 2010," according to Michele Russo, director of Green Research Communications, McGraw-Hill Construction. The McGraw-Hill description of commercial buildings includes office buildings, libraries, government office buildings and court houses.

This article is dedicated to prodding writers to consider writing about green and sustainable commercial buildings. If you don't know the difference between a bioswale and a Xeriscape, that's OK. If you are a good reporter and writer who can speak to experts and translate their information in a non-technical form, you will succeed.

I will highlight the green aspects of the new Darien Library as an example, following up with a glossary with key buzzwords such as LEED, Energy Star, green and sustainable -- terms you can't live without.

The Darien Library opened in January 10, 2009 and an application has been submitted to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for a Gold certification. The three-story brick structure, plus a mezzanine, contains an active "Main Street" level on the ground floor with book stacks, a children's room, CDs, DVDs, a café, and book checkout areas. There is a third level for research and study and a lower level containing a computer training center, a teen lounge and conference rooms.

The structure has a total square footage of 55,000 feet with 7,000 remaining unfinished. Located at Hecker Avenue and the Boston Post Road, the library has 135,000 books out of a total collection of 160,000 items.

The library has been constructed with non-toxic materials, according to architect Peter Gisolfi (petergisolfiasociates.com). The exterior materials include slate from Vermont, brick from Pennsylvania and low maintenance,

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Member News

Allia Zobel Nolan's recent article, "Worried about what to wear to the CPC Banquet? Who Isn't?" is now available at <http://www.beliefnet.com/Inspiration/2010/03/10-Ways-You-Can-Stop-Worrying.aspx>.

Success Stories

Julian Padowicz's Story

Around the turn of the century, I sat down to write the story of an experience in my childhood. Born in Poland, I was seven years old and living in Warsaw when Hitler attacked us in September of 1939, and my mother and I had made a dramatic escape over the snow-covered Carpathian Mountains the following February. For years people had been telling me to write that story, but my mother had published her own book in 1942, and I couldn't see a "handle" for retelling it until an event in the year 2000 or so.

When I finished it and began sending it around to publishers, I was pleasantly surprised to get very positive comments, in place of the usual form rejection. Unfortunately, much as they liked it, no one seemed to have a "niche" for it. Then, one editor confided to me that publishers did not look kindly on memoirs by non-celebs.

This confused me. My book was an adventure story, and it had been praised by numerous editors – one had called it, "Part Anne Frank, part The Great Escape, and part Marx Brothers," which I took to be a compliment. Why its being true instead of fiction would make it unworthy of publication, was beyond me. I spent a year asking editors and agents who came to speak at the Press Club, why this should be so.

Then it dawned on me: people who write memoirs don't usually write anything else. They are one-shot authors and a poor investment for a publisher. So I sat down and wrote a sequel. I had not intended to, because I felt that anything following our Carpathian Mountains escape would be an anti-climax. But I did manage to cobble together a dramatic story out of our experiences in Hungary and began mentioning the existence of this sequel in my query letters.

Lo and behold, publishers began asking for a second look at *Mother and Me*. Eventually I signed a contract with Academy Chicago Publishers, a boutique publisher well known in academic circles, who had turned the idea down the first time around, and the book came out in 2006 to great reviews and a "Book of the Year" award.

This past November, Academy released the sequel under the title *A Ship in the Harbor*. They are currently preparing a second sequel (trequel?) for publication next year under the title, *Loves of Yulian*.

Pursuing a Dream: Finding an Agent and Publishing a Book by Harriet Weinstein

"So many people dream for years about having a book published, but for me it didn't take so long," says Patricia Lee, author of *The Wrapping Scarf Revolution* and owner of the business BOBO Wrapping Scarf (www.bobowrap.com).

Using Korean-style wrapping scarves or "bojagi" favored by her grandmother and great grandmother to wrap and carry items before disposable plastic and paper took over, Lee created modern-style wrapping scarves, marketing them as "The Eco-Luxe Way to Wrap with Fabric." In addition, Lee continues to operate Greenwich Portraits from her home. A graduate of Rhode Island School of Design, she has a degree in painting.

When it came time to find a publisher for her book, *The Wrapping Scarf Revolution*, Lee had just about completed the manuscript. At first, she attended a meeting of the Connecticut Press Club on self-publishing, but decided to pursue a literary agent. "Self-publishing is an uphill battle," she said. She attended a Connecticut Press Club meeting on finding an agent, and at one point had two agents vying for her manuscript.

Although Lee discovered her publisher through a friend and not her agent, she decided to work with the agent during negotiations. Ultimately, Lee finalized the deal, working directly with the publisher. Currently, Lee is completing a second book, with Korean culture and food as the subject. She is writing a book proposal and after that, she may be actively looking for an agent.

Note: Patricia Lee was recently featured in Redbook in the story "Red-Hot Eco Moms."

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PROGRAM NOTES

Covering the Lucrative Healthcare Beat (Second in an occasional series)

Rebecca Shannonhouse, Editor, *Bottom Line Health*
Trisha Calvo, Executive Editor, *SHAPE Magazine*
George Pawlush, VP Public Relations and Community Affairs, Greenwich Hospital

Bottom Line Health is a newsletter that has short pieces on what consumers need to know about healthcare. Editor Rebecca Shannonhouse looks for one-source stories on topics such as how to choose a radiologist

What makes her happy:

- Writers who save an editor's time by not asking questions on things that they can find out on their own. The best writers have worked as editors and understand this.
- Writers who respond quickly ("That's golden to me") and deliver more than they are asked for.
- People who have diversified writing backgrounds -- periodicals, websites, corporate, non-profit. She did that a lot when she was freelancing.

What ticks her off:

- Writers who call her and are overly familiar. She is somewhat reserved and doesn't like people to talk to her as if she is a life-long buxom buddy.
- Writers who call too often. If she doesn't respond, move on. "Don't be a pest."

The Bottom Line family of publications also includes the e-letter, Daily Health News, which publishes six stories a week, written by freelancers. Both Daily Health News and Bottom Line Health editors are up to date on health news. If you tell her about a study, chances are that they know about it. Bonus: here is a list of Rebecca's resources:

EurekaAlert! www.eurekaalert.org

Newswise www.newswise.com

Medscape Breaking Conference News www.medscape.com

Ivanhoe Insider www.ivanhoe.com

MedPage Today www.medpagetoday.com

Ask to be added to press office e-mail lists at universities. An excellent professional organization is the Association of Health Care Journalists (www.healthjournalism.org).

SHAPE Magazine is a monthly lifestyle publication. Executive Editor Trisha Calvo is enthusiastic about the health care beat because almost every magazine hires health and nutrition writers.

How to pitch:

- Make sure you pitch your query to the right person. Look at the masthead.
- Package it. Instead of "Know Your Health History," try "Eight Questions to Ask..." Include a potential hed and dek.

- Include the potential lede.

- Show that you can get the information and the right sources and target the needs for SHAPE Magazine's readers.

Surprise advice:

Send some clips (but not too many) by *snail mail*. The reason for not doing this electronically is because sometimes she has to show them to another editor.

"We have to reinvent certain topics {e.g., lose weight, get flat abs, etc.}. Make me excited. Make me fight for it. Show your writing talent. Don't worry about giving away too much." Trisha may not assign you the article you pitched, but if she's impressed, she may assign something else to you.

Greenwich Hospital is following the trend of many hospitals by having more departments operate (no pun intended) independently within the hospital. George Pawlush notes that this offers more opportunities for writers.

"Marketing has become the buzzword," he notes. A lot of PR people have lost their jobs to marketing and advertising. The changes at newspapers have created additional problems for people who were doing traditional PR work. Branding is key. Greenwich Hospital's message is to give patients a good experience and works intensely to get their employees involved in that. Greenwich Hospital also makes a great effort to build relationships within the community. Even the CEO gets out to make himself and the hospital more visible.

Opportunities:

- *Healthy Extensions*, magazines and newsletters distributed by other hospitals need writers and editors. [Note: these are marketing tools. *Better Health*, a publication of the Hospital of Saint Raphael, uses free lancers to write articles to promote its care. Writers can only interview doctors from that particular hospital. The back door entry into the magazine is to write an article about your care there.)

- The Center for Integrative Medicine, a division of Greenwich Hospital, has departments that need articles written and brochures designed.

- Narrative medicine videos are being made at other hospitals to introduce department heads. These can be as short as three minutes. [Note: There are other opportunities to use video. Check out the general introductory video at www.silverhillhospital.org or the patient video guide at www.cumc.columbia.edu.] Some doctors have YouTube channels.

- Podcasts for websites.

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Special Report: Writing Green (cont. from first page)

aluminum-clad wood windows, says Gisolfi. Interior features include porcelain tile, carpeting, wood paneling and easily-cleaned mats by the entrances and exits. There are frittered glass windows on the west facing the courtyard, that is, there are dots of glass that prevent solar heat from entering. The area has shading from trees, but the frittered glass provides additional protection.

Materials for cleaning are green. Ten percent of materials are from recycled sources and 26 percent are local, that is, from no farther than 500 miles.

To provide heating and cooling, the library uses four geothermal wells dug 1,500 feet deep. In the winter, pumps pull the water out of the ground and in the summer, the pumps pull the heat out of the library building, carrying the heat into the ground. The library uses no fuel oil, but does use natural gas for domestic hot water heating and for supplying the building's emergency generator.

Additional energy-saving efforts include sensors in every room monitoring ventilation and lighting, adjusting the systems depending on whether a room is occupied and the amount of sunlight available. Plumbing that includes low-flow faucets and dual-flush toilets reduce water use by more than 40 percent.

Meanwhile, mitigating storm runoff is an ongoing goal. The water from the roof and the 145-car parking lot is rerouted through bioswales, ditches with vegetation such as grasses, where the water infiltrates into the ground system (soaks back into the ground) or runs off slowly.

Previously, the site had been occupied by a gas station with leaking tanks and a car wash releasing detergents into the ground water. The land was remediated, that is, potentially hazardous materials were removed before the library was built. It is now a clean site which is sustainable – storm water runoff is filtered naturally on the site, stored on site and is not causing pollution. Most of the vegetation is native species that thrive without irrigation.

Energy ratings are an important part of green building discussions. The new Darien Library, at 55,000 square feet, is 2.2 times the size of the previous building at 23,000 square feet. Library officials hoped that the amount of energy used in the new building would be no higher than in the old building. At this point, the amount of energy currently used is 15 percent higher than in the old building and is still being reduced.

There is also an energy efficiency figure of 48 percent based on the amount of BTUs used in a year. Architect Gisolfi says that the new building uses approximately 50 percent of the energy of a comparable building that does not use green techniques such as daylighting, geothermal heating and cooling and a very efficient exterior perimeter. The library and architect continue to work to improve the system's efficiency.

Two items writers should know about this story:

1. Is there vegetation on the roof? No. Library officials wanted a New England-style pitched roof which would not accommodate a green roof. Gisolfi says a pitched roof lasts about 80 years, but that it could function for 150 years because it is slate. However, green roofs help reduce water runoffs.

2. Are there solar collectors on the roof? No. According to Gisolfi, at the time they were designing the library, the solar collectors "were not that great -- they are better now," he says.

GREEN/SUSTAINABLE BUILDING TERMS

What is a green building? What is a sustainable building? This looks like an easy question, but it's not easy to obtain a definition because it depends on the expert.

Peter Gisolfi, founder of a company bearing his name and architect on the Darien Library, says he uses "sustainable" to describe buildings instead of "green." According to Gisolfi, "A sustainable building is one that does the minimum possible damage to the wider environment and takes advantage to the greatest possible extent of what's offered to it by its setting." But, Alex Wilson, executive editor at Buildinggreen.com, believes that there are advantages to using the word "green" because he "doesn't know if the buildings we're creating today are truly sustainable."

- **Certifications for buildings.** The most well-known is LEED, The U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Efficiency Design. There are four ratings: platinum, gold, silver and certified.

- **Energy Star** rating. This is a system used by the Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA released its second annual list of the top 25 cities recently with the most buildings with this rating.

- **Renewable energy** is a term used to describe sources like geothermal energy, sun and wind and water. Experts point out that unlike the sun and wind, geothermal energy, which is produced underneath the earth's surface, is always available.

- **Storm runoff** is unfiltered water that flows across parking lots, roof, and roads, for example, and is a major source of water pollution in streams, lakes and oceans.

- **Xeriscape.** Landscaping with as little supplemental water and maintenance as possible.

