

OUR MARCH 11TH MEETING

DESCRIBE IT IN A SENTENCE

TUESDAY, MARCH 11TH

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIAL HALL
2201 LAWTON ST. IN SLO

Can you describe your work in just one sentence? Whether you are writing a novel, memoir or short story, you will need to be able to do so. It requires the writer to condense years of work, thousands of words and hundreds of pages into one sentence.



Author Tom Snow

Tom Snow will be guiding us through the process of writing a proper Query Letter. Learn what to include in your bio and how to construct a synopsis that describes your work. Most importantly, it begins with that all important first sentence known as *the hook*.

Join us Tuesday, March 11 from 7:00 to 9:00 at the Unitarian Universalist Social Hall, 2201 Lawton St., near Corner of South & Broad, in San Luis Obispo. NightWriter's March Meeting will be filled with discussion, instruction, the NW Lottery and a little bit of Irish fun we call *The Thread*. All are welcome!

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Dennis Eamon Young

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: LIVING IN THE FUTURE AIN'T EASY

I grew up reading Asimov, Clarke, Blish, Heinlein, Siodmak, Herbert, Sturgeon, Bradbury, Huxley, Ellison, Wylie and Silverberg, alongside Howard, Poe, Lovecraft, Vonnegut, Tolkien and Burroughs to scratch that particular surface of literature. I felt much more at home in the wildly adventurous or engagingly unfamiliar futuristic worlds provided by a multiplicity of such authors.

Such having been said, it would seem that I would be living my current life basking in the glory of the hi-tech digital world of today. This is one of the futures I was weaned on. But no! This, I find, is a deranged version of those dreams. My super phone leaves folks hanging to give me a message, even though it is on and sitting in my shirt pocket. My super computer mysteriously delivers messages three days after they were sent. I upgrade my television to HD status, only to find that it snubs the rest of my interconnected technology.

One of my many fond memories provided by real paper books dates back to living in Massachusetts after divorce from my first wife. I had brought my daughters up from Connecticut, as usual, for the weekend. Eireann, my then eleven-year-old daughter, was perusing my library and asked to borrow a book I had saved from a friend's throwaway pile. Both my girls grew up voracious readers, so of course I said yes.

The following weekend Eireann peppered me with a variety of fairly astounding questions about the book, which was Orson Scott Card's "Lost Boys." I managed to put her questioning off until the following weekend and read the book myself in the interim. Mr. Card's scope of enquiry and elucidation ranged from sociology, human nature, religious views, crime, familial dysfunction, psychology and everything around, as well as in between. That one book supplied my daughter and me with about a month's worth of intense discussion.

That possibility is inherent in the act of creation at all times. We may not be a Hesse, Dostoyevsky, Faulkner, Hemingway or Asimov but, consciously or unconsciously, we bring life to ideas. We plant seeds of an idealistic or dystopian time and place, which the reader must then suspend disbelief in, in order to enter and learn from. A large segment of our current populace wishes to drag us back to a "Golden" era that never really existed in the first place. We owe this in large part to writers of articles, books, film scripts, journals, etc.

The NightWriters Annual Writing Contest will soon be ready for submissions. You could be next in line to affect the hopes and dreams of readers far and wide. You can inform yourself about the details of the contest in this newsletter, on the SLO NightWriters website, or

by coming to one of our monthly meetings, which take place on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM, starting with the April meeting. **The March meeting will start at 7PM.**

I now use digital cameras for my photography, a computer to process the photos and that same computer for my writing. I have come to a stalemate with my technology, but I think I'll go curl up with a good paper book for now.

*Excelsior,
Dennis*

Fellow Writers!

Is a writing partner sick? Need encouragement?

Getting married or having a baby?

Suffering from the loss of a loved one?

Email me at jandkvolkov@att.net and I'll send them a card from their SLO NightWriters family.

Kalila



MUSINGS AND NEWS: TOLOSA

Time to go.

I felt a tinge of regret when I wrote that—a big tinge!

It's hard to believe that a project which I dreamed up five years ago and managed with love and care, is coming to an end. I'm happy to report that the NightWriter column in Tolosa Press will continue under the capable hands of Andrea Chmelik and the committee she is assembling.

I want to thank all the people, and you know who you are, who helped nurture the column with me. We were all thrilled with the opportunity we've had to pave the way for NW members to see their work in print.

I couldn't have done it without the oh-so-dependable Editorial Committee, Anne Peterson, Paul Fahey and Willy Brujins, who always



*Judythe Guarnera,
Tolosa Submissions Manager*

responded in a timely manner, even when Tolosa made a “turn on a dime” request. They helped make our goal of Tolosa always having stories in the pipeline, edited and ready to go, successful.

A special thanks to all the NW members who submitted stories and waited patiently to see them in print. I admire those whose stories were returned with suggestions and took the time to revise and resubmit. They recognized that editing and revising would help them to grow as writers and improve their chances of being published. I’d love to hear from any of you for whom publication in the NW column in Tolosa Press helped you to move forward in your publishing goals.

Thanks to the NW Board and the general membership, who may not have submitted, but encouraged others to do so. You’ve all played a part in the growth and success of the column, which reaches a circulation of some 60,000 and is displayed in 500 racks, as well as online.

Somewhere in the neighborhood of 150-175 columns have been featured in Tolosa Press during this time. I’d estimate that the work of approximately 125 individuals graced those columns.

Now, another exciting project is beginning. NightWriters will be publishing an anthology of the columns which have been published in Tolosa in the last five years. We plan to unveil the anthology at the Central Coast Writers Conference in September.

It’s exciting for me to know that the NW column in Tolosa will continue. Member-at-Large, Andrea Chmelik, is in the process of assuming the helm. Staffing changes at Tolosa have resulted in a short-term hiatus for the column. We are presently awaiting their direction as to when the column will resume and expect that it will be soon.

For those of you who have been notified that your work was received, but not published, you will receive an e-mail from me regarding the status of your submission in the coming weeks.

Once the column is up and running, Andrea will send out a call for submissions with her e-mail address. Watch for an e-mail blast when that happens. And be sure to welcome her as you did me.

Again, thank you for the privilege of reading your amazing work.

“Remember you can’t get published if you don’t submit and you can’t submit if you don’t write. So start writing!”

In the rhythm of writing,

Judythe



ARE YOU FOLLOWING THE NW BLOG?

Be sure to check out our Blog for information, insights, encouragement, connections, etc. You’ll find writing prompts, ideas, encouragements and lots more. Feel free to leave a comment on any of our posts. And join us on Twitter and LinkedIn, too!

Join us on our Blog: www.slomightwriters.com

You can also access the blog from our website: www.slomightwriters.org

CRITIQUE GROUP ROUNDUP



Writer Anita Hunt

So You Are Thinking of Joining A Critique Group?

The November NW board meeting was like any other meeting, with one exception. I raised my hand. Never raise your hand or make eye contact in a board meeting. I always knew this, but I had a moment of weakness. In doing so, I had volunteered to go to critique groups throughout the year and bring back information that might be valuable to those of us who have never attended a group before.

I had the desire to do this for selfish reasons. I wanted to be able to see what makes the critique group tick without having any skin in the game. I surmised that I could attend under the guise of writing an article for the NW Newsletter, which was partly true.

“What was I afraid of?” “Why didn’t I just join a group and share my work like any other writer?” I did some soul searching and realized that I was chicken. I didn’t know if my work was good enough. I didn’t want to waste anybody’s time. I didn’t know if my stories were weak, trite or dull? I finally stopped the madness and told myself, “grow up and get over it, how bad could it be?”

I e-mailed the only person that I knew that was in a group. I e-mailed Janice and she sent me to Mike, who was taking over for Lillian. Phew! This was a lot harder than I thought. Mike was gracious and welcoming and I was ready to put on my big girl pants and go to my very first critique experience. I had the dates, times and map. I gained my confidence, prepared my material and planned to jump in with both feet. I was strong and courageous. So what if my writings were trite, weak or dull, I could take it.

The meeting was cancelled for lack of participation. I had my first stay of execution and was so relieved.

About a week later I was having Sushi at a window side table with my daughter in Pismo. I was attempting to put the wobbling raw fish into my mouth when I looked up to see my friend from NW, giving me sign language through the window. She was excited to see me and I gave her the universal come around signal. Judith came in and sat with us. I gave her the 3rd degree on what critique group she was in; where and when they met and if I might be able to join them. I had now become a critique group stalker. We exchanged a few phone calls over the next several days and it was booked! She said that it was not necessary for me to bring my work and secretly felt like I got a second reprieve.

I parked my car in front of the meeting place, took a deep breath and knocked on the door. I was welcomed with opened arms. Gloria, Bernie, Judith, Terry, Jack and Elsa made me feel like part of the group from the moment I walked into Gloria's house. The only difficulty was the abundance of tantalizing cookies being served. I was on a diet. Oh God, I knew this would be hard, but not this hard.

They set out the rules, mainly for my benefit and got down to business. I really appreciated their taking the time. They said, "We don't debate the comments, and we realize that it's not the positive feedback that helps the author." I was kind of glad I didn't bring any of my stories.

They decided to go clockwise around the room and the stories began. The feedback was always respectful and very helpful to both the author and the rest of the group. One comment was to not use words that would take the reader out of the story, or state that you will tell more about a topic later in the story. Either don't say anything about future events or state the facts at that particular juncture of the story. Another interesting topic I learned is that it's not necessary to say; he said, she said all the time. If you set the stage of your character properly, you can let the dialogue flow back and forth and the reader would absolutely know who was speaking. Let the monologue tell the story, not the author. I loved this!!!! I was part of the critiquing. I was ready to read my work and they were ready to hear it. Unfortunately, I didn't bring any of my work. I was disappointed as I knew these fellow writers would have been kind, honest, helpful and understanding.

I was told that some groups bring copies of their work to the session and others e-mail their work to the group a few days in advance, so that they had time to formulate their comments. It is up to the members to decide how the meeting will flow. I didn't want to leave, but my time was up and I bid them all adieu.

I learned so much and want to share my findings with you.

1. There is no low-fat food at Critique Groups
2. There is nothing to be afraid of, they don't bite
3. These workshops are thought provoking and worth their weight in gold
4. Always bring something to read, just in case you get the guts

I e-mailed Sharon and will be going to my second group next Monday. This time I will bring my story and hold my head high and take it like a man! A WoMan!

Until next time,

AE Hunt

Blog: <http://theoccasionaljew.com/>

"Critique Group Connections"

NW Members—Please, email critique requests to: Anita Hunt, Critique Group Coordinator, hunt6465@charter.net. We'll print your specific request in this **Critique Group Connections** section of the newsletter for all NW members to view, increasing opportunities for NW critiquing. Use this information to find a match for your needs, make contacts, or to start a new group or critique partnership. Contact Anita for assistance if needed. And, if you form a group, please let Anita know so she can list it on the website. She can also showcase the group's talent in the newsletter. Critique Group Guidelines are available on the website at www.sloulightwriters.org.



Anita E. Hunt
Critique Group Chair

***SLO NW cannot guarantee critique group formation or availability but do we strive to facilitate connections between writers so they can initiate and develop their own writing affiliations. While we cannot be, and are not, responsible for any outcomes from these associations, we hope they lead to great creative magic and magnificent literary works!

Poetry Critique Group Emerging! Any poet can join and benefit from peer review and exchange.

Any interested poet can call Irene @ 481-3824 or email irenekooi@gmail.com. Preferred meeting area is SLO City/Avila Beach.

CRITIQUE GROUP REQUESTS:

Katie is seeking a critique group for YA and FICTION. She is interested in either a critique group, or 1:1 electronic peer exchange. She has some writing experience and prefers SLO City location. Contact Katie at: dreamsofcitylights@gmail.com.

Bill Gloege is looking for a partner to give feedback on his novel, man vs nature genre. It describes a family's escape to the Arctic as they flee severe climate change. He hopes to educate on climate facts, but there's plenty of Hollywood style action and violence. Bill's previous writing has been technical; this is his first fiction. He needs honest, helpful feedback and will reciprocate with any writer of fiction, essays, short stories or nonfiction pieces. Contact Bill at 805-937-4547 or email oflibertysons@yahoo.com

Sheri Humphreys is seeking a critique Group for FICTION - ROMANCE genre specifically, SciFi and suspense are fine too. No specific skill level required. Preferred location is Cambria, Morro Bay, SLO. Contact Sheri at 805-927-2453 or email at sheri@sherihumphreys.com

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Critique Group Connections, Continued

Kristen Herrera is seeking a critique group for FICTION and YA. Preferred skill level is intermediate to advanced/experienced. Preferred location is SLO City area or South County.

Contact Kristen by email: kristenmbriggs@yahoo.com

Tony Taylor is seeking a critique group for FICTION, YA, CHILDREN'S MIDDLE GRADE or VARIED GENRES, preferred skill level is advanced/experienced writers. Preferred location is SLO City area.

Contact Tony at 805-704-3528 or by email: tony@anthonyjtaylor.com

Rolynn Anderson wishes to organize a **NEW PLOTTING GROUP** for LITERARY FICTION with elements of suspense and mystery. Preferred skill level is advanced. Preferred location is Arroyo Grande/Los Osos/SLO area.

Contact Rolynn at 805-473-5847 or by email rolynna@earthlink.net

Julie Cucchiara is looking for a critique group or 1:1 writing mentor for Fiction, preferred genre Comedy. All skill levels. South County location preferred.

Contact Julie at: julie.cucchiara@gmail.com

David Flamm is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange or 1:1 writing mentor/partner or editing fee for service, for COMMERCIAL FICTION. Preferred Skill Level is Intermediate to Advanced. Preferred locations for meetings are SLO City, South County/Santa Maria, Orcutt.

Contact David at 805-868-3779 or by email: david.flamm@yahoo.com

Christina Grimm is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for VARIED NO GENRE RESTRICTIONS. No skill restrictions. Preferred location for meetings is SLO City, Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria, but can travel to other locations.

Contact Christina at 805-459-4923 or by email: grimmpsyche@gmail.com

Jill Stegman is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for LITERARY FICTION or LITERARY HYBRIDS WITH THRILLER, SUSPENSE, MYSTERY. Preferred skill level is advanced. Preferred location for meetings is SLO City, Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria or North County.

Contact Jill at 805-466-1956 or by email: jastegman@gmail.com

Colin McKay is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for COMMERCIAL FICTION – CRIME, YA, or SCREENWRITING. Preferred skill level is advanced. No location restrictions for meetings but would prefer Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria. Contact Colin by email: mckay01@gmail.com

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Critique Group Connections, Continued

Deborah Brasket is seeking a critique group, online peer edit exchange, or 1:1 writing partner for ADULT LITERARY FICTION, NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES, AND FOR CHILDREN'S MIDDLE GRADE NOVEL. Preferred experience level is intermediate to advanced. North County is preferred. Contact Deborah at 221-5405 or by email: dbrasket51@gmail.com

Bill Bloom is seeking co-author/editor arrangements for two projects—one, an autobiography; the other, a book about Albert Einstein's wife. Any fee for service to be arranged between author and editor. Contact Bill at 543-1910 or by email: clb4u2c@charter.net

Griselda Rivera is seeking multiple critique groups: MEMOIRS, TEEN & CHILDREN'S, ACADEMIC/ EDUCATION/LINGUISTICS.

Contact Griselda at grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com

Alycia Kiley is seeking a critique group for VARIED GENRES but primarily POETRY, NON FICTION and ARTICLES; skill level is intermediate. SLO City location is preferred.

Contact Alycia at 602-7075 or by email, alyciakiley@gmail.com

George Klein is seeking a critique group or 1:1 writing mentor/partner for COMMERCIAL FICTION; No particular skill level or meeting location restrictions.

Contact George at 712-3378 or by email, fangio@charter.net

Quote of the Month

"What I had to face, the very bitter lesson that everyone who wants to write has got to learn, was that a thing may in itself be the very finest piece of writing one has ever done, and yet have absolutely no place in the manuscript one hopes to publish."

~Thomas Wolfe

Word of the Month "Chimera"

Definition: (N. Greek: *khimaira*, she-goat)

1. A fanciful fabrication; illusion.
2. An organism having genetically different tissues

Synonyms: Illusion, dream, fantasy, delusion, spectre, snare, hallucination, figment

Usage: It was truly a chimera, an enchanted fairyland glimpsed between the play of the light and shadow, sound and silence.

Don't Forget SLO NIGHTWRITERS HAS MOVED!

Join us for our informative and fun 2014 Meetings!

Our new location is the
Unitarian Universalist Social Hall
2201 Lawton Ave., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Near the Corner of South and Broad, Next to Meadow Park

DREAMS AND OBSERVATIONS

NightWriter Anthony V. Toscano, aka Tex Buffalino, has created the most amazing Website/ blog. It's called, appropriately, Anthony V. Toscano: Dreams and Observations.

Dreams and Observations is the blog portion of this website. And it's an amazing blog. Written straight from the heart, it tugs on one's heartstrings even if you have never met Anthony. The prose is literary in the very best sense of the word, and filled with both the wit and wisdom of a writer who has come to terms with life and with himself. It's poignant, entertaining, edifying and fun—all at the same time.

In addition, there are wonderful, evocative photographs—taken by Anthony himself. This is a talent he has been keeping to himself! It's worth a look just to click through the photos of Montana de Oro, Point Lobos, Sweet Springs, Avila Valley Barn, Los Osos Oaks Reserve, the Bob Jones Trail and more.

Be sure to go visit: www.anthoniyvtoscano.com. You'll surely want to make it a regular stop.

SLO NW e↔Line Edit Exchange

Can't find a critique group? Don't have time for meetings? Have specific needs for feedback on your work? Our Electronic Peer Review Line Edit Exchange is perfect for out-of-town members, or those with restricted time schedules.

All E-Exchange Partners are SLO NW members.

- Exchange views with other writers
- No fees charged, no credit expected or required.
- Participants contact each other, set their own rules and time frames.
- Use your own style of editing/commenting.
- If you don't find value in the feedback, try someone else on the list.

To be added, **contact Anita Hunt** (hunt6465@charter.net) with: Your Name, Email, Genre (if you desire a specific one), Skill Level (if you require a specific level). She will add you to the list. Then you can reach out on a one-to-one basis and find the right writing partner for you.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE CONNECTION

Dear NightWriters,

This month I am going to talk business.

I have been the Member-at-Large for SLO NightWriters for over a year now. My function is to serve as a liaison between the membership and the Board of Directors. Ever since I took the position I have been eagerly expecting messages in my mailbox. I've been looking forward to those suggesting how we can improve and dreading those that would yell at me in CAPS about how lame we are. But the truth is that for the most part my mailbox has remained empty. To make sure that we understand what our members' wishes and desires are, I will be sending out our annual satisfaction survey on April 1st. Or maybe I will wait until April 2nd, so you don't think it's a joke! When that survey finds you, please take a moment and fill it out. It is important for us to hear from you. It will be completely anonymous and confidential.

While staring at my empty mailbox I got an idea. How about starting an [online book club](#)? After some brainstorming with my fellow board members, we decided to focus on local authors and authors who will be presenting at the [Central Coast Writers Conference](#) in San Luis Obispo. I am sure that many of you have attended CCWC in the past. If you haven't, you really need to go! You'll love it. I wouldn't be writing this column if it wasn't for the CCWC.

Back to the book club—we thought familiarizing yourself with the work of the presenters would be beneficial. We also thought that reading books should be rewarding. So hear this—there will be contests. And the prizes? Books by you! If you would like to participate, please donate a book written (and signed!) by you. The winner of our monthly contest will receive a copy. This way we can share your work with our fellow NightWriters. It doesn't matter if you have sold millions of copies or if you have printed the pages yourself, stapled them and gave them to your favorite Aunt for her birthday. It's your work and you should be proud. Your words might mean the world to a fellow NightWriter. If you are interested, please send me an e-mail and we will work out the delivery arrangements.

I would also like to remind you that every fourth Saturday we meet at Panera Bread on Madonna Road in San Luis Obispo for [Unplugged](#) meeting. Come when you can, leave when you must between 8:30am and 11am. This is a very informal gathering that allows people connect, share ideas and talk about their projects. Free WiFi is available.

To stay connected, like us on [Facebook](#) and follow our blog at www.slomightwriters.com. You can also follow us on [Twitter](#) and on [LinkedIn](#).

Yours, *Andrea Chmelik*

chmelik.andrea@gmail.com

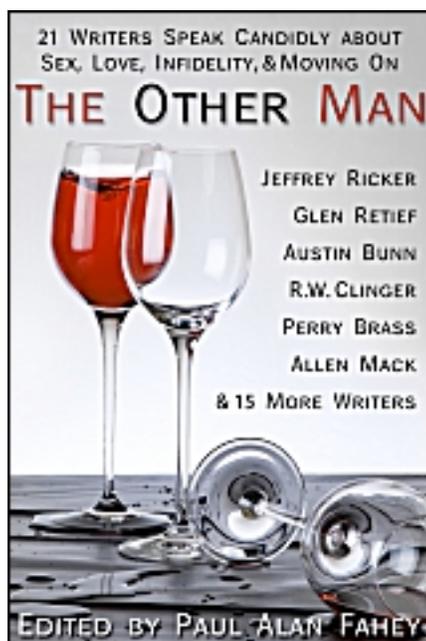


Andrea Chmelik
Member-at-Large

THE MARCH NW ONLINE BOOK CLUB SELECTION

In March the NW Online Book Club has a double-book challenge for you! (Read more about the book club in the Member-at-Large Connection on page 11.)

Victoria Zackheim is a novelist and the editor of four anthologies. She will be presenting at the Central Coast Writers Conference in San Luis Obispo in September 2014. We have chosen “The Other Woman” as one of the books for March. In this anthology, twenty-one wives, lovers and others talk openly about sex, deception, love and betrayal.



The second book was inspired by Victoria's, and edited by NightWriter Paul Alan Fahey—"The Other Man." Both anthologies share twenty-one essays about relationships tested by infidelity. You can find these books on Amazon in print or as an ebook.

Pick one or the other, or rise to our challenge and read both! Then join us for a discussion at www.slomightwriters.com.

"A good writer sells out everyone he knows, sooner or later."

~Alice McDermott



SLO NightWriters
25th Annual Writing Contest
The 2014 Golden Quill Awards

In association with

Cuesta College Central Coast Writer's Conference

This year's theme: Déjà vu

Visit www.slonightwriters.org for information and entry forms

1st Place Prize \$750 for each category

2nd Place Prize \$400 for each category

Honorable Mention Certificates

2 Categories

Short Story/Memoir 1,000 word limit

Poetry 40 line limit



All Writers Welcome

Entries accepted April 1 - June 30, 2014

Entry Fee \$15

SLO NightWriters has teamed up with the Central Coast Writers Conference. Our contest is still ours, still run by us, but for the first time we will reveal the winners at the Conference itself. First place winners will read their winning entries to the faculty and conference attendees. And First place winners in this year's contest will be awarded **free entry to the Central Coast Writer's Conference** this September, a \$140.00 value!



San Luis Obispo NightWriters
 Presents their 25th Annual Writing Contest
 in association with the 30th Annual
**Cuesta College Central Coast
 Writers Conference**

The 2014 Golden Quill Awards

Writers everywhere are welcome!

Choose from 2 Categories:

- Short Story/Memoir (1,000 word limit)
- Poetry (40 line limit)



Entries accepted from April 1st to June 30th, 2014

1st Place Prize-**\$750** for each category 2nd Place Price-**\$400** for each category
 Honorable Mention Certificates

Entries must include the words “Déjà vu” AND depict the theme (Interpret as broadly as you like)

Entry Fee - \$15 per entry

You may enter in more than one category and with as many entries as you like.

Go to www.slomightwriters.org for payment and contest information.

SHORT STORY/MEMOIR 1,000 max word limit - **must be double spaced** and, where applicable, will be judged on: 1) Beginning / Ending, 2) Character, 3) Dialogue, 4) Narrative Voice & Point of View,

5) Description of Setting, 6) Emotional Impact, 7) Plot / Story Arc, 8) Use of Language

POETRY 40 line max limit - **may be creatively spaced and formatted** and, where applicable, will be judged on: 1) Power/Emotional Impact, 2) Message, 3) Form and Flow, 4) Use of Language

All rights belong to the author. SLO NightWriters may request permission to announce and publish the winning entries on its website and other media.

For a complete set of Rules and Format Guidelines see below or visit our website at:

www.slomightwriters.org

Contest Entrants qualify for the special Early Bird rate at the 30th Annual Cuesta College Central Coast Writers Conference, September 19-20, 2014 in San Luis Obispo, CA, featuring keynote speaker, Anne Perry. Attendance at the CCWC is optional. First place winners will be given free entries into the conference (\$140 value each). For details, visit: www.communityprograms.net

REVIEW: FEBRUARY CRITIQUE MEETING

by: Jan Alarcon

As soon as we walked into Nightwriters meeting on 2/11/14, we all received a gift—a pen with a flashlight built into it, stamped “Nightwriters.” We fought over the purple ones—this has some meaning. I used mine to guide me home that night. I can’t wait to see them in the hands of local waitresses, bank tellers, and high school principals.

This was our Critique Night; Anita Hunt was the M.C. Members interested in reading five minutes of their original work filled out a slip of paper and were chosen by random drawing. Their readings were followed by five minutes of praise and helpful feedback from a panel of four: Sherry Heber, Susan Tuttle, Mary Redmond-Woodworth and Jason Matthews. I admired



the courage of those who put their names in the hat—one member likened reading to the group to “walking naked on El Camino Real.” All readers were rewarded with a \$5.00 Starbucks Card. There are two Starbucks in SLO County on El Camino Real, both in Atascadero—you have been warned. I loved all the readings—we are such a talented group. The feedback gave me some new tools to apply to my writing (the examples provided below are my own—not from

1. Be cautious about putting too much information on the first page—the reader needs time to acclimate to your created world.
2. Try to introduce no more than 3 characters on the first page—otherwise the reader could have trouble keeping them all straight.
3. As much as possible “show don’t tell.” Example: Have your dialogue reveal how the characters feel about one another instead of just explicitly stating, “Joan doesn’t like her twin Orion.”



4. Instead of using the same word over and over, get out your thesaurus and come up with some creative synonyms. Example: "Angel" could be cherub, spirit, supernatural being, celestial presence, divine messenger, heavenly one.
5. Careful of being too "on the nose"—obvious with your symbolism and metaphors. An on the nose example: "When he was drunk his face was as red as an alcoholic."
6. Instead of always saying "Jim said", "Bill said", "Tom said"—your characters can have their own special phrases that identify them. Example: Jim could always greet people:



"Happy to be alive today?" Bill: "My, this is a great day to be Irish." and Tom: "Where've you been? What'd you do? What'd you know?"

7. When trying to edit down, ask yourself: "What exactly does the reader need to know right at this moment to understand what is going on?" Cut out everything else.
8. Be careful of using dialogue for "reader-feeder." Example: "Hey Bill, my ex-husband with whom I am still sleeping,



would you like some coffee?" Bill already knows this. Give the reader that information in some other way.

Not everyone was called upon. We are going to continue to have one NightWriter read at every meeting. I learned so much from all of you and I am so in awe of the creativity and diversity of our group—I can't wait to hear more.

Jan Alarcan



KUDOS... KUDOS... KUDOS...

Beryl Reichenberg, children's book author and fiber artist, will be teaching school aged children how to make a 3D butterfly book that hangs. The class is on March 15 from 2 to 3 at the Paso Studios on the Park. Pre-register please by contacting Sasha at 238-9800. There is a \$5 materials fee. On March 5 she will also teach a third grade writing class at the Park Day School in Oakland.

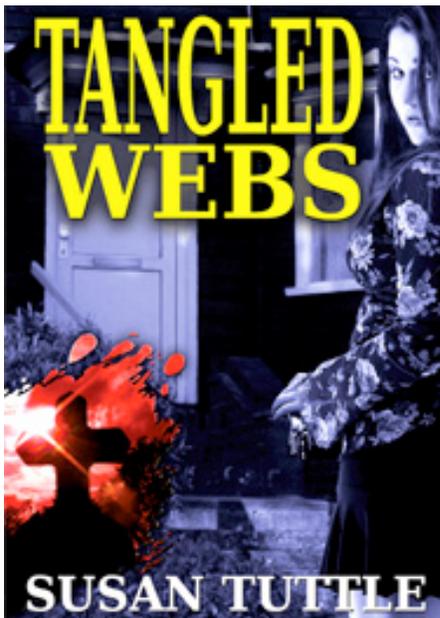
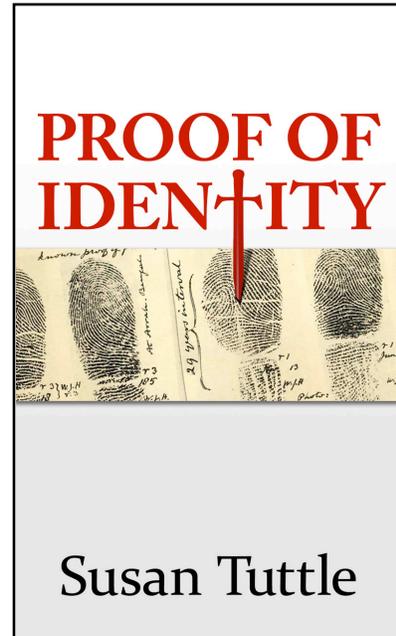
An article by **Janice Konstantinidis** will be published in the Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical (JACHS) later this month. It is about her experiences in Mount Saint Canice in Australia during her adolescence, and the abuses she suffered there. The journal will appear online at www.australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au/journal/. This article arose from the memoir Janice is working on, detailing the challenges she has overcome in her life.

Janice is also quoted extensively in a scholarly article by James Franklin, editor of the JACHS and Professor of Mathematics and Statistics at UNSW. Congratulations, Janice!

>

Terry Sanville's Flash fiction story "Winter Ride" will appear in a future edition of "The Humanist: A Magazine of Critical Inquiry and Social concern." This slick mag is published in Washington D.C., appears online, and is distributed in print nationally. Check them out at <http://thehumanist.org/>.

Susan Tuttle has released her new paranormal suspense novel, *Proof of Identity*, in both print and digital format. It is available from Amazon.com and can be ordered through bookstores. *Proof of Identity* is the story of a woman who is arrested for the murder of a man she has never heard of, or met, but police have witnesses who saw her leave the scene covered in blood, and her fingerprints are on the murder weapon. The cover was designed by Aaron Kondziela, and shows the original fingerprints taken in 1847 that were used to identify the whorls and ridges that make all fingerprints unique. You can find Proof of Identity at www.Amazon.com/books and www.Amazon.com/kindle.



Tangled Webs, a suspense novel by Susan Tuttle, is now available in digital format. Lia, a professional quilter, is also a serial killer's daughter who suffers from partial amnesia. She is brought back to the small town she grew up in by her mother's will, where danger awaits her around every corner. To save her life she must somehow discover what happened the night a classmate died 17 years earlier, and answer the most pressing question: Is she, like her father, a killer? You can find this exciting read at www.Amazon.com/kindle. (It's still available in print format, also from Amazon or any bookstore.)

Or check out her post on her blog for links to each book format: www.SusanTuttleWrites.com

3 MOST COMMON COMPLAINTS ABOUT AGENTS BY SCRIPTWRITERS

by Chad Gervich, TV producer, author and playwright.
from Brian Klems' The Writers Dig on writersdigest.com

Some words of wisdom that apply to all agent/writer relationships:

1. **My Agent Never Calls Me Back:** the first step in dealing with unreturned phone calls is to realize that it's rarely about you. Agents are very busy, stressed and under a lot of pressure. And some people just have bad phone manners. Remember that agents are often in meetings all day long, and return calls on the fly in the car between them. Entire days can be spent playing phone tag. Many routinely return calls at the end of the day, or in the evening hours before bedtime, especially to those who have more flexible schedules—like writers. It's easier to reach a writer at 7:30 pm than an company exec. However, if your agent starts failing to return all calls, and this becomes a patter, it's probably time for a conversation. You might find out that the agent is having health or family problems. Only then can you decide if the problem is fixable or whether it's time for new representation.
2. **I Have A Fantastic Idea, And My Agent Doesn't Want Me to Write It:** Often writers can become so passionate about an idea they lose perspective on it. An agent's job is to nurture, guide and facilitate a client's career. And while you may want to write a tearjerking story about your grandfather's gout, if the idea isn't commercial enough to sell, or "noisy" enough to get attention at meetings, you're failing in your career and your representative has failed to advise you adequately. This doesn't mean have to write what your agent dictates, but you should let him/her do what you're paying for: advise you on how to achieve your goals. Agents have their finger on the pulse of the industry. They know what is needed and what will sell. Their advice can be invaluable, but only if you listen to it. If you still want, you can write that gout story. Maybe it'll be so great, your agent will take it on. Or maybe he'll want to part ways. That's the risk you must be willing to take.
3. **My Agent Should've Gotten Me More Money:** Money, yes, is important, but there are other thing involved in negotiations. Just because you didn't hit the dollar amount you wanted doesn't mean you can't find equal or greater value in other ways. There are two types of values: dividing and creating. Dividing value is deciding who gets what slice of the pie. Creating value is making the pie bigger so there's more to go around. An agent's job is to look for ways to create value, rather than to remain mired in the dividing value of a work. Thus, they look for additional deals that can add value to the original contract (ex: You want 75,000 for your story/script; studio/publisher offers 60,000. Agent then steps in and "creates" value by adding an additional script/book for a total of 140,000. They get what would have cost 150,000 for a discount, and you sell two books/scripts. Added value.

Food for thought for all of us writers, whether we have an agent or not.

NEW TIME FOR NW MEETINGS ON TUESDAYS!

Starting with our April meeting, NightWriters will meet from 6:30 to 8:30 pm, just one half hour earlier. But that will get us all home even earlier, and with daylight savings time being in effect by then, it won't be so dark when the meeting lets out.

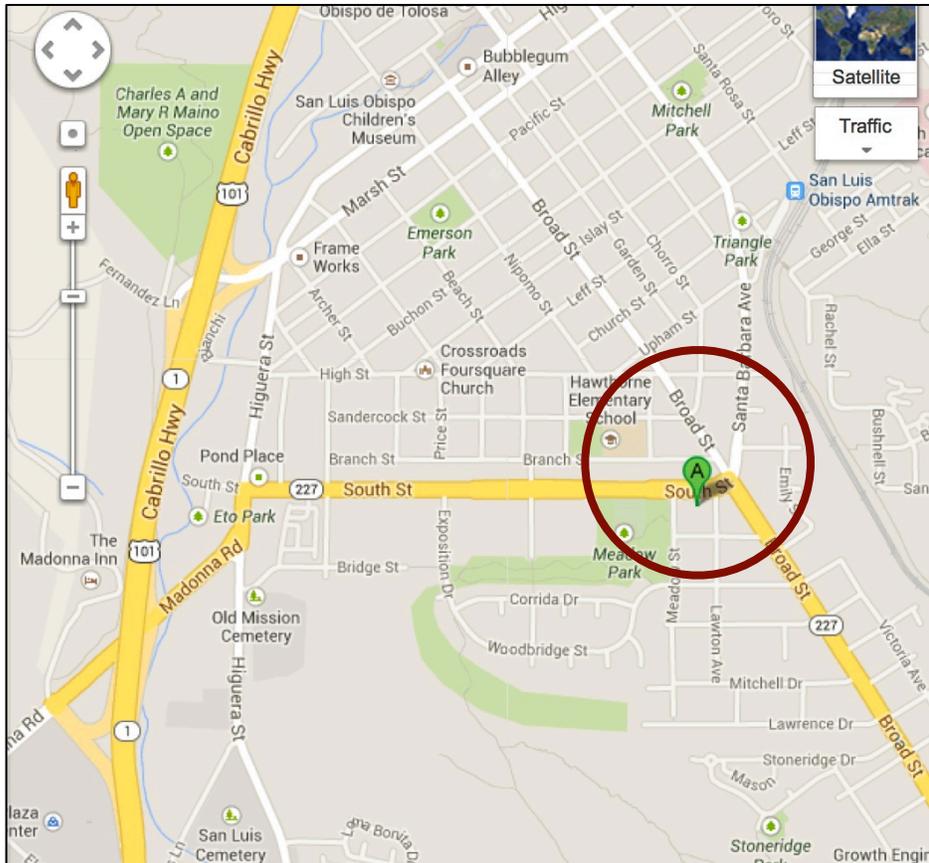
We have other exciting events planned for our members that will take place before our regular Tuesday meetings at the UUC Social Hall. Stay tuned for announcements of our in-the-planning-stages Round Table discussions, mini workshops, critique get-togethers, etc., that will take place an hour before the Tuesday meetings, from 5:15 to 6:15 pm.

It all starts in April, so mark your calendars! Meetings will begin 1/2 hour earlier, at 6:30 pm, and watch for announcements of our Round Table extras, for members only.

ENLARGED MAP OF NEW MEETING PLACE!

Just to make it as easy as possible to find us, here's an enlarged street map of our new meeting venue, the UU Social Hall, 2201 Lawton Avenue in SLO.

See you there on February 11th!



WHAT MAKES A BOOK AWARD-WORTHY?

Have you heard of the B.R.A.G Medallion? It's an award given to self-published books that meet exacting standards as judged by a group of specially selected readers. IndieBRAG was created in early 1012 to help legitimize quality self-published, digital format books. Since its inception, nearly 2,000 self-published books have been considered, and nearly 200 have been awarded a B.R.A.G. Medallion (www.bragmedallion.com). The indieBRAG Award is fast becoming a recognized mark of excellence denoting a level of quality equal to, or better than, the best among traditionally published books.

For all writers, it can be very instructive to understand what areas are considered when a book is being considered for a prestigious award. Even if you have no intention of entering your work in the running, knowledge of these specifics can help you hone your work to the best it can be. And with all the competition out there now, the best is definitely what will get noticed. And purchased. And read.

Here is how the submitted books are judged for a B.R.A.G. Medallion:

1. **What is the judging Criteria for a Medallion?** The 5 most important characteristics are: creative and original **plot**; coherent and distinctive **writing style**; believable and dynamic **characters**; realistic **dialogue**; flawless **copy editing**. A second group of attributes only slightly less critical are: proper **balance** between description/narration/exposition; compelling episodes/scenes; professional-looking book **cover** and interior layout; catchy **title**; **length** appropriate to the story. The basic question asked of readers is: Would you recommend this book to your friends?
2. **What are the Most Common Mistakes?** The factors listed above can knock a book out of contention when executed poorly. However, an indie author needs to realize that while proper copy editing alone will not make a great book, sloppy editing will instantly kill it. The most common lament of our readers is, "If only this book had been properly edited!" Sloppy editing can hurt an author well into the future.
3. **What Genres are Considered for an Award?** While IndieBRAG's primary focus is on works of fiction across a wide range of commonly recognized genres, excluding poetry and some memoir and biography, they do recognize cross-genre books such as steampunk, space opera, paranormal romance and alternative history, to name a few.

In a day and age where anyone can throw words onto paper and then upload them to the internet, it takes attention to detail and skills writers of the past never had to even consider to rise above the average and make a mark in publishing. Knowing what the experts are looking for gives us a leg-up in the race for publishing success.

WHEN FLAWS GO TOO FAR: AVOIDING UNLIKEABLE CHARACTERS

Angela Ackerman, writing coach and co-author of *The Emotion Thesaurus: A Writer's Guide to Character Expression*, gave some great advice in her guest post on Brian Klems' Blog The Writer's Dig on WritersDigest.com.

Today's fiction is dominated by tough and often jaded characters bruised by life's hardships. They're sarcastic and cynical, rough around the edges, with steel in their bones, ready to handle whatever comes their way. And readers line up to devour their stories. That's because their sense of control, even in chaos, is compelling to readers.

To be credible, **characters must have flaws and strengths like real people**. But if you insert a bit too much snark or insensitive internal dialogue, the character can slip into unlikeable territory. It's hard to gain a reader back once the character steps over this line. Here's how to keep your semi-antagonistic anti-heroes in the "you gotta love 'em" camp:

1. **Show a Glimmer:** No matter how impatient, angry, uptight or spoiled your character, hint that there's more beneath the surface. A small action or internal observation can show the character in a positive light (aka a Save the Cat moment). It can be a positive quality like a sense of humor, or a simple act that shows something redeeming about the character.
2. **Use POV Narrative for Insight:** Characters are flawed for a reason: negative past experiences (wounds) create flaws. Dribbling this negative past that created the flawed reaction into the narrative—with extreme care—can make the character irresistible, as long as this internal OV narrative is active, has bearing on the current action and is brief so it doesn't slow the pace.
3. **Create Big Obstacles:** Your goal is to create empathy with readers as soon as possible. One of the best ways is to show what the character is up against. If there's a rough road ahead, readers will make allowances for bad behavior as long as the character doesn't wallow in doom and gloom. Remember: hardship creates empathy, and how the character reacts to hardship gives a window into who he/she really is.
4. **Form a Balance:** All characters need a balance of positive traits (attributes) and negative traits (flaws). You can use the negative traits to create conflict through poor judgment, mistakes and relationship friction, but ultimately the positive traits must rise up and lead the character to the goal. Carefully consider which unique qualities will make your character balanced, likable and compelling.
5. **A Word About Villains:** Be careful not to give your antagonist too many flaws. Yes, we want the reader to dislike the villain, but hopelessly flawed antagonists make shallow characters and unworthy opponents. Be sure your villain is also balanced. Use key strengths like intelligence, meticulousness, dedication or discipline, for example, to make him/her even more formidable, forcing your hero to work even harder to win.

PROGRAMS AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEES

NW is in need of **Programs and Publicity Committee Members for 2014**. Committee members work together to make sure our monthly meetings, contest and other NW events are distributed properly through the social media / print / air venues. Interested in exploring (not committing to, just further getting information) this opportunity further? Drop us a line at slonightwriters@yahoo.com or contact your Member-at-Large, Andrea Chmelik at chmelik.andrea@gmail.com.

NEWSLETTER POSITIONS OPEN

WordSmiths is looking for writers to help with the editing process (checking for typos, etc.) of the NightWriters Newsletter. Health considerations are making it difficult for the present editor to fulfill deadlines. If you have editing expertise—or would like to develop that skill—please consider helping out. Also, WordSmiths is looking for columnists, either occasional or monthly. We have a distribution of over 200, which is great for your writing resume. Send enquiries to: Newsletter Editor at aim2write@yahoo.com or slonightwriters@yahoo.com. Be sure to put “Newsletter Editing/Column” in the **subject line**.

VICE PRESIDENT NEEDED

We are looking for someone to fill the position of Vice President on our Board of Directors. Our current Vice President, Sharyl Heber, has stepped down after filling the office with grace and competence. The Vice President’s duties are simple. The Vice President attends monthly Board meetings and votes on issues; he/she fills in if the President is not able to attend board or general meetings (might happen once or twice a year, if at all), and serves as backup for other board positions in emergency situations (hasn’t happened yet!). The Vice President also has the **option** of in stepping as President when the presiding President’s term is up. If you are interested in exploring this position, please contact NightWriters, with “VP” in the subject line: slonightwriters@yahoo.com

GREAT BEGINNINGS

...INFORMATION FOR BEGINNING WRITERS (AND EVERYONE ELSE TOO)

What really drives communicators, writers, editors and all other wordsmiths batty when it comes to bad writing and grammar? More than 500 Ragan.com LinkedIn users shared the writing mistakes that get under their skin the most. Here's the unscientific breakdown from the infographic by Ragan.com, posted by Chris Robley on the BookBaby Blog. Definitely all good things to avoid if you want to make a good impression on your readers.

1. **32% Homophone Misuse:** Accept vs. Except—accept means to receive; except means to take out or leave out. Edition vs. Addition—addition is what you do when you add numbers; edition is an issue or version of something, commonly text.
2. **21%: Cliches, Passive Voice and Trite Writing:** Passive—I was invited by my boss to attend the awards ceremony; Active—My boss invited me to attend the awards ceremony. Cliches—Let's circle back on that and make sure we're thinking outside the box; b translation—Let's meet to discuss innovative approaches to the project.
3. **17%: Grammar Flubs:** Who vs. whom—Use who when you can respond with he or she; use whom for him or her. ex: To whom did you send the dog? Fewer vs. less— Use few for things you can count and less for things you can measure. ex: You'll probably drink less soda if you eat fewer salty chips.
4. **16%: Punctuation Abuse:** Abuse—I am... an ellipsis abuser. Aren't multiple punctuation marks so annoying??!!! Correction—I overuse the ellipsis mark. Multiple punctuation marks are so annoying. Punctuation Abuse: You're vs. your—You're is a contraction for "you are," not your. ex: You're kidding me. Your high school prom date was Robert Downey, Jr.? (ed. note: a correlation to this is the apostrophe used whenever an "s" is added to a word to denote both plural and possessive. A singular "s" added indicated a plural. An apostrophe-s added means possessive. ex: My cousin's brother had fourteen candy bars in his backpack. I see plurals done like this: candy bar's, instead of candy bars, all the time especially in self-published books!)
5. **13%: Other: Arbitrary Capitalization**—You can sit in the Best Cubicle with a View today. (Needs no capitals anywhere.) Redundancies—I completely destroyed that piece of cake during the first annual bake sale. (Completely destroying is like being slightly pregnant—an impossibility.) Double Negatives—He doesn't have no sense about him. (You can only get away with this in dialogue—if the character would speak like that.) Changing tenses—We came; we see; we will conquer! (ed. note: And its corollary: Instead of properly using past tense, I often see past perfect tense verbs [had sunk] used without the qualifying "had": "He sunk down on the couch," instead of "He sank down on the couch.")

Most of the time, these kinds of mistakes are simply typos as our fingers try to keep up with our mind as we create. Another good reason to never let anything out of sight before it's vetted by a good copy editor.

We Need Your Help!

The success of non-profit organizations like NightWriters depends on its members. We all have talents other than writing that any organization could make use of.

NightWriters has many special opportunities for members to get involved, working "behind the scenes." If you'd like to assist in any capacity, email: slonightwriters@yahoo.com

President: Dennis Eamon Young
Vice-President: * **Position Open**
Secretary: Carol Schmidt
Treasurer: Susan Tuttle
Program Director: Jeannie Bruenning
Contest Committee Chair: Tom Snow
Publicity Director: Randy Ross
Membership Director: Hanje Richards
Critique Group Coordinator: Anita Hunt
Member-At-Large: Andrea Chmelik
Writers' Workshops Coordinator: Anita Hunt
Tolosa Press Submission Manager: Judy Guarnera
Welcome Committee: Hanje Richards
Sunshine Chair: Kalila Volkov
Website Master: Janice Konstantinidis
Web Assistant: Lila Bhuta
Newsletter: Susan Tuttle
Art Director: Dennis Eamon Young
Assistant Secretary: Janice Konstantinidis
Board Assistants: Sharyl Heber, Rebecca Waddell
NW Historian: Sharyl Heber

About Our Monthly Meetings

NightWriters' Evening Meetings are on the second Tuesday of every month, year round. We encourage interested visitors to join us at 7:00 pm. Admission is free; refreshments are served.

Next Meeting: March 11th, 7:00 pm, at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Social Hall, 2201 Lawton Avenue, San Luis Obispo.

Writers' Critique Groups: For paid members only. These groups read and critique each other's work and discuss the business of writing. Visitors welcome; phone ahead to make arrangements. See details below, or visit our website: www.slonightwriters.org

Notify NW of any change in address or email:

slonightwriters@yahoo.com. Join NW and send dues or renewal checks (payable to SLO NightWriters) to: SLO NightWriters, PO Box 6241, Los Osos, CA 93412-6241. Or join/renew online through our website:

Email all correspondence to: slonightwriters@yahoo.com or snail mail to: SLO NightWriters PO Box 6241 Los Osos, CA 93412-6241. We must have your **current email address** in order to send the Newsletter and other important NW announcements.

Newsletter Submissions: Send **by the 15th of the current month** for next month's publication. Send in kudos, writing articles, quotes, facts and tidbits, etc. Mark email "for newsletter" and send to: slonightwriters@yahoo.com

Have You Checked Out Our Website Lately? Control Your Own Information!

Post your bio, picture, book covers and ordering links! Contribute a writing blog post! Free publicity!

MEMBER SITE LINKS!

List your website(s) and blog(s) with live links — makes it easier for the public to find you and helps build your platform!

BOOK REVIEWS!

Get your book reviewed. Write a review—it's a valid publishing credit!

WRITERS SERVICES!

Do you have a writing or professional skill? Get listed on our new Services Page.

FACEBOOK!

Become a "Fan" of NightWriters! Visit NW's Facebook page and sign up today! Also, link your Facebook page and your websites and blogs to NW sites!

LinkedIn!

New! Connect with NW on LinkedIn! Help build your author platform with writing professional connections.

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

NW Critique Groups are a wonderful benefit of NW Membership. Some groups are full, but many welcome visitors. Always contact the group leader listed for specific information regarding group availability and visiting options. SLO NW cannot guarantee critique group formation or availability but we do strive to facilitate connections between writers so they can initiate and develop their own writing affiliations. While we cannot be, and are not, responsible for any outcomes from these associations, we hope they lead to great creative magic and magnificent literary works! Contact **Anita Hunt, Critique Group Coordinator** to list your critique group and critique needs in the NW Newsletter and on the NW Web site. hunt6465@charter.net

Can't find an existing group? START ONE. It's easy! If you're new at this, don't be intimidated. It's fun and there are no lofty requisites. All it takes is two or more folks committed to reading/hearing the work of others and providing honest, constructive feedback. Critique groups are not teaching sessions. They are writers learning from reading and critiquing each others' works. Effective formats may include exchanging the review/editing service by mail or electronically, or meeting face-to-face and reading aloud to each other, or any combination that works for the group. One of our groups takes a lesson/learning approach and does practice writing exercises every meeting. Some groups focus on a particular genre; others accept all kinds of writing. Each group is different depending on their needs and interests. **Group members set their own times, dates, meeting locations, and parameters.** We have **Critique Group Guidelines** on our website to help get you started and we can provide a mentor to attend a few sessions if needed. www.slownightwriter.org. Contact slownightwriter@yahoo.com or Anita Hunt Critique Group Coordinator (hunt6465@charter.net) with your critique needs and genres and she'll do her best to assist

CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

POETRY CRITIQUE GROUP FORMING

Poetry Critique Group Emerging! Any poet can join. Any poet can benefit from input of a group, regardless of experience. Call and together we can set time and place to meet.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Contact: Irene Chadwick, 481-3824
irenekooi@gmail.com

'JUST US' CHILDREN'S BOOK CRITIQUE

Meets in the South County. Critiqued at a fast pace, in a process where members critique each other's writing electronically, followed by a face-to-face meeting twice a month. **Meetings are held 1st and 3rd Saturdays at 10 am.** Contact moderator for details and directions.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Moderator: Lili Sinclair, 904-9697
liliasinclair@gmail.com

NORTH COUNTY GROUP

Meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from 9:00 am-noon. Adult Fiction, Memoir, etc (See page 19). Non-fiction, too, until another group can start. Meets in Paso Robles. **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Lillian Brown, 215-6107
lilliofslo@aol.com

SLO CRITIQUES

This group has no genre restrictions and no skill level restrictions. Meeting location is San Luis Obispo. The day and meeting times will be open to discussion.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS.

Moderator: David Schwab, 543-3111
daveschwab@sbcglobal.net

HI HOPES

This group was invented to fill a need for a Los Osos/San Luis Obispo group that incorporates writers who generate stories, essays, novels,

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

poetry—you get the picture—writers of any description. Whether or not you wish to publish, we'll help you with ideas to improve your writing. Led by Sharon Sutliff, we meet on the **2nd and 4th Mondays at 9 AM and usually wrap up in time for lunch.** We meet in various locations. Call one of the moderators to arrange a visit, or get more information. **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderators: Sharon Sutliff, 544-4034
Audrey Yanes, 748-8600

What If? Writing Group I (a.m. Group)

Meets **every Wednesday morning in Grover Beach from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.** Not a traditional NightWriter critique group. Work is produced in each session, then analyzed according to the objective of the day's goal. Based on writing exercises designed to jump-start the creative process (gleaned from a variety of published authors), these sessions take writers through the process of writing fiction from inception of idea to the final resolution. This group is for all fiction/non-fiction writers who want to learn the process of crafting a well-told story while developing their own voice and style. We explore such topics as ideas, character, story arc, tone, voice, POV, tension, dialogue, resolution, writing mechanics, etc. There is a small fee involved for this class to cover materials. If enough interest is expressed, a night class may be started.

CURRENTLY OPEN FOR MORE MEMBERS

Moderator: Susan Tuttle: 458-5234
aim2write@yahoo.com

NEW GROUPS FORMING!

ADULT NOVELS

Lili Sinclaire is considering **FORMING A NEW GROUP** for **ADULT NOVELS** in a process where members critique each other's writing electronically, followed by a face- to-face meeting.

Contact: Lili Sinclaire, 904-9697
liliasinclaire@gmail.com

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

LO PROSE

Meets in **Los Osos on the first and third Wednesdays at 7pm till usually 10pm.** Charlie Perryess and Lorie Brallier share hosting responsibilities, running a tight ship so that everyone can read. No cross talk permitted. At the beginning and at our break we socialize. We're all serious but fun-loving. Presently the writing covers several genres: YA novels; short stories; short stories woven into a novel; fantasy; humorous mystery novel; political satire novel; and personal essays. We write just about everything except poetry. **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS** but guests are welcome. It may happen that space could be made for a compatible writer.

Moderators: Charlie Perryess, 528-4090
Lorie Brallier, 528-8845

LONG STORY SHORT

Flash Fiction/Nonfiction only meets the **2nd & 4th Fridays every month, from 10 am to 12 noon** in Arroyo Grande. Bring paper and pencil, or your laptop if you are so inclined—flash pieces, 1000 word strict maximum. **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS** – call or email Diane to be placed on a waiting list.

Moderator: Diane Smith 858-414-0070
mdcomposes@yahoo.com

NOVEL IDEA

Meets twice monthly on the **2nd and 4th Wednesdays in San Luis Obispo**, dealing with book-length works. The group is fully committed to helping one another craft material in the chosen genres with helpful critiques and

encouragement. Marketing techniques are part of the on-going exchange. We are currently full but welcome one-time guests to observe how our group functions in the hope of encouraging establishment of new groups. **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Barbara Wolcott, 543-5240

FICTION/NONFICTION

Meets on 1st and 3rd Mondays from 9:00 am to noon in San Luis. Members bring original work to each session and read aloud to the group. The group provides constructive suggestions for improving the writing and the structure of the stories. Prose forms of literature—short stories, novels, memoirs, essays, newspaper and magazine articles, travel—are this group's forte. It welcomes writers who are serious about producing work for publication. Those interested in attending or who need more information should telephone. **CURRENTLY FULL — NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderators: Terry Sanville, 541-0492
Gloria Pautz, 543-2049

SOUTH COUNTY WRITERS

Meets on the **second and fourth Saturdays from 9:30 AM to noon in Grover Beach.** This group thrives on variety, writing short stories, articles, poetry and novels, all genres from fiction to biography and memoirs. Members exchange work by email at least one week before the meeting in order to receive in-depth critiques aimed at eliminating weaknesses and increasing strengths in everything from plot and character development to grammar and proper manuscript preparation. Intermediate to to advanced writers

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

are welcome. We meet in a casual and fun atmosphere and are serious about fully developing each member's writing talent, whether for publication or self-satisfaction. Visitors are always welcome.

CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Moderator: Judy Guarnera, 474-9598
j.guarnera@sbcglobal.net

WHAT IF? WRITING GROUP II

For all writers of fiction and creative non-fiction. Meets **every Wednesday in Los Osos from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm**. Not a traditional NightWriter critique group. Work is produced in each session, then analyzed according to the objective of the day's goal. Based on writing exercises designed to jump-start the creative process (gleaned from a variety of published authors), these sessions take writers through the process of writing fiction from inception of idea to the final resolution. This group is for all writers who want to learn the process of crafting a well-told story while developing their own voice and style. We explore such topics as ideas, character, story arc, tone, voice, POV, tension, dialogue, resolution, writing mechanics, etc.

CURRENTLY FULL—NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS: Visitors Welcome

Contacts: Susan Tuttle, 458-5234
aim2write@yahoo.com