

Budding authors can meet pros at conference

By SUSAN TAUBER

Budding writers will be able to rub shoulders with 34 authors, editors, playwrights, poets and journalists from all over the country at the 17th annual Craftsmanship of Creative Writing Conference Oct. 20-21 at Oakland University.

Sponsored by OU Division of Continuing Education and Detroit Women Writers, the conference will offer 26 workshops covering such topics as writing about real people, how to find material for articles, selling your short story and how to write and submit a play.

Conference hours are noon to 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20 and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21, at Oakland Center Building.

On Friday, participants can take limited enrollment three-hour sessions on writing. Milan Stitt, author of the play, "The Runner Stumbles," which was selected as one of 10 best plays for the 1976 Broadway season, will conduct the workshop on "Drama: Struc-

ture is Meaning."

"The structure of drama or the structure of the play is its meaning," said Stitt, a Detroit native.

Other teachers for the Friday labs are poet Judith Coates, writing consultant in schools for Michigan Council of the Arts; Julia Grace, former Oakland County resident and author of the romantic, historical novel, "Lovefire"; Iris Sanderson Jones, travel writer for the Observer & Eccentric; and author of a book on making original American dolls, and children's book writer Joan Potter Elwart.

A BREAK from the labs and workshops features Detroit Free Press columnist Nickie McWhirter. She will speak at 8:30 p.m. Friday during a cocktail reception in Meadow Brook Hall on the OU campus. Her talk is titled, "Not Now My Hair's Too Short."

The test of one's endurance begins Saturday morning with registration at 8:30 a.m. Prior to the workshops, par-

ticipants will hear A. Scott Berg, author of the book, "Max Perkins: Editor of Genius." He will speak about how he researched and created his books as well as lessons that can be learned from Perkins, the editor of such writers as Fitzgerald, Hemingway and Wolfe.

Between 10:15 a.m. and 12:45 p.m., there will be two series of workshops. After lunch, there will be another concurrent session of workshops with nine different ones to choose.

Carole Baron, vice-president and editor in chief of Pocket Books will give the closing talk of the conference on "Paperbacks: New Readers, New Writers, New Markets."

TO REGISTER for all or some of the activities, contact OU Conference Department, 377-3272. Cost for Friday's six workshops is \$20 per workshop. The cocktail reception is \$4 registration with a cash bar. Saturday's program fee is \$18 and \$4 for an optional lunch.

Two New Yorkers who will partici-

pate in the conference are Stitt and Anne Mollegen Smith, new managing editor and former fiction editor of Redbook magazine.

Both say they see the value of writers workshops for themselves and for the participants.

"I think writers workshops can be valuable in many ways," said Ms. Smith, former editor of the magazine, Your Place. "To the person who has never written a line, the conference can be overwhelming. But for the person who has tried writing, had some failures and doesn't know why, it can be helpful. It also helps the person who has had some success and wants to expand."

Ms. Smith, who said she prefers being an editor to a writer, will offer participants a sense of what editors are looking for in manuscripts.

"In my workshop I'll be talking about two things, markets for short fiction and new markets. There are so many new magazines that writers aren't aware of yet, that will accept

both fiction and non-fiction, such as Antiques World, Working Mother and Women Who Work.

"I'll try to help writers learn to look at the format of a magazine or just at its cover and surmise something about the editor's point of view," Ms. Smith said.

THE EDITOR admitted it is hard for writers to get their unsolicited manuscripts chosen by a magazine. She pointed out Redbook publishes 12-20 unsolicited manuscripts from the 30,000 it receives a year. Her talk, she said, will help writers get an insight into different methods of selling their short stories.

Stitt, a 1963 graduate of University of Michigan, said writing conferences help aspiring playwrights because "playwriting is a craft—it is learnable."

"Those of us who know the craft have a responsibility to teach it to others," said the author of "Back in the Race," a new play to be premiered in spring.

"It helps me to talk to playwrights too. Frequently when I'm telling young writers something basic, I'll remember I haven't been using it in my own plays."

Stitt is dramaturge and playwright-in-residence for Circle Repertory Company in New York. As dramaturge, he decides what plays the company will perform and then works on the text.

"For instance, if we decide to do 'King Lear' I decide which of the several versions will be best for us to use. If we're going to work with a new play, I make sure the script is up to snuff," Stitt said.

Stitt isn't a newcomer to the Rochester area. His first play, "The Runner Stumbles," was presented at Meadow Brook Theatre in the spring. A graduate of Cooley High School, Stitt's father and step-mother, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Stitt, live in Birmingham.

Club Circuit

LA LECHE LEAGUE OF FARMINGTON invites mothers interested in breast feeding their babies to join meetings held at 8 p.m. Wednesdays. Interested persons can call Pat Garbach, 477-8133.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN, Farmington branch, contributed money to New Horizons and Community Living Center this week in appreciation for help during the group's fall used book sale. The group meets once a month, in Farmington Hills Community Library on Twelve Mile. Membership is available to all women graduates of an accredited four-year institution. For more information, call Carol Malzone, 591-0181.

THE GATHERING PLACE will hold its Halloween party at 1 p.m. today (Thursday). The drop-in center for seniors rescheduled the holiday party because it will be closed next Thursday and Friday, Oct. 26-27.

Next event on the agenda is a get-together for Sunday dinner, at 3:30 p.m. Oct. 22. Cost, payable at the dinner, is \$4 per person. Reservations are

not necessary. Newcomers are asked to use Gate 4, on Eleven Mile, east of Middlebelt, when entering Merry Center, where the Gathering Place is located.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS, Farmington Hills Chapter 2088, meet at 1 p.m. Friday in the downstairs room of Farmington Community Library, 32737 Twelve Mile to hear a program on crime prevention.

The meeting is open to all persons over the age of 55, whether retired or not. The group has been invited to attend a series of free lectures sponsored by Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge Campus. The next lecture, "Values and the Community," will be at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 25. Membership inquiries will be taken by calling Al Mueller, 476-6097.

AMERICAN WOMEN IN RADIO AND TELEVISION, Detroit Chapter, is sponsoring "Management: In Theory and Practice," a seminar for

women in the news media, at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 25 in Wayne State University Angling Center, 27800 Franklin, Southfield. Cost of \$8.50

includes a light meal. Reservations can be made with Agnes Kerekes, of CKLW Radio, 963-1567.

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MTU posts honors list

Jo A. Belcours, a senior majoring in medical technology is among 75 students who were placed on the Michigan Technological University's dean's list for the summer quarter. Students must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

Ms. Belcours is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Belcours of 33176 Bernardino in Farmington.

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