### { 7th Annual }

### Joplin Writers' Faire

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# featuring...

Local & Regional Authors

Door Prizes

Multiple Genres



## Joplin Public Library Sat., Oct. 7th | 10am-lpm











#### 2023 Joplin Writers' Faire

Post Art Library, Joplin Public Library, and Friends of the Joplin Public Library welcome you to the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Joplin Writers' Faire! This year's event features 40+ local and regional authors, a Friends of the Joplin Public Library book sale, book signings, and a chance to win door prizes.

The Joplin Writers' Faire is a FREE annual event co-hosted by Post Art Library and Joplin Public Library. Its purpose is to connect all sorts of writers with existing and potentially new audiences while encouraging community support of local and regional authors. Friends of the Joplin Public Library is the premier sponsor for the 2023 Joplin Writers' Faire

#### **2023 WRITERS' BIOGRAPHIES**

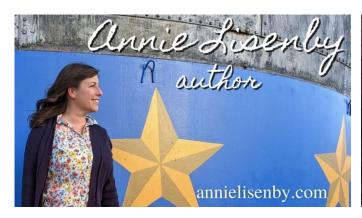
Note: All biographies contained herein were submitted or written by writers' faire participants. Any opinions or views expressed are the opinions and views of the authors and not Post Art Library or Joplin Public Library. Biographies are organized alphabetically by first name.

Amanda Stacey is an indie author and full-time mom. She attended an art school and MSSU, but ultimately deserted both before finishing her education. Now, Amanda is a glorified personal chef, taxi, and secretary as a wife and mother. She spends her bits of spare time creating worlds and deleting characters in her supernatural fantasy series, The Lilith Series. She wove together the first book, Born out of Darkness, and self-published it in January 2023. She is now weaving together the second installment in the mashup of supernatural fantasy and mythology. Amanda be finished by December 2024. Visit website: hesitantly hopes to her www.amandastaceybooks.com for more info and social media links!





A native of the Missouri Ozarks, **Annie Lisenby** has an MFA in theatre. She has performed professionally, is a member of the Screen Actors Guild, and is currently a theatre program director at a community college. As an author, Annie is a member of the Joplin Writers Guild and published in *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. In 2022, Annie's debut young adult novel, *A Three-Letter Name*, was released. It became an Amazon best-seller and won Best Indie Book by a Missouri Author through the Indie Author Project. When not writing or teaching, Annie enjoys exploring the Ozarks with her husband and two children. She also leads writing workshops based on her upcoming book *From Stage to Page*, a guide in using theatre techniques to add flair to writing.



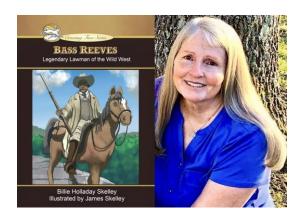


**Becca Turner** was raised in Missouri, except for a couple of formative years in SW Oklahoma that left her with an Okie accent. One day, she was reading cowboy romance novels and wondered why they're all set in Texas. Then she set out to do something about it. She lives in Missouri with her husband and two dogs.



**Billie Holladay Skelley** (B.H. Skelley), a Pushcart Prize nominee and a Best of the Net nominee, received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has written several health-related articles for both professional and lay journals, but her writing

crosses different genres and has appeared in various journals, magazines, and anthologies in print and online—ranging from the *American Journal of Nursing* to *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. An award-winning author, she has written twelve books for children and teens. Her book, *Ruth Law: The Queen of the Air*, was selected to receive the 2021 American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) Children's Literature Award, and her book, *Bass Reeves: Legendary Lawman of the Wild West*, took First Place in the Biography Category of the 2023 Purple Dragonfly Book Awards. Connect with Billie at https://bhskelley.com.

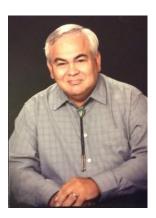


**C. Britt** lives in the midwestern United States with her husband, cat, and two dogs. She enjoys spending time sewing, photographing nature, playing video games, and (of course) dreaming up fictional worlds to write about. She's always been an avid reader, but in recent years she's grown more and more excited about creating her own stories. She's written hundreds of short stories over the last few years and shared many of them on Reddit. Nowadays, she's branching out and recently released her debut novel, Monstra Inter.



**Calvin Cassady** is an accomplished writer and spiritual seeker known for his inspirational memoir *Bridging the Gap, A Spiritual Journey to Heaven and Back.* With a background in

education, Calvin's faith journey led him to explore the intersection between spirituality and everyday life. As an author, Calvin is committed to sharing stories that offer hope, solace, and deeper understanding of Christianity. When he's not writing, Calvin spends quality time with his loving family, participating in church activities, and immersing himself in the beauty of nature. His unwavering faith and dedication to sharing his message makes him a beacon of light in the world of Christian literature.



**Chase Shirk** is an 18-year-old self-published author who loves reading, watching, and playing all things fantasy. With a passion for storytelling, and having been inspired by his favorite fantasy works, he decided to create his own story to share with others. His new series, Dragonlord, is the culmination of that desire and passion. His dream is he'll get to meet people who enjoy his book and talk with them about it, like how he enjoys discussing some of his favorite series with others.



**C.G. Baird** is an innovator and compassionate leader who understands the challenges and pitfalls associated with operating a successful childcare center. She decided to take the events of Scary Gary and turn them into a children's book to help fund her mission to educate other in-

home providers and early childcare centers about the importance of going above their state childcare regulations and minimum standards to both improve their business and their income as early childcare business owners.



**Clarissa Willis** is an author, consultant, and professional developmental specialist. She provides workshops, keynote addresses, and customized professional development, both nationally and internationally. In her spare time, she writes early childhood curricula, teacher resource books, and books for children. *Anderson the Ornithologist* tells the story of a young boy who loves birds and, through that, learns to make a new friend. Released late in 2022, *Fast as The Wind, The Story of Johnny Fry, First Pony Express Rider*, is one of three finalists for a Will Roger's Medallion for Best Children's Book about the American West (2022).



**Clay Dwyer** is a new children's author recently releasing his first publication, *Mighty Maggie: Defender of Tulips*. Clay finds inspiration through his two children and their adventures. For more on upcoming books visit https://claydwyer.com.







**D.A. Power** read her first sentence in a book independently at the age of four. Ever since, she became a lifelong bookworm and lover of stories. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Piano Performance from Southwestern Oklahoma State University, and has been a professional pianist for over 30 years. This is her debut novel. Power makes her home in Joplin, Missouri with her husband, Aaron, and their three sons. If you're interested in learning more, follow her on Twitter @D.A. Power, donnapower2022 on Instagram, and D.A. Power on Facebook.



**D.L. Golden** is a LitRPG author out of South Eastern Kansas. He has been writing since he was young, but only recently decided to publish his first novel, *Origins: Book 1* in The Dreamcatcher Series, which he started working on in the spring of 2020. He is currently working on the sequel story, *Odysseia*, which he plans to release in late spring or early summer in 2024.





**Doug Godsman** is a ScoCanCalArkieMo (Scottish Canadian Californian Arkansas Missourian)! He's also a writer who finished a three-book series of historical adventures. The series starts in Bonnie Scotland in 1905 and includes the realistic, non-Titanic, immigrants' voyage to and beyond Ellis Island. The series includes "Harvey Weinstein and Bernie Madoff" characters, an Arkansas mine, thieves, Mississippi gambling boats, a major natural disaster and sweet romance. (No, it's not a "romance novel" and is rated PG13!) When Doug writes, his intentions are to entertain, to inform, to educate, and to have readers finish the last page well-satisfied and happy they have spent their time wisely. His 3,000-plus readers-to-date tell him he's achieved this and more. Doug lives in southwest Missouri with his long-time partner, Phyllis, his Jack Russell mix, Mollie, and his one-and-a-half cats, Domino and Kat (which is short for Katherin, but he's a boy... Long story!).



**Elton Gahr** was born in Kalispell, Montana in 1977. He lived there until 2002 when he moved to Joplin, Missouri. He wrote his first short story in kindergarten, and continued to handwrite stories throughout school, writing choose your own adventure stories, short stories, and comic books, some alone and some with friends. He began to write more seriously once he graduated high school and has published twelve novels and hundreds of short stories. He works as a full-time writer.



**F.C. Shultz** is an author and poet whose work has appeared in *Ekstasis* Magazine, *Every Day Fiction*, and the Of Gods and Globes anthologies. He's the poetry editor for *The Joplin Toad* and lives in the Midwest with his wife and two kids. He's trying to cultivate a deep appreciation for the simple pleasures, which means writing a lot of poems about birds (and novels about dragons). You can find free books and poems at fcshultz.com.



**Gary Nodler** served as a Republican in the Missouri State Senate. He was born in Champaign, Illinois, raised in Neosho, Missouri, and attended Crowder College and Missouri Southern State University, where he received his B.A. degree in political science in 1972. In 2007, he was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Education degree from Western Missouri State University. He has served in the United States Army and in the Missouri National Guard. He is a member of the First Christian Church of Webb City and the American Legion. He served as Congressman Gene Taylor's district staff director from 1973 to 1988. He became a regional administrator of the Small Business Administration in 1989, serving through 1992. He was appointed by President George H. W. Bush to the Cabinet level Rural Economic Policy Working Group of the White House Economic Policy Council from 1991 to 1992. He served as staff for the Missouri Congressional delegation from 1997 through 2000. He served on Governor Bob Holden's Commission on the Future of Higher Education. He was first elected to the Missouri State Senate in 2002. Nodler wrote Senate Bill 55 elevating Missouri Southern State College to university status and renaming

it Missouri Southern State University. He also authored Senate Bill 389, which included the Lewis & Clark Discovery Initiative, providing capital improvements to Missouri higher education institutions, including \$20 million to Missouri Southern State University for the school's Health Sciences Building. He served as Assistant Majority Floor Leader and on the following committees: Appropriations-Chairman, Education-Chairman, Joint Committee on Legislative Research and Oversight-Chairman, Pensions/Veterans Affairs and General Laws, Joint Committee on Capital Improvements and Leases Oversight, Joint Committee on Education, Joint Committee on Government Accountability, Joint Committee on the Life Sciences. After leaving the Senate, Nodler served 3 years on the Board of the Joplin Sports Authority and served as a member of the Joplin School Board. In August 2018, he was appointed by Governor Mike Parson to the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education; in December 2022, he was elected chairman of the board. In late 2022, Nodler became an author publishing *Experiencing Life and the Universe.* The book, surprisingly, is not about politics, but metaphysics.



**H. Russell Smith**, poet and author of *Time Machines, Annoying Minotaurs, and Other Childish Pursuits* and *Windmills*, is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. His work can be found in print and online in several journals including *Star\*Line, The Flying Saucer Poetry Review, The Starlight SciFaiku Review, Southwestern American Literature, CQ Magazine*, and *The Whisky Blot*. An avid Ham Radio Operator, Rusty works as an electrical engineer and is currently earning a doctorate from Rockhurst University in Kansas City. Expect a third volume of poetry, *Saints & Sunflowers: Saints, Sunflowers, and a Compass*, in the not too distant future.



**J.C. Brice** writes fantasy and dark romance from her cozy bed when she's not wrangling her three kids or studying for exams. Writing is not her full time career, but a hobby she loves. She applied to medical school this year and is very excited for the release of *The Court of Shadows* and *Innuendo Friday*, November 24th. Her tiktok is also @your\_metalauthor as well as her Facebook.





**Kayla Branstetter** (she/her) is a published writer, an award-winning artist, and Tedx speaker from Missouri. While growing up she split her time between rural Missouri and the suburbs of Denver. With her feet in two worlds, she became adept at connecting with people from diverse backgrounds. She has a passion for breaking through barriers to achieve gender equality and amplifying marginalized voices. She is currently working on her first nonfiction book where women tell their stories about abortion, birth, and infertility. She is currently an English Instructor for Crowder College and holds an MALS degree in Art, Literature, and Culture from the University of Denver.



**LaDonna Greiner** is an author and photographer whose work is based on gratitude. Her most recent book, *I'm Here for a Purpose*, includes striking photographs and true stories of her hiking adventures, such as surviving a lighting and rain storm on a freezing January night atop Taum Sauk Mountain. As you might imagine, she's grateful to be alive! Other books include *21 Reasons to Say Thank You with a Grateful Heart*. These books include the benefits of living gratefully and guide you through 21 suggested notes of gratitude.



**Larry Wood** is a retired public school teacher and freelance writer specializing in the history of Missouri and the Ozarks. His books include *Wicked Joplin* and the *Two Civil War Battles of Newtonia*. He maintains a blog on regional history at www.ozarks-history.blogspot.com. Find him on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/AuthorLarryWood/.



**Malarkey Books** is a small press based in the middle of nowhere. Our mission is simple: publish good books. We don't chase trends or cater to a specific niche. We just love books.

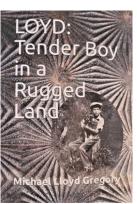


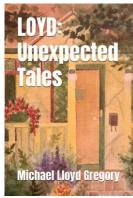
Margarite Stever grew up in Asbury, a tiny Missouri town of just over 200 people. She lives in a larger city now, but tries to stay true to her small town, country roots. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English from Missouri Southern State University. She writes stories and essays that touch a person's heart. Margarite is a member of Joplin Writers' Guild, Missouri Writers Guild, Sleuths' Ink Mystery Writers, serves on the board of Ozarks Writers League, and is Vice President of Ozarks Romance Authors. Her new paranormal romantic suspense novel, Sally's Secret Legacy, was released on September 20, 2023. She published her short story collection, Moonbeams and Ashes, in October of 2021. Her work has appeared in several anthologies, magazines, and journals, including Chicken Soup for the Soul: It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas. You can visit her website at www.margaritestever.com. Her seeds of wisdom and joy can be seen on her blog at http://ozarksmaven.com/, which has been read in over 90 countries.



Memoirist, artist, singer, storyteller, tailor, gardener, cat fancier, car enthusiast, and retired public school teacher **Michael Lloyd Gregory** has long believed that no one should be limited by their environment, the expectations of others, or gender norms in any pursuit that brings them happiness. Gregory has published two volumes of autobiographical work: *LOYD: Tender Boy in a Rugged Land*, the story of his upbringing, delightfully influenced by his family in rural McDonald County, Missouri, and *LOYD: Unexpected Tales*, which focuses on paranormal experiences of Gregory and his family. Both books are available on Amazon.com or can be purchased with special pricing at the Writers' Faire. Email: loydtenderboy@gmail.com; Facebook: www.facebook.com/loydtenderboy; Amazon: Amazon.com/author/michael-lloyd-gregory.







**Rick J. Gunter** was born and raised in the Missouri Ozarks of Texas County, Missouri, where he explored ghost towns and listened to the stories of old timers who lived there. After college, he spent over 30 years as a Software Engineer in the US Defense Industry, working in Texas, Maryland, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Colorado. Today, Rick is fulfilling his lifelong dream of writing historical fiction and non-fiction stories. He lives in southwest Missouri, researching Ozarks history and collecting antiques, old books, and old photos with his wife, Debra. He is also the Admin for the Facebook groups Ozark History, Families, and Photographs, and Little Town of Marmaros.



**N. Jade Gray** grew up on a farm in Oklahoma with one sister and three brothers. She began reading romance novels in high school and was hooked. In an attempt to entertain her friends, she began writing stories. The biggest hurdle she had to overcome with her writing was sharing her stories. Her former writing groups, the Wichita and Regional Authors and Low Country Romance Writers, helped with her confidence and shook the needed pom-poms to get her motivated for publication. She is also a former member of the Romance Writers of America. She met her husband while attending college and has two grown sons. Her oldest son is married and has two daughters.

Not really knowing what she wanted to do when she grew up, she's held various jobs in the accounting and legal fields. She lives in Missouri with her husband, rescue cats, Meera, Mango, and Pancake, along with one spoiled dog-named Fabio. Yes, she helped named the dog. She loves to hear her husband calling for his four-legged companion.



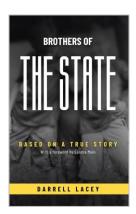
**Nancy Hughes** has lived in Missouri all her life and has yet to figure out the humidity! She says if you saw her hair, then you would completely understand that statement. Her life is filled with joy and fabulous fun as she loves on three children and six grandchildren (the youngest has cured any ideas of more babies). She became a member of the Widowhood Club in 2005, and has written two books to encourage those on this difficult journey with her. She's also written

five children's books as well as a women's devotional and speaks throughout the country to women's groups, conferences, and retreats. "With all my heart I can tell you that absolutely nothing happens to us that has not first passed through our Father's Hands... and He is faithful! Now if He could just do something about my hair." –Nancy Hughes



**Ozark Hollow Press** is a small, hybrid publishing company originating in the Ozarks of the Midwest. Among our ranks is a business owner of over 20 years, an undergraduate college student and part-time Twitch streamer, a medical intern, an anthropologist and RPG writer, and an English teacher with more degrees than letters in her name. We believe everyone has a unique story inside them, even those who don't think they do. You don't need to be a professional writer to write and share your stories. We seek out and celebrate the unconventional in any form – be it author, story, or writing situation.





**Randy** Turner is a retired teacher and former newspaper reporter and editor who received more than 30 national, state, and regional awards for investigative reporting and feature writing. He is the author or co-author of 17 non-fiction books, including *5:41: Stories from the Joplin Tornado* (10th anniversary edition), *Only in Lamar Missouri: Harry Truman, Wyatt Earp and Legendary Locals*, and *Newton County Memories*, and three novels, *Devil's Messenger, No Child Left Alive*, and *Small Town News*.



**R.H. Burkett** (aka Ruth Weeks) is an international tarot card reader and award-winning author who draws from her Cherokee and Cajun roots to write tales of the paranormal. From her travels to ancient stone circles in rural Ireland, to the French Quarters of New Orleans, she tells stories that encompass her love of all things mystical. Ruth lives in Springdale, Arkansas with her familiar, Fred.



Robert John Dopp is a simple individual that enjoys life and has learned much from it. He is constantly studying the Bible and teaching the Bible to the youth in Sunday morning Bible Study. Robert is always helping family, friends, and strangers and is willing to listen to anyone who needs an ear. What is most important to Robert is God, followed by family and country. Robert has served in the United States of America Air Force for one year. He is very patriotic, supporting the men and women of the arm forces. Robert believes that service to humanity is the best work of life. He has worked as a Behavior Support Tech dealing with high functioning autistic and behavior troubled individuals. A saying of Robert's is: "In school, you learn the lesson to take the test. In life, you take the test to learn the lesson." He believes a person is never too old to learn something new everyday, that life is a constant learning process from the day you are born until the day you die, and we all must learn to live in peace and harmony with each other. No matter

who you are, life is precious and we are to care for and help one another. Over the years, Robert has inspired young lives to better themselves as well as those around them. May God bless you always.



**Roger Desrochers** is a local prize-winning author with contest entries like *Life is Funny* and *The Message*. His genre is general audience, young adult. Currently having fun with the Running For My Life series—following Greg's misadventures in 2000-word flash stories of campy fun-filled fantasy and horror.



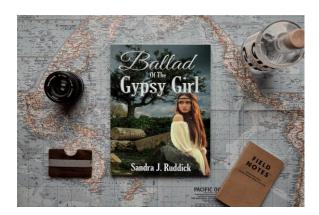
**Roger Hagan** recently relocated back to southwest Missouri after spending 44 years in other states. He's worked in digital marketing, education, the ministry, and as a former editor for a Mississippi novelist. He's a Neosho, Missouri high school graduate and has a BA in English/Education from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri, and an ME in Education and Journalism from Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Recently, he was a Baseball Chaplain for the St. Louis Cardinals AAA team, and for the Kansas City Royals AA team. He's also a Kansas City Chiefs, Royals and Cardinals fan as well as a writer who aspires to be published and looks forward to sharing his works at this event.



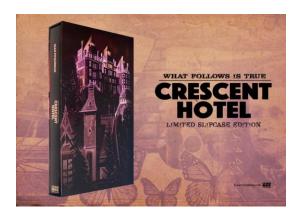
A Michigan native, **Sandra Parrill** has made Joplin, Missouri home for over 50 years. A former long-time employee at Ozark Nursery, Sandra has been a life-long gardener, artist, and writer, and with her husband Jim Parrill, gardens at Chaos, their acre of the Ozarks in Joplin, Missouri. Now in her tenth year as garden columnist published weekly in the Joplin Globe Weekend edition; she pens "Speaking of Gardens"; tales of Chaos, the force that drives Nature and is also the usual state of the garden; the natural world and gardening as a metaphor for life. Sandra was winner of The Missouri Writers Guild 2018 first place award for Best Newspaper Column. She is a Master Gardener, past member of the Missouri Landscape and Nursery Association and is currently serving as vice president of the Joplin Regional Artist Coalition board. Her paintings inspired by Chaos can often be seen at several regional galleries and shows and she is often a featured speaker at local garden clubs.



**Sandra Ruddick-Darr** was born and raised in Joplin, Missouri. She is both a writer and an artist. She loves the moon and coffee, but, most of all, she is a proud mother of two amazing kids. She has been writing and drawing since she was 12. She has four books of poetry out and one novel so far. She looks forward to sharing more of her writing that is in the works. You can find her on Instagram @sruddickdarr or visit linktr.ee/Sruddickdarr.



**Sean Fitzgibbon** explores unusual, real places and events through his artwork and writing. He has an MFA in art and a passion for making art and visual storytelling. He is a 2021 Artists 360 recipient and a 2022 recipient of the Arkansas Arts Council Individual Artist Fellowship Award for graphic nonfiction What Follows Is True: Crescent Hotel, which explores the hotel's strange two years as the Baker Hospital, one of the darkest and most controversial legends in the town of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. He has exhibited work throughout the US, including an August 2023 exhibit at Joplin Public Library. Follow Sean and his work on Instagram at instagram.com/seanpfitzgibbon and facebook at facebook.com/seanfitzgibbonart.



Born and raised in northwest Montana, **Seth Wolfshorndl** currently resides in Joplin with his wife and daughter. He has taught art at Joplin High School for over twenty years, where he is also the sponsor of the JHS Cartoonist Club. He keeps busy freelance illustrating for such clients as Glacier National Park and has been a featured artist for the Joplin Toad magazine. He writes and draws graphic novels that include *Random Ink, Duel,* and *Rook City.* 



**Steve Belcher's** Spiritual Experience November 20, 2012: Steve lived a good bit of his life with no consideration of his being an alcoholic. He accepted his wretched existence with no awareness of an alternative. He was selfish, self-centered, full of fear. This, he thought, was his lot and what of it?

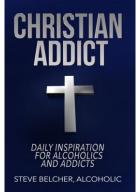
One night, Steve found himself in a very dark place as the result of a bad spree. He screwed up badly this time. Now, he believes this was all a part of God's plan for him and that God was in control. He was a long way from God then, even though if you had asked him, he would have quickly responded: "I am a Christian!"

He was in the city jail on a D.W.I. charge. There were no choices for him. God was in control and he had Steve confined by humans who were just doing their job. God had Steve's full attention. He was in a very deep, dark hole. There was not a human being on earth who could help him. It was time to consider other options. To continue on the road to disaster, or turn to God in prayer asking for help. Steve prayed.

God heard Steve's prayer and answered. He made his presence known to Steve, raising feelings in him which he cannot explain in words. God took away all Steve's fears and gave him the gift of his Spirit, his love, and his glory. Steve thanks him every day; he will never forget this miracle.

Two days later, God led Steve to Alcoholics Anonymous, a place where he could learn how to live without alcohol and serve God by working with others like him. Steve's choice had been made. He has not tasted alcohol or used any other mind altering drug since. Psalm 34 describes Steve's first spiritual experience; it is his favorite Psalm.





**T. Michael Burt** was born and raised in Missouri. As a child, his imagination ran wild. On the school playground, he gathered all the sparkling limestone knowing he had found gold, and struck it rich! Needless to say, his gold mining venture didn't pan out (pun intended) and he was forced to get a "real job." Okay, to be honest, he had to get several jobs, shaping him into a jack-of-all-trades. He now writes fiction books full of adventure and excitement, making him feel like that young boy on the playground again. He lives with his sweet wife and his own Guardian, Pickles, the Morkie dog. He has two daughters who grew up without his permission and got married and left home. He also has one talented son that has flown the coop, off on his own adventure. He is blessed with one granddaughter who happens to be the light of his world.



**Terry Zahniser McDermid** started telling stories when she was little, according to her parents. Since then, she's gone on to write articles, short stories, educational materials, and novels. Her works have been published in magazines, educational resources, and devotionals for adults and children, including *Woman's World, Harris' Farmer's Almanac, Teaching Today, Instructor, Wonder Time*, and *Primary Treasures*. Her books have been published by Avalon Books, Good Year Books, and Harlequin and she is currently re-releasing her books through Amazon Kindle. Her blog, Monday Musings, shares thoughts on a variety of topics. In addition to writing, Terry

enjoys teaching workshops for writers and those wanting to write their life story. More info can be found at her website: www.terrymcdermid.com.



**THANK YOU** for supporting the 2023 Joplin Writers' Faire. Applications for the 2024 event will open on or around August 1, 2024 on the Joplin Public Library website. If you're interested in becoming a sponsor, then contact Joplin Public Library Adult Programming Coordinator Sarah Turner-Hill or Post Art Library Director Jill Halbach at 417-623-7953.

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