

# The Owl's Hoop



A publication of the  
 Ozarks Writers League  
 501(c)(3)  
[ozarkswritersleague.com](http://ozarkswritersleague.com)

Editor: Jeanie Horn  
[jeanhorn@windstream.net](mailto:jeanhorn@windstream.net)

Editor's note: **Ye Olde English Inn**, 24 Downing St., Hollister, MO, (417) 544-9056, is the new location for OWL Awards. Information at <http://www.ozarkswritersleague.com/#!/awards-banquet/c13cn>. Make reservations early. Tell them you're an OWL member for discounted rate., \$59.00 plus tax.



"Dreams we have, legends we make. One is a vision, the other we create. Through the pursuit of one, the other formed, as two lives are changed forever more." ~Nicki Rehmert

Volume 29, Number 4

1983-2013

November 2013

## Two Southern Storytellers Speaking in November

ANN HITE



**Ghost On Black Mountain**, Ann's debut novel, published by Gallery Books/Simon & Schuster. not only became a Townsend Prize Finalist but won Georgia Author of the Year in 2012. Ghost is nominated for Georgia Writes Association's Best First Novel Award.

In *Ghost on Black Mountain*,

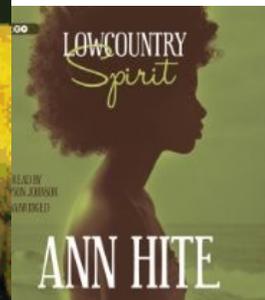
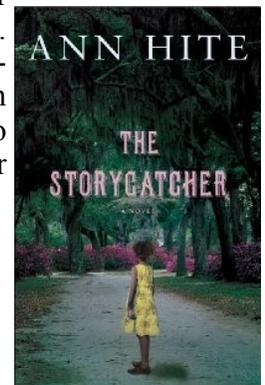
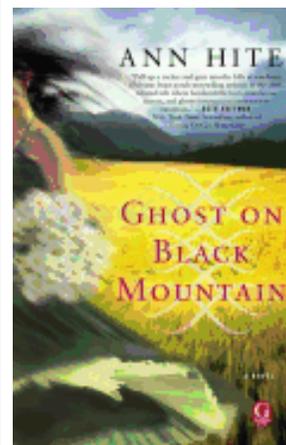
Ann interweaves and overlaps the stories of five women whose lives are bound together by a murder in rural 1930s North Carolina. Each woman's revelation forces a slight recalibration of the truth and gives great depth to a good old-fashioned ghost story. The spirits link history and the afterlife, dropping eerie hints—and not-so-subtle warnings—before vanishing into the woods.

Ann learned the art of Southern Gothic story-telling the time-honored way: sitting on the porch, listening to her elders. She paints a loving portrait of rural mountain life in the early twentieth century, and the characters are nuanced and true. Her personal essays and short

stories have been published in numerous national anthologies.

**The Storycatcher**, her second Black Mountain novel, was released by Gallery Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster on September 10th. **Lowcountry Spirit**, the haunting historical eNovella about three slave girls with mystical powers, living on an island off the coast of Georgia, whose lives intertwine in their quest for freedom, is available from Pocket Star, also an imprint of Simon & Schuster.

Ann is an admitted book junkie with a library of over a thousand books. She lives in Smyrna, Georgia, her husband's hometown, with her husband and daughter. In her writing, she allows the Appalachian characters to come to life and dictate their stories.





## “Don’t Give Me No Stinkin’ Excuses,”



**K.D. McCRITE**, aka **KATHALEEN BURR**, aka **KATHALEEN DEISER**,



has been published in various regional and national magazines. Her books include the *Confessions of April Grace* series for Thomas Nelson Publishers and *Annie's Attic Mystery* series and *Quilted Mysteries* series for Annie's Publishing. (For those who like an edgier read), she also writes under the name of Sidney Archer. She is a charter member of OWL, and once served as the secretary/treasurer.

K.D. believes you can do what you want to do, if you want it badly enough. She should know—she wrote for eleven years before having anything published. Having gone through valleys, forests, jungles, swamps and deserts of the writing land, K.D. knows that obstacles crop up at every turn. “Don’t Give Me No Stinkin’ Excuses,” will inspire you to never give up.

She also knows most obstacles become nothing more than excuses not to write. If you want to write, you will. If not, you’ll find an excuse. Her story of struggle to success will be presented in her morning session,

In her afternoon breakout session, “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly of Manuscript Critique,” K.D. will address the best ways to support other writers by giving honest critique and helpful feedback and how best to utilize that input. Authors should believe their words are neither golden nor garbage. Often our peers can help us polish rough edges off our work, but finding and giving good critique can be tricky. Receiving it without becoming arrogant or humiliated is the other side of that coin.

### Friday, 15 November 2013-Program of Events

6:00 p.m.: *Music by Possum Holler Fiddlers*

6:30 p.m. *Dinner Menu ; Italian Buffet; Caesar Salad; Your Choice of Pasta, Sauce, and Meat; Garlic Bread; Tea, Coffee, Water.*

6:45 p.m. *Presentation by Karen Nelson—The History of OWL;*

7:00 p.m. *Charter Member Recognition; 7:15 p.m. Dessert; 7:30 p.m. Awards Ceremony.*

### Saturday, 16 November Meeting Agenda

8:30: Registration starts

9:00 Announcements & Door prizes, vote on 2014 officers and dues increase.

9:30-10:30: Ann Hite, in the general auditorium.

10:30-10:45: Break

10:45-11:15: K. D. McCrite; “Don’t Give Me No Stinkin’ Excuses”, in the general auditorium.

11:15-11:30: Q & A with Ann Hite and K. D. McCrite, in the general auditorium.

11:30-1:00: Lunch on your own.

1:00-1:15: Announcements & Door prizes.

1:15-2:30: Breakout Sessions- Ann Hite & K. D. McCrite in separate rooms.

3:00: Board Meeting.



# The President's Page



**Hello OWLS!** Here we are, preparing for our November meeting, my last as OWL President.



How time flies. It's been a fun and rewarding year for me. I have met some great people and I've learned new things. What more could I ask?

We've got a big meeting coming up in November. Not only will we be celebrating our writing contest winners and OWL's 30th Anniversary, we'll be voting on two important issues.

As many of you know, Dusty Richards has expressed concerns about the board-approved nominees for 2014. I know this has created an uncomfortable situation for many of you, and for that, I apologize. The primary piece of advice I gave to Karen Nelson upon her acceptance to run for President was to build a team. As you will note in her article, "Looking Ahead" on pp 6-7, she has done this very effectively. I hope that votes cast on November 16 will be based solely on what each member believes will carry Ozarks Writers League forward in a positive and dynamic way. Please don't hesitate to contact me, any board member, or any nominee, if you have questions or need clarification on any issue.

**VOTE #1:**

## **2014 Officers:**

President – Karen Nelson

Vice President – Jeanie Horn

Treasurer – Ellen Thompson

Secretary – Ellen Withers

*\*Please note that Brenda Brinkley has withdrawn her acceptance as a nominee, which was previously presented to the membership.*

Above are Board-approved nominees selected by the nomination committee. However, per By-laws Guidelines: ***Nominations for any Board position may be made from the floor by any League Member, provided that anyone nominated from the floor shall be present and shall have consented in advance. Only League Members may be considered for positions on the Board.***

**VOTE #2:**

## **Dues increase:**

OWL strives to maintain a balance between maintaining reasonable member dues and quality of speakers. The last time OWL raised dues was in 2006. However, with the cost of bringing speakers to the Ozarks increasing each year, the Board proposes a \$5.00 increase in dues beginning in 2014. Upon vote approval by the general membership, Annual Membership will be changed to \$25.00 if paid before the February 2014 meeting, and \$30.00 if paid after the February meeting.

And now for the fun stuff! You won't want to miss this year's **Awards Banquet!** Not only will we be announcing the winners of the writing contests, we'll also be celebrating OWL's 30th Anniversary, complete with a video of highlights of the last 30 years produced by Karen Nelson and a musical presentation by the Possum Holler Fiddlers. And, as announced previously, we'll be holding the banquet at a new venue: Ye Olde English Inn!

***For Friday night dinner reservations, contact Jan Morrill at [jymorrill@gmail.com](mailto:jymorrill@gmail.com). Mail your check for \$15 to Brenda Black or pay via PayPal at [ozarkswritersleague.com](http://ozarkswritersleague.com) Deadline is November 1, 2013, and reservations are limited to the first 50 requests.***

We'll be sending out more information soon, and you can also find details on our website at [www.ozarkswritersleague.com](http://www.ozarkswritersleague.com). (Hover over "Meals and Events" on the menu, and click on "Awards Banquet.")

Life is full of changes. In November, I'll be "handing off the gavel" to a new President. I'll be experiencing changes on a personal level, too, as I leave Arkansas for Dallas, Texas to become a grandma! It's a bittersweet time for me, with so many happy memories of my time in Arkansas.

But, I also have a lot to look forward to, and so do you, with lots of fun, new ideas planned for next year. So, stay tuned!

Best wishes always, Jan

**YOU CAN NOW PAY YOUR DUES VIA PAYPAL BY GOING TO THE FOLLOWING LINK:**

**<http://www.ozarkswritersleague.com/#!membership/cfv>**

## SKILLS CORNER

### Make A Living As A Writer

**C. HOPE CLARK**, author of *The Shy Writer: An Introvert's Guide to Writing Success*



– trade paperback and e-book, became THE HOPE for many aspiring authors. She offers advice and encouragement on her website <http://www.fundsforwriters.com/>, where you also can subscribe to her weekly newsletter. For those OWL members who couldn't make the meeting, below is a list of highlights from her all-day presentation given for the Ozarks Writers League members in August.

**# 1:** The more you write, the more people know about you as a writer, the better your chances that doors will open for you to write. People don't buy from strangers.

**# 2:** Writing contests provide steps up for a writer, especially a struggling writer. Just about every literary journal has some kind of contest. Know the red flags and acceptable practices of contests, such as entry fees, history, and sponsors/funding.

**# 3:** With both contests and publishing, you have to consider copyrights. If the guidelines state one-time rights, or first rights, that means one use, one publication. If they state all rights, they can use the piece any way they please and own the submission. Contests can lead to many opportunities to include selling magazine articles or getting a book published.

**# 4:** You'll reach more people with an article than you ever will with a book.

**# 5:** Sign up for newsletters, especially those that pertain to your genre of writing. They often open doors for writing jobs.

**# 6:** Consider pitching to blogs on media, news, and magazine sites. Some pay. However, online writing mills rarely further a career. While style and voice are important in an online article, the formalities of proper writing still apply. Quality is still king. Articles should include links back to authors' websites and blogs. Avoid online writing jobs that want you to send an example meeting their requirements that they can keep and use without paying you.

**# 7:** Freelance gigs build testimonials, credits, and income. Magazines create clips and gain readers. Don't just write for magazines, or only write novels. Use one to land another. Write a piece for the paper. Write a column for newsletters. Become the expert at whatever you write about. ALL create credibility for you as a writer. Everything you do as a writer can lead to ideas for future writing that sells.

**# 8:** You might not be able to quit work and write thanks to grants, but you might find a grant to make your writing goals easier to reach. You'll find grants that cover a simple conference fee or a six-month retreat to write and get away from it all. Like any market, read the guidelines to make sure you fit the mold. While some of them are for big dreamers who face stiff competition, others provide new talent with opportunity. Some provide temporary time, space and support for the creation of new work in a retreat format. Some pay for specifically designed projects and others exercise your ability to match writing with a social cause.

**# 9:** Volume and variety are often the secret to earning a living as a writer. Be a storyteller, become professional in your writing with a goal to publish for sales. How glorious if you can sell and earn a living, but, do not miss other chances to record your stories. Make the effort. Weave the words. Tell the tale.

## OZARKS WRITERS LEAGUE

**Minutes of August 17th, 2013  
Board Meeting**  
Courtesy of Jan Morrill

The third quarterly meeting of the OWL board was called to order by President Jan Morrill at 3:02 p.m. Board members present were Jan Morrill, Duke Pennell, Brenda Black, Dusty Richards, Karen Nelson and Beth Carter. Also present, Newsletter editor Jeanie Horn. Ellen Withers, Patty Stith, Pamela Jones, Ruth Weeks and Fred Pfister were absent.

**Secretary's Report:** Following a review of the May printed minutes, a motion to accept as written passed by unanimous vote.

**President's Report:** Jan Morrill noted that OWL is still in need of a Public Relations Chair. She announced the current nominees for 2014 officers at the general meeting. Jan and Karen will be meeting with the personal at Ye Olde English Inn to discuss final details of the OWL Awards Banquet.

**Treasurer's Report:** Brenda Black said accepting payment by PayPal is much easier. She will be working with the webmaster to make it easier for members to add new member information. Her quarterly report was accepted as distributed to the Board reflecting a July 31st balance of \$4,178.95. a motion to accept passed by unanimous vote.

**Membership Report:** In Fred Pfister's absence Brenda Black passed out copies of the membership list to other officers present. She stated that she contacted those OWL members who have not renewed with a reminder of delinquent dues.

**Contest Report.** Beth Carter reported that several members have already submitted contest entries.

Meeting adjourned at 3:33 p.m. by unanimous vote of the attendees.

## WEBMASTER

**KAREN NELSON**—Friday night awards dinner reservations can be paid online via the



OWL website as well as by postal mail. Dinner will be provided by the Riverstone Restaurant (adjacent to Ye Olde English Inn, site of the OWL awards ceremony), and close to the College of the Ozarks. The \$15.00 prepayment for dinner includes tax and gratuity.

Members can renew memberships online via the OWL website. A new membership form is available that allows them to also submit a brief bio and contact information for a special "Members" section to be created on the website. Forms can be filled out and submitted entirely online, or printed and sent via postal mail. Click "Membership" tab at the OWL website [www.ozarkswritersleague.com](http://www.ozarkswritersleague.com).

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**5 October 2013**—1 p.m. to 4 p.m.—at the Garden Bistro, North Main in Eureka Springs, Pamela Foster will teach a workshop, The Golden Trilogy. She teaches the art of weaving **sense of place** with **point of view** and **internalization**. The workshop includes writing exercises and critiques.

Sylvia Forbes will host the *Leigh Michael Writing Workshop* on Saturday, **5 October 2013**, in Fayette, MO at the Maison on Main B & B. Cost of the workshop is \$25.00, and that price also includes lunch. Send an email to [missouriwriter@gmail.com](mailto:missouriwriter@gmail.com) and ask for a flyer and registration form. Join them for a fun and inspirational workshop that will get your creativity flowing.

**Saturday, 1 February 2014, 9 a.m.—2 p.m.,** AUTHOR BOOK SIGNING DAY, @ Kimberling area library. Authors will autograph and sell their own books at this event. For more information go to [www.kalib.org](http://www.kalib.org).

## LOOKING AHEAD: from Karen Nelson

I want to take a moment before our annual November meeting to share a little about myself. So many times we meet in passing, but run out of time to properly know one another. I came to my first OWL meeting when I was 18. My uncle, Fred Pfister, encouraged me to pursue my writing while I settled in to my first year at College of the Ozarks. Through the years, OWL has been a touchstone for me, reminding me to believe in my abilities and stay true to the creative drive we all share.

I was especially honored to be joined by my 13-year-old daughter just this August, as she became an OWL member herself and entered her first contest. Three generations of OWLs...I like to think it runs in the family.

**My vision of the Ozarks Writers League** is for OWL to be a community of writers who support one another. Now, more than any other time in our 30-year history, we need to remember what League Historian and Charter Member, Paul Johns said, "... (OWL's) success is not measured by the length of its membership roll, but rather in the quality of its members."

Ozarks Writers League has always been, first and foremost, about its people, and their dedication to the benefit and progress of the entire membership.

My husband and I have lived in the Branson area for 20 years, and enjoy homeschooling our two children – Kendra, age 13, and Drew, age 10, on a small hobby farm. I have taught at most of the area schools, and currently coordinate educational programs for area arts and recreation entities while serving as an editor at two magazines – *Flash Fiction Chronicles*, and *Gravel Literary Magazine (University of Arkansas)*. I am not, nor have I ever been, an employee of Goldminds Publishing or Steven Anderson (Law). I have completed contract work for the company, as I have done contract work for numerous individuals and corporations across the country. I do, however, serve as a board member for another non-profit organization with Steven Anderson, OWL member Ellen Gray Massey, and

others. I remain a self-employed freelance writer, like many of you.

Since April 2013, I've been honored and delighted to assist current president Jan Morrill in her assignment of various duties including filling the role of Webmaster since June 2013. The Board graciously welcomed my presence at the May and August board meetings (reflected in the board-approved minutes and documents), and have been an outstanding support in planning for the coming year.

A variety of members assisted me in producing an historical presentation for OWL's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this November, and it is here that I realize the League's future lay in its past. The League's archives indicate that previous years included multiple speakers in one day, focus-group sessions, a variety of entertainment and accommodation venues, and an overall sense of family that I admired and wanted to rekindle. This also aligned with the recent membership survey results, indicating what the group as a whole wished for the future.

The very arrangement of a Board of Directors should prevent any one person or faction from controlling, influencing, or intimidating others. They work as a team to implement the desires of the whole membership. The volume of work to be completed necessitates the coordination of volunteers – typically through the use of sub-committees, and historically utilized by our charter members and set forth in the bylaws.

A Hospitality Committee could ensure that new members are greeted, shepherded throughout the day, equipped with membership materials, and made to feel welcome. A Contest Committee would relieve much

With increased communication between the Board and the membership, as a group we can widen out in the Ozarks region and make room for new and varied writers among us. We can uphold the values of our Charter members and keep in step with the innovations of today.

Plans include a new venue for Friday Night Dinner, with a variety of entertainment, themes, and amenities. Saturday workshops can be enhanced by the formation of specialty committees to handle specific tasks – thus allowing a greater number of members to participate and learn more about the organization. In addition, a concerted effort to attract – and keep – new members, and put OWL back in the public media are vital to the survival of the organization.

of the burden from one person tackling such a massive project, and allow others to be trained for future service. An Auction Committee would be able to explore additional funding avenues, working in advance on extension programs to complement the live auction.

Prospective Board members for 2014:

Jeanie Horn—Vice-President	Fred Pfister –Historian
Ellen Withers –Secretary	Chet Dixon –Auction Chair
Ellen Thompson –Treasurer	Rochelle Fields –Contest Chair
Jan Morrill – Past President	Sylvia Forbes –Hospitality Chair
Brenda Black – Past Treasurer	Kent Bonham –Publicity/Assistant Editor
Diane Yates –Membership Director	Beth Carter – Director
Pam Foster – Director	Patty Stith – Director

(1) I believe the membership should have a choice when it comes to how their dues and wishes are applied, and this exercise of duties should encompass all member's interests and their requests for new material.

(2) I believe my years working with event coordination with the Branson Convention and Visitors Bureau, my organizational skills with other non-profit entities, my work in the academic world, magazine editorial experience, and twenty years' writing success in a variety of genres places me in a unique position to be of service to the Ozarks Writers League.

To assist the Ozarks Writers League in its next chapter would be a great privilege of mine. I have been delighted to serve as Webmaster these last six months, and have valued our connection as writers for many years. I hope to give my children an organization that will cheer them on and assist them in their artistic dreams, like OWL did for me all those years ago.

I look forward to seeing you at the November meeting, and I am always available by email or phone, should you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

Karen Nelson  
[dkaren@centurytel.net](mailto:dkaren@centurytel.net)  
(417) 546-4937

## Showcasing Our Talented OWL Members; by Sylvia Forbes

Our members are very talented! As the new chair of the Hospitality Committee, I'm planning to develop a handout which lists the books our members have published. I'm asking all OWL members who are authors to send me a brief email ([sylvia@forbesfreelance.com](mailto:sylvia@forbesfreelance.com)) containing your name and the titles of your books. For those prolific, multi-published authors, please just send a total number of books published, and the titles of the 5 most recent books (or your 5 favorites). Deadline to be included in this handout is October 15, 2013. Thanks for participating in this project - it never hurts to get a little more publicity!





# Owl News



**Anthology** (Short stories, essays, poems) Deadline September 1, 2014

**All other contests:** Deadline September 1, 2014

See website for guidelines for all contests. **Anthology entries**, go to Lou Turner at [louturn@aol.com](mailto:louturn@aol.com) (For Echoes of the Ozarks, you must put **Echoes IX Submission** in subject line.)

## 2013 OWL OFFICERS

**President** **Jan Morrill**  
jymorrill@gmail.com (918) 409-7570

**Vice-President:** **Duke Pennell**  
479-871-3330  
duke@dukepennell.com

**Treasurer:** **Brenda Black**  
10515 N. Black Nursery Rd.  
Prairie Grove, AR 72753  
(479) 846-3440 bblackwriter@gmail.com

**Secretary:** **Ellen Withers**  
lnwithers@yahoo.com (501) 329-7477

**Past-President** **Dusty Richards**  
dustyrichards@cox.net (479) 751-7246

**Membership Director: Fred Pfister,**  
frpfister@suddenlink.net

**Board of Directors:** Jan Morrill, Fred Pfister, Duke Pennell, Dusty Richards, Brenda Black, Ellen Withers, Patti Stith. **Historian** – Ruth Weeks; **Contest Chair**– Beth Carter; **Web-site**– Karen Nelson.

Newsletter–Jeanie Horn; jean-horn@windstream.net  
116 Duvall St., Marshall, AR 72650  
870-448-2499

## MEETING INFORMATION

### Motel Accommodations

Boxcar Willie Inn, 360 Schaefer Dr., Branson, MO, offers a rate of \$45.00 plus tax for two. Continental breakfast. Identify yourself as an OWL member when making reservations. Phone 417-337-7070. Check website for directions.

Also Available: In historic downtown Hollister, Ye Olde English Inn, est. 1909, located at 24 Downing St., Hollister, Mo. (417) 544-9056. For directions and map, check their website.

### OWL Meeting Place

Ozarks Writers League meets in the Plaster Auditorium at the College of the Ozarks. Go through the entrance, follow Opportunity Ave. to Plaster Auditorium, the 3rd major building on the right. Registration starts at 8:30 a.m.

**Cell Phone Courtesy** As a courtesy to our speakers, **turn off** cell phones, or set on vibrate during the meeting.

**Please**, no conversations in the meeting room. Use the lobby.

# THE WRITER'S LIFE

**When did you decide to be a writer, and why?** I have always had short scenarios running around in my head (I used to think I was a tad loony). In 2007, I put a scenario down on paper about a rancher who found a pregnant woman along a wagon trail. The scenario became a novel. That first novel became a series of books about their family and launched my career as an author.

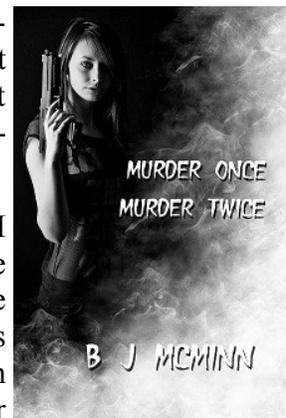
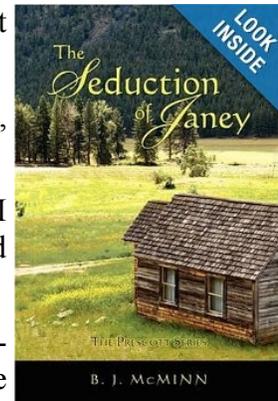
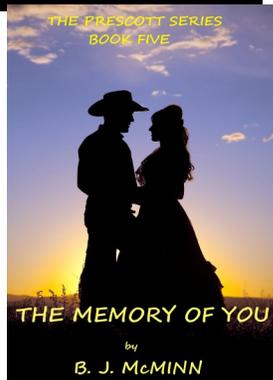
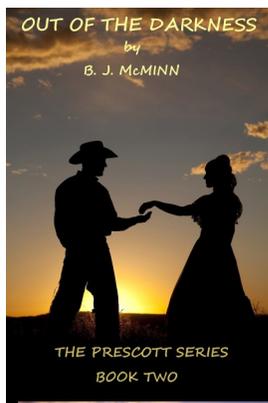
**What kind of writing do you do?** I write romance: Historical romance, time travel romance, murder/mystery romance.

**What inspires you to write?** I enjoy seeing my characters come alive. I fall a little in love with my male protagonists and the women become good friends.

**What are you proudest of in your writing?** That I can put sixty-to-eighty-thousand meaningful words together and not replicate the same words. I'm also thrilled that my Prescott Series has done so well on kindle.

**What, or who, has been the most helpful to you in your writing?** Conference organizations, such as OWL and OWFI, supplied me with invaluable information. Dusty and Velda's critique group provided the greatest influence on my writing. They guided and encouraged me from the first page of my mystery novel, *Murder Once, Murder Twice*, to its publication. I appreciate each of them.

**What do you usually read?** I love romance, except graphic erotica. I enjoy good suspense/mystery, if they have a little romance involved. I enjoy the uncertainty, the wooing, and the desire as a relationship develops between characters. My favorite author is Hannah Howell. I have read each of her books except her vampire series. I'm not into vampires or werewolves, even if they are romantic.



**Is there anything about your writing that you're particularly excited about right now?** Yes. I have started the sixth and last book of my Prescott Series. When "A Woman's Cowboy" is finished, I plan to begin the sequel to my time travel romance that I have outlined on the second novel in my murder mystery series.

**B.J. McMinn**

