



# Page Turners

## Page Turners

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](mailto:PageTurnerHome@aol.com) ..... Editor: Joan Upton Hall

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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.freesevers.com> Mystery, Inspirational, Horror, Children  
 Gloria Oliver <http://www.gloriaoliver.com> Spec Fic, Fantasy/SF/Horror, YA  
 Sylvia Dickey Smith <http://www.sylviadickeysmit.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,

I enjoy getting your newsletter each month. My favorite section is “Book Sellin’, Searchin’ & Signin’ Shenanigans.” It makes me feel like I know you authors personally and that I’m right there with you. Last month’s was especially funny: How **Gloria Oliver** feels about learning new tech skills (when I thought you writers knew it all). Then how **Diane Fanning** was attacked by a flying deer!!!

Your friend (because you make me feel like one),

—**Lucy H.**

**Editor’s note:** If you read this newsletter, my dear, we definitely DO consider you a friend. And if you’ll read Shenanigans this month, some of us wish you had been “right there with” us during that tornado watch!

Answer to: **San Gabriel Writers’ League’s** letter from: PT author, **L.C. Hayden:**

How wonderful to read the newsletter and see a thank you from you all for my recent presentation on “Writing Dynamic Dialogue.” I had a blast and very much enjoyed meeting all of the members. Your club is filled with warm and enthusiastic folks. Thanks for inviting me to speak to your club.

—**L. C.**

contact me to speak to your club/organization at [lchauthor@yahoo.com](mailto:lchauthor@yahoo.com)

**Editor “Oops!”:** Apologies for misspelling Ottawa, M.D. Benoit’s residence (I spelled it “Ottowa”).

**Have a new publication 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. A short blurb about you as a writer and your website if you have one.

## **AUTHOR OF THE MONTH: Joan Upton Hall**

Lives in: Georgetown, Texas

Writing genres: Speculative, Paranormal, Travel/History, Editing advice

(Combined from TV interviews at both **Dallas** and **Fort Worth** when Book 1 was first released)

**Interviewer:** What gave you the idea to write **Arturo el Rey**?

**Joan:** My dad whetted my interest on the King Arthur legends at an early age, and I was fascinated with the idea that when Arthur was dying, he promised to return when the world needed him. The question always nagged me, “How bad does it have to get to bring him back?” In my novel series, that happens after a global pandemic wipes out more than half the people on earth, and a young Marine realizes it’s up to him to lead the survivors in setting things straight.

**Interviewer:** The idea that this protagonist and a few other characters in your book are reincarnated from Arthurian characters complicates the plot, and might put off some readers. Couldn’t the characters just as well have been only themselves without the baggage of past lives?

**Joan:** Yes, but I like the added depth of modern adaptations of classics. Readers are free to read it at face value if they like—purely as a suspense thriller. On the other hand, there’s the aspect of the characters’ trying to rectify mistakes they made in previous lives. Will they make it or break it in handling moral questions?

**Interviewer:** I understand that you made your career as a high school English teacher before you began writing full time. At least one reviewer called this book “gritty for an English teacher” and noted that you had a surprising familiarity with “street language.” What do you say to that?

**Joan:** Writing fiction requires writers to be able to play many roles. As for “gritty” action and language, keeping your eyes and ears open around high school students, makes a pretty good education. Then too, I read all kinds of books.

**Interviewer:** Besides that, in what ways did being an English teacher influence your writing?

**Joan:** It made me much more conscious of the mechanical errors that mar even published books, so I work at proofreading thoroughly. Unfortunately, it’s hard to catch all your own errors. Fortunately, I’ve had meticulous editors such as **Ginnie Bivona** (then of **Republic of Texas Press**), **Elizabeth Burton** (of **Zumaya Publications**), and **Carlyn Kahl** (then of **State House Press**, part of **Texas A&M Consortium**) Those teaching years also provided much more time to read and study good books—before I got a chance to make a fool of myself in the publishing world. Another benefit was that, in order to help students see deeper meanings, I had to analyze those books myself more than I would have done simply as a reader. It has been purely a bonus to learn how to emulate the skills of great writers and examine what works and what doesn’t in my own writing.

**Post Script:** When a reader told me she enjoyed my **TEOTWAWKI** book, I had to ask someone what that meant. I was surprised to learn that’s another way to say “post Apocalyptic” or “the end of the world as we know it.” (a hard way, if you ask me)

## **Books of the Month: Excalibur Regained: the series by Joan Upton Hall**

When I first began this epic, I intended to crowd it into one book. But such a book would have required a wheel barrow to carry it around. About the same time I realized that, while I had only chosen certain aspects of Arthurian legend, the things that pertained to an adult Arthur most directly, three clear divisions made separate books possible. I completed Book 1, and began trying to find a publisher.

Having published two nonfiction books, which have better chances of publication, I was spoiled and thought I was on my way to stardom.

TOR publishing considered it for almost a year before turning it down. People said for TOR to consider it was a great compliment. But for me, it made me “consider” including my age in the next submission letter along with the words, “Please rush!” (I didn’t, of course.)

I got lucky when I found a small publisher (royalty, not subsidy) who did books in my niche, **Zumaya Publications** in British Columbia. To my great joy, the acquisitions editor, **Elizabeth Burton**, offered me a contract for the proposed trilogy, and I signed up. That publisher is now centered in Austin, Texas, and Book 1 and 2 are available at the usual sources. To see covers, read sample chapters, and find reviews of the first two, go to: <http://www.joanuptonhall.com/books.htm>

### **Book 1 - Arturo el Rey (2005)**

Art Reyes, a young Marine, suffers eerie visions of dying— as none other than King Arthur. Had it only been a legend, Arthur’s promise to return when the world needs him? A terrorist plague puts him to the test in a new dark age. He accepts his destiny when he meets a girl reminiscent of Guinevere and a white-bearded librarian, who calls to mind a certain magician.

### **Book 2 - Shadow of Excalibur (March, 2008)**

After years of relative peace, Arturo el Rey’s former lover forces him to accept her son Edward as his own, then allies herself with a right-wing militia to put Edward on the throne. Art’s beloved Shanna is attacked and on the run, her only help the one man who could destroy them both: Stephen Dubois. As the Rey Alliance teeters on the brink of collapse, the doom of Camelot seems to be repeating, Art must confront demons from both his present and past lives that hang over his head like a sword.

**Book 1 - Arturo's Grail Quest** (working title, scheduled for release sometime next year)

As Art and Shanna age, what new discoveries about their past lives will they discover? What will new generations bring to the saga? Will the Rey Alliance be able continue under the leadership of these new generations? Will each find the Holy Grail of their individual truths? And with one man's misguided notion of what the Grail is, will the new society survive at all?

## **GET 'EM WHILE THEY'RE HOT** (Other Releases & Successes)

### **Finalist - Dream Realm Awards** by Gloria Oliver

**Cross-eyed Dragon Troubles** has been chosen as a finalist for the **2008 Dream Realm Awards** in their Young Adult category! Results should appear in late August. Please visit [www.gloriaoliver.com/crossed.html](http://www.gloriaoliver.com/crossed.html) for more info on the book and sample chapters if you care to take a peek.

### **Textbook to Be Released for Fall 2009 Semester**

**George Wilhite** has been field testing his new textbook, *Writing: Plain and Simple*, during summer classes at Texas State Technical College-Waco. The new textbook, for developmental writing classes, gives easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions on HOW to write a very basic essay. To be published by **TSTC Publishing** for the Fall 2009 semester, the book is a short, inexpensive how-to guide that can be accompanied with whatever grammar textbook the instructor wants (George likes using *Strunk & White's Elements of Style*).

### **Our Cruise Begins—Para aya!** by L.C. Hayden

On May 26, at the Phoenix airport, my husband and I checked in our luggage all the way to Barcelona. We received our tickets to Chicago and to London. Once we're in London, they said, they'll give you the last set of tickets. "Okay," I answered. No problem—or so I thought.

Once in London, we explained that we didn't have the printed tickets. "No problem," the attendant said. Where had I heard that before? She proceeded to check the computer and sure enough, there we were. She looked at us and smiled. "Our machine is broken so I'll handwrite the tickets." She guaranteed us that there would be no problem. Hesitantly, we handed our handwritten tickets to the airline ticket taker. She frowned, but let us in. Whew, the lady was right. No problems.

We arrived in Barcelona and followed the signs to claim our luggage. Once in the area, we couldn't locate the flight we came in. We asked an attendant about it. He told us that we had to claim our luggage at the international area; we were at the local claim area. "And where is that?" I asked.

He pointed with his head. "Para aya." So we went para aya. We walked and walked and still couldn't locate it. We asked another attendant who gave us specific instructions. We went up the stairs just as we've been told and security stopped us. "This is for international flights. You can't come here."

"We've just landed from London and we need to pick up our luggage."

"Let's see those tickets."

We show him our handwritten tickets.

He looked at us as though he was ready to throw us in the slammer. “You wrote these yourself. We need the real tickets.”

I tried to explain that those were real. He wouldn’t believe me so we headed back to Iberia airline booth and explained our dilemma. “Wrong place,” she said. “You have to go to the main Iberia booth.”

“And that’s where?”

Para aya.

Sigh. Still, we headed para aya.

After asking four more people for instructions, we finally found the booth. “Si, we’re Iberia’s main booth, but you need the international one.”

“And that’s—?”

“Upstairs.”

We explained the problem again. “I understand. They’ll take care of you upstairs.”

On our way upstairs, we bumped into the attendant who had originally given us specific instructions. He walked us past the security and took us directly to the international luggage area. Bless his heart!

By then, there were no suitcases so we were directed to go to Lost and Found which was para aya! By now we were getting the hang of this, so we located Lost and Found, but not our luggage. A quick computer search showed they were still in London.

We gave them the name of our motel. They assured it the luggage would be delivered by 8 PM. Rich and I had dinner and we did a bit of sight seeing. We returned to our hotel and no luggage.

I called the airport which was less than 10 miles from our motel. The cost of the call came at 6 and half Euros or \$9.36. Luggage would be there at 10 AM.

We got up, had breakfast, and returned to our room. No luggage. Another 6 and half Euros call later, we were guaranteed it’ll be there by 2 PM. Since I’m an “employee” of Princess Cruise Lines, I had to report in by 3 PM. “No problem,” they said. “But give us your first port-of-call just in case.”

Rich and I spent the day touring Las Ramblas, a two or three mile long street lined with museums, stores, eating places, statues, and parks. Great place. We looked down the street and noticed the fascinating architecture. Could Las Ramblas be wider than this single street? We deviated and began to take pictures of this century old buildings.

What we didn’t know was that was the Red Light District. The prostitutes came out and were infuriated that we were taking their pictures and not paying them. I ignored them, pointed the camera high, and took the pictures. One lady said a non-lady word and threw her can of Fanta at us, aiming for our feet. I took more pictures and walked back to Las Ramblas and eventually back to our motel.

The hotel clerk greeted us with “The luggage is here.” Rich and I did the Happy Dance—oh, okay. I did the Happy Dance. My husband pretended he didn’t know me. The clerk took us to the luggage area and sure enough, there was Rich’s suitcase, but not mine.

Another 6 and half Euros call later, they guaranteed it would be delivered to the Ruby Princess before we sailed at 7 PM.

Since this was the same day that qualifications for the World Cup was to be determined, the streets were filled with people in painted faces, wearing the soccer uniform, and carrying flags and banners. We absolutely loved it. Eventually we reached the ship.

My suitcase still hadn’t arrived.

First thing I had to do was report to the Assistant Cruise Director who would inform me when and where, I’d be speaking, and set me up with the ship store as they would be selling my books. When I finished with that, Rich and I had dinner and went back to our room—and my suitcase arrived!

Another happy dance. And that was the beginning of our super cruise.

Next month: our ghostly encounter? If you want an early peek, check out my blog at <http://lchayden.com> and click on blog. Please leave a comment!

Also, if you’d like to view some pictures of our cruise (includes a visit to Virgin Mary’s house in Turkey,) please drop by my other website at <http://booksbyhayden.com> At the top of the opening page, you’ll see Med Cruise. Click on that.

## Next Cruise Invitation

I would absolutely love it if you joined me on the Oct/Nov. 2009 Celebrity Cruise through the Panama Canal. We catch the ship in San Diego on October 24 and disembark in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, on November 8. Let me know if you'd like to join me as Celebrity told me they would be willing to discount your cruise—not by much but every bit helps—so come sail with me!

## Book Sellin', Searchin' & Signin' Shenanigans

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

### Dauntless Writers Brave the Storm "Last Writes" Critique Group

(7 PM, June 24, Georgetown, Texas) – The night was dark and stormy...honest! It really was! Our area was even under a tornado watch.

**Sylvia Smith** and **Joan Hall**, who live at the same collection of condos (and where we first became good friends) were half surprised when other members of our critique group, "The Last Writes," braved Interstate-35 and met us at our Club House at the appointed date and time. These brave souls are **Joy Nord** (western romance novel & nonfiction) and **Dunbar (D.C.) Campbell** (suspense novel), both from the nearby town of Round Rock.

We hunkered down to work with frequent cell phone calls from \*spouses checking to see if we had lost our minds and asking if we knew a twister had touched down not far away. True, being surrounded by large windows didn't make the best storm shelter. We considered running across the street to my place, through lightning and rain, but nixed the idea. Instead we adjourned to the one windowless, small, enclosed area—the Women's Restroom—where we stayed until the storm passed.

There we sat and completed our critiquing process, knees to knees, in straight chairs (no not potties). D.C. said it was a truly unique experience for him, and he might not tell it to his old Marine buddies.

\*To set the record straight, it was D.C.'s daughter, not his wife, who called him. His wife had gone shopping. Now there's a woman after my own heart!

### A Steampunk Fathers' Day Surprise: 'Retrographic' Writing Machine' by George Wilhite

First you need to know that my 1880s persona name is **Dr. Wright Gooder**. As such, I was surprised on Father's Day with a 1920s vintage x-ray machine case. In the antique shop, my wife and kids put the sign on it, which reads, "Dr. Wright Gooder's Bigger, Better Writing Machine." It will soon become his 1880s "Retrographic' Writing Machine," only because we don't have enough room for a linotype machine. He plans to hang a flat monitor from the swinging arm and put his computer inside.

With temperatures already reaching 105° in June, I haven't planned anything for July or August, except one event. My wife and I will attend a concert of **Abney Park**, a very well-known steampunk band from Seattle. If you haven't heard of **steampunk**, Google it. Interesting concept of personalizing modern equipment (computers, etc.) to look like steam-driven machines. At least that's one aspect of it.

Regarding that, my wife and kids bought me the case of a 1920s x-ray machine for Father's Day which I am modifying to accept my computer—all green metal, black knobs, gauges, switches, and big swingy-arm kinds of things (how's that for descriptive writing?). Looks great in my 1880s study/pool room/ poker room.

Editor's note: To see more of what George says about steampunk, go to <http://www.joanuptonhall.com/pageturner.htm> and see the Jan/Feb 2009 issue, in which he was the featured author.

## **Wanna Be a Writer? Careful What You Wish For** by Jackie Griffey

I'm busy as the proverbial cat on a hot tin roof—wish I could report I'm doing a lotta GOOD! I've put quite a few things on Kindle; have the first of the **Merrivale** series coming out from **Zumaya Publishing** in Nov., 2009 (Trade Paperback)—**The Devil in Merrivale**—they changed the spelling of the town's name); the first of a new cozy mystery series (**Dead on Arrival**) will be out in HC from with **Five Star** January, 2010. They (Five Star) are reading another one (historical) which I hope will make it out in 2010 too. I'm also reinstating two books I put with **Xlibris** back in 2000 since **Amazon** is still trying to get rich on them in their new and used department—I'm not and would like a piece a the action. Ha! I'm pouring caffeine over my stomach growls and working my can off—wish me luck as I do all of us writers.

## **What's in a Name?** by Diane Fanning

When I heard Facebook was offering personalized url's instead of the alphabet/numeral soup, I liked the idea. But I knew there were seven other Diane Fannings on the site so I hurried to nail down my name.

I got it. My page is now: [www.facebook.com/diane.fanning](http://www.facebook.com/diane.fanning)

In the process, I made a new friend, **Diane Fanning from Edinburgh, Scotland**. She is currently on vacation taking her first visit to the states with stops in Washington D.C. and New York.

I've done updates to my website, <http://www.satx.rr.com> including the addition of my favorite reads for 2009—so far. You can find a sample chapter of each of my published books on that site. I'll be adding a chapter for my September 1 release, *A Poisoned Passion*, as soon as I get through the review of the galley proofs.

I have no appearances in the month of July but with two books coming out this fall, I'll be out and about all over the place soon. I hope to see you at one of those events.

## **It's Finished!** by Sylvia Dickey Smith

**Sylvia Dickey Smith** reports completion of her latest novel, a mainstream women's historical fiction set during WW11. She is busy marketing the work to literary agents, and she is excited over the positive results she is receiving.

Keep an eye out for: **A WAR OF HER OWN**

**A WAR OF HER OWN** transports the reader to a time and place when the whole world is at war. Desperate people caught in the backwater of the Great Depression flock to sleepy little Orange, Texas, a town in the middle of social revolution. The population soars over 700 percent as a result of

jobs-for-the-taking at the local shipyards. Folks have money to burn, but with little to spend it on or a place to lay their heads. Except for the distant war, times are good. Production output of dreadnaughts, destroyer escorts, and P-T boats break all records. Signs announce, “If you work here, YOU KNOW you’re good.” Gypsies camp out around open campfires. Shantytowns spring up to accommodate the severe housing shortage. Beds rent by the hour, the sheets still warm from one body when the next body crawls in. Frenetic, hectic, and exhilarating. Life is good for everyone—except Bea Meade, who fights another war, and the enemy resides within her.

## FUN STUFF, CONTESTS & OFFERS

### Chance to Reserve Your Copy by Cheryl Swanson

Who’s afraid of breast cancer? Everyone, including me. But a forthcoming book by PageTurners’ author Cheryl Swanson will help you transform your fear into positive actions needed to protect yourself. In **BUSTING LOOSE: A Breast Cancer Survivor Tells You What Your Doctors Won’t Cheryl Swanson** opens up the life of breast cancer survivors, helping readers understand the vastness of this illness.

It’s an excellent gift for family members, survivors and those in recovery or treatment. According to author **Skip Crayton**, author of the novel, **The Letter Sweater**, based on a journey through breast cancer: “**Cheryl Swanson** holds nothing back and answers all the questions and more; from the shock of discovery, to what’s next, to available options, to how to deal with life beyond diagnosis and surgery. Although the book is hugely informative, to me the best part is that it reads like a conversation with an old friend. Breast Cancer does not just affect the individual; it affects the entire family. If there is one book that is a must read for those facing breast cancer, **Busting Loose** goes beyond anything else in print.”

No newcomer to writing, Swanson has four other books published, including the suspense/thriller, **Death Game**, which she wrote during cancer treatment. While **BUSTING LOOSE** is not yet available, you can receive additional information or reserve a copy by contacting the publisher, **Zumaya Publications**, [www.zumayapublications.com](http://www.zumayapublications.com) or the author at [cherylaswanson@gmail.com](mailto:cherylaswanson@gmail.com).

### The eBook Reader: is it worth it? By M. D. Benoit

First of all, for all the detractors out there, I’ll say it first: reading a paper book is a unique experience, difficult to replicate.

That said, I asked for—and received—a **Sony Reader** (PRS-505) for my birthday last April. Many people who had never heard about eBook readers a year ago now have at least heard about the **Kindle**, thanks to Oprah who raved about it on her show. The Kindle is an amazon.com product (not available in Canada). There are many other readers but the Sony and Kindle are the ones most people know. For a great comparison of the two, see <http://freshtech.wordpress.com/2007/12/13/kindle-vs-sony-ereader-comparison/>.

What most readers (meaning the device, not the people) nowadays have in common is the use of eInk technology “that possess a paper-like high contrast appearance, ultra-low power consumption, and a thin, light form. It gives the viewer the experience of reading from paper, while having the power of updatable information.” (<http://www.eink.com/technology/>)

Is it true? Speaking about my Sony Reader, I can say positively yes. The “screen” is as clear as paper and the size of a pocket book. Moreover, I can increase the font size (not getting any younger) so I can read in comfort. It weighs approximately 9 ounces (the weight of a big pocket book) and with its soft cover gives me the feeling I’m holding a book instead of a tablet. The page turning is easy and can be done from either hand. The battery charge lasts for about 7,500 page turns.

Best of all, I can carry with me hundreds of books –my entire library if I want—anywhere I go. My husband and I travel a lot and it’s always been a pain to cart books with me. Because of that I started reading eBooks on my Palm Pilot, although the screen was very small. With the Sony Reader, except for the lack of crinkle of pages, my reading experience rivals that of a paper book.

The Sony bookstore has over 150,000 books available, including most bestsellers and Google has made available free more than 500,000 of its books. The only criticism I would have is that the software required to download books is a bit clunky. Overall, the Sony Reader gives me a great reading experience.

## **Kids Today Do Read!** by Joan Upton Hall

I keep hearing people say that kids don’t read books any more. But as an old—er, uh—former English teacher, I see signs everywhere that they do. My grandchildren always have their noses in a book, but I know this may not be typical. Not only have they been read to since before they could talk, but also they see their elders reading for pleasure. Important to remember if you have young children or grandchildren.

Authors like J.K. Rowling proved to us all that you didn’t have to “dumb-down” the vocabulary for kids, and neither did the classics some of us grew up with. All it takes is to have such a fascinating story going on that they’ll figure out the “big words” through context clues because they don’t want to stop reading. I’ll never forget how it warmed my heart, with each *Harry Potter* book release, to see crowds of children leading their parents to buy books. You’d see little kids walking down the street, lugging one of those weighty tomes and reading while a parent had to steer them along.

Also the distinctions between kids’ books and adult books are blurring, like Rowling’s “books for children.” The *Twilight* series may have started as young adult books, but they are on my list of “must-reads” at my granddaughters’ and daughters’ urging.

Think it’s only the “advanced” classes who keep the libraries and bookstores open? Think again. Just before school closed for the summer, I was asked to come and talk to about fifty high school students (freshmen through seniors) at Round Rock High School. The librarian and teachers wanted me to talk about my books to their students-at-risk program (kids who have been in trouble and who are in danger of quitting school). After all, the hero of my *Excalibur Regained* series was such a student himself—before realizing he was King Arthur reincarnated.

The English teacher in this program has her students to read books of their choice (with recommendations from her) and write about those books for other students to see. Collectively, these students read about ninety-six different titles during year, and individuals vied for the recognition of how many books each of them read. Several of the students are hooked on writing too! As for the reception I received in speaking to them, they were a delight to talk with and offered plenty of discussion and questions.

So don’t tell me kids don’t read—if given the incentive and the opportunity.

What shocks me to the souls of my feet is to hear *writers* say, “I don’t have time to read books.” If you’re a writer, think of it as an assignment to read what is currently being published.

Just don’t tell anybody you’re doing it for fun.

Need a speaker for high school classes? Contact: [jmuHall@aol.com](mailto:jmuHall@aol.com)

## READERS ASK AUTHORS

### M.D. Benoit on the HOT SEAT

(as last issue's Featured Author)

**Reader asks:** What's the difference between "hard" and "soft" science fiction, and which category does yours fit best?

**M.D. answers:** Science fiction is considered "hard" when the story has an emphasis on scientific or technical detail, or on scientific accuracy (e. g., astronomy or physics), or on both, whereas "soft" science fiction stories are based on the social sciences such as psychology or anthropology.

Although my own stories do contain some element of science, as with the quantum mechanics elements of parallel universes (brane theory) in my second book, *Meter Made* (<http://mdbenoit.com/jackmeter/mm.htm>), they tend to be more soft SF because I'm more interested in how my characters act and evolve than in how science can be applied to a story.

In fact, what I do is more of a combination of genre mixing and genre bending than soft SF. I mix science fiction and mystery elements, but I also bend the genres. For instance, my main character, **Jack Meter**, is a tough guy but uncharacteristically broad-minded. His sidekick is a woman, but she's not a love interest. Far from it, at the beginning of the series, **Claire Foucault** loathes him. She's also a brilliant scientist.

My books reflect an enduring trend: that of genre mixing.

#### 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.

**Joan Upton Hall** 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](mailto:PageTurnerHome@aol.com) or to the author directly through her website shown on Page 1.

**If your question is chosen, we'll credit you.**

## FOR YOU READERS WHO ALSO WRITE

**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](mailto:PageTurnerHome@aol.com) or [jmuHall@aol.com](mailto:jmuHall@aol.com) with subject line: "PT submission"

## 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).

## **HEADS UP FOR AUTHOR SIGHTINGS**

**July through early August- If you're in the area, stop and see us!**  
(For private appearances, such as small book clubs, check with author)

### **L. C. Hayden**

Presenting a set of workshops through the University of Texas at El Paso's Continuing Education Department.

July 7: How to Maintain the Interest in Your Story

Aug. 4: Everything You Wanted to Know About Publishing But Were Afraid to Ask

Oct. 24 – Nov. 8: Author-in-Residence at the Panama Canal Cruise in Celebrity's Infinity. Join me!

May 28-June 9, Author-in-Residence, **Princess Cruise Lines, Grand Mediterranean Cruise.**

### **Joan Upton Hall**

July 2, Thurs., 7 PM: "Sharpen Your Writing Skill with Short Stories," presentation to San Gabriel Writers' League, Georgetown, Texas.

August 3, Mon., 7 PM: "Hico – in Just Visitin' Old Texas Jails," presentation to Hico Historical Preservation Society, Hico, Texas.

### **Sylvia Dickey Smith's**

#### **Schedule for Blog Talk Radio's**

#### **MURDER, SHE WRITES**

The following guests are set to talk about their books, their writing, and how they do what they do best, write mystery!

**L. J. Sellers:** July 6

**Jane Tesh:** July 113

**Elizabeth Gunn:** July 20

**Dianne Marquett:** July 27

Tune in to [www.blogtalkradio.com/murdershewrites](http://www.blogtalkradio.com/murdershewrites)