

Transcript

Wynne Leon

Welcome to the sharing the heart of the Matter podcast, where we celebrate the storyteller in us all. I'm Wynne Leon, and in this episode, Vicki Atkinson and I are talking with author and Blogger Lauren Scott. In this wonderful episode, Lauren tells us the beautiful story about how she started a poetry blog 14 years ago. In the process, she cultivated the roots she planted as a young girl for poetry as a destination for her emotions. Vicky and I asked how she took the step from her blog to publishing books. Lauren tells us the themes of each of her four published books. She weaves the theme of love through all of them, even the most serious, just the way that love carries us through life. And she gives us a sneak peek into the children's book that is about to hit the press. She authored it with her nephew as illustrator. The morning we. Recorded this podcast Laurence Piece tweets only please was announced as best publication of the Month on Spill WordPress. This podcast is like a master class on the growth mindset. Those are my words, not Laurence, because she's wonderfully humble and real. Which makes it even. More powerful and inspiring to hear Lauren. Tell her about her writers early and all the things she's overcome and been willing to try. And how that feeds into fantastic ideas for new projects. I'm confident you'll love the scenic and beautiful places we explore as we share the power of storytelling. We know you'll love it.

Good morning, Lauren and Vicki.

Lauren Scott

Good morning.

Wynne Leon

Hello there. So good to see you. And you know I just think this is so fun. Like we get introduced to people on WordPress and then this is like the extra candy that because we just had Halloween on top when we get to actually speak with you, which is so fun.

Vicki Atkinson

Right.

Lauren Scott

It's great to see you. Guys.

Wynne Leon

Good to see you. So our pleasure as we, as I said we know. You from WordPress where you publish your beautiful poems and pictures and posts, but you're a widely published author. Can you tell us about your widening journey?

Lauren Scott

Well, my writing journey actually began with a teenage girl. Who wore her Brown hair, long and straight, and parted in the middle.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh.

Lauren Scott

That's when I started writing poetry, and I remember back then I used a lot of rhymes. I wrote about family, friendships, boy crushes, you know.

Wynne Leon

MHM. Oh.

Lauren Scott

But. I wrote poetry throughout the years and my poems be turned out to be a destination for my emotions. Whatever I was going through, whatever I was feeling.

Wynne Leon

MMM.

Lauren Scott

Then in my late 20s, I met my future husband. We were married. We will soon celebrate our 36th anniversary. And then we had our son and daughter.

Wynne Leon

Hey.

Lauren Scott

And I continued to write throughout the years, but honestly writing. Turn out to land on the back burner.

Vicki Atkinson

M.

Wynne Leon

Hmm.

Lauren Scott

So I didn't really give it the time and attention that it deserved and required until later in my life. Later in my life, and ironically, when I turned the Big 5 O my son, who was in high school, suggested that I start a poetry blog.

Wynne Leon

Ohh.

Lauren Scott

That's how I entered the world of WordPress.

Wynne Leon

Wow. Now how does he know about the WordPress I mean? That.

Lauren Scott

My son is the techie and the family familiar with blogging? Yeah, and yeah. So that's what I did. I started my poetry blog. I've been blogging for probably almost 14 years.

Wynne Leon

Ah.

Vicki Atkinson

Wow.

Lauren Scott

And UM. But I will say I just want to add a side note that. You know, after high school graduation, I started going to college, but I didn't finish for personal reasons. So I've never taken any formal creative writing courses or poetry classes.

Vicki Atkinson

MHM.

Lauren Scott

And the fact that I didn't have any specific literary credentials kind of affected my self esteem over the years.

Wynne Leon

MHM. Yeah, sure.

Lauren Scott

But when I started blogging and following the writers, you know who I enjoy their poetry?

Vicki Atkinson

MMM.

Lauren Scott

The online community became a fantastic. Class online class so that's where I learned many, many forms of poetry. I learned more about fiction. I'm not a fiction writer, but I ended up writing some fiction short stories.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

So. The the blogging community has just been a great community to be a part of.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah, yeah.

Wynne Leon

This is it.

Vicki Atkinson

Lauren, would you say it's it for when? And I've talked about this a little bit, it it almost seems to a person the writers that we talked to talk about the importance of community and confidence building. And I I love how, you know, honest. You're being about that trepidation. I think that writers feel because some of our favorite writers Wynne and I. Come to writing from the great Big world of work. Not everyone has literary credentials, and sometimes because they don't. The writing is more compelling, but that is there is a little bit of UM, I don't know. You have to feel a little bit of audacity, you know, to to creep in and say this is me. I'm I'm going to bring it to you and showcase it in a forum like WordPress. And I love hearing that you felt that. But the confidence comes when you meet friends. That receive you well and give great feedback. That's beautiful.

Lauren Scott

And I look at my writing years ago and I look at my writing now and it's it's changed, it's transformed. It's evolved.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. MHM.

Lauren Scott

Which is like when said earlier, it's growth.

Wynne Leon

Yeah, right. Yeah. Wow.

Vicki Atkinson

So.

Lauren Scott

I I write mainly in freestyle but I do like the syllabic poetry. The challenge that that it delivers. So I've learned, you know, like I said before, I've learned a lot of poetry.

Vicki Atkinson

MMM.

Lauren Scott

Forms. And I've written some fiction short stories, and one of them I had submitted to spill words. And it's called. Resilience is Her Saving grace, and it was nominated for publication of the month. It didn't win, but I was thrilled with the nomination because it was one of my first fiction. Fiction stories mechanized in that way, so that that felt good.

Vicki Atkinson

Thank you. Yeah. Yeah. And extending kind of your reach a little bit because I think for writers that are as. I think as accomplished as you are, you know really kind of reaching outside, you know, a poetry to to dabble, you know. And we all think of it that way and then it works out. And you you feel competent when you do that and it's it. It is growth. Yeah. Right.

Wynne Leon

So how did your blogging journey sort of grow into publishing?

Vicki Atkinson

Well.

Lauren Scott

Yes, I started publishing self-publishing my books in 2013. And my reason for that was I wanted to create a, a legacy or keepsake, if you will, for my family. So in 2013, my first book was new day new dreams, and this is, you know, I've always been a romantic, and I have, I'm, I'm lucky to say that I have a great.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. Oh.

Lauren Scott

Has been. I have a great relationship, so that book takes the reader on a romantic ride. It's it's a lot of love poems. Kind of a fun, lighthearted book then in 2015. Finding a balance. Was published and that book. The poems in it. Expressed the emotions that I felt after. A daunting disease invaded our family. And there's also a little bit of romance in the book. It's kind of strange how I did that, but but it's a little more serious. It has a little more serious tone, and all the proceeds of that book go to the Chris Klug Foundation in support of organ donation.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh.

Lauren Scott

Because he had the same disease. I mean, I'll be transparent. My daughter was diagnosed with this disease. He's and he had the same disease as her and he he's a survivor. So it was very inspirational and helpful for us to read about him at that time.

Wynne Leon

MM. Mm-hmm.

Lauren Scott

She's doing fine, just letting you know.

Wynne Leon

Great.

Vicki Atkinson

But.

Lauren Scott

But that was the story behind that. Book and then.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

In 2021, I compiled a collection of poetry and nonfiction short stories from my life and created a memoir that that's titled more than Coffee Memory, Orson Prose, and.

Vicki Atkinson

Love that.

Lauren Scott

And then my latest collection is ever so gently, and that's a poetry collection of. Of over about 90 poems. So that that is divided into 3 sections of nature, love and life, and that's the Reader's Digest version.

Wynne Leon

MHM. So good. You know what I love? There are so many things that I love about your story and your journey 1 is. That creation of a legacy we've. Yeah. You know, as people just. But the second is that you've mined what you've written like you've pulled these things together and sometimes that's hard. I think for me, it's hard.

Lauren Scott

MHM.

Wynne Leon

To to not just go forward, you know, I like writing the next thing and I forget to mine the.

Vicki Atkinson

MHM.

Wynne Leon

Stuff that I've already put out there.

Lauren Scott

Right. Well, that makes me think that I need to organize everything that I've published on my blog and that I've submitted to other online magazines because.

Wynne Leon

MHM.

Lauren Scott

There will be new books in the future, you know, so I should be organizing.

Wynne Leon

Yeah. Yeah, well, Speaking of new books, you have a new children's book you publish for Gobblers. Masticadores. Masticadores. Thank you, Lauren. Just completely. But if you have a children's book. Yeah, coming out shortly.

Lauren Scott

I know. I do. I had written the story and shared it on my blog. I believe last year and it was well received and I thought, you know, I'm gonna put this into a book. So I did. And my nephew. Who is? I have two older sisters. So my my nephews and my niece are older and he he's a wonderful artist and he's done the illustrations and it's been a magical experience working with him and seeing the characters come to life through his through his artwork so.

Vicki Atkinson

Hi.

Lauren Scott

I hope to publish that this month. I had planned to release it a few months ago, but we've had some technical difficulties.

Wynne Leon

Hmm.

Lauren Scott

Though I hope to have it come out this month and and I can market it for the holidays.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh my gosh, I love that talk about, you know, a family, you know, endeavor. Right. And the fact that your nephews, the illustrator, that's just so delightful and it to wince point it all started with a blog. Right. And you're like, I I think there's something more in this. So I'm curious, did you in turning the the inspiration and the blog into a book?

Wynne Leon

How much is?

Vicki Atkinson

Did you have to write a lot more? What kind of additional effort was there to make that transition from a a beautiful blog piece into a children's?

Lauren Scott

I added a little more to it and of course I edited. You know, I I wanted a certain number of a certain amount of text on each page.

Wynne Leon

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Lauren Scott

You know, children's books through my research, are about 32 pages. It's going to be like an 8 by 8 square angle back with the gloss cover.

Wynne Leon

MHM.

Lauren Scott

So I I did some editing, I made some revisions added, added a little bit more text. To it and I this is all new for me. I you know, I hope it does well. But I I told Chris, my nephew. What I'm, you know, I had to lay it out. What text I wanted, you know the order and everything on each page and and then.

Wynne Leon

OK.

Lauren Scott

The picture in my mind that I envisioned.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

To to align with the text and I gave Chris my thoughts and he delivered and we went back and forth a few times. I was open to his suggestions. He's very active on Instagram.

Wynne Leon

Mm-hmm. MHM.

Lauren Scott

And he's in Southern California, so I appreciated any of his thoughts.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

My my family turned out to be good editors too, and my son is helping me with the formatting.

Vicki Atkinson

Nice.

Lauren Scott

Full disclosure, formatting is not my Forte. No. So I I'm looking forward to seeing it in print and I I hope it does well, I mean that's what any offer holds.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

Ah, I love that. And I love that you wrote the the story, but you had the vision. You're about the illustrations and it. It became kind of a family project. I know nothing about children's literature, but at the printers row lit Fest in September, I made a beautiful, you know, acquaintance of a woman who. Wrote a spin on Goldilocks and the three Bears and decided, you know, from her art background to challenge herself, to think about the companion illustrations and didn't feel like she should do it, but it it exists. It's beautiful and it is, like you said, kind of 8 by 8, about 30 pages. But kind of stepping into children's literature, that's it's a leap, you know, into a brand new genre and look at you, you're you're doing it.

Wynne Leon

Mm-hmm.

Lauren Scott

Well, and I actually have another children's story that I've written and I stared, which I also.

Vicki Atkinson

Ohh I didn't know.

Lauren Scott

Received great feedback, you know, which feels good so that I think I'll probably discuss that later on the podcast, but that's also on the horizon down.

Wynne Leon

Wow. Wow, that's.

Lauren Scott

Yeah, my, my 14 year old puppy copper is running. That story will always be our puppy. Even at 14 years old.

Wynne Leon

Looking up. Ohh yeah yeah offer.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. Ohh yeah, of course. Yeah.

Wynne Leon

I love all this. I mean, all you just illustrate so well the growth. I mean, that's my word for this. Yeah. Gross. Yeah. So you're just just showing us how to do it. And you talked about your 2025 goal to hide some of the Pacific Crest Trail. Yeah. And we see a lot of nature and natural beauty in your writing. You talked. That ever so gently having a section on nature. Can you talk about how nature and writing come together for you?

Lauren Scott

Well, I have to thank my husband for for my strong connection with nature because when I met him he introduced me to camping, hiking, backpacking. Although I had no interest to put it back on. My to put a. Map on my back at that moment.

Wynne Leon

Right, yeah.

Lauren Scott

But when our children were born. We took them camping. He introduced us all to the great outdoors and. During the time that I didn't want a backpack.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

He started taking the kids backpacking. And started taking them for weekends.

Wynne Leon

MHM.

Lauren Scott

My son was 5 and my daughter was eight when he first started taking them. Up into the Sierra Mountains.

Wynne Leon

Hmm.

Lauren Scott

Point raised. National seashore. So those were great times that the kids had with their father, learning all about. Bears and bees and bugs and you know please. And during that time, I had my weekend with my girlfriends.

Wynne Leon

MHM.

Lauren Scott

So it all worked out but. When I was about 56, I told my husband I'm ready to put that pack on my back so he and I started backpacking this, I mean, the kids were older, you know. And we go on weekend trips. I'm I'm not into week long backpacking trips at the at my age. Maybe. Maybe when I was younger he he's gone on. We were a very active Scout, family Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and he he led AT250 milers with my son.

Wynne Leon

Wow.

Lauren Scott

Years ago, but I told him no week is too long.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

So we've gone to some beautiful places. I've shared many photos on my blog and you know, just just being outdoors on a, on a trail. No. In campsite. Swimming in a lake we both love swimming and we we love the beach, but we love freshwater lakes and. You know. All that just it provides an abundance of inspiration to write. Yeah, yeah. You know, I I think of. What? You know what we see in the news. Now nowadays everything going on in the world, everything going on in the US and when I. When I am in nature. It just gives me a chance to reflect. Yeah, and sit in the quiet and rejuvenate my mind, my heart, my soul. You know, nature just provides these gifts that are free to us.

Wynne Leon

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Just on a on a how to note. Do you take notes when you're out there, do you actually, will you actually write something down? Ohh good.

Lauren Scott

And. Oh yes, I. I bring a journal. Yeah, I bring a journal whenever.

Wynne Leon

Hmm.

Lauren Scott

We go on. Trips normally when I when I write at home, I'm normally typing on my laptop. I love to type, but sometimes I'll just sit and write. I do have my journal.

Wynne Leon

Hmm.

Vicki Atkinson

MHM.

Lauren Scott

Like for instance, this morning I woke up and I had some thoughts and I went out to the living room, sat down and jotted them down in my journal. Now, if I don't have paper nearby, I'll, I'll and my you know, we our cell phones are like another appendage so.

Wynne Leon

MHM.

Lauren Scott

I don't have paper.

Vicki Atkinson

Well.

Lauren Scott

Write down thoughts in my notes in. My cell phone.

Wynne Leon

Yeah, yeah.

Lauren Scott

But on the trail, yes, I have my journal and.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah, I love what you said about, you know, kind of the being in nature and how it it's almost unavoidable. It forces a stillness and a quiet, even when you're moving and, you know, kind of

interacting with all the flora and the fauna and everything around you. There is kind of an. And when and I hear this from, you know, our other writer friends, there's a certain, like, reverence about being in nature. That can be so inspirational and things come forward that you might never have anticipated, but I I love what you and win are saying. The trick is capturing it right. You know the feeling in the moment because you don't know what that might translate into in written form, but it's beautiful raw material, right? Yes. Yeah.

Lauren Scott

You know, aside from being at home and witnessing. Sunrises and sunsets. We have seen some of the most gorgeous. Sunsets at the lake that we we go to every year up in the Sierra Mountains.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

And. You know, every time I see something like that, it feels like the first time I'm in awe.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. Yeah.

Lauren Scott

So it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter how often you go out, even if it's a walk around the neighborhood. You know, it's every, every time is the first time as you're going to see and hear something different.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And it's very much when times are stressful, you know that that you mentioned, right. Right now there's a lot of stress that people are feeling that you can't really dispense with it in any way. We don't have a lot of agency. We have a certain amount right of of influence. But I think you have to find ways to hit that reset button to release some of it because we we know how caustic. OK. And destructive it is to just carry it and carry it it it compounds so beautiful encouragement here, Lauren. Ohh my gosh. Well and it goes full circle to what Lauren said about her writing from the beginning, which was the destinations for emotions, right. Yeah, that's such a great phrase, right?

Wynne Leon

Yeah, it is such a good phrase. So, Lauren, can you give us a tease about projects and other things you have coming up?

Lauren Scott

Well, I told you about my children's book. The title is Coras quest.

Wynne Leon

Ah quest.

Lauren Scott

And. You know, in addition to that, I have another children's book idea.

Wynne Leon

Mm-hmm.

Lauren Scott

And. And then I I have more poetry collection ideas, maybe more. Specific, you know, like a book of syllabic poetry or a book of high pens.

Wynne Leon

MHM.

Lauren Scott

I also would love to. Published a collection of fiction short stories, so these are all it's like. There's so many ideas and so little time. And you know, my blog keeps me busy. I I'll write to post on my blog and then trying to keep up and read, you know, the the bloggers that I follow, it's like a full time job and I'm still. Working. I I need to fit in blogging in the morning or at night.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

And.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Lauren Scott

You know, but it's all. It's all worth it. It's a great community to be a part of.

Wynne Leon

Right.

Vicki Atkinson

Well, and we have to mention that this is like literally hot off the press. You know, we're recording this right after Halloween. But you wrote a beautiful piece called treats only. Or was it treats only? Please treats. Only treats only for spill words. Press and it just and I think.

Lauren Scott

It's. Please.

Vicki Atkinson

Did you get notified this morning or yesterday it is, it is. Let me pause for emphasis of the publication. Of the month.

Lauren Scott

All the month for October. Thank you. And it's it's displayed on the sidebar on at stewards Press of the series tab.

Vicki Atkinson

Beautiful.

Wynne Leon

No good.

Lauren Scott

I thought to add that last year in May, I was voted author of the month. So I'm.

Vicki Atkinson

Now. Wow. Amazing.

Lauren Scott

Really thrilled to be. A part of spill words and and a part of Gobblers. I'm I'm a monthly contributor for Gobblers as well, so. You know, when you when you contribute to other online magazines, it just it expands your exposure as well as reading other writers and.

Wynne Leon

Yeah, right.

Vicki Atkinson

And can we ask Lauren if you have one piece of advice for other writers about how to take that step into publications like online magazines? What would your top tip be? Oh.

Lauren Scott

I would say go for it. Don't let fear or self doubt hold you back.

Wynne Leon

MMM.

Lauren Scott

Because honestly, I've dealt with self doubt and I've dealt with fear and I don't think I stand alone in that. I think any or most riders do or anybody in whatever. Creative, aren't they, they? Oh my gosh, you draw a blank. First is. Yeah, whatever you do, everybody deals with self doubt or fear. But I I would say just go for it because I went for it and almost 14 years later, I'm.

Wynne Leon

Pursue. Yeah, yeah. Right, right. Yeah.

Lauren Scott

I'm enjoying the ride and and things are happening and I will say that I'm intending my first writers conference, next year's San Francisco writers conference.

Wynne Leon

M.

Lauren Scott

And I'm excited. There's going to be 500 to 700 attendees, many speakers, authors. Publishers, you know, opportunities to network. So I'm really looking forward to that.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh, that's so good. We heard a little bit about that from our friend Cheryl Aurelia when she attended last year. And yeah, that what a beautiful thing we hear that that's a good community building. Inspirational.

Lauren Scott

Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

Step for a lot of writers. Yeah. Yay.

Lauren Scott

As ironically, she asked me last year if I wanted to or she asked me in 2023 if I wanted to go with her, because geographically close by and I couldn't go at the.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Wynne Leon

Ah.

Lauren Scott

Time. And then when I was thinking about going next year, I turf, she wanted to go and she's not. Be able to go so. So anyways, she I loved reading about her experience and I look forward to, you know, to the to the whole new experience myself.

Wynne Leon

Yeah. So good. Well, thank you so much for taking the time to talk with us. You have so much going on and we're just thrilled to be able to talk to you and hear about that.

Lauren Scott

Well, thank you so much for inviting me to be here with you guys. I truly enjoyed it.

Vicki Atkinson

Absolutely. No good. Our pleasure. Thank you, Lauren.

Wynne Leon

Thank you, Lauren. Thank you for listening. Our music is composed for sharing the heart of the matter by the exclusively talented duo of Jack Canfora and Rob Koenig for show notes and more great inspiration, please visit our site at sharingtheheartofthematter.com.