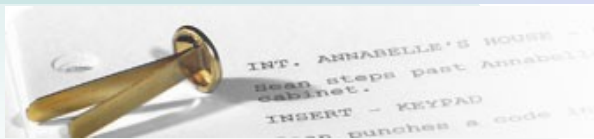


# Idaho Screenwriters Association



[www.idahowriters.org](http://www.idahowriters.org)

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The October meeting of the Idaho Screenwriters Association will be on Tuesday, 19th, starting at 6:30 pm.

Idaho Pizza at  
7100 W. Fairview.  
Near Cole Rd



## October Meeting AGENDA

### INTRODUCTIONS

(come prepared to answer the following:  
*Finish this sentence: "I was never so scared as the time..."*



Bring your 10 pages, and enough copies for all the readers necessary and let's READ!

Got any Ghost Stories???



Inside this issue:

Meeting Agenda	1
Halloween Party	1
Member Spotlight	2
Screenwriting Workshop	2
Lance Thompson	3
Writing with Sherry	4

## IMP / ISA Halloween Party!

Friday, October 29th  
6-9pm

At Her Spirit

5181 W. Overland Rd in the  
Pioneer Square

*\*prizes for the 3 best costumes*

*PRIZES for 'BEST COSTUME'*

*-Snack Potluck-*

*Come Nibble,  
Network*

*And Name your vote for the  
Best Costume!*

*Authentic Palm Readings  
and Tarot Card Readings  
for only \$20*



## H. STUART HOTCHKISS

Stuart Hotchkiss is a multifaceted executive and entrepreneur with demonstrated success in large corporations and small privately held businesses.

Corporately, Mr. Hotchkiss most recently served as President of Time Inc. Home Entertainment. Hotchkiss also was in charge of Time Inc.'s in-house promotion and production agency.

Prior to Time Inc., Mr. Hotchkiss worked for a number of high profile publishing companies including Rodale Press, Phillips Publishing, Time-Life Books, and Book-of-the-Month Club. His experiences spanned both domestic and international marketing and new product development functions.

Mr. Hotchkiss has consulted for a number of leading firms in the online service, publishing and catalog industries, serving as both a business start-up advisor and technical expert.

Mr. Hotchkiss holds a BBA Degree in Marketing from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and a MS Degree in Business Policy from Columbia University. A native of Richmond, Virginia, he now lives in Boise, Idaho.



### MOVIE QUOTE:

*“There’s no place like home.”*

~ The Wizard of Oz 1939



<http://idahomediapro.org>  
Wednesday, Oct 20th  
IMP Luncheon  
11 am—1pm

Smokey Mountain  
Pizza in Parkcenter

Lunch is not included, but we will break for lunch.

Workshop to be held at:

**Her Spirit**

**5181 Overland Road in the Pioneer Square**

**Boise ID 83705**

For more information, contact:

**Lance Thompson 208-898-1451 [lancet@q.com](mailto:lancet@q.com)**

To reserve a seat, send a check payable to

[Bagpipe Luau](#)

[1752 West Cedar Grove Street](#)

[Meridian, ID 83646](#)

\$85 for the two-day workshop,

\$75 for veterans (military or people who have taken the workshop before)

Limited to a maximum of 16 students.

## Screenwriting 2-day Workshop

Nothing is more fundamental to a successful screenplay than sound story structure, yet nothing is more misunderstood.

The three-act structure is as old as Aristotle, but the simple rules have been needlessly twisted, misused and confused over the years by those who make their living as storytellers.

Lance Thompson demystifies and explains story structure in this enjoyable, instructive, interactive two-day workshop that is guaranteed to improve your ability to write and tell a good story. Students will learn the importance of story, basics

of story structure, and how the principles contribute to a memorable screenplay. Students will also participate in class exercises to create stories using what they've learned.

Workshop will be held **Saturday, October 23 and Sunday, October 24, 2010** from 9:00 a. m. to 4:30 p. m.



Friday nights in the mid-seventies I had a standing appointment in front of the television for **The Rockford Files**. It was a weekly dose of the kind of good old private eye stories we all loved from the 1940's, updated in era but as timeless as the film noir classics. The producer of the show was Stephen J. Cannell, a gifted writer, prolific Emmy Award-winning producer, and genuine Hollywood gentleman who passed away last week at age 69.

Cannell produced or co-produced over 40 television series, including **Rockford**, **Baretta**, **The A-Team**, **Baa Baa Black Sheep** and (a personal favorite) **Tenspeed and Brownshoe**. In addition to hundreds of television scripts, he also wrote sixteen novels. Quite an impressive output from a guy who flunked three grades in elementary school because of his undiagnosed dyslexia. It wasn't until he was already writing for television that he realized that he suffered from a condition that made it almost impossible for him to read and write.

My wife worked for Stephen J. Cannell Studios in the 1980's, on a show called **21 Jump Street**, about a group of young undercover cops posing as teenagers. One of the cast was a promising young actor named Johnny Depp. He was just one of countless actors who got his break on a Cannell show.

During that time, Stephen Cannell had several television series on the air, several more pilots ready to go, and a dozen more in development. He had a seven-story building in Hollywood for his producers and writers, had rented sound stages all over town, and had just built a new production studio in Vancouver. The television shows Stephen Cannell produced employed hundreds—certainly more than a thousand—creative people. That's when the 1988 Writers Guild strike hit, and production came to a standstill, all over town. Thousands of people were laid off, and had to scramble for work. Studios stopped making movies and television shows, and their income ceased.

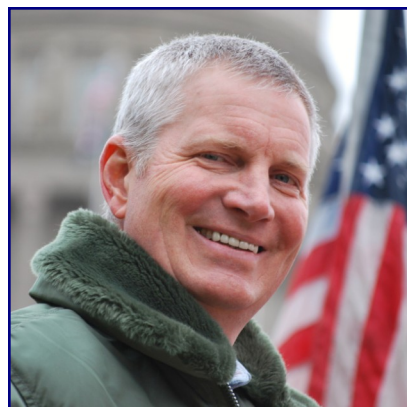
Those who worked for Stephen J. Cannell were lucky. He voluntarily paid employees half wages during the strike. This unprecedented generosity was not a clause in their contracts, or required by any agreement or law. This was Stephen J. Cannell being a decent, thoughtful and thoroughly generous human being. He cared about the people who worked for him, and he went to great effort and expense to take care of them.

During the last season of **The Rockford Files**, star James Garner was suffering from a variety of physical ailments, either caused or exacerbated by the hard-hitting action of the series. The Emmy-winning show, in its fifth season, was popular and lucrative for Cannell. But Garner was showing the strain, and his health was deteriorating. Garner was not a complainer, and was determined to tough it out. When Cannell learned the severity of Garner's condition, he went to the star and said he was pulling the plug on the show. No television series was worth ruining a man's health.

I was lucky enough to meet Stephen J. Cannell on two occasions. The first was at a Christmas party which he threw for all his employees (and their spouses, which was my category). I managed to stammer a few words about how much I admired his work, and how many hours I spent glued to the TV because of him. He accepted the awkward compliments with grace and humility.

The second occasion was many years later, when he had left television behind for a successful career as a novelist. My wife and I saw him at a Burbank restaurant, and we stopped by his table. My wife wanted to tell him what a pleasure it was to work for him, and I wanted to congratulate him on the success of his new book. He and his lunch companion both stood up to greet us, interrupting their meal. Stephen J. Cannell demonstrated the grace, charm and manners that are seldom seen in Hollywood today.

Fortunately for all of us, Stephen Cannell's talent survives him in his novels and in the countless hours of entertainment he created, much of it now available on DVD and other media. His characters were unforgettable, his dialogue sizzled, and his stories resonated with emotion and truth. His heroes might have been hard-boiled, but they were all decent, honorable, and courageous people who walked the walk. Just like their creator.



Lance Thompson  
208-898-1451



Understanding the elements of a good story...

## IDEAS

The first pieces of your script you may notice are the ideas. Ideas are usually the smallest pieces, but the most important.

## CONCEPT

By the time a director sees a script, all of those little ideas have been blended into one big idea called a concept (*which is the idea behind a film*).

## CONFLICT

There is no story without conflict, and a story lives or dies on the strength of its central conflict. There has to be a struggle. Someone has to want something and someone else wants to keep them from obtaining it. What does your character want, and why can't they have it? What does your character fear, and what forces them to deal with it?

## CHARACTER

Character is one of the most important parts of story, yet one that writers frequently don't spend enough time thinking about. They create a character that is separate from their story, rather than a character that is part of their story. You can't just plug a great character into a great concept, the character grows from the concept or the concept grows from the character. Remember: What your character looks like isn't important (*casting will decide that*), we need to know WHO a character is—it's what's inside that matters. How your character sees the world, what they fear, what they desire, their general attitude, those are the things that are important in a screenplay.

## PLOT

It's what happens. Many people confuse plot and story and that can also lead to story problems. Plot is an



element of story, and the most obvious one. When people tell you about a movie, they usually relate the plot, they tell you what happened. Story requires things to happen. You can have the most interesting character in the world, but if nothing happens to him, you'll end up with an awful script. Plot is how one scene logically and inevitably leads to the next, how each part connects to the next part. The foot bone connects to the ankle bone, the ankle bone connects to the leg bone, the leg bone, well, you get the idea!

## LOCATION

Location is critical to the story. Not a specific location, but a specific type of location. (*A rural town, a big city, a deserted isle, the desert*).

## TIME

The three Greek unities of Story: are Time, Place, and Event. Film can bend these unities by traveling from place to place and from time period to time period, but most films are focused on a single time period. Every story has a time period that is the present. There may be flashbacks and flash forwards, but there is a single "present time" that all of these flashes come from. Time is also similar to location

in that it needs to be appropriate to the story. Though some ideas are timeless, others require a certain time period to work effectively.

## TONE

An underestimated part of story, one of the main gears in that fine Swiss watch. Comedians say it's not the joke, it's the delivery and Tone. What is the "delivery" of your script? The overall mood of the script. Tone is not the same as Genre, it's a different piece of story. Change the "tone", you change the script. Both "*The Wild Bunch*" and "*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*" have the same plot, the same characters, the same end, many of the same scenes, but much different "tones". One is a very violent action story, the other is a buddy movie (light comedy). So figure out what your tone is, then stick with it. Establish it in your opening scene (tell the audience what kind of experience this is going to be, then give them that experience).



Sherry A. E. Carr  
ISA President

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