**Friday May 16**

**Topic 1—90 minutes—Off to a Great Start—Keys to a Powerful Opening [Kelley]**

**Description:** Your opening sentences lay the groundwork for your entire story or novel. That’s why the beginning often needs the most revision after your first draft is finished. Whether you're just starting out or deep in revision mode, learn how to grab your reader, plant your story's roots, and make promises you can keep. Bring the first page from your own story so we can use what we’ve learned to revise them, then critique each other’s openings the next day. We often learn more from critiquing other people’s work, so be part of the magic as we put the concepts we’ve discussed into action!

**Topic 2—90 minutes—The Telltale Tale [Jerry]**

**Description:** One of the more intriguing aspects of the human experience is the rare, out-of-the-blue, serendipitous, too-coincidental-to-be-real event. An experience like that ofttimes leaves one wondering if there were something deeper to it in terms of meaning, symbolism, or messaging. It can be beyond words for even great writers to capture the *what* of the happening and *how* it struck them. That’s when it can move to the archetypal level of a story. This session is designed to allow participants to share such a personal experience, explore ways to broaden it to a larger story, and begin crafting a short story or novella version of it.

**Topic 3—150 minutes—Stories in a Flash—Make Your Words Count [Laurel]**

**Description:** What is Flash Fiction? It’s a genre of fiction defined as a very short story. Word counts can vary from 100 words (micro-fiction) to about 1,500. The challenge is to include all of the elements of a satisfying story but at a greatly reduced word count, leaving consumers with a whirlwind read and a memorable ending.

Participants will:

·       evaluate several published pieces,

·       learn what to avoid,

·       understand several editing techniques,

·       make specific storyline decisions, and

·       learn how to keep the narrative moving.

There will be hands-on-keyboards/notebooks exercises. Sharing will be encouraged.

By the end of this session, participants will create a work of fiction worthy of editing for possible publication.

**Keynote during dinner [Kelley]**

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**Saturday May 17**

**Topic 1 Continued—90 minutes Plus Homework Discussion [Kelley]**

**Topic 3 Continued—90 minutes Plus Homework Assigned [Laurel]**

**Topic 4—150 minutes—Quite a Character: Literary Fiction as an Archetypal Story [Jerry]**

**Description:** No writing is easy. Every author or playwright puts him or herself “out there” and at risk, professionally and perhaps personally, when they publish their work. The reasons are twofold: They no longer have control over the work—it says what it says—and they become subject to public scrutiny and criticism. It takes, then, courage to write and publish. But the degree of vulnerability rises with certain types of stories, particularly literary fiction. That’s because in literary fiction the takeaways from the story by readers aren’t so much about the intricacies of the plot but instead of the complexity, conflicts, and character of the protagonist(s). In this session, we’ll dig into the uniqueness of literary fiction relative to its sister fiction genres and look at examples of literary fiction novels. Participants will have time to either work on a current draft or begin crafting one.

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**Sunday May 18**

**Topic 3 Continued—90 minutes Plus Homework Discussion [Laurel]**

**Topic 5—90 minutes—Serve Readers a Smorgasbord of Senses and Emotions [Laurel]**

**Description:** The most memorable writing leaves readers with all of the “feels.” Robert Frost is credited with saying, "No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader. No surprise in the writer, no surprise in the reader." In this session, participants will enhance their scene(s) by adding sensory details and tension after studying examples from successful authors.

**Topic 6—150 minutes—Wounds, Needs, Strengths, and Weaknesses—Put Some Meat on Your Characters’ Bones [Kelley]**

**Description:** Developing your characters is half the fun of writing. But understanding your characters and how they’ll react in the messy circumstances you’re about to shove them into requires more than just knowing how they take their coffee or what they do for a living. Learn how to plumb below the surface to find out what really makes them tick—and how you can exploit that to make them unforgettable.

**Closing—60 minutes—Wrap Session: Takeaways and To-dos [Jerry]**

**Description:** Writing workshops can be invigorating and inspiring. They can also leave the participant with a sense of being overwhelmed, with so much on their plate—all good stuff—they find it difficult to sort out where to begin. A good practice is to break the learnings and takeaways into two groups: the overall, global ideas and the specific to-do, where-to-next pile. This session will allow participants to share their learnings and talk about their initial strategy to put them into practice.