



# Midwest Writing Center

*Fostering appreciation of the written word, supporting and educating its creators.*

## David R. Collins 2010 Writers' Conference

June 23, 24, & 25

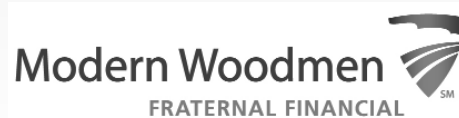
St. Ambrose University, New Hall  
518 W. Locust Street, Davenport, Iowa

### Conference Schedule

	June 23	June 24	June 25
8:30-10:00 am	• <b>Road to Nonfiction</b> (Three-day workshop)		
10:15-11:45 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>From Ordinary to Outstanding</b> (Part 1 &amp; 3)</li> <li>• <b>The Freelancing Payoff</b> (Three-day workshop, three different topics)</li> </ul>		
11:45 am-1:00 pm	• <b>Lunch on your own</b>	• <b>Lunch on your own</b> <i>or</i> optional <b>Author Luncheon</b> with keynote speaker, <b>Cecil Murphey</b> . \$15 Location to be announced.	• <b>Lunch on your own</b> <i>or</i> <b>Conference Concluding Lunch</b> . \$15 or included with full conference registration. Location TBA.
1:00-2:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction to Nonfiction Feature Writing</b> (Three-day workshop)</li> <li>• <b>From Ordinary to Outstanding</b> (Part 2)</li> </ul>	<b>1:30-3:30 pm</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pitch your manuscript to publisher Steve Semken. Ten minute pitch sessions available for \$25. Pre-registration required.</li> </ul>	
2:45-4:15 pm	• <b>Writing Poems that Stir the Senses</b> (Three-day workshop)		
4:30-6:00 pm	• <b>The Publishing Process</b> (Three-day workshop)		
6:30-8:45 pm	• <b>Creating Buzz for You and Your Book</b> (Two-day workshop)		
7:00 pm	<b>Midwest Writing Center</b> Presentations by Eric Butterman on "Overcoming Rejection as a Writer" and Steve Semken on "Self-publishing & Marketing Yourself" with Q&A.	<b>Midwest Writing Center</b> Open readings by conference faculty and participants with faculty book signing.	

### Conference Sponsors:

- Modern Woodmen of America
- St. Ambrose University English Department
- Illinois Arts Council





## Workshop Descriptions

### Creating Buzz for You and Your Book (Marketing & Publicity)

June 23 & 24 6:30-8:45 pm

**Presenter: Twila Belk**

No matter how powerful or entertaining or world-changing your message is, who will read it unless they've heard about you or your book first? In this class we will discuss different ways to create buzz—publicity tips, building your platform, social networking, and lots more. Get answers to your questions and ideas that you can start using today.

### The Freelancing Payoff

**Presenter: Eric Butterman**

#### Part 1: It Starts with a Pitch

June 23 10:15-11:45 am

With publishing companies laying off workers, freelance writers offer them a cheaper alternative—yep, you might actually make MORE money. You will learn pitching from actual pitches which sold for \$1,000 and we will write pitches together and analyze them for a better chance at landing the assignment. I will also show you how following up on the phone could double your writing business.

#### Part 2: Feature Writing for More Money

June 24 10:15-11:45 am

Feature writing has long been a key part in having a successful freelancing career. Still, whether it's getting top sources or interviewing well, it can feel like a struggle. Well, struggle no more. We will break down every aspect of the process to complete a quality article in a lot less time. Turn half-hour interviews into 15 minutes, learn exercises that turn a procrastinator into a pro and, most importantly, become the confident freelancer you have always wanted to be.

### Part 3: Organize and Grow

June 25 10:15-11:45 am

The sad truth is the success of a freelance writer isn't usually just based on quality of work or marketing. It's often about who is the most organized, has a clear plan for future goals, and understands how to best execute it. We will look at how to make the most of literally every hour you devote to your freelancing career. This covers everything from finding the balance between pleasing clients and getting new ones to creating a "career map" which will allow you to see where you want to be a year from now. Change can come fast—if you're moving in the right direction!

### From Ordinary to Outstanding

June 23 10:15-11:45 am & 1:00-2:30 pm

June 24 10:15-11:45 am

**Presenter: Cecil Murphey**

The difference between ordinary and outstanding is subtle. Murphey has taught and mentored writers for more than 30 years. He shares forty subtle-but-significant details that can transform your fiction and make you a superior writer.

### Introduction to Nonfiction Feature Writing

June 23, 24 & 25 1:00-2:30 pm

**Presenter: Emma Rainey**

Nothing provides people with more pleasure than a "good read." This course teaches students how to write feature stories for publication that readers will stay with from beginning to end, for both print and online publications. Students learn to gather and organize material from reliable sources, develop interviewing techniques, and hone their writing skills. Students will generate a topic of interest—whether that focus is "hard" news, features, profiles, or the art of narrative storytelling. You will also look closely at several readings culled from contemporary sources and then engage in a series of workshops, writing drills, and one-on-one conferences. The focus of the class will be on further developing your unique voice and range as well as augmenting your talents as a reliable writer.

### The Publishing Process

June 23, 24 & 25 4:30-6:00 pm

**Presenter: Steve Semken**

Publisher of Ice Cube Books since 1993 (*Radish* magazine award in 2009), Steve Semken, will cover the publishing business in all of its many facets. From how to start a small literary press, the options of self-publishing versus more traditional publishing, the art of submissions & queries, working with authors, marketing, book tours, dealing with booksellers, and more. There will be lots of time to ask questions so you can learn about what most interests you. As both a publisher and author, I will cover a couple of sides of the publishing business.

### Road to Nonfiction

June 23, 24 & 25 8:30-10:00 am

**Presenter: Dr. Roald Tweet**

This workshop will follow the steps needed to turn out a publishable piece of nonfiction from getting an idea to completing a manuscript for submission.

### Writing Poems that Stir the Senses

June 23, 24 & 25 2:45-4:15 pm

**Presenter: Stephen Frech**

Pablo Neruda writes in his *Memoirs* of his love for words: "They glitter like colored stones, they leap like silver fish, they are foam, thread, metal, dew [...] they have a crystalline texture to me, vibrant, ivory, vegetable, oily, like fruit, like algae, like agates, like olives." Poems that come alive for us have a physical, sensual presence Neruda describes, one that appeals to all our senses. This workshop is designed to generate poems that stimulate the senses and to revisit existing work with our whole bodies.

### Author Luncheon Keynote Getting There from Nowhere

June 24 11:45 am-1:00 pm

**Presenter: Cecil Murphey**

Murphey shares his writing journey from the wishful, want-to-get-published status to New York Times best-selling author. Along the way, he explains the qualities it takes to reach the top.

**\$15** Location to be announced.

# Conference Faculty

## Twila Belk

Twila Belk, also known as the Gotta Tell Somebody Gal, is a popular speaker, writer, publicist, and director of two writers conferences—the Quad-Cities Christian Writers Conference and the Presbyterian Writers Conference to be held in Nashville. In addition, she works closely with bestselling author Cecil Murphey as his manager, publicist, and personal assistant. In her full-time work with Cecil Murphey, she has the opportunity to coach and counsel many writers and to work together with industry professionals. For more info, visit [www.gottatellsomebody.com](http://www.gottatellsomebody.com).

## Eric Butterman

Eric Butterman is a freelance writer and teacher who has written for more than 50 publications, including *Glamour* and *ESPN.com*. His articles have allowed him to do everything from chat with Venus Williams about her killer serve to finding out Action Film Director John Woo would actually love to direct a musical. His students have credited his courses with helping them sell an article for as much as \$4,000 and make four-figure deals before the course was even over. Butterman concentrates on using actual pitches that sold as examples and taking you through an understanding of every step that goes into succeeding in writing—including negotiating deals and how to turn one assignment into many. He has been a freelance instructor for the *Editorial Freelancers Association*, *JournalismJobs.com* and *Ed2010.com*. In addition, he's lectured at NYU and Harvard.

## Dr. Stephen Frech

Dr. Stephen Frech has earned degrees from Northwestern University, Washington University in St. Louis, and the University of Cincinnati. He has published three volumes of poetry: *Toward Evening and the Day Far Spent* (1996), *If Not For These Wrinkles of Darkness* (2001), and *The Dark Villages of Childhood* (2009). He is founder and editor of Oneiros Press, publisher of award-winning letterpress poetry broadsides.

## Cecil (Cec) Murphey

Award-winning writer Cecil (Cec) Murphey has authored or co-authored more than 100 books, including the New York Times bestseller *90 Minutes in Heaven* (with Don Piper), and *Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story* (with Dr. Ben Carson). He is also the author of *When Someone You Love Has Cancer*, *When God Turned off the Lights*, and *Christmas Miracles*, all 2009 releases. As he enters 2010, he has nine additional books contracted or finished. His books have sold millions of copies and have brought hope and encouragement to countless people around the world. In addition to his books, Murphey has written hundreds of articles that have appeared in a variety of publications. He stays busy as a professional writer and travels extensively to speak on many topics such as writing, recovery, spiritual growth, caregiving, significant living, male sexual abuse, and more. For more information, visit [www.cecilmurphey.com](http://www.cecilmurphey.com). For writing tips, visit his newly launched blog: [www.cecilmurpheywritertowriter.blogspot.com](http://www.cecilmurpheywritertowriter.blogspot.com)

## Emma Rainey

Emma Rainey earned an M.F.A. at the University of Iowa's Nonfiction Writing Program and, for the time being, prefers writing about Iowa. Currently she researches, writes, and edits for the Teaching Company, and holds an adjunct position at Iowa Wesleyan College and Kirkwood Community College. Past undertakings involve serving as artistic director for several dance companies, working with homeless teens, teaching yoga, and volunteering as faculty advisor for ONE, an organization that fights extreme poverty and global diseases in Africa. In January Ms. Rainey organized the first free writing workshop for veterans in Iowa City. Her essays can be found in *The Iowa Review*, *Two Hawks Quarterly*, and *The Southeast Review* among other publications.



## Steve Semken

Steve Semken began Ice Cube Books in 1993 and now bases his press in North Liberty, Iowa. He was one of *Radish Magazines* award winners for 2009. A publisher of well over 50 books he has focused primarily on place-based writing as a way to better understand how to best live where we do, whether through fiction, nonfiction, poetry, visual arts, or memoir. He is also the author of six books, including *The Great Blues* (Woodley Press) on great blue herons, which won the Kansas Book Award and *Pick Up Stick City* (Rivers Bend Press) a novella which *Publishers Weekly* claimed was “funny, poignant and more than a bit whimsical, this allegorical tale of small town and environmental care is suffused with wonder.” He was also a writer-in-residence at the Island Institute in Sitka, Alaska.

## Dr. Roald Tweet

Dr. Tweet is Professor Emeritus of English at Augustana College in Rock Island, where he served as the Conrad Bergendoff Professor in the Humanities, and has written and lectured extensively about the Upper Mississippi and its past. His publications include *A History of the Rock Island District Corps of Engineers, 1866-1893* and *The Quad Cities: An American Mosaic*. His first published work on the river went to print in 1975 and resulted from research conducted while camping along the Mississippi with his family. As part of his ongoing radio series “Rock Island Lines,” he has created more than 1,000 three-minute vignettes inspired by the region's lore.

*Detailed biographies and photos are available on our website at:*  
[www.midwestwritingcenter.org](http://www.midwestwritingcenter.org)

