

OUR FEB 9TH MEETING

JENNA ELIZABETH JOHNSON

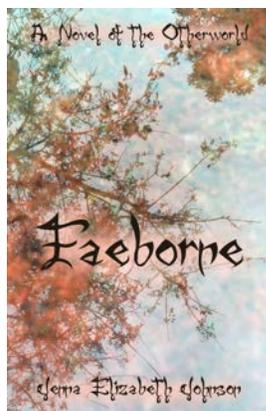
Have you wondered what it takes to become a best-selling author if you decide to go independent? What do you need to do to get your books noticed? How do you rise to the top of the Amazon sales charts? If you have, don't miss this month's meeting!

Jenna Elizabeth Johnson knows how to do it. She's an Amazon.com best-selling, multi-award winning author of Fantasy and Young Adult Paranormal Romance. Jenna grew up and still resides on the Central Coast of California, a place she finds as magical and enchanting as the worlds she creates.

Jenna is the **author of 13 books** (10 novels and 3 novellas) with plans to write many more. Her latest novel, *Faeborne*, was released in December, and she hopes to have the fourth book in her Oescienne (AW-see-en) series out by late spring.

During her presentation, 'How I Became a (Semi) Successful Indie Author', Miss Johnson will discuss her journey to becoming a writer and what she has done to build the beginnings of a career as an independent author.

This is not a meeting you want to miss. See you on the 10th at 6:30—or for the Round Tables at 5:15 if you can make them.



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NIGHTWRITERS “ROUND TABLES”

Join Terry Sanville and Mark Arnold at the Critique Table as they give feedback on pieces brought to the table. Please **keep your submission to two pages, typed, 12-point font, double spaced**. This is a great—and safe—way to see what the critiquing process is all about, get valuable feedback from two fantastic writers, and practice reading your work to a small audience. Round Tables start at 5:15 pm.

Susan Tuttle's Round Table will focus on **Character**. We'll explore what it takes to make characters who are believable and intriguing, characters readers will fall in love with and want to know more about. We'll talk about how to write characters who are vastly different from us, and explore strategies on how to understand our characters even better than we understand ourselves. We'll also talk about the value of a character biography, and how to make sure your characters won't ever act “out of character.”

See you at the Round Tables on Tuesday, February 9th at 5:15 pm.

“Talking is a hydrant in the yard and writing is a faucet upstairs in the house. Opening the first takes all the pressure off the second.”

~Robert Frost

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





Dennis Eamon Young

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: BEWARE THOSE CORNERS AND SHOOT THEM GUNS!

An interviewer once asked the prolific Science/ Science Fiction writer Isaac Asimov what lengths he went to in order to keep all the far-flung elements of his stories from just being an unmanageable mess. Did he write a voluminous outline to adhere to, or just outline a few chapters at a time? Mr. Asimov wryly replied that he wrote stories, such as The Foundation trilogy, in the same manner he had used at the beginning of his career when writing for the pulps. He would start writing a story until he had written himself into a corner.

The interviewer asked the obvious question: "Then what did you do? Start over?" The answer was classic Asimov. He chuckled and replied that he then proceeded to just write his way out of the corner. Ah, yes. JUST write your way out of the corner. Unfortunately, there are very few Isaac Asimovs in the world of writing.

How many times have you been reading an enjoyable book, really getting connected to the characters and the story line, when the author winds up dragging you into a corner with no way out? Then, of a sudden, he miraculously jumps out of the corner in some inexplicable and incongruous manner. You are stumped as to how he did it. Well, so was the author. The odds are you will never read another of that author's works.

My friend Susan Tuttle tells the story of a writer who wrote an excellent book, except that he ran aground at the very end, having the protagonist end the story in a totally uncharacteristic act. She will never trust that author again. Fortunately, the ending of the movie was handled in a much more satisfying manner. If you intend to take an abrupt right turn with the story arc or the actions of a character, you had better have a good explanation in hand, in order to keep the readers on board. Readers enjoy a little bumpiness, but they do not wish to get tossed off the train.

Another disquieting mistake is one that pops up mostly in crime thrillers. In order to heighten tension, the author will have one of the characters pull out a gun. But the gun is never fired. The rule is that if there is a gun, it must be fired. Otherwise, the readers will delve further into the story, still waiting for that gun to have been fired. If not, you had better have a damn good explanation that makes sense to the reader, or she may just close the book, go get some coffee and watch TV.

No matter what the genre, the reader desires, consciously or subconsciously, to curl up comfortably and get lost in your book, finding love, adventure, excitement, wonder and

escape, or some combination thereof. They will want the continuity of a pleasurable reading experience without the unexpected interruptions of wondering who that was, what just happened, or where did that come from?

Within the world of your short story, novella, novel, or even a trilogy, your aim should be to set a reliable pace, overlapping story arcs, strong and reliable characters that the reader can relate to and a meaningful resolution. Throughout the reading experience, your audience's attention should not wander nor do you want them to stop at the end of a chapter without an almost desperate need to turn that page, so they are not left hanging. End a chapter with shots being fired, or a car careening off a cliff and your reader will not be able to put your book down without turning the page.

You can back your characters into a corner without a means of escape, but you will need to produce a way out which makes sense later. Do not just leave your reader hanging in the breeze or they will leave you to find something more satisfying. Give them every reason to stay the course.

Excelsior,
Dennis

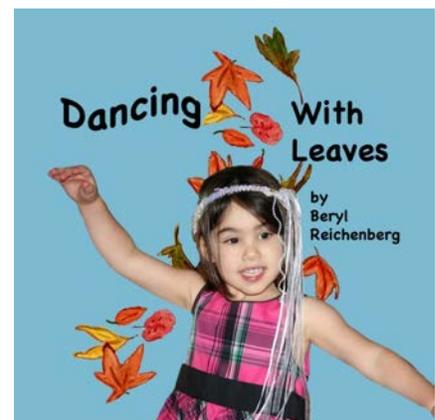
Book Launch!

Dancing With Leaves

by Beryl Reichenberg

Mary loves to dance. One day she is dancing outside with Autumn leaves when she is carried away by the wind and ends up in a tall tree in the woods. Forest creatures help her climb down and find her way home.

Dancing With Leaves is available on Amazon.com and from local museums, galleries and stores. For a full listing: www.berylreichenberg.com



The Power of Books

Destry Ramey's children's book, *The Brown Paper Bag*, the story of the puppy Feather, debuted not too long ago. This testimonial was forwarded to us late in January. It shows just how much power our stories can have on our readers.

Testimonial from Jan Kasler, January 24, 2016

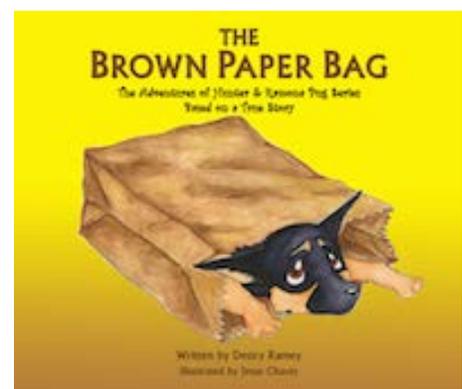
I don't know if John has told you about our little family, but we are foster parents of some pretty amazing young boys. We have 3 ranging in age, 7, 10, and 19. Our little guy struggles with multiple diagnosis, PTSD, ADHD, and FASD. Every day is a struggle for him. Our family loves to read and seeing my littles snuggle up with a blanket and a story book make my heart sing. But my little guy will have none of it. I try to read to him and he is ok for a page or two and then he is just done. He struggles with reading at school, and some days this struggle leads to a meltdown.

Well last week he was having a difficult time transitioning from an activity and had a major behavior. Most times just giving him time to process will do the trick, but this day was not a good one. After giving him some time, he was not transitioning out of his meltdown. So I went for your book in hopes that a good read would get him to think of something else. (Yes, I know, books tend to get pushed away by this little guy, but I caught him looking at the cover the day before.)

So I climbed up on the bed with the book and just started reading out loud. The next thing I knew, he was no longer trying to hurt himself and stopped throwing things. He was listening!!!! He then crawled on the bed with me, totally engrossed in this story. The pictures mesmerizing him. As he snuggled closer, I felt his little body melt into mine. He began pointing and asking questions.

He never does this. After reading for a while and him picking out words he knew, our conversation began about how dogs can talk but not everyone understands what they are saying. That we have to pay attention to their cues. And he turned to me and said, "like when you knew I needed you to read me this book but I didn't have to tell you?"

And that is our magic moment. He really listened and understood. Not to mention your Feather looks like our little long haired chihuahua, Beaner.



"You must keep sending work out; you must never let a manuscript do nothing but eat its head off in a drawer. You send that work out again and again, while you're working on another one. If you have talent, you will receive some measure of success—but only if you persist."

~Isaac Asimov



NW MEMBER AUTHORS, COME SELL YOUR BOOKS!

Sell your books at our general monthly meetings! If you are a member of the SLO NightWriters, we encourage you to take part. We will have a table set up for you to display, discuss and sell your books.

Please note—SLO NightWriters holds no liability in this process. All authors participating are responsible for their own money exchanges and for the security of their own funds and books. Your dues with the SLO NightWriters must be current in order to participate.

We hope that you will welcome this opportunity. For more information about our meeting, please visit our web-site.

We look forward to seeing you!
Sincerely,

Andrea Chmelik
SLONW Vice President

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

Beryl Reichenberg will have a Valentine's Book Mark session at the Gallery at the Network in San Luis Obispo for Art After Dark on February 5 from 6 to 9. Gallery visitors, adults and children alike, will have an opportunity to make their own book mark for Valentine's Day to keep or give to a friend or loved one.

On February 8 from 2 to 4 PM, **Beryl** will teach children to make their own Valentine's Day bookmark at the Paso Robles Public Library as the library celebrates "Take Your Child to the Library Day". The library is located opposite the city downtown park. "A sample of a bookmark may be seen in the children's room at the library."

On February 19, **Beryl** will be in Paso Robles at the Studios on the Park to teach a pop out card for kids in a class from 3:30 to 4:30. Children under six may need the help of an adult. Parents are encouraged to participate and make their own card. There is a \$5 fee for materials. Contact sasha@studiosonthepark.org in advance of the class.

Terry Sanville's vignette titles "Talking Without Speaking" will be published in an upcoming issue of the Vignette Review, an on-line literary journal and one of a small number that specializes in publishing this literary form. Check them out at www.thevignettereview.org

Elizabeth Roderick has signed a contract with Limitless Publishing for her new adult magical realism series, the *Other Place* series. The first installment, *The Hustle*, about a young homeless woman's "adventures" while trying to get clean from heroin, will be released on May 31, 2016. The second installment, *The Other Place*, about a schizophrenic man trying to make it as an artist, will be released on July 5, 2016. She is still working on the third and (likely) final installment.

The final book in the *Write It Right* Series, #6: *Brilliant Beginnings/Extraordinary Endings*, by Susan Tuttle, will be available in print from Amazon.com (and, of course, from Susan) by February 15, 2016. It can also be ordered from any bookstore through Amazon.



Contratulations to SLO NightWriters Liz Regan and Christie Withers!

Tolosa Press • January 14 - 27, 2016 • 31



Dates, Yams & Nietzsche

By Elizabeth Regan



You call me at 8 a.m. and ask if I know what day it is. "November 1," I squint at the wall calendar. "And...?" You prompt.

"Ah, All Saints Day? The day when saints gather their relics from churches, cathedrals and catacombs and patch themselves together for formal conversations? They rehash last minute decisions to be martyrs. They ponder their influence on modern times and conclude they're like the rest of us only a bit more into self-sacrifice."

"How divine." You yawn. "The nonselfies. About today...?"

"Zombie Apocalypse? The transmutation of dead bodies into zombies who rise from their graves and mumble and fumble and scare children and dogs for twenty-four hours. I see them from my window lurching stiff-legged, staggering about town, looking quite dull and dazed. You'd never mistake them for our friends."

"Anything else?" A hint of impatience in your voice.

"Elves Day. The annual return of tiny shoemakers who come to mend our brogues and clogs. The locals call it flip-flop day. Everyone, excluding zombies and saints, wear flip-flops and leave their footwear, tagged with names and addresses, on the curb. The little cobblers spend their night turning old to new. We'll have spit-shined-new-soled shoes tomorrow."

You click off your cell.

Later we meet at the beach. You have your T.S. Eliot and me my Emily Dickinson. We settle our books and picnic on the rainbow quilt. We read Emily's love poems. You recite The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock from memory. The waves and I applaud. Later I serve you brie on olive bread while you feed me fig jam and cheese on apple slices. We aim grapes targeting each other's faces and laugh with each miss, our plastic flutes of champagne spilling into the sand. Finally, I uncover a stashed bakery box and light a candle.

You grin. "You know what day it is." We cram birthday cake into each other's mouths. You wipe frosting off my cheek. "Tomorrow, calendar guru?"

"November 2. World Transformation Day, whereby all peoples engage in acts of kindness..." I begin. "Shush." You put a finger across my mouth. "November 20?" You hesitate, your voice unsteady.

"Transgender Recognition Day." You study me. The push-push pulse of city clamor is audible against the sea's symphony.

"Gender dysphoria," you falter. "Body betrayal."

"Whatever," I comment.

We watch the moon relieve the sun. The sky turns marble, sea silver. You grab my face and stammer, "Not whatever...I'm...trans." Your words hang suspended in the salty air like breath unreleased.

I stare at the ocean. "For, ah, how long?"

"Forever. Does it make a difference?" Seconds mount into minutes. The pale tide soaks our quilt. We don't move. Frozen.

Finally I look at you and web our fingers. "Saints, zombies, elves, Popeye. We yam what we yam and all we yam." I hear you exhale. Your face sheds fear.

"Nietzsche," you whisper. "Amor fati—love of fate, live truth."

We huddle on the sodden blanket, our bodies warming each other against the evening chill. We listen to the crash of the waves.

Elizabeth Regan is a former child development educator with a focus on science and mathematics and national consultant on anti-bias classroom methodology. Among her career experiences were textbook reviewer and grant writer; skills that she applies toward creative writing. She has previously published with Tolosa Press and lives in Morro Bay. She is a member of SLO NightWriters, for writers at all levels in all genres. Find them online at slonightwriters.org.



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SUNSET AT JALAMA BEACH

By Christi Withers




Ray rose to the sound of waves and a train's clackety-clack as it crossed the trestle bridge over Jalama Creek. The train's melancholy whistle faded as it headed south. This is it, Ray thought. Everything has been said. They were through.

Patti was still asleep, gently snoring as she lay tucked away in her queen size bed at the tail of the couch. Ray could see her slender form, the dip in her waist where he'd rest his arm when they lay together. She used to wake him when she was restless and they would caress each other back to sleep. Now he ruminated in the front of the RV in the crow's nest bed above the driver's seat. He knew she needed space. She'd been telling him so for over a year.

Ray soaked out to watch the Milky Way wash brightly across the midnight sky and hoped for a sign. He believed in signs. Tonight the big dipper hung oddly in the north with its handle pointing straight down from its scoop and Jupiter hid behind the hill. Ray surrendered and headed back to bed until it was light enough to pack up.

As the sun broke over the coast range, Ray quietly climbed down from his perch, pulled on his jeans, slipped into his Uggs and swung the door open. He walked behind the RV and watched his pee steam rise in the icy morning air. When he finished, he folded a bright Hawaiian print cloth and then the camp chairs.

Everything had looked perfect the night before. He'd attempted a romantic dinner—a roaring fire in the cast iron pit, an expensive bottle of wine, perfectly grilled steaks. Another failed attempt at reconciliation.

At sunset, before their dinner, Ray and Patti had smoked some weed on the bluff above the beach. He'd hoped it would relax them and allow their differences to float off like the curls of smoke. But the effect had only isolated them.

"We'll get through this," he'd assured her. "Remember what the counselor told us. All marriages have their yin and yang. He had reached for her hand.

"I can't fall in love again. It doesn't work like that." Patti pulled away.

When the sun dipped below the sea and the light disappeared, she turned toward the water. "Where is the bright green flash?" she'd said. "Everyone always promises a flash but I've never seen it."

Ray watched her walk back to the RV. The air chilled quickly when the sun disappeared.

Everything had been said. She'd rented an apartment and would move the end of the month. She feigned sadness, but Ray now knew it to be pity. She'd made a decision. He sensed her relief. He was the procrastinator.

They'd sell the RV. Neither one of them could afford the payments alone. The house, too. That's how these things worked. What about their plans for the future, he wondered? The trip to Yellowstone? He'd always wanted to see Yellowstone.

After he finished packing, Ray walked to the beach for a last look at the rocky coast. The tide retreated slowly, pulled by the last evening's faint white moon.

Christie Withers was born on the Central Coast of CA, lived in Fairbanks Alaska for 20 years where she raised her daughters, co-owned a hardwood lumber company with her late husband, and then Graduated from University of Alaska with a BA in English. She returned to the Central Coast in 1999. Christie is a member of SLO NightWriters, for writers at all levels in all genres. Find them online at slonightwriters.org.

We are accepting story submissions now!

Find Tolosa submission guidelines at www.slonightwriters.org

Submit your 500-600 word short fiction to sharylheber@gmail.com

Pick up copies of SLO City News, Bay News and Coast News at local stores and kiosks. Visit the Tolosa on-line archives to read other NW stories



HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR WORK IN THE NIGHTWRITER'S COMMUNITY

Dear NightWriters,

An important part of our mission is to promote publication and expand authors' recognition in a forum that nurtures a spirit of community for all its members.

We want to hear about your successes and share them with the rest of the world. We want to brag about your new releases, publications and appearances. We are not doing you a favor—we are honored to be a part of your writing life.

The one catch? **We need to hear from you**, and we need to hear from you in a timely manner.

Here is what you can do to help us help you!

1. Contact me as soon as possible. You can email me at chmelik.andrea@gmail.com and I will post your event, publication, or other kudos on our social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn). I will also forward your message to our webmaster (who will list it on our website), and newsletter editors. If submitted in a timely manner, our newsletter goes out to all of the membership once a month.
2. Please, do not assume that we know about your event. We may live in a close-knit community and I see some of your posts and tweets, but I still need you to let me know what you want me to share on your behalf. You can either email me, or you can tag the SLO NightWriters in your posts and tweets.
3. Sharing is caring. Make sure to like our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter, so you can support your peers and share their good news with your friends. Help us build a more supportive writers' community.
4. That's it!

I hope to hear from you! Good news is inspiring. Your success feeds our souls and makes us feel all fuzzy and warm.

Let those kudos rain!

Sincerely,

Andrea Chmelik

Vice President & Social Media Coordinator



Andrea Chmelik

Disclaimer: Please be aware that we reserve blast emails for events that pertain to the organization. While we treasure every one of over 200 members of the SLO NightWriters, we don't want to turn into spammers. Thank you for your understanding.

Hospitality Needs You

Our Hospitality Committee is doing a fantastic job of making sure we have scrumptious goodies for every meeting. But Leanne Phillips, Baxter Trautman and Brian Schwartz could use some help. If a few more NW members pitch in, then each committee member would be responsible for only one or two meetings a year!

It's a fun job. All it takes is some shopping for goodies the day before/day of the meeting, spreading the treats out on the table to entice attendees, and cleanup after the meeting ends. All money outlaid is reimbursed at the meeting.

Contact Leanne if this sounds like something you'd like to help with. What better way to get what you'd like to snack on than being part of the committee?

Leanne Phillips: lphillips715@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP MINUTE

Will return at a future date. Stay tuned for more information.

If you have questions, please contact me: jkon50@gmail.com
805-238-3153

Hanje



Hanje Richards

A WRITER'S PROCESS



by: Liz Roderick

Liz loves to talk about authors and their books and how they write them. If you'd like to be featured in Liz's column, drop her a line: elizabethroderick@att.net. All she needs is a copy of your book, and your emailed answers to her questions.

BOOK PUBLICITY FOR SELF-PUBLISHED AUTHORS



Recently, Erin MacDonald-Birnbaum, one of the most experienced book publicists in the industry, answered some questions for Book Baby. Here is her take on the state of publicity in the 21st Century and how it impacts self-published authors:

Q. Describe what book publicity looked like when you started your career, versus what it looks like today.

A. It wasn't nearly as connected as it is today. When I first started, social media hadn't really taken off (there wasn't any Twitter or Instagram or LinkedIn), and we didn't have the immense amount of online resources at our disposal as we do today.

Q. The recent surge of self-published and independently published books have created substantial dialogue in the industry, particularly in the past five years. How have these books changed the landscape, in your opinion?

A. The biggest change is that anyone can be a published author now with a few clicks of their computer mouse. I think most importantly, it's allowed a lot of great writers and stories to be found/read because they have the opportunity to publish their books themselves when perhaps they didn't get the notice of a traditional publisher. I think we would have missed out on a lot of great stories that way. It's really made what was once an "exclusive" club of select authors a much larger group of writers from all walks of life and all over the world. It definitely made the book world a heck of a lot more interesting.

Q. What are the biggest mistakes people make when handling their own book promotion and publicity?

A. I think the biggest mistake people make when handling their own publicity is that they don't realize this is truly a full-time job. This isn't something they can just do on the weekends or a few hours at night after work but to really be successful in promoting themselves or their project, they have to dedicate all of their time to this endeavor as they would a career.

Q. What are some of the proudest moments of your career?

A. I have a few. On a personal level, it's that I have been in this business for over 11 years. This is a stressful, high-pressure and fast-paced job and I am proud that I have made it this far and still love what I do. On a professional level, I think anytime a publicist secures those "big" runs for their clients is a really proud moment because most people don't realize the hours, days, months and sometimes even years it took to see them come to fruition. The first time I got a book I was promoting reviewed in the NY Times Book section and coordinated a five-page spread for an author of mine about his book in People Magazine were both very cool and exciting.

Q. If you could give writers one piece of publicity advice for self-promotion, what would it be?

A. Make sure you don't oversell. Any time you are promoting your book, you should always be thinking: How is what I am sharing beneficial to this audience?, whether it's someone reading an article you wrote or were quoted in or an interview you give on radio or TV. You should absolutely highlight your book, but you should always provide that takeaway the audience can apply to their daily lives. So, for example, if you wrote a book on retirement, maybe you write an article on the five biggest retirement mistakes and how to avoid them or if you are a chef, you do a TV segment and show three great smoothie recipes to start your day. Bottom line, bring value into whatever you are doing to promote yourself or your book.

"The most important things are the hardest to say. They are the things you get ashamed of, because words diminish them—words shrink things that seemed limitless when they were in your head to no more than living size when they're brought out. But it's more than that, isn't it? The most important things lie too close to wherever your secret heart is buried, like landmarks to a treasure your enemies would love to steal away. And you may make revelations that cost you dearly only to have people look at you in a funny way, not understanding what you've said at all, or why you thought it was so important that you almost cried while you were saying it. That's the worst, I think. When the secret stays locked within not for want of a teller but for want of an understanding ear."

~Stephen King

Four Mistakes Indie Authors Make With Their Book Description

from BlueInk Review

Think of your book description as the most important sales pitch of your life. Every word must count, every idea must serve to rope readers in. Too often, indie authors fall short and lose readers to a book with better promo copy.

Every book needs a book description—that teaser promo copy you usually see on a book’s back cover. When done effectively, it signals which audience the book is targeting *and* captures a reader’s interest. A book description is also invaluable for your author website and other marketing and promotion materials.

At [BlueInk Review](#), we see too many self-published authors with book descriptions that fall flat, potentially turning readers and reviewers off before they can give it a chance.

Here are four common mistakes indie authors make with their book description:

1. **It goes unedited:** It’s incredible how many times we read an excellent book, with every period and comma in place, only to turn to the back cover and find the book description filled with errors and convoluted copy that leaves us scratching our heads. We can only conclude that the author gave the manuscript to a competent editor, but didn’t feel it was necessary – or just completely overlooked the need – for an editor to work on the book description. The moral of story? Give all the copy – promotional copy included – to an editor before publishing.
2. **It lists every plot detail:** Your book description is meant to be an enticement, in the same way an appetizer is meant to whet your appetite for the meal to come. Too often we see what amounts to the entire meal laid out in the book description: a summary that mentions every plot twist in the book. If readers know everything that’s coming, why would they bother to read the book? Summarize the plot, but don’t give away all your surprises.
3. **It doesn’t specify the genre:** Is your book a historical fiction thriller? A young adult drama? A memoir? If readers have to guess the genre after reading your book description, it hasn’t done its job. The purpose of a book description is to attract readers who love your kind of book. Without mentioning the genre, you are likely losing your most enthusiastic readers. State the genre up front; don’t be shy. Use the words at the beginning of the description, as in: “This historical fiction novel follows the exploits of....”

4. **It's an afterthought:** Writing an effective book description is an art unto itself. It must describe the salient points of the book, including the story's most enticing elements, all in one or two artful paragraphs and without giving too much away. Think of it as the most important sales pitch of your life. Every word must count, every idea must serve to rope readers in. If you don't feel comfortable with this kind of writing, hire someone who does to help you.

5.



10 Ways to Promote A Self-Published Book

from: BookBaby Blog

1. **Author Website:** Create a professional website where readers and media can go to see your latest news and information. Be sure to include hi-res photos, biography, links to social media profiles, press quotes and positive reviews.
2. **Book Launch:** Schedule an event where you sign, read and answer Q & A. Get everyone as excited as you are. (ed. note: You might even partner with another writer in the same genre or with a like subject, but not in direct competition. You'll draw twice the attendees and maybe sell lots more books.)
3. **Email Newsletter:** Interact with your fans on a regular basis. Entice website visitors to leave their contact info with book discounts, etc. Have an email sign-up sheet at all your events.
4. **Social Media:** Use Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, etc. Find 3 networks you enjoy using and spend 20 minutes a day on each. An hour of social networking every day should provide big results.
5. **Contests:** Hold a social media contest or giveaway with a few copies of your new book. People love prizes, and they love to share tweets and Facebook posts about contests.
6. **Write Blog Articles:** Contribute and write articles for blogs relevant to your work. This will drive traffic to your website, improve your search engine searchability, and get your name out there.
7. **Google Alerts:** Google will notify you if someone on the internet writes about you, your book, brand, etc. You can contact these people to explore further promotion opportunities, or simply thank them for mentioning your work.
8. **Radio Interview:** Getting radio exposure might sound daunting, but there are countless internet, community and college radio stations that are happy to interview writers.
9. **Book Clubs:** Write up discussion questions for book club meetings. You can offer to Skype in or attend a local discussion in person.

10. **Bookstores:** It can be difficult to get shelf space for your book even in independent stores. Visit all the stores within an hour's drive, talk to the person in charge of acquiring inventory, and ask if they'll take a few books on consignment for a few months. Maybe other local retailers would like to feature your book in their stores, too. Contact public

"If you want to really hurt your parents, and you don't have the nerve to be gay, the least you can do is go into the arts. I'm not kidding. The arts are not a way to make a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable. Practicing an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow, for heaven's sake. Sing in the shower. Dance to the radio. Tell stories. Write a poem to a friend, even a lousy poem. Do it as well as you possible can. You will get an enormous reward. You will have created something."

~Kurt Vonnegut, *A Man Without a Country*

South County Writers

This group which focuses on serious writing in a friendly, supportive environment is looking for one or two members who write at an advanced or intermediate level.

We meet on the second and fourth Saturdays from 9:30 to noon in Grover Beach.

The members thrive on variety:

Writing short stories, articles, and novels;

all genres from fiction to biography and memoirs.

Members exchange work by email one week prior to the meeting in order to receive in-depth critiques.

The critiques are aimed at eliminating weaknesses and increasing strengths in everything from plot and character development to grammar and proper manuscript preparation.

We are serious about fully developing each member's writing talent, whether for publication or for personal satisfaction.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

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

"Critique Group Connections"

NW Members—Please, email critique requests to: Janice Konstantinidis (jkon50@gmail.com) 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 Janice for assistance if needed and she'll get you to the right people. And, if you form a group, please let Janice know so she can list it on the website. She can also forward your group's information to the newsletter. Critique Group Guidelines are available on the website at www.sloulightwriters.org.

***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!

CRITIQUE GROUP REQUESTS

Laura Emerson is seeking a critique group for researching and writing California Historical Fiction. Preferred skill level—intermediate/advanced. Preferred location is SLO, Morro Bay, Pismo. Contact Laura at noturavg@sbcglobal.net.

Holly Thibodeaux works in fiction, non-fiction, screenwriting, memoir and experimental fiction. She is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange with writers in a more structured environment with accountability to boost productivity. Intermediate level preferred; no location restrictions. She would also like to find others interested in exploring the philosophy of writing and the psychology of storytelling. Contact her at:

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.

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

Critique Group Connections, Continued

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

Contact Griselda at grissilvarivera58@yahoo.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

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: grimmpsych@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

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

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

Steve Bowder is seeking a critique group that concentrates on true stories embellished to make them interesting, but that stay true to the facts that are known.

Contact Steve at: sbowder@live.com

Quote of the Month

“Use the time of a total stranger
in such a way that he or she will not
feel the time was wasted.”

~Kurt Vonnegut

Word of the Month “Rechauffe”

Definition: (N, Fr. *re* + *echauffer*, to warm)
Warmed leftover food; old material reworked
or rehashed.

Synonyms: reproduced, stale, reworked,
rehashed

Usage: By the time I was halfway through his
third sci-fi book, I realized it was just more of
the same rechauffe.

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 Sharyl Heber** (sheber@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.

LAST MONTH AT THE BOARD MEETING

Each month, we'll be reporting on the progress your board is making in ensuring SLO NightWriters meets your needs. We invite any and all of you to join us whenever you would like to attend. Our board meetings are always open to all our members.

SLO NightWriters Board Meeting Minutes – January 3, 2016

Meeting Date: Sunday, Jan 3, 2016 **Time:** 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm **Place:** Library United Church of Christ 11245 Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo CA

President: Dennis Young, Cell: 805-540-1271

Present: Dennis Young, Hanje Richards, Leanne Phillips, Janice Kostantinidis

Guests: No guests were present.

Previous Minutes Presented: • December minutes approved.

President's Report (Dennis Young):

- Resolved: Dennis will formally ask Sharyl Heber to stay on as Tolosa Press editor.
- Dennis will submit a blurb to the newsletter regarding the survey results and the Tolosa process.
- Going forward, any complaints brought to the attention of any of the board members are to be immediately forwarded to Dennis.

Secretary's Report (Leanne Phillips, Assistant/Acting):

- December minutes and January agenda were sent to Sharyl to archive.
- Board members are to continue to copy Sharyl with their reports.
- Dennis will discuss Sharyl's resignation from the Board with her for purposes of clarification.

Treasurer's Report (Susan Tuttle): • No report.

Social Media / Publicity Report (Andrea Chmelik & Meagan Friberg):

- Andrea's written Social Media Report is attached and incorporated into these minutes by reference.

Tolosa Report (Sharyl Heber):

- Sharyl's written Tolosa Report is attached and incorporated into these minutes by reference.

Membership Report (Hanje Richards):

- Hanje's written Membership Report is attached and incorporated into these minutes by reference.
- Resolved: Dennis will order magnetized name tags for Board members so guests at the general meeting can identify and approach them.

Newsletter Report (Susan Tuttle & Elizabeth Roderick):

- Dennis will discuss software issue with Susan and Elizabeth.
-

Photography Report (Dennis Young):

- Photographs from December meeting were sent to newsletter and social media teams.

Programs Report (Janice Konstantinidis):

- Janice's written Programs Report is attached and incorporated into these minutes by reference.
- No special needs for January meeting. The February speaker (Jenna Johnson) will need to be able to show a Power Point presentation.
- Leanne's written Hospitality Committee report is attached and incorporated into these minutes by reference. Update: Baxter will provide refreshments for January meeting.

Website Report (Janice Konstantinidis):

- Janice's written Website Report is attached and incorporated into these minutes by reference.

Critique Group Coordinator Report (Rebecca Heath)

- No report.

Anthology Report: (Sharyl Heber/Andrea Chmelik)

- No report.

Granted Complementary 1-Yr ~ Or ~ Lifetime Membership:

- No new memberships have been granted.

Mid-Month E-Mail Business:

- No mid-month e-mail business.

Old Business:

- Re: Tracking how guests heard about SLO NightWriters: Hanje reported that she asks guests informally how they heard about SLO Nightwriters, and this information is requested on the application when they join the organization.
- Tabled: Further discussion re: e-mail blasts for book signings: Consider including something in newsletter reminding members of deadlines and/or weekly e-mail blast to cut down on amount of mail.

New Business:

- No new business.

Contest Report / CCWC:

- Dennis will confirm with Tia whether she will stay on as Golden Quill contest director.

December meeting (December 5th, 2015) Report covering *November 2015*

Facebook:

We gained 5 new fans in the last month (from 344 to 349)

Days when fans are active – fairly consistent throughout the week

Times in a day fans are active – between 9am - 8pm

Gender – 74% women, 25% men

Age – 6% 18-24; 13% 25-34; 21% 35-44; 20% 45-54; 19% 55-64; 21% 65+

Keep sending me any info/photos/quotes/articles you would like to share on the FB page – even if you don't use FB yourself! Please, copy Meagan Friberg on any social media and publicity correspondence.

LinkedIn: 379 connections (371 last month)

Twitter: # of followers – 237 (235 last month); # of following – 336 (336 last month); # of tweets to date – 309 (307 last month)

Tolosa Report:

- 4 stories - for the months of Jan and Feb 2016 sent to Tolosa on Dec 18th 2015
- 7 stories - are ready to send to Tolosa
- 3 Stories – are ready, needing only a final copy edit for punctuation. (We are in need of final copy editor. Meagan Friberg has provided this service on a stand- in basis kindly and beautifully and would be perfect if she is willing to take on the task for the selected stories. If not, a new copy editor will be needed in the future.)

No NightWriter story appeared in the last Dec. issue which is likely due to an extensive edition of '2015 Year in Review.' It is, of course, always Tolosa's editorial decision whether to include us or not.

Tolosa has not updated the 'CC Life' archives link with the newer NW stories since October. So our stories may not be archived on their site in the future. Theresa told me she would contact the Tolosa person in charge of that to check on it, but I've not heard back from her. I'll follow up with her on this. For now, I'll not include that archives link in the kudos messages that go out to the membership as the newer stories will not be found there.

Membership Report:

	Active Members	Renewal Overdue	Lapsed Members	New Members Last 30 Days
Nov. 2015	220	22	5	8
Dec. 2015	213	13	7	2
Jan. 2015	214	22	9	1

Programs Report:

January, Brian Schwartz; February, Jenna Elizabeth Johnson; March, Patty Blue Hayes; April, Tom Wilmer

Hospitality Report:

I've e-mailed the committee (Baxter and Brian) a proposed rotation schedule for 2016, with us teaming up on refreshments for October (Golden Quill Awards) and December (End-of-the-Year Party). I am waiting to hear back from them. It would be nice to have more members to fall back on.

REVIEW OF JANUARY MEETING

Terry Sanville and Mark Arnold critiqued five two-page submissions at Round Table One. Terry and Mark stressed the importance of avoiding sentences with *dangling participles*. A dangling participle modifies an unintended subject. Participle phrases, phrases that contain an -ing word, will modify the noun closest to them. So always make sure your participle is modifying what you intended it to modify.

Examples of Incorrect sentences with dangling participles:

Hiking the trail, the birds chirped loudly. (The birds are hiking the trail.)

Floating in the pool, the passing clouds overwhelmed me. (The clouds are floating in the pool.)

Examples of correct sentences without dangling participles:

Hiking the trail, I heard the birds chirp loudly. (I am hiking the trail.)

Floating in the pool, I marveled at the clouds. (I am floating in a pool.)

(Mignon Fogarty, 2013)

Ruth Crowne, one of the five who read, is writing a story about Chicomecoatl, the Aztec Corn Goddess. Those of you not raised by Mexican grandmothers might not know that Chicomecoatl is the goddess of corn and oversees tamale making. A clay statue of her resided on my grandmother's stove. She wore a feather headdress, her face was painted red, and she held a shield of the sun in front of her. Ask Ruth about her intriguing story to learn more about this goddess.

Susan Tuttle taught us how to write great endings in Round Table Two. Readers will be turned off if your story does not end well. A great ending arises organically from the story events, has all the characters acting in accordance to their personalities, and wraps up all story plots, except for maybe a cliffhanger or two.

Susan taught us eight different methods for ending our stories:

The symbolism ending in which a symbol is used to underscore the story's theme. This symbol must be used throughout.

The observation ending in which the ending clearly reflects the opening of the story.

The question & answer ending in which the question asked in the opening of the story is answered.

The growth/change ending in which the growth/change the main character is underscored.



By Jan Alarcon



The philosophical ending in which the ending is a philosophical comment on the theme or message of the story.

The twist ending in which the ending contains a revelation that throws the entire premise of story into question. This twist must be foreshadowed throughout the story.

The closed-door ending in which there is a feeling of finality at the end of the story. It should appear that there is nothing more to add after this ending.

The Cliff-hanger ending in which a subplot open to lead into another body of work.

I am partial to philosophical endings; here are three of my favorites:

“It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known.” *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens.

“So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.” *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald.

“You have fallen into art —return to life.” *Willie Masters’ Lonesome Wife*, William H. Gass.

Brian Schwartz spoke at the general meeting. Brian runs a digital publishing consulting business. I have had a privilege of hearing Brian speaks on



several occasions. I have learned so much for him, and every presentation is unique and packed with useful information.

I was struck this time with all the great philosophical adages he gave us. Can't decide which one to tack up all my bulletin board, they are all fantastic:

"The thing that gets you out of bed at 4:00 in the morning is the thing that you should pursue."

"Success is just beyond the point where the urge to quit is the strongest."

"Never get too comfortable or complacent."

"20% of the things you do create 80% of the results. So focus of doing more of the 20% kinds of things you do.

"If overwhelmed, grab a piece of paper and break down what you want to do into manageable chunks."

Brian Schwartz can be reached at <http://selfpublish.org/about/>.

Every year, my uncle Richard would select an annual inspirational poem. In honor of his memory, I do so as well. I leave you with my inspirational poem selection for 2016.

Lost, by David Wagoner

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you
 Are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,
 And you must treat it as a powerful stranger,
 Must ask permission to know it and be known.
 The forest breathes. Listen. It answers,
 I have made this place around you.
 If you leave it, you may come back again, saying Here.
 No two trees are the same to Raven.
 No two branches are the same to Wren.
 If what a tree of a bush does is lost on you,
 You are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows
 Where you are. You must let it find you.

Until next month,
Jan Alarcon



Friday Night Writers Group

The Friday Night Writers Group is looking for one or two new members. This is a serious writing group that focuses on increasing both the writing and computer technical skills that lead to successful publication—despite all the fun we have on Friday nights. (Let's face it: this is a digital age, we need to know digital stuff as well as how to write.)

Members write everything from nonfiction articles and memoir to short stories, poetry and novels of all genres. We bring from 1-6+ pages each session and read our work, then the piece is critiqued by each member using the "Oreo cookie" method: what works, what needs work, what works. In the last 3 years, our members have published over 10 five-star-review books. When we set goals, we help each other achieve them.

The Friday Night Writers Group meets every 2nd and 4th Friday of each month from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm (complete with snacks!), in San Luis Obispo. For further information, a schedule and meeting dates/place, contact Debra Davis Hinkle at: debradavishinkle@pacbell.net



DAN SMITH'S TOP 10 PREDICTIONS

Print sales were up in 2015, self-published authors continued their ongoing momentum, and quirky trends like adult coloring books had a surprising industry effect. So what does 2016 have in store? Here the predictions from Smith Publicity's CEO:

Here are my ten book marketing and publishing industry predictions for the year ahead.

1. **Digital publishing will continue to experience success**, although print sales experienced a resurgence in 2015—due in part to Amazon's heightened prices on e-books. This could be the year when the see-saw between print and digital becomes more steady.
2. **Content book marketing will continue its upward trend**. This is especially important for authors who write business books. At Smith Publicity, we've experienced a steady increase in successful placement of byline articles. Providing ready-made material for print and online outlets is an increasingly important component of any book publicity campaign for non-fiction, self-help, and business books.
3. **Independently published and self-published authors will need to amp their online presence**. Even with the ongoing debate over whether or not social media sparks book sales, the fact remains that it has become increasingly important to augment traditional publicity with social media activity.

4. **Romance will continue to bloom in 2016.** At Smith, we represent a wide range of authors, but we've certainly seen an increase in romance in recent years. Fifty Shades of Grey sparked an enormous surge of romance and erotica novels, many of which are offered in digital-only formats. But as new motifs make way in this genre, we expect to see less billionaire bachelors and more historical romances. You can thank the popularity of the Outlander series.
5. **Ghost-written memoirs will increase in popularity.** Book packagers have solid footing in today's industry, and that includes companies that offer to ghost-write compelling life stories. Just because you lived an astonishing life doesn't mean you're able to write about it. Companies have stepped in to fill that gap, and we expect the trend to continue.
6. **Pay-per-placement publicity programs will decline in popularity.** Anecdotally, in 2015 we encountered more and more authors who had opted for a pay-per-placement publicity campaign structure, and left the process disillusioned. Certainly, there are quality firms who conduct such campaigns, but we've repeatedly heard that the disparity between placement value and cost makes positive ROI more difficult to achieve. There is every reason to believe this will continue in 2016.
7. **Low-cost publicity service options will likely continue to grow in popularity in 2016.** Flat-fee, quick-start programs are attractive to authors with limited budgets. Comprehensive, full service campaigns will remain the most popular choice, but expect low-cost service offerings to expand.
8. **Smaller book trade shows will grow in popularity in 2016.** We've already seen this happening in 2015. Book Expo America, even with criticism of changes in its structure, will remain THE event, but smaller shows, such as PubWest, are becoming more popular for both authors and industry professionals, and this will continue.
9. **The self-publishing landscape will continue to change.** As witnessed by the recent sale of Author Solutions by Penguin Random House, the blending of traditional and self-publishing may have run its course.
10. **Self-publishing will continue to become a more viable means of attracting traditional publisher opportunities.** We saw this increase in 2015, and expect this to continue in 2016.

"Being a writer is a very peculiar sort of a job: it's always you versus a blank sheet of paper (or a blank screen) and quite often the blank piece of paper wins."

~Neil Gaiman



by: Mike Price

GETTING TO KNOW NIGHTWRITER MEMBERS

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Will Return Next Month

Jump on the networking bandwagon! If you'd like to be spotlighted, contact Mike at: drjakespa@sbcglobal.net

“If you want to write, if you want to create, you must be the most sublime fool that God ever turned out and sent rambling. You must write every single day of your life. You must read dreadful dumb books and glorious books, and let them wrestle in beautiful fights inside your head, vulgar one moment, brilliant the next. You must lurk in libraries and climb the stacks like ladders to sniff books like perfumes and wear books like hats upon your crazy heads. I wish you a wrestling match with your Creative Muse that will last a lifetime. I wish craziness and foolishness and madness upon you. May you live with hysteria, and out of it make fine stories—science fiction or otherwise. Which finally means, may you be in love every day for the next 20,000 days. And out of that love, remake a world.”

~Ray Bradbury

Help! Great Beginnings Needs You!

Great Beginnings is information for writers just starting out, as well as a refresher for those of us who have been around for a while. This is a great way to get publishing credits (the newsletter has a circulation of about 250 each month) while honing your writing skills. Write one article, or a series, it's up to you. We're looking for around 300-400 words on technique, writing skills, publishing, marketing, social media—any subject on writing for those starting out. What have you learned that will help other new writers? See Great Beginnings in each newsletter to get an idea of what's being done. Then email your submissions to: aim2write@yahoo.com with NW Newsletter in the subject line. You know you want to do this... so email me today!

GREAT BEGINNINGS

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

10 MISTAKES NEW AUTHORS MAKE

Writing coach Nancy Erickson, who works mainly with nonfiction works, offers new writers this advice. A new author often:

1. **Thinks he/she has an original idea (but doesn't):** Research, read other books on the same topic, in the same genre. Make sure what you want to say hasn't already been said. If it has, find your own unique angle and perspective.
2. **Loves the sound of his/her own writing:** Get over yourself and seek outside, objective criticism. That's the best way to improve. An overconfident attitude leads to sloppy writing.
3. **Thinks writing a book is easy:** Writing has never been easy, and never will be. It's hard discipline. You have to create deadlines, hold yourself accountable, be constantly learning and improving—and writing constantly at the same time.
4. **Doesn't know how to begin:** You need to start with a plan that carries your initial concept from word #1 to finished cover. Know what you are trying to accomplish, have a firm goal in mind. Ask yourself: what is the purpose of this book? How is it different? Who is the audience? Why would anyone buy and read it?
5. **Limits his/her language and fails to expand his writing style:** Readers appreciate a varied vocabulary. They grow impatient with repetitive words, phrases and sentence structure. Make your writing interesting, vary sentence styles, use active language, make your verbs sharp and distinctive.
6. **Misuses grammar and punctuation:** Learn the rules for grammar and punctuation. You can be sure your audience knows them. Readers will dismiss you as an amateur if you don't sharpen those technical skills.
7. **Doesn't invest in necessary resources:** When your manuscript is done, avail yourself of the professional help out there: proofreaders, editors, interior and cover designers. Just because you can do everything yourself doesn't mean you should. No one, no matter how good they are, can proofread or edit their own work properly.
8. **Trusts the opinions of family and friends:** They most likely won't give you objective feedback. Plus, they are inexperienced, they care too much about your feelings, and may only tell you what you want to hear. Nothing can replace a good, objective critique group.
9. **Doesn't know how to end the book:** You have to tie up all subplots, resolve the main plot and revisit all the foundational questions to make sure you've got a satisfying ending.
10. **Sets arbitrary deadlines:** Don't just pick a date out of the air and then force yourself to meet it. Goals are great and keep us on track, but sometimes you need to pull back, get some distance, and then revise yet again. It's what separates an amateur from a professional.

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: Andrea Chmelik
Secretary: Sharyl Heber
Treasurer: Susan Tuttle
Program Director: Janice Konstantinidis
Contest Committee Chair: Tia Araminta
Publicity Director: Andrea Chmelik
Membership Director: Hanje Richards
Critique Group Coordinator: Rebecca Heath
Social Media Coordinator: Andrea Chmelik
Tolosa Press Submission Manager: Sharyl Heber
Welcome Committee: Hanje Richards
Sunshine Chair: Kalila Volkov
Website Master: Janice Konstantinidis
Web Assistant: Steve Derks
Newsletter: Susan Tuttle, Elizabeth Roderick
Art Director: Dennis Eamon Young
Assistant Secretary: Janice Konstantinidis
Board Assistants: Sharyl Heber, Rebecca Waddell
NW Historian: Sharyl Heber
Hospitality: Leanne Philips (coordinator), Baxter Trautman, Mike Price, Rebecca Heath, Brian Schwartz

About Our Monthly Meetings

NightWriters' Evening Meetings: the second Tuesday of every month, year round. We encourage interested visitors to join us at 6:30 pm. Admission free; refreshments served.

Next Meeting: February 9th, at United Church of Christ on Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo. General meeting begins at 6:30 pm. Round Table presentations start at 5:15 pm.

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:

www.slonightwriters.org and pay with credit card.

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 our webmaster and the newsletter editor at slonightwriter@yahoo.com to list your critique group and critique needs in the NW Newsletter and on the NW Web site.

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.slonightwriter.org. Contact slonightwriter@yahoo.com with your critique needs and genres and we'll do our best to assist you.

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

PISMO SATURDAY GROUP

New group starts Saturday May 10. All levels and genres, short stories, poetry, novels and memoirs. Work is exchanged one week prior to group meetings. 1500 word limit on submissions. Meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 9:00-11:00 am. Contact moderator for location.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Moderator: Tom Snow
coinerbop@gmail.com

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, 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

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

THE THURSDAY GROUP

This group meets at 9:00 am every other Thursday at The Coffee Bean in Pismo Beach. Anyone interested in joining them can email the moderator for full details.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS.

Moderator: Mark Ruszczky
zsur@aol.com

North County Storytellers

This group focuses primarily on novel length works, though we often mix it up with flash fiction and short stories. Members may agree to read larger chunks of material at a time to allow for developmental critique. Items must be electronically distributed at least one week prior to the meeting. Beginning in the Fall, the group will meet the first **Tuesday of each month from 7-9 pm in Atascadero**, and the **third Tuesday of each month from noon to 2 pm in Templeton**. Summer schedule varies.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO 2 NEW MEMBERS.

Contact: Tina Clark
theclarkfour@sbcglobal.net

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 advanced writers 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 OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

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

WRITE IT RIGHT WRITING GROUP I (Wed. a.m. Group)

Meets **every Wednesday morning in 5 Cities area 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 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 monthly fee involved for this class to cover materials.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS.

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

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

PISMO WEDNESDAY GROUP

New group began Meeting on May 1. All levels and genres: short stories, novels, poetry, memoir. Work is exchanged one week prior to each meeting; 1,500 word limit on submissions. Meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 9:00-11:00 am in Pismo Beach.

CURRENTLY FULL—NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS. Visitors welcome. Contact moderator for location.

Moderator Tom Snow
coinerbop@gmail.com

LO PROSE

Meets in **Los Osos on the first and third Wednesdays at 7pm till usually 10pm.** Charlie Perryess and Anne Allen 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
Anne Allen, 528-1006

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

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

NORTH COUNTY GROUP

Meets every other Thursday from 10:00 am-12:00 noon at the Atascadero Library, preceded by "a bit of socializing, for those so inclined" at the Starbucks by Vons. Fiction, creative non-fiction, short and book length writers of moderate to advanced level comprise the group. **CURRENTLY FULL —NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

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

WRITE IT RIGHT WRITING GROUP II (Wed. p.m. Group)

For all writers of fiction and creative non-fiction. See full description under Wed. a.m. Group. Meets every **Wednesday in Los Osos from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm**. Not a traditional NightWriter critique group. See full description above.

CURRENTLY FULL—NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

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