

July 21, 2020



Gangster In Our Midst—available at local bookstores, [Amazon](#), [Walmart](#) & [Barnes & Noble](#)

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Gangster Blog

Award-winning Authors



Gloria VanDemmeltraadt & Betty Brandt Passick



**WOW 11th Annual
Writers' Conference**

Saturday, October 24
8:30-4:30

**"Writing a Memoir
You'll Be Proud of"**

Oak Knoll Lutheran Church
600 Hopkins Crossroad
Minnetonka, MN

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com>; tickets (643)-617-8182

Oct. 24th WOW Writers' Conference— CANCELLED

I'm bummed this event has been cancelled! Author/friend [Gloria Van Demmeltraadt](#) and I had planned to teach a "Writing a Memoir" workshop. Individually we teach this class on an ongoing basis—hopefully, next year. I **welcome invitations** to come to churches, schools, book clubs, or organizations to share my learnings and to help others discover how to write a memoir you can be proud of.

Audible Book Recording Underway (finally)

The audible recording of *Gangster in Our Midst* is finally underway. A male college student who's been active in drama will do the male voices (female: me). I'm awaiting his recording of Ch. 1, "Mystery Man," which begins with a newspaper article (murder of Frankie Yale)...a narration of the gangster's thoughts about the article...the gangster's speaking voice as he answers the door of his home and speaks to a young boy delivering newspapers...etc. What a **fun project during a coronavirus**.



COMING!

**Sequel to
Gangster in Our
Midst:
Winter 2020!**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Oct. 24th WOW Writers' Conference—	
CANCELLED	1
Audible Book Recording (finally)	1
Reminds Me of an Old Worm Movie	2
Author Events	2



Reminds Me of an Old Worm Movie

I grew up in a small Midwestern town in the 1960s.

Vivid memories of those years pop in and out of my head from time to time—probably similar to those of most of my childhood friends.

Every now and then I recall a sci-fi movie I saw on our black and white TV.

I'm not a lover of sci-fi. Probably one of my six brothers was the first to turn on the TV that evening and picked what our family would watch for the next couple hours. That's how it worked: whoever turned on the TV got to pick. If you left the room, even to go to the bathroom, you lost the pick to the second person who came into the TV room.

The sci-fi movie opened with a scene in an average small town where a few white people are talking to each other (not about anything in particular, just about the stuff normal people talk about in a small town). Suddenly the sandy soil beneath them opens up—kind of like when one lets the water out of the bathtub and creates a swirling effect. They drop into a subterranean world run by worm aliens, who quickly capture, anesthetize, and put a mind-altering chip in the back of their heads, before returning them above ground. The citizenry without the 'chip' implant immediately notice a distinct difference in the 'chipped' people, who now have robotic mannerisms and cold, fixed eyes.

Six months ago the first case of COVID-19 appeared in America, and pretty much every morning since I have awakened to wonder if I am one of those altered 'worm' people.

What has happened to my life?

Sometimes, particularly as I stare out into my unusually quiet cul-de-sac, I imagine the outline of a new book: A coronavirus has come to a country of over 325 million people. Businesses are forced to close to prevent spreading the virus. The economy stalls. The country's president goes on national TV to quell citizens' fears, stating the virus will magically 'disappear' within days. Meanwhile, the virus surges in densely populated areas of the country. In a subsequent chapter, the reader learns this scenario is playing out in countries around the globe. Months later (back home) in a metropolitan city, a white policeman kills a member of the minority citizenry after he attempts to pass counterfeit money. His death is captured on video and broadcast on national TV and cable stations. Racism rises once more to the forefront of problems the country faces, and suddenly—in addition to a virus—a movement against racism spreads like wildfire across the land... (you get the idea).

Since COVID-19, I have been writing a new book—a sequel to *Gangster in Our Midst* (2017). It isn't political. It's not about subterranean worm aliens.

But it is about a man who builds a boat.



Author Events (July--December)

All scheduled events have been cancelled due to the coronavirus.

