

## THE WRITING LIFE

by Bobbi Linkemer

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### Musings on September

**I**t is the season of September — a time of taking stock, new beginnings, and the Jewish New Year; of burning leaves (well, no more, of course), marching bands, and Chief Illiniwik bursting out of the U of I marching band onto the football field. In the name of political correctness, the chief is no longer with us, which is so sad. He was a passionate, fiery dancer, whose mighty leaps and twirls made our hearts beat and our spirits soar. The memory still does.

I get very nostalgic in September, as you can tell. I revisit earlier decades and wonder if that is a sure sign I'm getting old. Even though I can't recall an appointment I made ten minutes ago, I remember absolutely everything about high school and college — dancing, learning, reading, drawing, and writing.

It's funny that I never considered becoming a writer back then. I did great in classes that depended on writing skills. I

aced essay tests. I wrote fabulous lyrics for song and skits, even though I couldn't sing or read music. But if someone had asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I definitely would *not* have said oh, I want to be a writer.

And, yet, here I am recalling that I have been just that for forty years! People do ask why I made the decision, and I have no sensible answer. "I was struck by a thunderbolt," I usually say, "You know ... like Michael Corleone in the Godfather." I must have been, because one day I woke up and knew what I was going to do with the rest of my life. Write.

So, here I am sitting in my very lovely little office, staring out the window and contemplating the accouterments and evidence of the writing life: reference books, portfolios, computer equipment, and a five-foot-long, hand-painted sign that says, "**When the desire to write is not accompanied by actual writing, then the desire is not to write.**"

