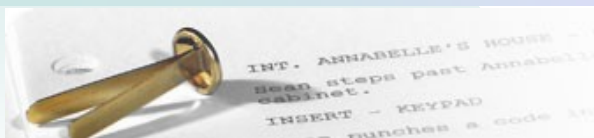


Idaho Screenwriters Association



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The July meeting of the Idaho Screenwriters Association will be on Tuesday, 20th, starting at 6:30 pm.

Idaho Pizza at
7100 W. Fairview.
Near Cole Rd



July Meeting AGENDA

INTRODUCTIONS

(come prepared to answer the following:
What from your 4th of July could be written into a screenplay?)

Bring in TEN PAGES
Bring enough copies for readers, and
let's READ this month!



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The largest event of its kind to focus on the screenwriter, the 2010 Screenwriting Expo provides unique access to over 150 of the finest seminars, workshops, and panel discussions covering topics to include:

- comedy
- Dialogue
- Directing
- Family films
- Historical fiction
- Improving your writing
- Independent films
- Making it in Hollywood
- Marketing
- Networking
- Pitching
- Producing
- Short film
- And more, more and more!! Sign up at www.screenwritingexpo.com

Kevin Mullin has been in Idaho for 16 years since he was transferred to Mountain Home AFB while on active duty. He left active duty and worked as an Emergency Manager for Ada County for 5 years before being called back to active duty in 2000 with the Idaho Air National Guard, where he currently serves as a HAZMAT Technician.

Kevin has an undergraduate degree in Political Science. He has a Master of Public Admin in Environmental Policy and Natural Resource Management from BSU. His interest in film and film making came when he was in college in Los Angeles. He was playing football and like most student-athletes he was looking for easy classes. He had to take an art credit. As he puts it, "I stink at Art, the University had a pretty big film school so I took a film class to meet the requirement." In that film class he was introduced to many classic films, including; "Citizen Kane", "On the Water Front", "Maltese



Falcon" and some of the Marx Brothers movies and Charlie Chaplin's silent films. While at grad school at BSU he took a film production class on a whim and was inspired to get more involved in independent film making. He joined the Idaho Screenwriters Association. He taught himself digital video editing. In 2005 he produced and edited a feature length documentary. He has edited several short film projects for the i48 Film

competition. He also shot, edited and co-produced a "mockumentary" involving a trip to Denali National Park that he and some co-workers took in 2005. More recently his projects capture his kids or co-workers doing outdoor sports such as skiing and mountain biking. He has a YouTube channel where you can see many of his video projects: YouTube/kpmull.

Kevin has 2 sons, age 8 and 13 and a daughter, 22



"I'm as mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore!"

Network—1976



<http://idahomediapro.org>
Wednesday, July 21st
IMP Luncheon
11 am—1pm

First Steps

"If the writer's initial sentence isn't effective, then he has failed in his first step." - Edgar Allen Poe

Wonder what Hollywood is looking for in a script?

An interesting and unusual story, good writing, great characters with a new "spin", a fantastic high concept. But before all that, it needs to start with a fantastic FIRST PAGE. Some have said they even want the FIRST SENTENCE to grab them!

An average reader has to read and analyze about a dozen scripts a week (or more). That's more than two a day. If your script is slow getting started, or confusing; the reader may set it aside and move on to the next script. Sure, they'll

come back to the "problem scripts" eventually and give them a full read, but you have already started off on the wrong foot.

You may be thinking about the good old days of movies, when they had time to build character, time to set the stage for the story. Today's films are fast food for people with Attention Deficit Syndrome.

If the opening is slow, use the old trick of 'second chapter first'. Basically you take the first chapter than introduces the character and put it AFTER the second chapter that usually introduces the conflict. So start your script with the story in progress and finding ways to introduce your characters on the run.

Last summer I soared through an old growth ponderosa forest in Colorado, (www.soaringcolorado.com) guided by a Sky Ranger named Simon Richardson. Besides learning to let go of my fear of heights, I also learned some other valuable insights from Simon. He shared his approach to life with me. He lives each day to the fullest, with a real sense of adventure and fun in everything he does. He does what he loves and loves what he does.

Soaring is an all day adventure where guests soar through the trees and over the river on a mile of steel cable zip line. Soaring guests embrace Simon's exuberance and let their spirits soar for a few hours along with his.

Simon doesn't view work the way many people do. As a Sky Ranger at Soaring Colorado, Simon helps guests conquer their fears and explore the trees like young kids, whether they are 5 years old or 95 years old. His enthusiasm and energy are contagious. Simon reminded me that we may not be around tomorrow so we should enjoy every day as much as possible.

But can someone who is not in the tourism business enjoy every day as if he or she is on vacation? The answer lies in discovering what you really love doing and giving yourself permission to pursue that passion. If you are working just to get cash to pay your bills, it's time to examine your alternatives. You can work at something you enjoy and pay bills too.

One of my former students recently called and told me times were tough and he was thinking about getting out of motion graphics to pursue something else. I cautioned him against trying to find work just to pay the bills, as there is competition for all jobs. You might think that the alternative job won't be hard to get, but you'll discover you'll work just as hard to get a job doing something you don't like as you will to get a job you love.

People who love what they do-- whether it is a Sky Ranger, a policeman, a housekeeper, or teacher-- have a joie de vivre. They are fun to be around, even when they are not working.

Donald Petrie's film *My Life in Ruins*, is about a tourist guide in Greece who finally finds love. Ushers from Idaho Media Professionals (www.idahomediapro.org) were given blue show T-shirts emblazoned with "Got Kefi?" on them. Kefi refers to the spirit of joy, passion, enthusiasm, high spirits. The main character finally allows herself to enjoy her life and finds Kefi. If you don't have Kefi, perhaps it's time to find it.

Simon says, "We don't know how long we have here or whether today will be our last. So make the most of it." Enjoy every minute of your life. Remember what got you interested in your career in the first place. Keep that sense of excitement to fuel your enthusiasm. Do your job well and contribute. Simon's job is not all fun and games, but he treats it all like an adventure. Maintain that attitude and you'll excel at your job.

Simon has also guided tourists in Thailand on the backs of elephants. For him, work is an adventure. He plans to guide tourists in the Himalayas.



Maybe you think you can't possibly be a tour guide in the Himalayas. You don't know anything about the Himalayas. Neither does Simon. But he found a way to use his skills (speaking English, experienced traveler, good with people) to pave his way. Your skills can likewise be your ticket to the job you love.

Adventures await you if you are willing to explore opportunities and put your skills to work.

Sounds like an action plan to me. Are you ready to soar?

Pamela Kleibrink Thompson is an internationally known recruiter/hiring strategist and career coach. Clients include Lucas Animation in Singapore, LAIKA in Portland, Oregon; and Framestore in London, England. She speaks regularly on career issues at colleges, universities and conferences. For recruiting, career coaching or speaking requests contact Pamela Thompson at PamRecruit@q.com. Pamela Kleibrink Thompson The 911 Recruiter and Career Coach read my online column "The Career Coach" at <http://mag.awn.com> LinkedIn profile at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/pamelathompson>

The art of writing narrative description (and dialogue as well) can be summarized in three words: Less is more. Use as few words as possible to say as much as you can.

Let's start with a poor example:

We see the skyline of New York from a train. It's going very fast and has a gray look to it.

The first problem is the phrase "We see," which is a cameral direction; let's get rid of that. Second, is the skyline "going very fast" or is the train? The description is not crystal clear. Also, the description of the train is rather lifeless. The following is an improvement with fewer words.

A silver train speeds toward Manhattan.

As a writer, pick and choose your details. Which are essential? Narrative description should not be a general summary of what happens, but a specific account using specific language, but using as few words as possible.

Do not describe incidental actions unless they are important. You do not have to describe Sonya lifting her cup of tea to her lips unless there is poison in the tea or unless doing so helps characterize Sonya in some way.

Dramatic moments may require more detail than less dramatic details. What follows are a few lines of description taken from the opening football scene from *The Last Boy Scout*.

A receiver breezes past, in motion to begin his pattern. Moving like a gazelle Cole's fingers paw the cold earth. Gouging it.



The ball is snapped. A firecracker series of pops as linemen collide. Legs churn.

The last two lines are not long shots. The camera is clearly being directed, but without any cameral directions. The action is clear and visual.

There are some things you cannot do with narrative description, and that is to describe feelings, realizations, and thoughts. They cannot appear on the movie screen; thus, you should not describe them in a script. Instead of writing, "Jim felt awful," describe a facial expression, gesture, or small action that implies how he feels. The description of facial expressions and gestures is a little trick that helps your reader get inside the character.

When an important character first appears in the screenplay, provide a brief character description of that character. In other words, give us some idea of the character's personality or nature.

ANGIE dresses too young for her age and gets away with it.

Sometimes dialogue scenes need visual elements to heighten the impact of the spoken words. In *My Best Friend's Wedding*, Julianne (nicknamed Jules, played by

Julia Roberts) and Michael (her best friend) have a moment together. The setting is visual: A boat on the Chicago River (as opposed to a couch in an apartment).

Jules wants to tell Michael she loves him. As they both approach the moment where they might say what they feel, they also approach a bridge. The dialogue continues as follows:

MICHAEL

Kimmy says, when you love someone, you say it. You say it out loud. Right now. Or the moment...

He pauses. Jules looks like she's busting to say it. They approach a bridge, are under it—silent—and then past it. She's misty-eyed.

JULIANNE

...passes you by.

The visual cue of passing under the bridge tells us that the moment has passed for her to say she loves him. The visual cue brings the message home and makes for a stronger moment.



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ISA President

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