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Website: [www.motherwitdesign.com](http://www.motherwitdesign.com)  
Birthdate: April 22, 1950

Education: Bay City Central High (1964-68; Valedictorian), Western Michigan University Honors College (1968-70), West Virginia University (1973-74; graduated Magna Cum Laude, B.A., English), and Marshall University Graduate College (M.A., Humanities, 2000)

## Career Summary

September 1975 to present: Freelance writer, performer, and owner of Mother Wit Writing and Design (1983-present) and Oh Susannah Graphics (1975-1983).

January 1972-December 1972, West Virginia Commission on Aging: Editor of monthly publication, *Age in Action*, for older West Virginians.

August 1970-December 1971, U.S. Government: VISTA volunteer. Helped form Cabin Creek Quilts, a cooperative business owned by 125 low-income quilters. Product design, quality control, marketing, and fieldwork with quilters.

## Awards and Honors

- First Prize, Original Songs, Appalachian Humor Festival, Berea, KY (1983)
- Publication in anthology of best stories from the PEN Syndicated Fiction Project (1990)
- Two short stories nominated for the Pushcart Prize (1994)
- First Place, Charleston Stage Company's New Plays Project (1994)
- First Place, West Virginia Writers annual competition, for short story collection, *Windfall* (1996)
- Two \$3,500 Individual Artist Fellowships from the WV Commission on the Arts (1994, 2000)
- First Place, Commentary, Public Radio News Directors, Inc., national competition (1995)
- Second Place, Media Award, WV Division of Tourism, for article in *West Virginia Quarterly* (1996)
- Second Place, Media Award, WV Division of Tourism, for article in *Mid-Atlantic Country* (1997)
- Second Place, Commentary, Public Radio News Directors, Inc., national competition (1997)
- Three-month residency grant from the Helene Wurlitzer Foundation of Taos, New Mexico (2007)

## Writing and Performance

• Short stories in *Redbook*, *The Available Press/PEN Short Story Collection*, *The Village Advocate*, *Appalachian Heritage*, *Farmer's Market*, *Lullwater Review*, *Now & Then*, *Rosebud*, *Kestrel*, *Antietam Review*, *Laurel Review*, and other publications.

• Poems in *Carolina Quarterly*, *Embers*, *The Sun*, *Arts & Letters*, *Passager*, *Venue*, *Pine Mountain Sand and Gravel*, *The WPFW Poetry Anthology*, *Kestrel*, *Now & Then*, *Tantra Press*, *Hubbub*, and *Wild Sweet Notes: Fifty Years of West Virginia Poetry*.

• Poetry readings on American Public Radio's "Mountain Stage" and Pacifica Foundation's "The Poet and the Poem," as well as numerous live readings in the Appalachian region, including readings at West Virginia University, West Virginia Wesleyan College, ArtSpace, Appalshop, the Blennerhassett Reading Series, the WV Division of Culture & History's Poetry and Motion series, Sunrise Museum, Fairmont State College, and Appalachian South Folklife Center.

• Regular commentator on West Virginia Public Radio, 1994-1998.

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- Original songs on two self-produced albums, *Fabulous Realities* and *Going Over Home*, have been featured on "Mountain Stage" and "The Folk Sampler," both nationally syndicated radio shows. Featured guest on "Mountain Stage" and WV Public Radio's "Music from the Mountains." "West Virginia Chose Me" included on *Songs of Home*, a promotional CD produced by the WV Lottery and *The Road Home*, produced by Wingman Records.
- Reviews, travel articles, and feature articles in *Mid-Atlantic Country*, *West Virginia Quarterly*, *Goldenseal*, and *The Charleston Gazette*. Author of *The New West Virginia One-Day Trip Book*. Editor of West Virginia's official travel guide, *West Virginia Wild and Wonderful*, from 1999-2001. Featured editorial writer for the travel guide's 2002-2007 editions.

## Visual Arts and Graphic Design

- Winner of regional and national awards for graphic design, including First Place and/or Best of Show awards from the Charleston/Huntington Advertising Clubs, West Virginia Communicators, West Virginia Press Women, and the National Federation of Press Women.
- Paintings in West Virginia Juried Exhibition, 1989 and 1993.
- Curator, "Poets and Painters," for Arts & Letters Series with Rachael Worby, September 1996. This show was also mounted at West Virginia State College's Della Taylor Brown Gallery, August 1997.
- "Portraits of Friends," a collaborative art/poetry/photography exhibition with Charles Jupiter Hamilton and Scott Smith, exhibited at Museum in the Community, Youth Museum of Southern West Virginia, Appalshop, The WV State Museum at the Cultural Center, Boarman Arts Center, and West Virginia University.
- Designer of many logos and publications for the WV Division of Culture and History, including layout design of *ArtWorks* and layout of the state's folklife magazine, *Goldenseal*, for more than 17 years.

## Workshops

- Since 1988, conducted many creative writing, playwriting, and songwriting workshops for West Virginia public school students, including two month-long residencies in all Jackson County elementary schools and one-day to two-week workshops in Fayette, Grant, Hampshire, Harrison, Kanawha, Lincoln, Morgan, Pocahontas, Putnam, Randolph, and Upshur counties. Conducted numerous workshops for women and girls at the Family Resource Center of Charleston Area Medical Center, and annual workshops for award-winning young writers during Young Writers Day at the University of Charleston. Workshop for teachers, "Make Your Own Folk Song: Songwriting with History," presented several times at The Clay Center, Charleston.
- Currently conduct an annual weeklong songwriting workshop at Ghost Ranch in Abiquiu, New Mexico, with singer/songwriter Julie Adams. Also with Adams, I have taught songwriting workshops for West Virginia University Women's Center, Michigan State University's ROIAL (Residential Option In Arts & Letters) program, and Garrett Community College (MD). I have led several songwriting workshops at Kanawha Valley FOOTMAD (Friends of Old Time Music and Dance) fall festivals.

## Memberships and Volunteer Activities

- WV Writers, Friends of WV Public Radio, Kanawha Valley Historical & Preservation Society, The PawPaw Foundation.