

Local writers' group geared toward positive attitude

Remember, we become who we spend time with. The quality of a person's life is most often a direct reflection of the expectations of their peer group.

—Author Julia Griggs Harvey

BY JONI HUBBARD
STAFF WRITER

Jessica Hatchigan believes in the power of a positive attitude. Author of the best-selling "How to be Your Own Publicist," Hatchigan is looking for writers who feel the same way. The Inklings currently has a handful of members and will be limited to 10 women who will meet Tuesdays at a bookstore in Farmington Hills.

Her inspiration is rooted in similar groups founded by J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis (see sidebar). Hatchigan said, "That's really what I want is people who have faith in what's possible for themselves and other people." While the group is for Christian women writers, it is open to writers who are non-Christian publications and publishers, said Hatchigan. Applicants must have gotten beyond the "journeyman" stage in their careers and have accumulated significant publication credits (two or more major magazines and/or book credits).

Members will also meet on

Thursdays at her Northville home to critique manuscripts, discuss the writing life, share writing and marketing tips and provide mutual encouragement and support.

Meetings will open and close with a brief, non-denominational prayer asking God's guidance, help and blessings on members and their writing careers.

The idea, Hatchigan said, is to create a small group of women writers who share a common spiritual ground. While cynics need not apply, the group isn't really for "Bible-thumpers" either.

"There are people who are Christians who are cynics," Hatchigan said. "I have faith in possibilities."

Her books always take a positive track as well. In "Count On Me and Norma D," she approached the topic of divorce in a humorous way for young readers. Her latest children's book, "Dinosaurs Aren't Forever," features the same cast of characters.

A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Wayne State University, Hatchigan's own writing career has included a variety of experiences, from book publishing to contract writing at Ford Motor Co., a job she took on after publication of her first book.

"Once they offered me a job at Ford... it was one of those offers you couldn't refuse," she

Lewis, Tolkien writers' group inspired 'The Inklings'

According to information provided on a Web site maintained by Taylor University (www.taylor.edu/upland/programs/lewis/inklings), C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien formed a group of friends they called "The Inklings" after the two first met in 1926, while on faculty at Oxford University. They met Tuesdays and Thursdays to read and talk about their works in progress, along with many other subjects. The writers encouraged and supported one another, and those who

have studied their works have noted significant influences.

Also, Lewis was not Christian when he and Tolkien first met, and Tolkien brought Lewis to that faith through their regular association.

Other Inklings included Charles Williams, Owen Barfield, Warren Lewis (brother of C.S. and author of several books on French history), R.E. Havard (the Lewis brothers' physician), Christopher Tolkien (son of J.R.R.) and many others.

ing their own books, gathering a collection of valuable tips. It's one of three parts to a writing career, Hatchigan said.

"One is the actual writing, which is the challenge," she said. "Then there's marketing, building a brand...and keeping faith in yourself, which is a tough thing to do."

That's where her writing group comes in. But Hatchigan also has the advantage of a success level with her latest project.

"I had a lot of serendipity with this," she said. "There was a lull in my business activities that allowed me to pick up some steam with my book. If you're a solo entrepreneur, you have to make those decisions."

Promoting the PR book has paid off; as of Nov. 1, it was the best-selling PR/marketing book in Canada. Hatchigan sent review copies to major newspapers there and received attention in a nationally distributed magazine as well.

She believes the Internet is an integral tool for authors and considers it the second phase of

any promotion, after a book tour. The third phase is radio, which provides the convenience of doing an interview from home.

Hatchigan encourages any writer seeking to "brand" their identity to spend about \$45 a year at Register.com and get their own Internet domain name. It's a low-cost promotion alternative and can include e-mail, which provides an even more uniform Web presence.

"How to be Your Own Publicist" is available through amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com, and can be directly ordered through greenbriar.biz.

To apply to join the Inklings, e-mail Hatchigan at jessica@hatchigan.com and include name, contact information (e-mail and phone), a short description of your writing career and accomplishments and 50 words or less about why you'd like to join the group. Applicants should allow two weeks for response.

jhubbard@home.com.net
(248) 477-5450

Passion for educating others is motivation for Studio Jewell

Note: Due to a production error, part of this article didn't run in the At Home section of some Observer newspapers Nov. 21. The entire article appears below.

BY NICOLE STAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

For interior designer Eileen Jewell, meeting clients at the airport was becoming too frequent.

With limited availability of modern and contemporary furnishings in metro Detroit, she and her clients found it necessary to fly to Chicago to do their shopping.

Sure, selections can be made from catalogs, but there's no substitute for sitting in the couch you plan to plop down on every night. And, if there's one idea that dominates Jewell's philosophy as an interior designer, it's that homeowners should make their homes work for them, not the other way around.

"It's all about fitting into your home and feeling welcome," said Jewell, who lives in Lathrup Village.

So last August she stopped looking — and commuting to Chicago — and opened a store that specializes in contemporary furnishings: Studio Jewell, 501 S. Washington in

"There are so many things we can do with our homes, and it only takes a few ideas to make a great change."

Eileen Jewell
Interior designer

Royal Oak.

"I was really struggling to find contemporary furniture in Michigan. I wanted to find the clientele that wants modern, but also supply the clients with that product," said Jewell, a graduate of Michigan State University's Human Design and Environment program and a member of the American Society of Interior Designers.

Studio Jewell's showroom offerings are all manufactured in the United States. That way, items ship in about four weeks and customers don't have a long wait, as is customary when buying from European makers.

Customers, however, do have access to lines from overseas, as well as collections of original modern furnishings by such designers as Charles Eames and Ludwig Mies van

der Rohe.

Contractors, upholsterers and architects are also available through the full-service studio.

"I also want to educate people about design and the role of interior designers," said Jewell, formerly a member of the Michigan Design Center's Designer On Call team.

To that end, Studio Jewell regularly offers interior design courses, including classes in feng shui and a basic workshop in which beginners learn the techniques of space planning and assemble a design board to identify their likes and style preferences.

"There are so many things we can do with our homes, and it only takes a few ideas to make a great change," said Jewell, whose design education experience includes teaching at the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit and Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills.

She also talks about working with an interior designer on a monthly radio program on WKAR-AM radio.

"I teach everybody that I work with," Jewell said. "It just feels like it's my job. I'm passionate about it."

nstafford@home.com.net | (248) 901-2567

EVERYTHING

in our store!

Buy One
Get the second
50% off

Excludes 50% off merchandise. Lower price item 50% off.

Now thru Sunday

dressbarn

misses & woman sizes 4-24

For the store nearest you call 1-800-dressbarn or visit us at www.dressbarn.com. Sale ends 12/1/02

Pastor retires from St. Timothy United Methodist

The Rev. Phylemon DePriest Titus will retire from St. Timothy United Methodist Church in Redford Township on Dec. 21. A three-day celebration has been planned in his honor for the weekend of Dec. 6-8.

Events include a dinner/dance Friday, Dec. 6; a musical tribute Saturday, Dec. 7; and an open house Sunday, Dec. 8. For details of these events, contact Carmen Wells at (313) 861-3195.

Titus was ordained in 1965 and has served The United Methodist Church for 37 years. He has served at St. Timothy for seven years. He is a board member of the Black United Fund and National Black Methodists for Church Renewal. He also is a member of the Career Development Council, Equal Justice Council and National Urban Network Association. He served as a conference delegate to the World Methodist Conference for six terms.

SHOP 'til you DROP

At the 12th Annual
The Children's Center / WJR 760 AM Auction

November 29 - December 20

www.bids4kids.com

Phone: 1-866-887-5437

Listen to WJR 760am for daily Auction updates

ULTIMATE ITEMS

2001 Chrysler Stratus Convertible LXI

18k gold and platinum ladies diamond ring

Over 100 Additional Items

Sports Memorabilia • Food • Hands-on Events
Restaurants • Beauty • Music Events • Décor
Services • Golf • Jewelry • Travel • Shopping
Sports Events • Toys • Misc.

Help support The Children's Center by bidding on items from the small and unique, to the ultimate gifts.

Bid on-line anytime or bid by phone Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

The Children's Center, 70 W. Alexandrine, Detroit, MI 48201