

CONFERENCE SCENE

Events to advance your craft, connections, and career.

BY KRISTY STEVENSON

1 Taylor University's Professional Writers' Conference

Hosted by the Professional Writing major at Taylor University, a Christian liberal arts college, this event is in its sixth year.

WHEN: July 28–30, 2022. **WHERE:** Taylor University, Upland, Ind. **PRICE:** \$139 (Fri.-Sat.); \$139 teen (16+) track or advanced track (Thurs.-Fri.); \$249 all (Thurs.-Sat.). Includes conference, meals on campus, one-on-one appointment with faculty, and one-on-one social media help if desired. On-campus housing is available for a fee, or there are hotels within three miles of campus. **WHAT MAKES THIS CONFERENCE UNIQUE:**

"We have found our niche being a Midwest Christian conference that's short, affordable, and a friendly and welcoming place for writers of all ages and experience levels," says Director Linda Taylor. Offering an advanced track for those who want to take their craft to the next level, they also provide a teen track that specializes in teaching young people about the publishing world. The event holds a mock publication board meeting, genre gatherings, and an open mic night. For teens, they also offer special night-owl activities that are run by the conference staff.

HOW MANY ATTEND: 100+ **FACULTY:** Presenters include: Megan Alms (Olive & Quill); Timothy Berkey; Hope Bolinger (End Game Press); Julie Campbell (Warner Christian Resources/Warner Press); Aubree DeVisser; Carol Fielding; Linda Glaz



(Hartline Literary); Bob Hostetler (Steve Laube); Denise Hunter; Alexandra Mellen (*Christianity Today*); Edwina Perkins (Iron Stream Media and Harambee Press); Rachael Phillips; Lincoln Reed; Alyssa Roat (Mountain Brook Fire); David Sherrer; Lydia Sherrer; Linda Taylor; James Watkins; PeggySue Wells; and Brenda Yoder. **HIGHLIGHTS:** Three keynote sessions focus on inspiring writers and how faith is important in the process, with Edwina Perkins discussing building diversity in writing and publishing. Track 1: Breaking In—Outlining your way to success; Perfecting your pitch; Writing your book proposal; Writing devotions that sell and inspire; Breaking in via freelancing; 22 ways to get publishers to say yes in 2022; Self-editing basics. Track 2: Staying Current—Disabilities in fiction; Getting started in podcasting; Does my writing offend you?; Writing, mental health, and how to take care of you; Ask a bestselling author anything. Track 3: Specialty Markets—Writing for children; The basics of scriptwriting; The basics of newswriting; Writing immersive fantasy; Writing the cozy mystery; Blogging your way to publication; Writing not-too-sweet romance. **IF YOU GO:** Ivanhoe's restaurant, located



in Upland, is famous for its 100 different shakes and 100 different sundaes. *Huffington Post* named it as "the one thing you must do" in the state of Indiana. In addition to ice cream treats, customers love their hamburgers, chicken salad, fruit salad, and tenderloin sandwiches.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

TaylorWritingConference.com

2 Catamaran Writing Conference

Welcoming writers of all levels, this west coast event is in its ninth year and draws attendees from all over.

WHEN: July 31–August 4, 2022.

WHERE: The Robert Louis Stevenson School, Pebble Beach, Calif. **PRICE:** \$950 for the full conference including three community meals per day. Four nights onsite lodging is also available as part of package deals; see website for details. **WHAT MAKES THIS CONFERENCE UNIQUE:**

"We offer an immersive experience," says Founder and Editor-in-Chief, Catherine Segurson. Through workshops, lectures, and presentations, you'll have the opportunity to form lasting relationships beyond your time at the event. "About half of our attendees have already published books, so the classes are

Preparing for the New Normal

As we contemplate what the “new normal” might look like, many long for the comfort of old routines. Naturally, conference attendees are concerned about health and safety, expecting assurances that the right measures are in place. It’s likely that everyone will have higher expectations for face-to-face events post-COVID—from hygiene to hybrid.

Attendee registration and check-in may require the most modification, especially if the event requires proof of vaccination. Remember to pay attention to conference communications leading up to the event. Conference leaders are investing in safe experiences by creating breakout groups or workshop sessions that foster discussion and welcome remote contributors, some encouraging a more retreat-like environment that’s less intimidating than a big hall.

I expect that hybrid meetings, with both virtual and in-person attendance, will be the standard as opposed to the exception going forward. Balancing the external needs of participants with the internal needs of a team can be a juggling act. But hybrid conferences offer a healthy mix of enthusiasm, giving those who long for camaraderie the opportunity to gather again. And for those who cannot afford to travel or are more comfortable continuing to use the creative platforms that were born from our need to shelter in place, virtual options level the playing field and open attendance—and speaker options—to a wider audience.

TOP TIPS:

- Plan ahead! Research meals, mask requirements, safety updates, and hours of operation for everything.
- Be open to change. As CDC guidelines and those of the conference venue may still be in a state of flux, be ready and, more importantly, be understanding.
- Whether you are attending in-person or remotely, always make the most of the experience, glean nuggets of information and style that you can incorporate into your own writing.

for serious writers, or for those who want to be challenged,” says Segurson. Attendees also have full campus access during free time after lunch, including the library, community lounges, and Olympic size swimming pool. **HOW MANY ATTEND:** 50–75. **FACULTY:** Presenters include Mark Allen Cunningham, Dorianne Laux, Alison Luterman, Christine Sneed, Joan Rose Staffen, and Patrice Vecchione. **HIGHLIGHTS:** In addition to a keynote presentation, session genres include Poetry, Fiction, Nonfiction, and Writing Retreat. Each genre features four daily group literary workshops in a group of up to 12 participants. Nightly receptions on the outdoor terrace will be followed by literary reading presentations from conference faculty with a participant reading on the final

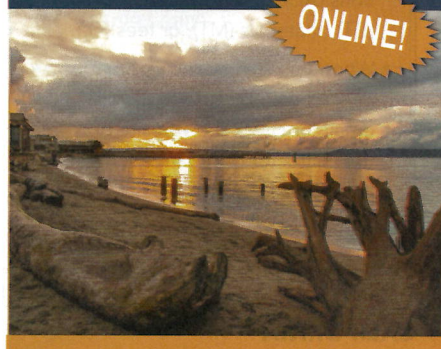
evening. **IF YOU GO:** Participants have the option of taking daily literary themed excursions offered in the afternoon free time, which include a private, guided tour of the Robinson Jeffers Tor House, as well as the Ricketts Lab on Cannery Row where John Steinbeck and Ed Ricketts wrote the *Log of the Sea of Cortez* together. There is also a hike on Point Lobos which inspired Robert Louis Stevenson’s book *Treasure Island*. **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** CatamaranLiteraryReader.com/writing-conference-2022 **WD**

Kristy Stevenson (KristyStevenson.com) is a freelance writer, editor, and storyteller. A native Cheesehead, she’s a southern transplant currently residing in central N.C. with her husband and two children.



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