

2005 TAA Convention Speech

Ron Pynn, outgoing executive director

I am going to write a book, I am, I am.
And it will not be about green eggs and ham.
I am going to write about mathematics, art, or some other stuff,
And I will fill it with all kinds of fluff.
It will have an index and a table of contents
And some other things that make no sense.
And when it goes to sell
The students can tell
They paid too much money
For something that's not very funny.

I will send it off to an editor named Dawn
Who will have to stifle a very big yawn.
She will yawn so wide
The P&L sheet they will have to hide.
This may not seem like a big deal,
But for publishers who are big wheels,
This is important to know.
That is why I am telling you so.

A proposal I will send in.
It will be written on a napkin.
In it I will include all kinds of names and places.
Names of which no one can ever trace.
Books, they will sell by the millions,
Because all the pages, they will be fill-ins.
So now send me that advance,
Then I can do a little dance.

A contract I will be needing,
For it's a family I am feeding.
This contract will have but one clause,
For which there is no reason to pause.
And for a royalty, they give a rate,
The terms of which I just wait.
I am told, don't look so sad
For any money you should be glad.

Your rights,
They may be slight.
But over us don't hover,
For your name's on the cover.
Just sign
On the dotted line.
Then your name you will see in print
While we are off to the mint.

Oh, now a book I have to write,
Can you imagine such a sight.
I am at the keyboard,
Totally bored.
A sentence I have yet to pen,
And I don't know when
I'll ever get a chapter
But that's a whole different matter.

The manuscript I will fill with words,
Most of which will be absurd.
Some of them will be long, others tall.
From my keyboard, they will fall.
Writing words can be a pox,
Mine I get from the cereal box.

I will also include a graph,
Just so you can laugh.
Photos, the pages I will fill
Just so your eyes can stay still.
And the margins I will make wide,
So the words, they have no place to hide.

There will be photos of all kind,
Including your mother and mine.
People in all kind of poses,
Some will even be blowing their noses.
There will be mountains tall
And atoms small.
Photos break up the prose,
I'll take two more of those.

All my footnotes
Cause me to gloat.
I might not get them right,
But at least I have a cite.
People of fame
I will name.
Every chapter will have a million.
That way people think I know what I'm doing.
I include every book in the field
In hopes some legitimacy it will yield.

The title will have many a word
Including a picture of a bird.
For meaning you will have to search
While the bird sits on its perch.
Titles, you see, are how books are judged
And for this one, a publisher must be hugged.

Every once and a while, I wonder
How can I do this job without a blunder.
When the spots before my eyes are red,
I just get up and go to bed.
But sleep does not come
So up I get and write some.
But for all I try
Tonight the words I cannot pry.

I look up at the clock
As I suffer from writer's block.
I can really feel the pain,
There is nothing coming from the brain.
What I write, I throw away
Whether its night or day.
Maybe I will let it be
And go watch some TV.

There are times I write slow
For the sentences have no glow.
Finally, several paragraphs are at hand
For hours I will not stand.
And the result, at the very least,
Is a very sore seat.

I write a draft that is rough,
Putting it all on paper is quite tough.
Most of the paragraphs are ho hum
But at least they are all done.
They include lots of big words,
Most of which are for you nerds.
But don't accuse me of dumbing down
Even if it makes the students frown.

The book comes with ancillaries a plenty.
A workbook, a pocketbook, and a hanky.
A toothbrush
May be a bit too much.
But a music video from the internet
Will be just the ticket.
And a computer game I will add
All because it is a fad.
And I will add a lollipop.
You see, I just cannot stop.

All the case studies
Involve our buddies.
There is Enron;
It goes on and on.
And with Haliburton
We will be flirting.
And if things don't add up nice and tight
Arthur Anderson will make it all right.

Exercises come at chapter's end.
Student mistakes they hope to mend.
Some exercises are concentric,
While others are isometric.
The exercises will keep you on your toes,
That way we keep the blood to flow.
They will put you through your paces.
Now don't go and make any faces.

A test bank
I will have to crank.
The questions will be arcane
And all the answers the same.
There will be multiple choice and fill in the blank.
The questions, they will be really rank.
The tests, you throw down the stairs.
That's the only way to grade fair.

For a CD-rom
I will create a stink bomb.
The student's computer will tell,
What's that smell?
So when you get the C prompt,
And through the program you romp,
Be ready to plug your nose
And the rom you had better close.

The CD-rom comes with a menu,
It even allows you a change of venue.
You can order coffee and dessert,
A choice of entrees you can assert.
But there is no bologna,
On this menu there's nothing phony.
You just have to hit the right key,
Though you will be charged a handling fee.

I will have a home page,
It will set the stage.
On it I will post the baseball scores
And useless information galore.
There will be many links,
One including the kitchen sink.
But it will not be tame,
Filled with mostly video games.

To the publisher, the manuscript, the post office will bear
Sent with postage galore, and a prayer.
The text they will edit,
That is, if I let it.
When they have read what I have to say
Let us all pray it will be OK.
A word they dare not change
For it will make the book all strange.
When too many words they do parse
The book becomes a farce.

The book is such a bore
It makes your eyes sore.
800 pages at last count,
which has grown by a large amount.
Of the pages I have had my fill.
To write more, I must take a pill.
Yet the editor yells, more.
That's what publishers are for.

All that is in the book I don't understand.
That's how things go, with all the extra hands.
The inserts make it very slick,
They have added plenty of tricks.
And as we were in haste,
There is a lot of cut and paste.
The clock is ticking;
I hope the glue is sticking.

They want the book on disc
Tsk, tsk.
This book I am to compute
Which I do as well as the flute.
And my C drive,
It gives me the hives.
Whoa, I accidentally hit erase,
And now I have plenty of space.

On my floppy,
They want camera ready copy.
Oh, when will they ever learn
A CD I do not know how to burn.
If I am to format,
Don't treat me as a doormat.
In this digital age,
I hope I don't lose a page.

I know I will have to revise,
Under some guise.
For if you look,
You will see a used book.
New info I have to find;
It has to be of some kind.
The pages must be rearranged,
That way the book has changed.
Then more cash,
We can stash.

For market research we will search,
Students who are attending church.
Thay way they cannot tell a lie
Why the book they did not buy.
These groups, they will all have focus,
It's so much better than hocus pocus.
And from these market data
We can eliminate all the errata.

The book should be read
Only while in bed.
First turn down the light,
It will lessen the fright.
Tuck the book under the pillow as you sleep,
And into your brain all the information will seep,
Or so it seems.
Sweet dreams.

The students all have opinions,
They, and their minions.
We ask, what do they know?
Don't you want to grow?
But they know they have nothing to fear,
For they can always go out and drink beer.
If only the book you would read,
Then beer, you would have no need.

For the book a market we will create,
And no one will we berate,
About the book we will tell lots of lies,
And with an airplane write them in the sky.
The book has been well adopted,
Placed with a good family as plotted.
For what we lack in quality
We more than make up in sanctimony.

Into the bookstores the students will flock
But just to gawk.
No need from the shelves to take,
A book they themselves can make.
Off to the copy shop in a flash,
That way they can save the cash.

The books, they make a pretty pile.
But there is no reason to smile,
For the books are all used.
Your sales, they are bruised.
Their numbers keep growing,
All the while, your sales keep blowing.

The number is fifty thousand and two,
That's a lot of reasons to be blue.
A whopping big number,
That makes you grow number.
Used book merchants collect them in a shopping cart,
As from office to office they dart.
After all, the book you did not ask,
So in the cash they do bask.

When they ask, any books to sell,
At them, please try not to yell.
Give them a lecture if you must,
But why create all the fuss.
There is no need to send them to perdition,
After all, you can always create a second edition.

The book reps, you must adore
When they stand at your door.
As they arrive they will just honk,
Take the book and on the head bonk.
That way faculty are sure to adopt,
Lest on the head they get bopped.
There will be no need the book to open,
So long as the head is not broken.

I have come to the end of my tale.
The check, she is in the mail.
And if I attempt another rhyme,
I will be charged with a crime.
Many a lesson you should have learned.
After knowledge we all have yearned.
But it has come the hard way.
And that is why we need TAA.