

Newsletter for Eastern Idaho Writer's League, inc.

## New Year's Greetings from the EIWL Board

It is customary to be setting goals and resolutions at the beginning of the new year. This is so important as we are continuing to shape EIWL. Several established authors recently made comments regarding the simplicity of the process of getting a book published in this day of e-books and print on demand—getting a quality book published is still time consuming and tedious. Some writers seem to be skipping the edit and revision phase entirely and publishing substandard books.

The 2010 IWL workshop on publishing by Pat Adair was recorded in the era when kindles were first making an appearance. The main theme of the workshop remains true, although the electronic media devices and publishing opportunities have been advancing continually. The speaker noted that there are many readers still preferring that tangible paper and cardboard book symbolizing an author's painstaking journey into print. Many writers are still striving to become that author who earns a space in the personal libraries of the readers. Other writers may simply want to save memories for future generations of families and friends. One of our main goals is be a group that will benefit all Eastern Idaho writers of many genres and help with the production of quality books, whether they are electronic in nature or hard copies.

Our parent group, IWL, had been helping writers become those authors for eighty years. EIWL is hoping it can continue to help writers get their books published and onto people shelves for forever homes. Some of the keys paths to that success are already being surveyed:

**Workshops   Critique Groups   Open Mic Events   Book Signings**

The Board invites input to help keep our authors on the road to success. This could be as simple as sharing speaker suggestions, helpful websites or books on the craft.

## EIWL Library

We have an audio CD collection of 2010 IWL Conference Workshops which could be checked out to members. Some are slightly outdated but still helpful.

Writing Outside the Box —Barbara Hollace

Publishing Then and Now —Pat Adair

Literary Letters—Deborah Fredericks

Freelance Writing—Patrice Lewis

Marketing—Panel Discussion

Body Language—David Givens

Public Speaking For Authors—Dr. Mark William Cochran

The White Room—Christine Moore

Keep Safe and Sane, Or Not—Ed Santos

Writing a Killer Mystery—Frank Zafiro & Dawn Richard

## Get Connected!

Please share your favorite book on writing to add to our EIWL must-read list in the February newsletter.



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## Special points of interest

- New Year's Greeting
- Workshop by Becky Cook Armstrong see back page for details

## Caxton Press

Caxton Press is one of the oldest independent publishers west of the Rockies. The press originally offered printer and office services, but added a book publishing service in 1925. On March 17, 1937, a fire raged through the west stockroom at the press and spread to second floor offices. The blaze destroyed many books that were under production at the time. Caxton Press did not let the fire prevent them from continuing to work on projects and new equipment was ordered quickly and the business was rebuilt in a much larger building and remains a thriving business in Caldwell.

See Rick Just's Blog for more details on the fire and rebuild.. (The link is also available on the EIWL Member-Only Facebook Group Page)

[https://www.rickjust.com/blog/the-caxton-fire-tap-to-read?fbclid=IwAR0Iq3jnrO24Uonp2PjdBWfidxT\\_IOIM\\_4plj4eGspKdg7rtSomcRVx1HBw](https://www.rickjust.com/blog/the-caxton-fire-tap-to-read?fbclid=IwAR0Iq3jnrO24Uonp2PjdBWfidxT_IOIM_4plj4eGspKdg7rtSomcRVx1HBw)

## Author Guidelines

**CAXTON PRESS** has a long tradition of publishing Western works with timeless appeal. We always are looking for new material. Please follow our guidelines when submitting so that we may give your manuscript the attention it deserves.

**Suggested Topics:** Caxton publishes nonfiction trade books for general audiences. Although we may consider a manuscript on any subject, we prefer nonfiction with a theme such as western or frontier history, travel, pictorials, narratives or western themed cookbooks. We will consider historical fiction if it deals with the West. We do not publish poetry.

**Topics to generally avoid:** "How I spent my years on the farm, on the mountain, in the city, etc." or "My family history."

**Standards:** We prefer to receive a query letter first that outlines your topic. If we feel it has possibilities, we'll usually request some sample chapters and an outline before requesting the complete manuscript. Both physical and digital copies of the work are acceptable and one, or the other, may be requested depending upon the topic and amount of material being submitted.

Use active rather than passive verbs, and vibrant, colorful prose.

The piece must be responsibly researched. Your sources must be thoroughly documented and not infringe on existing copyrights. It is your responsibility to provide all photographs, illustrations, and graphics for your book. **If your manuscript is accepted, the final version must be delivered to us on computer disk or via e-mail** (Microsoft Word format preferred). Some of our books include indexes, and we may ask the author to assemble the index at the appropriate time.

**Style:** We request our authors to follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition).

**Proposals:** Submit a cover letter addressed to the editorial department with your proposal. Introduce yourself and the theme of your manuscript. Tell us about your target audience, and why you think Caxton should publish your book. Include either an outline or a table of contents, a sample of the manuscript (usually one or two chapters), photocopies of artwork samples, and a SASE for return of your materials.

We handle every manuscript we receive carefully, but prudence dictates that you keep a copy of everything you send us. Don't send original documents, photos or artwork unless we request them.

Please allow 8-12 weeks for our response. We receive many manuscripts every year and evaluate each for readability, literary merit, accuracy, research, and salability.

**Send submissions to:**

Caxton Press

Attn: Scott Gipson

312 Main St.

Caldwell, Id. 83605

## A Glossary of Workshop Critiquing Terms from the Wednesday Night Writer's Group Archives by Gary Townsend

**Wandering POV.** This point of view shifts to another character, or to the author, when a piece has been, for instance, “third person, major character” throughout. Omniscient is a valid, though challenging POV; so is multi-character or “selective omniscient.” “First person,” though limiting, can be a good option. There are several others; but once you’ve chosen—it’s best to stay within your choice.

**Author intrusion.** Henry Fielding, in the 18th century, made this work; so did his contemporary, Tobias Smollett. But contemporary readers (usually) like to do their own thinking. “If Buck could have read newspapers,” Jack London famously intruded on behalf of his canine hero, “he would have known that trouble was brewing.”

**Echoes.** A word or phrase occurring too close to its last use by the writer sets up an echo in the reader’s ear. When Thomas Mann did this, it was considered *leitmotiv*; when we do it, it’s usually an error caused by not rereading our own text.

**Sentence variation.** English is rich in potential sentence constructions ; try a few besides “subject, verb, object.” You could put the reader to sleep. Hemingway like to string short, pithy sentences together with conjunctions to achieve subtle contrasts, or wry meanings, or surprises. See *The Garden of Eden*, Chapter One; or the much earlier *The Sun Also Rises*.

**Three-(or two-) legged table.** It takes characters; a plot; a theme; and some say, the way you handle time—to make a story. Remarkably, some people get a long way into a story with one of these elements. Edgar Allen Poe, and much later, John W. Campbell each got away with their characterless stories—once. Plotless stories have enjoyed a long vogue in the *New Yorker*. But until you’re ready for the *New Yorker*—keep in mind these four (or five) basic elements.

**Pacing.** When a story drags, you can often tell; but not as soon as your readers. It’s not a universal cure, but 99% of the problems of pacing respond to the following fix: Use dialogue to enliven a scene that drags as narrative; use narrative ( indirect discourse) to speed up a scene that drags as dialogue ; and as Elmore Leonard advises, “leave out the parts that readers skip.” A master of combining dialogue/indirect discourse to create engaging scenes was Dashiell Hammett. See *The Thin Man*, Chapter One.

**Tone and Mood.** Tone is the writer’s feeling and posture toward the work; mood is what the writer wants the reader to feel in a given scene. Tone should stay the same throughout; mood can change with every paragraph.—or vary, or stay the same.

**Vivid verbs.** Use them—but with one notable exception: go on and use “said” rather than one of 156 possible euphemisms/synonyms for “said” unless you have got a really good reason. Try “verb runs” (circle them) in your rewrite process: look for the excess use of the verb “to be,” weak or inexact verbs; shopworn verbs. See Strunk and White’s discussion in *Elements of Style*.

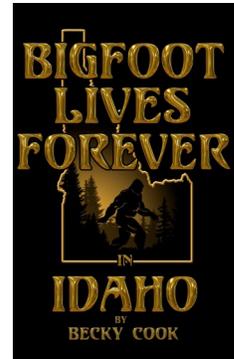
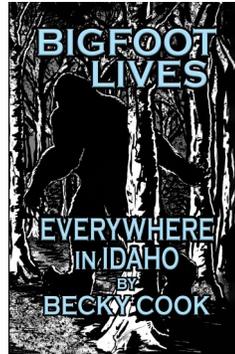
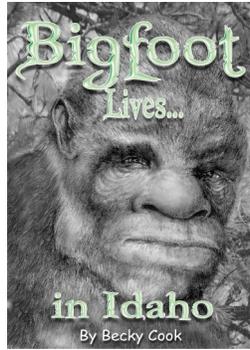
**Showing vs. telling.** Add vivid description to your new respect for vivid verbs; don’t tell things as they’re always told—especially about emotions. Employ senses besides the (exclusively) visual. See the last scene of *Farewell to Arms*, and judge for yourself what Hemmingway (and readers) got for his alleged thirty-nine rewrites.

**Vagueness.** What it means to you isn’t always what it means to your reader. You can only try for precision—for the apt word—but at least, give your final draft a reading. (aloud, it’s suggested) to detect undesired effects.

**Character gawking (a.k.a. “filtering”).** Give the reader the up-front feel of sensory experience, not an unvarying account of a character’s perceptions. “Toby opened the shed and immediately smelled gasoline” is okay; “When Toby opened the shed, there was an immediate acrid scent of gasoline” might be better.

**Paragraph division.** Nonfiction’s “topic sentence/idea transition sentence” structure for paragraphs is pretty well known; less familiar is fiction’s principle of “unity of impression.” It’s very suggestive, even instinctive; but we all have to learn what to leave out, what to leave in, and what to make a separate concern— in accord with the effect /impression we want to achieve with the reader.

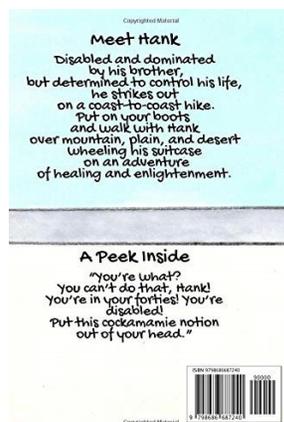
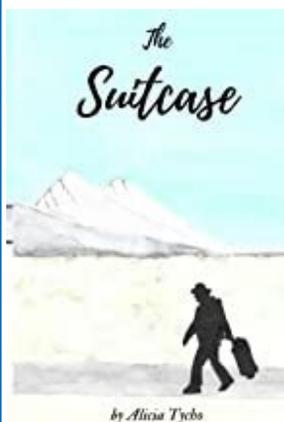
## Back Story: Eastern Idaho Writers—Meet Becky Cook Armstrong



Becky Cook Armstrong is an Idaho native who loves to write. She has written for numerous newspapers and magazines throughout the western United States and has reported local, regional, and national news. She has been fascinated with Bigfoot sightings and stories all her life and it is the favorite subject for her children as well. It's more than a casual interest, with hundreds of stories that have been told to her over the course of her lifetime starting when she was four years old. She has compiled the stories into four books: *Bigfoot Lives in Idaho*, *Bigfoot Still Lives in Idaho*, *Bigfoot Lives Forever in Idaho* and *Bigfoot Lives Everywhere in Idaho*. Becky is one of the 100 tallest women in the United States but she is still shorter than some of the Bigfoot she has seen personally.

### Beyond Bigfoot:

Becky has a book of memoirs based around her changing flock of chickens called *The Chicken Chronicles*. Last year she published a children's book called *the Grumpy Genie* and has two more books in that series going to print shortly – *the Grateful Genie* and *the Generous Genie*. She has numerous projects ongoing currently and is always finding new subject matter to write about.



Available on Amazon by local author Alicia Tycho.

### January Workshop with Becky Cook Armstrong

EIWL is excited to host a workshop January 15, 2022 from 3-5 p.m. at Idaho Falls High School library. Please join us and meet Becky Cook Armstrong and learn more about her books and experiences as an Eastern Idaho writer. She will also share some information on self publishing vs. traditional publishing.

We are also hoping to have a workshop available at Portneuf District Library in Chubbuck at the same time. We are still working out details for that event.

**Please RSVP to [cowpirancher@aol.com](mailto:cowpirancher@aol.com)**  
These workshops will also be available via Zoom.