

First State of the Guild Address September 2012

Thank you for coming today, and a huge thanks to Sue Jostrom for allowing us to hold the potluck here at her houseboat on Lake Union this year! For those of you who don't know me already, I'm Elizabeth Johnson, board president. The board thought it would be a good idea to put together a State of the Guild speech to let you know what we've been doing and what we hope to achieve in the coming months. I will try to keep it brief, so we can all get back to socializing.

New Members: First off, we are pleased to announce that the Editors Guild now has 256 members—with about 30 new members joining in just the last few months.

New Board Members: The Guild added several new board members this year, including Mary-Colleen Jenkins, Waverly Fitzgerald, and Adel Brown. Most of the board members are here today, along with members of our advisory council and a special guest, Jason Petz, who designed the brochures for our last two conferences and who will be one of the designers speaking at our November 12 meeting.

Member Meetings: We have booked a lot of interesting speakers at meetings at Hugo House this year, including Jon Fine from Amazon Publishing, and Catherine Carr, who spoke about personal branding. Attendance at meetings has been so robust that we're now looking into finding a new meeting space. We also changed the way we take meeting notes. Instead of asking a volunteer at the start of each meeting, we now have two volunteer note-takers who have agreed to take on this task for an entire year.

Coffee Hours: To connect our members with each other, the board suggested on the listserv that members hold occasional coffee hours. We are glad to see that this idea is really taking off. Since the first coffee hour in March, there have been at least four other coffee hours in different neighborhoods around the Sound, and more are on the way. Next up are get-togethers in West Seattle, Wallingford, Edmonds, and Columbia City. Members have also branched out with their own ideas for fun gatherings. For example, Catherine Arnold recently started an editors' hiking group.

Listserv: The Guild's members-only listserv is still going strong. We've heard from several people who posted questions recently, and they said that they were pleased with the supportive response they received from other members.

Facebook: There's also a lot of activity on our Facebook page, which is one of the ways we hope to build awareness of the Editors Guild.

Speakers Bureau: We're also trying to connect with potential clients through our new Speakers Bureau. By giving members opportunities to speak at literary conferences and other gatherings, we hope to establish the Guild as the go-to source on the subject of editing of all kinds. This fall, we have a presence at Northwest Bookfest, Write on the Sound, and two PNWA events.

Marketing Materials: By the way, for these events and others, we now have a supply of Editors Guild business cards to hand out, which feature the Guild's new logo and our website address.

New Website: That brings me to some of the goals the board has for the next few months, and you should know that finishing the new website is number one on the list. Volunteers from the Guild have put in countless hours toward revamping the website. Much work has been done and much progress has been made, but we found that we needed to hire a new developer to finish everything up. That developer has been selected, and we expect to finalize the details of the Guild's contract with him at our board meeting tomorrow night. You can be sure that we will keep you posted just as soon as we know the launch date.

Other Goals for the Year: Other goals for the coming year are adding a few more people to the board, and finding ways to involve members in Portland and other areas farther from Seattle. We are also excited to get started planning the next conference. And we are hoping to inspire some of you to volunteer for a task or two with the Guild. Mary-Colleen has put together some sign-up sheets outlining some of the jobs, so please take a look and sign up if you are at all interested.