



Page Turners

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This newsletter will also appear at: <http://www.joanuptonhall.com/pageturner.htm> with authors' photos

The authors' cooperative, Page Turners, welcomes you to this free, monthly newsletter. We encourage you to forward it to others you think would enjoy it, print it to share with friends, and invite them to subscribe by emailing us. You may unsubscribe at any time.

Contact: PageTurnerHome@aol.com Editor: Joan Upton Hall

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Contents

Mail Bag: Readers Write	1-2
Author of the month: Jackie Griffey	3
Book of the month: <i>The Devil in Merrivale</i>	4
Get 'em While They're Hot! (other releases & successes)	4
Book Sellin', Searchin' & Signin' Shenanigans	5
Fun Stuff, Contests, and Other Offers	6
Readers Ask Authors: L.C. Hayden on the HOT SEAT.7
For Readers who also Write	8
Location, Location, Where Characters ... by Joan Upton Hall	8
We welcome article submissions – see guidelines	
Heads up for Author Sightings (calendar)	11

Need a speaker? Check websites below for a writer near you.

Meet our Staff: Authors whose pages you must turn!

M.D. Benoit <http://www.mdbenoit.com> Science Fiction Mystery, Alternate Reality
 Mayra Calvani <http://www.mavracalvani.com> Horror Dark fantasy, Satire, YA, Children
 David Ciambrone <http://www.davidciambrone.com> Mystery, Technical management, News column
 Diane Fanning <http://www.dianefanning.com> Mystery, True Crime, Suspense
 Jackie Griffey <http://www.jackiegriffey.com> Cozies, romantic suspense, horror, historical
 J.C. Hall <http://www.jc-hall.com> Fantasy, Nonfiction
 Joan Upton Hall <http://www.joanuptonhall.com> Fantasy, Paranormal, Travel/History, Editing advice
 L.C. Hayden <http://lchayden.freeservers.com> Mystery, Inspirational, Horror, Children
 Gloria Oliver <http://www.gloriaoliver.com> Spec Fic, Fantasy/SF/Horror, YA
 Sylvia Dickey Smith <http://www.sylviadickeysmith.com> Mystery suspense
 Cheryl Swanson <http://www.cherylswanson.net> Contemporary thriller, self-help nonfiction
 George Wilhite (website under construction) Mystery/Detective, Western, Speculative, Noir, Nonfiction

MAIL BAG – READERS WRITE

Have questions you'd like to ask any of these authors? Comments about their books? Their favorite desserts? What pets they have?

Write to Page Turners at the email address shown in the masthead.

Be sure to state which author you are addressing.

Dear PT,

In your question suggestions, you mention “What pets [PT authors] have.” I’d like to know from each of you who will answer: What’s your favorite pet and what can you tell us about it? (I believe we can understand a lot about someone by the way they relate to animals.)

—Mandy

Dear Mandy,

Good question, and I agree with your assessment of people as they relate to animals. So I’ll take your question first, and then ask others on the staff to respond one at a time during the coming months. Here goes:

Of all the animals that have owned me: horse, dogs, chickens, fish, rabbit, goats, cows, and cats, I’m now down to only cats—three to be exact. You see I now live in a condo, and the home association would take a dim view of a menagerie. Which one is my favorite? I dare not say (even if I could) because, at this minute, my black cat, Lancelot, is sitting on my desk watching all these little bugs (letters) scamper across my computer screen. If I named one favorite cat, Lance would blab to the others for sure. Besides, how could I choose? Such a question doesn’t fit the multiple-choice concept. (That would be like “Sophie’s Choice,” a movie that’s always haunted me with the horror of having to choose one favorite child.)

All I can say is that the interaction among my three felines is an unending entertainment to me and my husband, Don. I shudder to think how bleak life would be if we didn’t have them. They sense my moods and react just as I need them to at the moment (frequently to make me laugh, sometimes to cuddle, sometimes just to be nearby).

—Joan Upton Hall

Question for readers (or other PT staff members): Do you talk for your pets and have different voices for them? Some folks consider this weird.

What do you think?

Next month: another author, staff member.

Have a first book or other “first” to announce? Tell us about it. Here's all you need to do:

1. Mention PageTurners newsletter (something specific you like about it would be nice — but isn’t required).
2. Announce the title of your book (or whatever), a short blurb about it, and where it can be purchased.
3. Include a short blurb about you as a writer and your website if you have one.

AUTHOR OF THE MONTH: Jackie Griffey

Lives in: Arkansas

Writing genres: Cozies, romantic suspense, historical

Website: <http://www.jackiegriffey.com> & <http://jjgbreaktimewithjackie.blogspot.com>

(Reprint of a recent Interview)

TWL: Jackie, when did your passion for writing begin?

Jackie: I joined **The Penpoint Writers Group in Jacksonville, Arkansas** in 1993 and have been enjoying writing and all things related ever since. I like doing research, meeting new readers and writers too.

TWL: Can you tell us what your typical “writing” day is like?

Jackie: I check my email, do what must be done immediately, and break to eat and run errands before settling down to write (hopefully without interruptions). After all that, I work till 4:30 or 5:00 o'clock.

TWL: Do you write full time?

Jackie: Yes, I'm retired. I'm a “late bloomer” and didn't start writing until I retired. My first book was published in 2003, a historical romance, and I wish I'd started writing sooner. Also that I'd started writing mysteries sooner.

TWL: Who is publishing your book?

Jackie: I'm very pleased that **Zumaya Enigma** has given me a contract for my Merrivale cozy mystery series.

TWL: Can you tell us a little about your book coming out in early 2010?

Jackie: It's a cozy mystery set in a small fictional town in Tennessee and is the first of my series that introduces Sheriff Cas Larkin and his match-making wife, Connie. I hope readers will like it and look forward to visiting Merrivale again for the books that come out each year.

TWL: What are some of the ways you are promoting your book?

Jackie: Word of mouth, **SinC** (Sisters in Crime), and other organizations I'm in. The book is on **Amazon** of course and there are ebooks of them too.

TWL: Do you have a mentor?

Jackie: Not really. I know I've missed my chance to grow up to be **Mary Higgins Clark**, but the library in my home town and the Central Arkansas Library System is very supportive, and all of them have my books. There are also several readers here who have all my books and are waiting for the next one which really warms my heart.

TWL: Can you give aspiring authors words of advice towards getting published?

Jackie: Yes. The main thing is to keep writing and keep sending things out. There are so many publishers and so many formats now, your novel is sure to be published in one or two of them if you refuse to give up. I have had my ups and downs, a lot of rejections (anyone want to paper a room or an office? LOL) but I plan on writing as long as I can see the monitor.

Book of the Month: *The Devil in Merrivale*

by Jackie Griffey

When the body of a popular girl is found brutally stabbed in the woods near Merrivale, Sheriff Cas Larkin discovers a strange “club” at the local high school that smacks of devil worship. As if that weren't enough, there are livestock thieves at work, and the longer he investigates the more tangled things become.

Is the County Judge's son running a satanic cult, coercing his classmates into dark ceremonies and worse?

With the judge himself getting in the way, finding out who's responsible for Denise Davis's untimely death is even more difficult. Cas needs to unravel the mystery as quickly as he can before the strange goings-on get even stranger—or there may be the devil to pay.

Jackie invites you to email her at: www.jackiegriffey.com

GET ‘EM WHILE THEY’RE HOT (Other Releases & Successes)

Voted Pres. & Vice Pres. for Sisters in Crime (Austin, Texas Chapter)

Dave Ciambrone will take over the 2010 presidency, and, yes, men are accepted in the organization as “sisters with a Y chromosome.” Backing him up will be **Joan Upton Hall** as Vice President.

Library Writers’ College Success Spreads by Dave Ciambrone

Following a year and a half of success at Georgetown, Texas, Temple, Texas will also offer writing classes at their public library, under the guidance of instructors, **Sylvia Dickey Smith**, **Joan Upton Hall**, and **Dave Ciambrone**. The first class (one 2-hour session), “**Everything the Unpublished Writer Needs to Know but is Afraid to Ask**” kicks off the series Feb. 2.

Favorite questions from past sessions have been: How do I get an agent? How much will I get paid? Is there such a thing as a good rejection letter? My book doesn't really get interesting until the third chapter, is that okay? Should I send a picture of what I want the cover to look like?

For how to register, please contact the Temple Public Library. For future class offerings at both Georgetown and Temple as they come up, check our “**Heads up for Author Sightings**” at the end of each **PageTurner** issue.

The same authors, plus more, will continue to offer classes for the Spring Semester at Georgetown, Texas. See: www.yesglf.org for class descriptions, dates, and how to register.

Editor’s note: The Library Writers’ College is the brain child of Dr. Dave Ciambrone, who subsequently has become a member of the Library Board at Georgetown.

How to Write it Right by George Wilhite

George Wilhite's second edition of *Writing: Plain & Simple*, a short and easy-to-understand textbook for college developmental writing classes, just came out before Christmas. Produced by TSTC Publishing at Texas State Technical College-Waco, the second edition has Wilhite's "famous?????" Top Ten Mistakes along with an appendix of rules for each of those mistakes. Appendices also include template diagrams to help beginning essay writers and "non-writers" with organizing their essays. The Spring 2010 semester will be the first semester for all WRIT 0200 classes at TSTC-Waco to use Wilhite's new textbook. (George Wilhite, Chair English Department, **Texas State Technical College**, Waco, TX)

Plans are underway for **Texas Mystery Month** events in Waco, but nothing has been confirmed yet.

Writing Update from L.C. Hayden

I've received the ARCs (advance review copies) for my next Harry Bronson novel which **Five Star** plans to release on April 16. The cover is beautiful—the best, I think, of all my covers. Now I'm busy designing bookmarks, flyers, contacting libraries, etc.

I also received the galleys for *Bell-Shaped Flowers*. I already proof read the book and sent it back to the publishers. However, I haven't gotten an actual release date other than soon. I did receive a copy of a review that appeared in *The Baytown Sun*. Part of it reads, "Think **Hallmark Hall of Fame** for L. C. Hayden's latest novelette." It would be absolutely great if Hallmark Hall of Fame did!

Why Casey Had to Die is continuing to sell. In December, **Books in Motion** released the audio version. Please go to www.booksinmotion.com to buy or rent the CD version or download the MP3 version.

Busy writing a stand alone set in El Paso. It's about time I used my home town as the setting for my novel, don't you think?

Book Sellin', Searchin' & Signin' Shenanigans

(Or: A funny thing happened on the way...)

A Surprise for the Surpriser

by Diane Fanning

In December, I did a three-store HEB mini-tour signing books for surprised grocery shoppers. I had two big surprises myself doing those events. In Austin, I was delighted to meet the grown daughter of a **Perry Hall High School (Maryland)** classmate. The other unexpected event was a genuine honor—**Texas Ranger Captain Shawn Palmer** came to one of my San Antonio events to personally deliver a copy of my book, *A Poisoned Passion* that had been signed by every **Texas Ranger** in the state. It simply took my breath away.

Update and Good Wishes

by Diane Fanning

For those of you who have been begging for the next novel featuring Homicide Detective Lucinda Pierce, the new one, *Mistaken Identity*, will be out in May. And, yes, there will be more. I still have another book in the series under contract. I'll focus on that one when I complete the true crime book I have in the works.

Best wishes to all of you in 2010. May your reading give more pleasure, may your days give you more smiles and may the year exceed your wildest dreams.

FUN STUFF, CONTESTS & OFFERS

Contest Reminder from L.C. Hayden

Don't forget to send me names of folks who would like to receive my newsletter. The person who sends me the most names will win a copy of my new release, *Bell Shaped Flowers*, an inspirational young adult novelette along the lines of Hallmark Hall of Fame, or the next Harry Bronson novel, *When Death Intervenes*.

Vegas or Bust – Suggestions Welcome By George Wilhite

George and Rebecca Wilhite will be headed for Los Angeles and Las Vegas in March. No signings or book events set up for that trip yet. Anyone with contacts at bookstores in LA or Vegas, feel free to suggest possible venues. Current plans include spending a couple of nights on the **Queen Mary**, stopping by **The Edison (steampunk club)** in LA's old electric power plant), and then a drive to Vegas for a friend's wedding. On the way back, we hope to stop in Phoenix to see an old friend and western author who seems to be trying to become a member of EVERY re-enactment group in Arizona! **Rot Timanus**, author and illustrator of several books which follow routes taken by famous Westerners and frontiersmen (such as **Lewis & Clark** and **Davy Crockett**), moved to the sunny Southwest a few years ago and has never looked back. We're hoping to see the old adobe home he's been renovating for the past several years.

Freebies Happening Here by Gloria Oliver

Have set up a new freebie page on the website at www.gloriaoliver.com/free.html It includes several free pieces of flash fiction, a prequel story to my *In the Service of Samurai*, and listings to my fanfiction stories for the TV show "**Supernatural**" and the Japanese Anime show "*Gatchaman*". With any luck I will be able to add more book-related stories as time goes on.

Also trying an experiment on Twitter/Facebook with quotes from the books with an Amazon url. Really hard to find quotes that will fit in 140 characters or less too! Will be posting them about 3 times a day since these utilities mostly catch people only when they are on. Was able to make 40 for Samurai. Need to pull more for the other books and hope to do one book a week. Figured it might prove a fun experiment!

Here are my **Twitter** and **Facebook** links in case anyone is interested.

<http://www.twitter.com/GloriaOliver> or @GloriaOliver

Facebook is <http://www.facebook.com/people/Gloria-Oliver/743554244?sid=0>

Oh, and one added bit of news - I finally figured out how to create a **Facebook Fan page!** So if anyone wants to be a fan, you can find that page here: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Colony-TX/Gloria-Oliver/192158048796?ref=search&sid=743554244.1454581322>.

Care to share a flash fiction piece of your own that involves writing?
 Email it to: PageTurnerHome@aol.com with "Flash Fiction" as the subject line.
 (See examples on Gloria 's site: <http://www.gloriaoliver.blogspot.com>)

Want to see YOUR name and promotional information here?
 (and also longer term on Joan Hall's website)?
 See Contest information at: <http://www.joanuptonhall.com/bb.htm#tips>
 See earlier winner(s) (on-going) at: <http://www.joanuptonhall.com/winners.html>

L.C. Hayden on the Hotseat by L.C. Hayden

As an author, I get asked a lot of questions, but the one I get asked the most is "What exactly does L. C. stand for?"

The answer goes back to way before I started writing my novels. Before writing mysteries, I freelanced for several magazines. I looked at the various ones and decided I'd like to write for the treasure magazines. I researched, wrote the article, and since this happened before the invention of computers, I typed the piece. I used my real name as my byline: by Elsie Hayden.

My husband, Rich, took the pictures, printed them (told you it was before computers), and I sent the package in. It came back. "Thanks, but we've just bought a similar piece." I was devastated but did not give up. I researched another buried treasure and eagerly sent it out. It, too, came back. "Thanks, but we've just assigned this to someone else."

Hmm...I wasn't liking this trend, but I must be from Missouri. I wouldn't give up. I sent a third, a fourth, a fifth...They all came back. By this time, I felt like a high school dropout. I picked up a copy of the magazine and slammed it down. Talking to myself, I said aloud, "This is exactly what they're looking for. Why are they not publishing me?"

Rich picked up the magazine and pointed to the title page. "Look at the articles. They're written by John, by Steve, by Mike. There are no Marys, no Susies, no Elsie's."

Being a smart cookie, the light dawned on me. I took out the first rejected manuscript and retyped the first page. The only change I made was the byline. I changed it from by Elsie Hayden to by L. C. Hayden.

The article was immediately accepted. So were a second, and a third. I got used to using the initials and when it came time to write my mysteries and other novels, it felt natural to continue using L. C. instead of Elsie.

And thus, L. C. Hayden, the author, was born (or was I created?)

READERS ASK AUTHORS

HOT SEAT

People are always asking us, “Where did you come up with (such-and-such character, idea, place, etc.)?” Okay, so here’s YOUR chance to find out. Each month, we’ll put the previous month’s Author of the Month on the hot seat to come up with a short answer.

Jackie Griffey is our Featured Author for this month, so check out her website and books and ask away. **Of all questions received, we’ll draw one. Please send your questions by the middle of next month.**

Send your question (**and a sentence or two about yourself if you desire**) to: PageTurnerHome@aol.com or to the author directly through his or her website shown on Page 1.

If your question is chosen, we’ll credit you.

FOR YOU READERS WHO ALSO WRITE

Location, Location: Where Characters Come to Life

by **Joan Upton Hall**

(reprint—first appeared in **HotShots, Heart of Texas SistersinCrime** newsletter
Micqui Miller, editor)

Writers hear a great deal about putting readers into the viewpoint (pov) character’s *head* immediately. I prefer to make that the character’s *skin*, where they not only think, but see, hear, feel, taste, and smell whatever the character does. Thus immersed first hand in the story’s setting, readers don’t just read what is happening, they experience it.

As important as dialogue and action are to establish character and conflict from the outset, you must also ground readers in time and place. If the writer gives no clues that it’s day or night, hot or cold, 18th century or the present, your Faithful Reader, rather than floating in limbo, will assume something, perhaps strolling through the park on a sunny day. Imagine her surprise, on page two, when you have “headlights stab through the darkness and illuminate the driving snow.” Can you think of a better way to remedy this than to give a quick picture of the setting as the character perceives it? Especially if the character has an *attitude* (favorable or un-) about the surroundings, Faithful Reader instantly knows what both character and setting feel, look, and sound like. Movie makers may have an advantage over writers in this respect. Next time you watch a movie, notice all the surroundings and happenings shown even while the credits roll.

Until movies add senses of taste and smell, we writers have the advantage, but do we use it? Unfortunately, those senses are the ones most often left out of a beginning writer’s descriptions too, but oh how powerful they are. Mention the words “popcorn,” “vanilla,” or “gasoline,” and people instantly recall the smell, perhaps even an incident and emotion from a memory.

Most of us find it easy to show visuals, but remember also to use the other senses too. It’s not just “whose *head* we’re in.” We don’t perceive our surroundings by our minds alone. Do you have to rely on a thermometer to know it’s cold? Or test the chemical components in the air to know bread is baking nearby? Must you carry around equipment to measure tweeters, woofers, and decibels to know the car in the next lane has its stereo on loud?

Let's look at a few beginnings from published novels in various genres to see how the authors guided readers to experience the scene.

Death surrounded her. She faced it daily, dreamed of it nightly. Lived with it always.... Ten years as a cop hadn't hardened her toward it. A decade on the force hadn't made her accept it. When she looked death in the eye, it was with the cold steel of the warrior.

Eve Dallas looked at death now. And she looked at one of her own.

Frank Wojinski had been a good cop, solid.... He'd been on the pudgy side and had let his hair gray and thin naturally. It was a rare thing in 2058 for a man to bypass body sculpting and enhancements. Now, in his clear-side view casket with its single spray of mournful lilies, he resembled a peacefully sleeping monk from an earlier time.

—**J.D. Robb** (aka **Nora Roberts**), *Ceremony in Death*, Eve Dallas detective series, futuristic mystery

...Gray Horse Running, one of the Comanche, trembled expectantly as first dawn touched the two mountains with fire. Up there, perhaps still sleeping, waited whatever spirit was to give him his medicine, his spiritual power for a life as a warrior and a man of the People.

He was in his eighteenth summer, and he had prepared a long time. Now he and the spirit would meet, face to face.

—**Elmer Kelton**, *The Wolf and the Buffalo*, western historical

Their stories began with the day that my father appeared. Rachel came running into camp, knees flying, bellowing like a calf separated from its mother. But before anyone could scold her for acting like a wild boy, she launched into a breathless yarn about a stranger at the well, her words spilling out like water into sand.

A wild man without sandals. Matted hair. Dirty face. He kissed her on the mouth, a cousin, son of their aunt, who had watered sheep and goats for her and told off the ruffians at the well.

“What are you babbling?” demanded her father, Laban. “Who is come to the well? Who attends him? How many bags does he carry?”

“He is going to marry me,” said Rachel matter-of-factly, once she had caught her breath. “He says I am for him and that he would marry me tomorrow, if he could. He's coming to ask you.”

—**Anita Diamant**, *The Red Tent*, mainstream historical

Freedom lay within Gloria's grasp. She stood tense before the window of her cell, moonlight framing her nude figure. She ignored the dank chill. Her flame-red hair, usually smoothed tight, fluffed out around her head and shoulders in an unhallowed halo. Well-toned muscles trembled under alabaster skin. The guard fumbled at the lock, dropped the key, and cursed under his breath....

The iron door squeaked open, and she waited for him, smelling his sweat. Waited like the black widow that lived in the corner of her cell. All these seven years, the dynasty of ruthless female spiders had schooled her to forge her secret

hatred into the guise of patience, the model prisoner. Inspired her to keep herself fit and powerful as a wrestler but neat as a priestess.

—**Joan Upton Hall**, *The Shadow of Excalibur*, Book 2 of the *Excalibur Regained* trilogy, urban fantasy

Consider how much you learn about each of the above characters and situations in less than a page each. Isn't that more important than a physical description giving mere drivers' license facts (color of skin, hair, eyes; height and weight; gender; age) that you get in some books? The former passages entice your Faithful Reader to begin forming her own mental picture of the scene, settle into the reading as an active participant, and keep turning pages.

It's something like moving into a new living space (albeit temporary). Real estate agents aren't obsessed with "Location, location!" for no reason. And the most talented of them appeal to senses when showing a house: sight, sound, feeling, and... Are those cookies baking in the oven? In school the salespeople who use the old cookie trick probably learned that our olfactory receptors are directly connected with the primitive limbic system of our brain, considered the seat of emotions.

Hurrah again for us writers! We don't have to bake the cookies. We just mention the smell to tantalize our readers' limbic systems and stir up emotions.

Next time you begin a story, remember that real estate agents aren't the only ones concerned with location, and movie makers aren't the only story tellers who can draw Faithful Readers into a scene.

Think cinematically—but with all five senses.

How-to Advice a Couple of Clicks Away ONGOING COLUMNS for WRITERS:

Ask the Book Doctor: Freelance editor, **Joan Upton Hall**, answers writers' questions. Past issues, first published in various newsletters, also appear on her own: <http://www.joanuptonhall.com/bb.htm> (scroll down and click the link for "Ask Doc" Q&A's).

Have an article about writing or book groups? If it would interest our readers, we'll be happy to print it. We can't pay at this time, but it will serve as a published clip with your byline. Reprints accepted with notice of first publication. [Submission guidelines](#):

1. Send as an attached Word document.
2. Up to 800 words (If editor condenses it, you will have a chance to approve before printing)
3. A short blurb about you as a writer and your website if you have one.
4. Email to: PageTurnerHome@aol.com or jmuHall@aol.com with subject line: "PT submission"

(See next page for **AUTHOR SIGHTINGS** -->)

HEADS UP FOR AUTHOR SIGHTINGS

January through early February, 2010- If you're in the area, stop and see us!

(For private appearances, such as private book clubs, check with author)

L. C. Hayden

Jan. 12: *Everything You Wanted to Know About Publishing, But Were Afraid to Ask*; El Paso Community College; 2 PM

Jan. 29, 30: Key Note Speaker at Solivita in Florida. Contact: jacquiesolivita@cfl.rr.com

David Ciambrone (continuing classes at Georgetown Library Writers' College)

with Helen Nardeccia: Jan. 14, 21, & 28, Thursdays, 7-9 PM: Crafting Memoir from Memory

with Joan Upton Hall: (Wednesdays, Jan. 27, Feb. 3, 17, 24, Mar. 3, 10: 7-9 PM: Creative Writing

with Joan Upton Hall & Sylvia Dickey Smith: Feb. 2, Tues., 7-9 PM: *Everything You Wanted to Know About Publishing, But Were Afraid to Ask* at Temple Public Library, Temple, TX.

Joan Upton Hall

Feb. 5: "First Friday on the Square" all evening at the Williamson County Museum (west side)

Georgetown, Texas. From sales of Joan's historical books: *Just Visitin' Old Texas Jails* and *Grand Old Texas Theaters That Won't Quit*, part of proceeds will go to the museum.