

SLWG Member Spotlight: *We're pleased to present...*

Joseph Passanise



SLWG Member Since 2008
2009 SLWG Member of Distinction
Volunteer Coordinator

The following text is from our Spring 2009 print newsletter, *The Scribe*:

If you enjoy a person with a striking sense of intelligence, integrity and inspiration, then you will appreciate **Joseph Passanise**, or as his friends call him, Joe.

Born in St. Louis, Joe lived on the Hill until age 11, when his family moved to South St. Louis. In high school, Joe enjoyed English classes, but his counselor advised him to study math and science. Heeding this advice, Joe later graduated from St. Louis University as an Electrical Engineer and found that he enjoyed writing technical reports. He didn't initially consider himself a writer, but as Joe began to follow his inner passion, that changed.

Now Joe is honing his skills by reading Philip Gerard's *Creative Non-fiction*, and by joining SLWG.

"We joined SLWG earlier this year," he explained. "My wife, Cheryl and I, attended a book event and met Mary Menke."

His favorite aspect of SLWG is sharing at Open Mic Night. He's also eager to learn more about the Cycle Critique groups among the many other resources SLWG offers.

So what advice does Joe have to offer other writers? He says, "The art of writing is about who you really are. You're writing because this is how you enjoy expressing yourself."

Joe writes creative non-fiction involving political issues and also writes on his own intuitive experiences with the presence of God within himself. Joe has spent countless hours studying the Bible. The New Testament helps him understand the *inner* relationship and presence of God, though the traditional understanding is of God's presence *outside* of us. He hopes to one day publish a book on Communion with the presence of God within. His inspiration is part of who Joe is as a person: finding the truth about real life situations.

His favorite quote on writing? "The pen is mightier than the sword," from Edward Bulwer-Lytton's 1839 play, *Richelieu*, "because it reveals the staying power of the written word when compared to instruments of violence."

Joe composes on his computer, usually in early morning or late evening when there are fewer distractions.

"For me," Joe acknowledges, "it's important to write within a peaceful environment; to have a certain peace within me before I write."

Joe also considers himself a creative problem solver. After completing thirty years with St. Louis County Department of Highways and Traffic, he utilizes his experience to propose solutions regarding public safety issues.

Additionally, Joe is President of St. Louis-Bogor Sister Cities Organization, which promotes business, education and cultural exchanges between the U.S. and the Republic of Indonesia. He has taught as an Adjunct professor at St. Charles Community College preparing students to become active citizens on local, state and national levels.

As if he weren't busy enough, SLWG is excited to announce that Joe has agreed to be our Volunteers Coordinator.

So if you've been thinking about becoming a more active member of St. Louis Writers Guild but don't know where to start, introduce yourself to Joe. He'll help match your skills to our needs.

Welcome aboard, Joe!