



# Literary Louisiana - Lynn Shurr (aka Carla Hostetter)

by Josephine Templeton



Lynn Shurr (aka Carla Hostetter)

Band/Singer: Peter, Paul and Mary and Simon and Garfunkel, now just Simon

"My mother said I had a vivid and overactive imagination. Still do," comments Lynn Shurr, known to her friends and family as Carla Hostetter. This retired Iberia Parish librarian spends most afternoons tapping away at her keyboard. She's been writing poems, stories and plays since childhood.

"The act of creating takes away my aches and pains, my worries, and sets me down in another place. I would still write even if I never had another book published."

Lynn has completed fifteen books, and two are published (*Goals for a Sinner* and *Wish for a Sinner*). She writes two books a year. "As one HeartLa member said, once I get going I will have a huge backlist."

In *Wish for a Sinner*, "Joe Dean Billodeaux, womanizing star quarterback for the New Orleans Sinners, thinks maybe he should be looking for a more wholesome kind of woman than the ones who signed his list for sex after his season of celibacy ended. The first who comes to mind is Nell Abbott, the Wish Lady who helps fulfill the dreams of ill children. His friends think Nell, a child psychologist, is just what Joe needs. But, is Nell willing to take on Joe and all his little problems?"

She also has a short story entitled *The Mummy*, *The Samurai*, *The Shrunk Head* and *Joe Boone* in the anthology *Dreamspell Haunts Volume 2*.

Lynn's most memorable experience as a published writer thus far was at Heart of Louisiana's Readers' Luncheon in 2010 when the person sitting next to her ordered Lynn's book on her Kindle as they spoke.

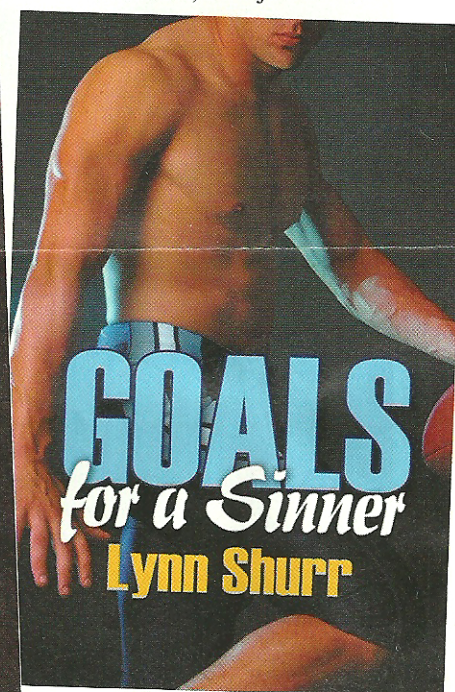
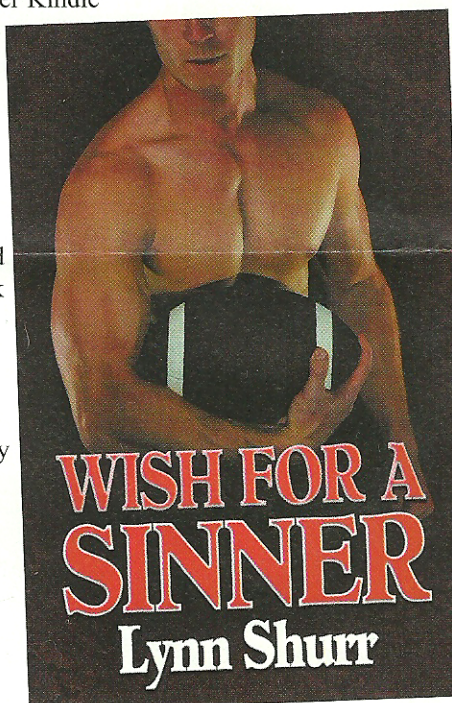
As for how her life experiences have influenced her writing, she states, "One good thing about being older-your life is rich with experiences to draw from and allows a deeper understanding of people and events. Everything from a sad divorce to Little League shows up in my books."

When her first book, *Goals for a Sinner* was released last April, her entire family showed up at her first book signing. They were all dressed in red and black football jerseys and had brought a cake embossed with the book's cover. "My husband understands that writing takes gobs of time and never complains about a late or burned dinner. He also takes the teasing about my sexy covers well and merely states that he posed for them."

She's married to Dave Hostetter, an astronomer and planetarium curator, and she has three grown children: Cora, Caroline and James and one grandchild, Avery. Her family also includes Jake and Elwood, two large and lazy orange tabby cats.

Lynn's favorites:

- Author: Jane Austin
- Book: *Pride and Prejudice*
- Movie: A&E's version of *Pride and Prejudice* with Colin Firth



- Music: "Classic rock and folk music which sometimes provides me inspiration and often appears in my books."
- Hobbies: Reading, painting, flower gardening and traveling

She admits that of her own books, her favorite is *Queen of the Mardi Gras Ball*, a 1920's historical due to be released in January, 2010 by L & L Dreamspell.

It took Lynn "five years of concentrated effort (to get published) since I retired, but I have submitted books on and off all my adult life."

While she writes almost every day from one to five ("a luxury of time many writers don't have"), the only writing ritual she adheres to is making a pot of hot tea and putting her bottom in the computer chair. She doesn't get up until she's typed out at least 1,000 words every day.

Lynn's advice for aspiring authors - "Only the trite but still true - write every day, hone your craft, and never give up." She also warns to watch out for scams. "Thanks to e-publishing, anyone can get a book into print, but the internet abounds with folks who will take your money and produce a shoddy product. Be careful. It's better to take the hard road to a real publisher whether e-pub'd or in New York than the quick pay as you go route."

Lynn received the "call" via e-mail. She was in front of her computer, and when she saw the message, she opened it last because she thought it was yet another rejection. It was early in the morning, and she was still in her slippers and nightgown. "I sat staring at the screen and waiting for my husband to get out of the shower so I could tell him the good news first. After that, I started e-mailing all my friends."

Rejection letters are a fact of writer-life, and at first, Lynn could barely write after getting the first ones. "Now I have the hide of a rhino and simply print them out and file them so I remember where I have queried and their reply. Rarely, I get one that infuriates me, but I handle it the same way. Print it, file it, forget it. Mostly, though, I have reached the point of the "good rejection" where they liked the book but it "is not right for them". And yes, you still get rejections no matter how many books you have published. It's a tough business."

In regards to character development, Lynn urges writers to "Study the people around you, how they talk, what they talk about. For historical characters, read non-fiction books on that era and esp. diaries and old letters to get the feel of how they expressed themselves."

Lynn Shurr's upcoming book signings:

- August 13th at the Franklin, LA Art Walk from 6 - 9
- October 1st at the Shadows from 9 - 3
- November 5th at Heart of Louisiana's 2011 Fall Into Romance Readers' Luncheon featuring Sabrina Jeffries. Visit [www.heartla.com](http://www.heartla.com) for more information.

Her books are also available via [www.lynnshurr.com](http://www.lynnshurr.com), [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com), [www.lldreamspell.com](http://www.lldreamspell.com), Fictionwise, and all Romance e-books.

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