



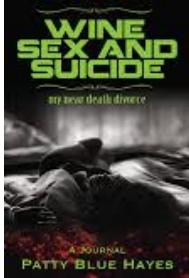
OUR MARCH 8TH MEETING PATTY BLUE HAYES

Structuring Your Self Published Book

This will be an overview of the start to finish process in my self-publishing experience. Topics covered will include:

- How to use **Barnes and Noble** as a resource;
- What to include on your **back cover**: front and back matter;
- Tips on inexpensive **cover design** and how to best use freelancers;
- The importance of owning your **ISBN** if using a hybrid publisher;
- How to **select your title** for Self Help, Business and How-To books using keywords and where to pack in keywords on Amazon;
- Make a **YouTube video** about your book.
- A sneaky way to possibly **increase your FB and twitter** followers;
- A few **creative tips** and why you start with the flaming cheese.

Patty Blue Hayes is an award winning author of *Wine, Sex and Suicide—My Near Death Divorce*. Her other book, *My Heart is Broken. Now What?* is also available as a 12-week audio program to help people move through heartbreak. As a life coach, she works with clients one-on-one on a number of life issues. She's available for accountability coaching for writers to help them banish the fear, take action and accomplish their dream.



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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 **Settings**. Settings can do much more than merely ground readers in a specific time and place. Come learn the 4 types, the 7 elements and the 5 essential ingredients of fascinating settings; how settings can create atmosphere, reveal information about characters, increase tension/suspense, and deepen your story's theme; how a setting can even become a character in itself. Come at 5:15 to the **Settings Round Table** and learn how to make all your settings truly memorable.

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

“I see only one rule; to be clear. If I am not clear, then my entire world crumbles into nothing.”

~Stendahl

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: WITH A LOT OF HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

Back when I joined SLO NightWriters, I was thrilled to be inducted into the Critique Group that I am still a part of today. I am still thrilled. I wrote about a trip I had undertaken in Ireland, under the wing of a famed Irish archeologist. I got to go places a normal visitor could not and photographed to my heart's content.

All my new writer friends lauded my effort with many great compliments. I was beaming with pride and gratitude at this wonderful reception. Then finally Susan Tuttle finished complimenting me and uttered those fateful words: "It's lovely writing Dennis, but it is not a story!" So began the journey of learning how to craft a story, which continues to this day.

I have sat through hundreds of Presentations, attended Conferences, joined Workshops, read books and held conversations with many writers. It always comes full circle, back to my Critique Group for the most important insights into why and how I write. Susan has been a constant guiding light, between critiques and her writing Workshops, but my dear friends such as Evy Cole, Judy Guarnera, Ginger Lasher and Claire Gordon have been there all the while, working with me.

These writers, and others who have come through our group, have helped to shape the writer I have thus far become. Although we write in various genres, critiquing and being critiqued teaches me to look at my work more accurately and edit with more precision. The writing is important, but the editing is crucial. Harper Lee's editor played a huge part in the shaping of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

One of the other most important things to be aware of is not to edit! What? Yes, you read that correctly. You can quickly stifle the inspiration of your muse, if you start editing right away. You must pour forth as many ideas, characters, story arcs, philosophical rants and descriptions as you can, **before** you take the editing knife to it all. Know your story and what you are attempting to say and then work from the end back to the beginning.

Editing is an art unto itself, hidden beneath the surface of that which we read and respond to. The misplaced comma, the blue eyes that have mysteriously changed to brown, Mr. Bronson having morphed into Mr. Brown are all of the same ilk. They are signs of an improperly edited text. They are those very things that must be excised before your work reaches an editor.

When our members submit a story to the Tolosa Submission Committee, our readers go through each piece of work to ferret out any problem areas, sometimes making suggestions on how the creator of the story can make simple corrections to enhance the work in some other way. When Tolosa Press receives the story, they do not have the time to do these edits, so they appreciate the fact that the stories have already been edited and are ready to go. They still have the final say as to whether or not to publish, but we have increased the odds in the writers' favor.

When I was working on films, I learned quickly that there is a crucial triad: Actors acting out a story; the Director fitting all the pieces of the puzzle together; the Editor attempting to make all those pieces flow seamlessly. It always boils down to the editing. There may be some writers with such a strong sense of storytelling that they can drag the reader along, even with glitches. Those writers are few and far between. Why make the reader work that hard? Why take the chance of antagonizing your reader? Write like crazy and edit like a surgeon. You owe it to yourself.

I always look forward to learning how my critique friends will see my newest piece of work and how they might help me refine what I am trying to say. Indeed, I get along with a lot of help from my friends.

*Excelsior,
Dennis*



NW MEMBER AUTHORS, 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.

Andrea Chmelik
NW Vice President

Acts of Kindness

Pay it Forward Author Catherine Ryan Hyde Narrates Documentary About Kindness
by Leanne Phillips

Cambria author Catherine Ryan Hyde spoke recently at a screening of *Kindness is Contagious*, a documentary about the benefits of being kind. The film was hosted by Bob Banner at the Grange Hall in San Luis Obispo to a packed house.

In Hyde's 1999 novel, *Pay it Forward*, a middle school teacher assigns an extra credit project to his students – come up with a plan to make the world a better place, then put it into action. One student accepts the challenge. Trevor's idea is a seemingly simple one: Do a big favor for three people, and ask for nothing in return. Instead, ask each person to "pay it forward" by doing a big favor for three more people. The results are life-changing for Trevor and his family, but also set into motion a wave of kindness that begins to change the world. The novel was adapted to film in 2000.

During the course of the making of *Kindness is Contagious*, Hyde was interviewed by the filmmaker David Gaz about her novel, *Pay it Forward*, and the movement it inspired. Gaz liked her voice and her positive demeanor and asked Hyde if she would narrate the film, which she agreed to do.

The *Pay it Forward* author as narrator is appropriate considering the film's hypothesis, which is similar to the premise of Hyde's novel. The film picks up where an article based on the research of James Fowler and Nicholas Christakis left off. Fowler and Christakis explored the benefits of being kind and the viral nature of kindness. Their research revealed that, when someone is kind to another person, the recipient of the kindness is then in turn kind to an average of four more people, and the benefits eventually circle back to the person who was kind in the first place. This, the researchers premised, is scientific support for karma.

The article became the inspiration for the documentary. During an interview for the *Chicago Tribune*, Gaz explained how the film came to be. "My wife said that all my projects were getting very dark and cynical and I said, 'Great – then I might just do a movie all about being nice.'" Gaz then read an article in *Discover Magazine* about the Fowler/Christakis happiness study. After reading the article, Gaz says, "the whole thing gelled."

Gaz interviewed a diverse group of people, including police officers, executives and even roller derby players. He asked each person the same question: "What's the kindest thing anyone ever did for you?" The answers he received were truly extraordinary. Gaz came to the conclusion that being kind affects not only the person who is the object of an act

of kindness, but the person who is being kind, leading to a healthier, happier and longer life.

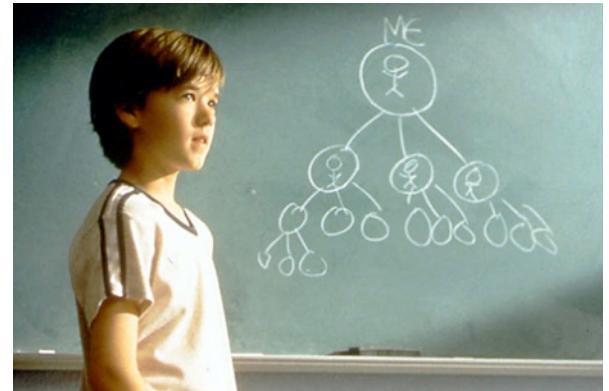
"Kindness spreads just like the flu virus. If one person starts being kind, being generous to other people in that group, that behavior can spread from person to person to person and soon the whole group is more likely to exhibit that same behavior."

This is essentially the same theory Hyde put forth in *Pay it Forward*. After the screening of *Kindness is Contagious*, Hyde spoke about her experience with the film and about what's currently happening with the *Pay it Forward* movement. Hyde's Pay it Forward Foundation, formed in 2000, continues to make a difference worldwide.

Hyde also spoke about the recently-published *Pay it Forward Young Readers Edition*, which is suitable for middle school readers. Through donations and a partnership with Hyde's publisher, the Pay it Forward Foundation is donating copies of the book to teachers, classrooms and other educational environments.

On April 28th, people in more than 75 countries will participate in the 10th annual Pay it Forward Day by performing an act of kindness for someone, such as paying for a stranger's coffee, gas or meal, taking a bouquet of flowers to a local hospital for a lonely patient, or letting someone go ahead of them in line. The foundation hopes to inspire 10 million acts of kindness worldwide and is encouraging people to come up with their own creative ideas. Assuming the Pay it Forward theory is true, imagine the ripple effect of this single day.

To learn more about the book program or about Pay it Forward Day, visit the foundation's website at payitforwardfoundation.org.



"[I]t proves that you don't need much to change the entire world for the better. You can start with the most ordinary ingredients. You can start with the world you've got."

Catherine Ryan Hyde, Pay It Forward



"There is no wrong way to perform an act of kindness." Catherine Ryan Hyde.

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

Terry Sanville's short story, "The Nuns at Starbucks," was selected as the second place winner of the Ingrid Reti Literary Award, an annual contest sponsored by Arts Obispo (the Arts Council of San Luis Obispo County). Second place provided a \$300.00 cash award. Congratulations, Terry!

"A Long Way From Vicksburg," a short story by **Terry Sanville** (the only Western he's ever written), will be published in April of 2016 in Where Cowboys Roam, a print and e-book anthology put out by Zimbell House Publishing in Waterford, Michigan.

Terry Sanville's story, "Hound Sounds," will appear in the upcoming anthology titled Writing to Woof, put out by Grey Wolfe Publishing of Michigan. Terry tells us: "Hound Sounds," an unusual dog story, is a free-standing chapter from a novel I'm writing about a young city girl growing up on a farm in rural Pennsylvania Dutch country. On Sunday morning at 6:53 am, I received an a-mail flyer from Grey Wolfe asking for submissions with a deadline of midnight that same day. I read their e-mail at 8:30 and sent them "Hound Sounds" at 9:30. By 11:30 Grey Wolfe had accepted my story and submitted edits for my approval. I approved the final edits by 2:15 pm. Sometimes things move pretty quickly—and these guys are especially fast. Fast can be good...

NightWriter **Ruth Starr** has two stories about people in the SLO areas in the February issue of Journal Plus Magazine. She has had over 60 stories published in that magazine over the years.

Terry Sanville's short story, "The Soprano Down the Hall," is included in the online spring edition of Folia Literary Magazine. Folia is published by the Medical College of Georgia in Athens, GA. Their mission is to foster a deeper appreciation for the poetry of life, death, and medicine. www.foliamag.com/#!spring-2016-issue/e3rby.

"In times of unrest and fear, it is perhaps the writer's duty to celebrate, to single out some of the values we cherish, to talk about some of the few warm things we know in a cold world."

~Phyllis McGinley

NW WORDSMITHS

MARCH 2016



YOUR COMMUNITY IN YOUR HANDS

Congratulations to SLO NightWriters Dennis Young and Paul Fahey!



NIGHTWRITERS

central coast life

No Need For Forgiveness

By Dennis Eamon Young

Scully felt the heat of the blood run down his arms and chest. It was burned into his brain. He looks sick, the taste of sweat of that vomit long ago taints. He'd been nineteen at the time, but it took four grown men to pry him off his father. "Was it that confrontation that started you on such a path of violence, my son?" the priest asked.

"No, Father. That just provided a stop along the way." Scully noted the sharp edge in the priest's voice, and the look of concern. "I just didn't want to be here anymore than Scully wanted him. That was obvious. Scully didn't care."

"Don't be afraid, Father. The guards beat me up, but they let me speak to you." Scully laughed from that deep, dark place inside, the place where a little boy had covered in abysmal fear for as long as he could remember. The same little boy who'd been tortured again and again, and who covered his eyes so he didn't have to watch his mother getting battered.

Emmett Scully waited stoically for the state to put an end to his miserable existence. He told the priest his tale of torture and torment. His pain had escalated as he acted out his anger on others until he grew strong enough to turn on his target, his father. His old man survived that fight and Scully served his sentence in prison.

Just before Scully released his old man had come home in a drunken rage and had gone too far. Scully's mother ended up in the morgue.

Too late for her, but his father would spend the rest of his life in prison. "Do you still feel badly for causing me so much agony? Do you wish to seek their forgiveness?"

"Hal! That's a good one, Father. You have no idea how much better off they are without him. Too bad someone else who tried to stop him... until he died. I tried to stop him, too. I'm a lesson. Listen up, old man!" Scully reached out and shook the priest by the shoulders. The guards jumped in and pummeled his arms with their

batons.

"I didn't hurt you." Scully cradled his arms to his chest. "I just wanted to make a point. You should look at the whole story. This is just one of the other ways around. I'm paying the price for their ticket to freedom."

"You could've accomplished that, you know," the priest hissed, "if you just called the police."

"And how long would that have stopped him? You and I both know why society hates me. Because I did what they couldn't."

Dennis Eamon Young is a writer and professional photographer living out the dreams of his youth. He is the author of *Equality: What creative friends on the enchanting Central Coast of CA. Dennis is proud to be the President of SLO NightWriters, for writers at all levels in all genres. Find them online at slonightwriters.org.*

NIGHTWRITERS

The Only Light in Town

By Paul Fahey



SLO NightWriters

cafe



neighborhood destroyed. She almost laughed aloud. No need to worry about Ambrose now.

Eva snatched her coat pocket and felt the documents safely inside, but she wasn't out of danger yet. She would make a call, and by the time the firemen and volunteers cleared the debris, she'd be out of town, and on her way home to Berlin. Eva smiled again as she watched the fires illuminate the night sky. It was the only light in town.

Paul Alan Fahey, a writer and editor, resides on the Central Coast. He writes for JMS Books. He's looking forward to editing another nonfiction anthology of personal essays: *Equality: What Do You Think About When You Think About Equality?* Paul 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 published in the CC Life section of Tolosa Press.

at www.tolosapressnews.com

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.



MEMBERSHIP MINUTE

Bring a Friend to the March 8th Meeting

Did you feel a little intimidated when you came to your first SLO NightWriters meeting? Did it take you a long time (or possibly forever) before you felt comfortable mingling with your fellow NightWriters? Well, we on the SLO NightWriters Board have all been there. We have all walked in feeling like an outsider.

Do you have a friend who confided in you that he/she writes poetry but never shows it to anyone? Someone who has been writing short stories since grade school and has kept them all? Do you know someone who journals daily; has a fantasy of writing the great American Novel; or aspires to be a travel writer, journalist, writer of self-help books, or a blogger?

Perhaps you have kept your writing or your participation in SLO NightWriters a secret from some of your friends. Did you ever think that if you told them about what you do the second Tuesday of every month that some of them might be surprised and be very interested in coming and learning more about it? In fact some of them might be secret writers themselves!

This month (March) we are inviting you to bring a friend with you to our meeting. We will try hard not to overwhelm your guests, but would like to give them a warm welcome and show them what we offer to our members.

Our speaker at the March meeting will be our very own member, Patty Blue Hayes. She is an author and a life coach who will be talking about **Structuring Your Self Published Book**. This will be an overview of the start-to-finish process in her self-publishing experience. Topics covered will include: What to include on your back cover; front and back matter; tips on inexpensive cover design and how to best use freelancers; and a sneaky way to possibly increase your FB and twitter followers.

We look forward to sharing what we have to offer your friends. We hope that they like our program and our round tables. We hope they enjoy having the opportunity to



Hanje Richards

network with other writers and finding out about contests and critique groups and other writing events and activities.

Bring a friend to our meeting on March 8th!

Hanje



WALK A MILE IN HER SHOES

As part of community outreach, SLO NightWriters is organizing a team for Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, an event to raise awareness about sexual assault and gender-based violence. The 14th Annual San Luis Obispo Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event will be held on Saturday, April 30th, in Mission Plaza from 11 AM - 1 PM. The family-friendly event will feature live music by The Kicks, a vendor fair, awareness activities, and a mile walk through downtown where supporters can carry signs and men can sport high-heeled shoes as a symbol of their support. Team members can also opt to instead walk at the Paso Robles event on April 16th, which will feature live music by The JD Project.

Both events benefit RISE, a non-profit organization which provides free services to survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence throughout San Luis Obispo County, including a 24-hour crisis line, counseling, legal help and shelter services.

Each SLO NightWriters team member will be asked to pay a \$20 registration fee (which will be reimbursed by SLO NightWriters) and/or raise a minimum of \$20 in pledges. If you'd like to join the SLO NightWriters team, or if you have questions, please contact Andrea Chmelik at chmelik.andrea@gmail.com.

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

New Facebook Group

Dear NightWriters,

For those of you who would like to socialize and get to know each other better, but can't attend our monthly meetings, we have created a Facebook group.

Facebook groups are dedicated spaces where you can share updates, photos or documents and message other group members. Just click on the link below and hit "join group" in the top right corner. Once our administrator approves your request, you are in!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1701340913423099/>

Invite other NightWriters and get going. Swap ideas, encourage each other, share your events and so on.

We hope that you will find a group of writing peers beneficial!

Sincerely,

Andrea Chmelik
SLONW Social Media Coordinator



"Writing is so difficult that I often feel that writers, having had their hell on earth, will escape all punishment hereafter."

~Jessamyn West



by: Mike Price

GETTING TO KNOW NIGHTWRITER MEMBERS

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Martha Ann Raymond

NW: "Who are you?"

MAR: Hi. My legal name is Martha Ann Raymond (nee Spooner) though I suspect I will go through several pen names. Right now, I like 'Marty Spoon.' I think it has a whimsical sound.

NW: "Who is your greatest inspiration?"

MAR: I am currently having a very deep love affair with Truman Capote. His ghost whispers a great many things in my ear. I blush and smile and keep typing.

NW: "What genre do you like to write?"

MAR: YA fantasy. I am working on a YA novel about a teen girl who discovers there is a Huldra living in the foothills behind her house. A Huldra is a seductive forest creature found in Scandinavian folklore. It's been incredibly hard getting the plot right. I have been working on it for about 2 years. I'm on the fourth draft in the back quarter. Fingers crossed!

NW: "Tell us about your favorite story/article/essay that you have written."

MAR: Once I wrote an essay about the damaging effect that hyper sexualized females in the media has on young girls and women for a college paper and my teacher simply wrote, "Wow," on the top. That piece was my favorite because that's when I realized I was a natural wordsmith.

NW: "Do you have a day job?"

MAR: Yeah. I drive a paratransit bus for RTA, Regional Transit Authority. Mostly riders with disabilities.

NW: As a father of young man with disabilities, I appreciate that.

NW: "How does your family support you in your writing?"

MAR: My dad proof read one of my early drafts and he is really attached to it. He has not accepted the plot changes I have made. It's sweet but kind of annoying at the same time.

NW: "How does NightWriters help you?"

MAR: Just being near other writers, breathing the same air. It's like, you gotta hang out with your tribe every now and then, (as much as I enjoy the solitude of writing.)

NW: "How do you handle rejection letters?"

MAR: I wallow in royal indignation for a while, then I move on.

NW: "Tell us something surprising about yourself."

MAR: My parents were part of the 60's counter-culture and so I was born in the wilds of Alaska. The smell of fiddler ferns and blueberries will always be special for me, but California has been home for over 30 years.

NW "Besides writing, what are your other hobbies?"

MAR: I used to play the acoustic bass, but there is just no time. These days, my bass sits in the corner and glowers at me. I'm taking my second job as a writer very, very, seriously and there is just no time for hobbies. I even quit drinking.

NW: Thank you Martha, for stepping into the glare of the NightWriter's Spotlight. Good luck on your novel.

If you'd like to be spotlighted, contact Mike at: drjakespa@sbcglobal.net



"There are so many different kinds of writing and so many ways to work that the only rule is this: do what works. Almost everything has been tried and found to succeed for somebody. The methods, even the ideas of successful writers, contradict each other in a most heartening way, and the only element I find common to all successful writers is persistence—an overwhelming determination to succeed."

~Sophy Burnham

4 Tips on Excerpting Book Reviews

from: Smith Publicity

How do you showcase a fantastic 200 word review without blathering on for 200 words? By excerpting it. Here are 4 tips on the craft behind the blurb:

1. **Cite the Source:** All reviews should be sufficiently cited. If it's not cited, or you have just made up your own "review," don't use it. If you print "Best Book Ever" on your cover without attribution, it only hurts you. Never compromise the integrity of your work with unattributed blurbs.
2. **Choose Wisely:** The more reputable the source, the better. Be strategic when choosing which review to excerpt. Your Mom may not be the best person to quote on your cover, even if she is the most quotable.
3. **Don't add words:** In reviews, as in journalism, you can't put in words that weren't there before. If you need to add a word to provide better context, you must put that word in parentheses. For example, you could excerpt this review ("A truly remarkable feat that takes us on a wondrous journey through time.") like this: "A truly remarkable feat... (and) wondrous journey."
4. **Use Ellipses Correctly:** It's industry standard that you must use ellipses if words are omitted from a quote. You must always maintain the integrity of the original review, and not allow deleting words to repurpose the original intent. For example, you couldn't take "It's remarkable that a book this terrible was ever published." and hone it down to "...Remarkable!" But you could make this, "It's remarkable that a book this terrible was ever published, but despite its shortcomings, the author has a clear vision that is realized through an interesting narrative." into this: "...a clear vision that is realized through an interesting narrative."

Praise has far more validity when someone else is tooting the horn for you. Knowing how to excerpt the right way will keep readers reaching for your work.



by: Liz Roderick

A WRITER'S PROCESS

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.

"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.slonightwriters.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: grimmpsycho@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

"The purpose of a writer is to keep civilization from destroying itself."

~Albert Camus

Word of the Month “Parsimony”

Definition: (N, L. *parcere*, to spare) Unusual or excessive frugality; extreme economy or stinginess.

Synonyms: frugality, niggardliness, thrift, meanness, tightfistedness, closeness

Usage: I was raised by my bachelor uncle, whose parsimony kept me in rags and made me a laughingstock at school.

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.

WRITER BEE: THE BUZZ ON THE WRITING LIFE



by Leanne Phillips



Do you write for fun? Do you hope to someday make writing your full-time career? Or are you living the dream, earning all your income from writing?

Does it really matter? The bottom line is we all write because we love to write. Right? Well, it might matter a great deal come tax time, which is just around the corner.

Consider this scenario: Last year, you entered the SLO NightWriters Golden Quill contest ... and won! The first place prize for your short story on the theme of transformation was \$1,000. Congratulations!

When it comes time to prepare your taxes, whether you are a hobbyist or a professional writer, you are required to report and pay federal income tax on any contest winnings over \$600. (State tax laws vary, but most states do tax contest winnings.)

What if you laid out some cash to win that contest? You paid the \$20 entry fee. Your short story involved the transformation of butterflies. You live in San Francisco and made two weekend trips to Pismo Beach to visit the Monarch Butterfly Grove for research purposes. You spent \$1,600 on gas, hotels and meals, for a total of \$1620 in expenses.

Here's where it gets interesting.

If you write as a hobby and entered the contest for fun and adventure, you can deduct "ordinary and necessary" hobby expenses up to the amount of your hobby income. The IRS defines "ordinary" hobby expenses as those that are common and accepted for the particular hobby. "Necessary" expenses are those that are appropriate for the activity. Paying a contest fee and traveling for research likely fit the bill – those are both things writers ordinarily do. So, you can itemize your deductions on Schedule A and deduct the first \$1,000 of those expenses to offset the \$1,000 in income. You had a great time traveling, you were recognized for your writing talent, and you'll come out even on your taxes. Not bad!

But if you are a professional writer, it gets even better.

Let's say you made \$75,000 from your day job as an editor in San Francisco last year. In your spare time, you finished writing your first novel and decided to start diligently seeking

financial success as a writer. You took certain steps to prepare to self-publish your novel. You hired an editor. You bought a block of ISBNs and had business cards printed. You subscribed to Writer's Digest and bought a copy of *Self-Publishing for Dummies*. You paid \$30 to join SLO NightWriters so you could network with other writers. Finally, you entered the Golden Quill contest for the purpose of getting your name out there and becoming known as a writer.

Under those circumstances, you can itemize all of your business expenses as a sole proprietor on Schedule C. The \$1,620 in expenses associated with entering your short story into the Golden Quill contest, as well as your other start-up expenses, will go toward offsetting *all* of your income. Not only will those expenses offset the \$1,000 in contest winnings, but assuming you operated at a loss this first year, they will also offset a portion of your \$75,000 day job salary.

How does the IRS determine whether you write as a hobby or as a business? There are no clear-cut rules, only guidelines. Basically, if you are writing as a business, you need to be prepared to establish that you are attempting to earn reliable income from writing versus writing solely as a labor of love.

Here are some things the IRS considers an indication that your writing career is a business:

- You turned a profit in three of the last five years.
- You complied with formalities in organizing your business, such as obtaining a local business license and a seller's permit.
- You are actively engaged in *trying* to make a profit from your writing, *OR*, you rely on the income from your writing (i.e., it's not a sideline and you don't have another job or the income of a spouse to underwrite your writing career).

None of these guidelines are hard and fast rules. Losses can be expected in the start-up phase of any business, and you may not be in a position to quit your day job just yet. But, if you haven't turned a profit by your third year, you may risk an audit. The IRS will then take a look at the big picture to determine whether you are a hobbyist or an entrepreneur.

The IRS does recognize that it may take longer to turn a profit in some professions. (For example, if you breed racehorses, they only expect you to turn a profit in two out of seven years.) Here are some things you can do to help prove to the IRS that you take your writing career seriously and are trying to make a living as a writer:

- Get business cards.
 - Keep good records.
-

- Open a business bank account.
- Obtain the appropriate business licenses and permits.
- Document advertising and marketing efforts.
- Maintain a business plan or calendar, mapping out your career trajectory.

In the end, the most important indicator that your writing career is a business is that you treat it like a business. Run your writing business by the book, work diligently and keep good records. Most importantly, if your business is in the red, make adjustments to improve the profitability of your business. Before you know it, you'll be able to put that day job behind you.

NEXT MONTH: Tax Deductions for Writers

DISCLAIMER: The information presented in this article is offered for opinion, reference and general informational purposes only. The author is not an investment advisor, financial planner, attorney or tax professional. Please obtain professional advice regarding your individual circumstances.

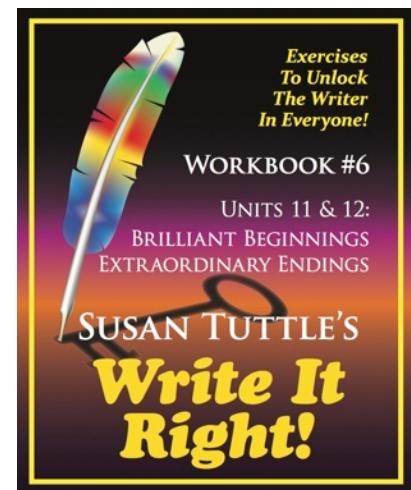


Book Launch

Volume #6: Brilliant Beginnings, Extraordinary Endings of Susan Tuttle's *Write It Right Series* is now available on Amazon in print. Volume #6 covers the last two of the twelve writing skills writers of fiction and creative non-fiction must master to be successful. In this workbook you will find lessons and exercises to help you craft eight different Brilliant Beginnings to your stories, and eight different Extraordinary Endings that will keep readers coming back for more.

Look for Susan's complete series on Amazon.com, and at the NW monthly meetings:

- Vol. 1: Character, Setting, Story
- Vol. 2: Point of View (POV)
- Vol. 3: Plot, Dialogue
- Vol. 4: Scenes, Style / Voice
- Vol. 5: Conflict / Tension, Subplot



REVIEW OF FEBRUARY MEETING

Terry Sanville and Mark Arnold critiqued submissions from NightWriters at Round Table One.

Kurt Vonnegut, author of *Slaughterhouse-Five*, a semi-autobiographical novel about surviving the bombing of Dresden by hiding in a meat locker, offered the following eight essential tips for writing a successful short story.

1. Use the time of a total stranger in such a way that he or she will not feel the time was wasted.
2. Give the reader at least one character he or she can root for.
3. Every character should want something, even if it is only a glass of water.
4. Every sentence must do one of two things—reveal character or advance the action.
5. Start as close to the end as possible.
6. Be a sadist. No matter how sweet and innocent your leading characters, make awful things happen to them—in order that the reader may see what they are made of.
7. Write to please just one person. If you open a window and make love to the world, so to speak, your story will get pneumonia.
8. Give your readers as much information as possible as soon as possible. To heck with suspense. Readers should have such complete understanding of what is going on, where and why, that they could finish the story themselves, should cockroaches eat the last few pages.

Susan Tuttle taught us how to craft fascinating characters at Round Table Two. People want to read about other people striving and overcoming—something. People read fiction (and creative nonfiction) for 3 reasons: enjoyment; to escape problems; and to learn about being human. Engage readers by creating characters they can connect with, empathize with and care about. Wanting to know what will happen to these characters is why readers turn pages. (Susan Tuttle, 2016)

Susan suggested that we write a character biography for all the major characters in our stories, and include everything of importance that happened to the character before the start of the story.

Susan also suggested that we choose our characters' names carefully: consider the characters' strengths and weaknesses as well as the sound of the name and the image the name conjures up.

Charles Dickens did a great job of giving his characters names to fit their personalities: Harold Skimpole, an entitled and manipulative user of other characters to support his cushy life by parasitic maneuvering. *Bleak House*;



By Jan Alarcon

NW WORDSMITHS

MARCH 2016



Sloppy, an orphan and dramatic reader of the newspaper. *Our Mutual Friend*;

Polly Toodle, a "plump rosy-cheeked wholesome apple-faced young woman." *Dombey and Son*;

Wackford Squeers, a cruel schoolmaster of an orphanage for unwanted boys. *Nicholas Nickleby*;

Luke Honeythunder, a philanthropist and guardian of orphans. *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*;

Poll Sweedlepipe, an eccentric barber with an obsessive love for birds. *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*

(Denise Harrison "20 Memorable Character Names from the Works of Charles Dickens" 14 September 2007).

Jenna Elizabeth Johnson, a best-selling, multi-award winning author of Fantasy and Young Adult Paranormal Romance, spoke to us at our general meeting about how to become a successful indie author. Jenna encouraged us to:

1. Write books in a popular genre. Look around, do your research. If you want to be a full-time, or even part-time author, it helps to write in a genre that is selling.

2. Write prolifically. If you want to do this for a living, then you must be willing to be actively writing all the time. The more books you publish, the more potential for book sales and the more money you will make.



NW WORDSMITHS

MARCH 2016

3. Be present on social media. This is especially important for the Young Adult genre. Facebook and Twitter are your friends. Utilize these outlets to interact with your readers and other fellow authors. Get a website/blog and set up an account for a newsletter service. Make yourself easy for readers to find.

4. Polish your product. Invest in a good cover designer and editor. Read, re-read, and re-re-read your manuscript. Get as many eyes to go over your work as you can before you hit *publish*.

5. Put yourself out there. Go to writing seminars, book festivals, book signing events etc. Let readers know you exist.

6. Team up with fellow authors. Reach out to and connect with other authors who write in your genre. Create a Book Bundle. Think of it as a sampler for potential readers.

Harper Lee passed away on February 19, 2016.

Her first novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, about racial injustice in a small Alabama town, became one of the most beloved and most taught works of fiction ever written by an American. I leave you with some of my favorites quotes from her book:

“Mockingbirds don’t do one thing except make music for us to enjoy. They don’t eat up people’s gardens, don’t nest in corn cribs, they don’t do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That’s why it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird.”

“You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view... Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it.”

“Real courage is when you know you’re licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what.”

“With him, life was routine; without him, life was unbearable.”

Until next month,
Jan Alarcon



WHAT DO YOU WRITE?

A Brief Look at the Evolution of Genre in English Literature

Part I

People have been telling stories for a long time, notably the early Greeks and Romans. The early stories were not written down, but passed down orally; they tended to take the form of story told by narrators as they moved from town to town. We know this from some of the early descriptions of epic heroes such as Hector of Troy, described in a standard stock phrase as Hector of the Flashing Helmet: we are able to date this story to the Bronze

Age by the description of his helmet. Although we can't say that all that was written was accurate, the repetitious nature of the stories suggests that a lot of it was historically correct. This genre is known as *myth* or *allegory*.

The people learned about their heroes and current events via this oral transmission. Myths and fables were prominent at this time. The people were not keen on fiction, unless it was a story or play written to represent something that had taken place.

Herodotus wrote about his travels, but it was not until Thucydides wrote his history of the Peloponnesian War about 460 – 400 BC that written history was born. Thucydides is known as the father of history because his accounts can be validated.

The Bible was the next real leap in the written word we have from ancient times. Again, this type of writing takes the form of allegory or testament, which is supposed to reflect the truth, and is a genre of non-fiction.

Moving along to writers such as Geoffrey Chaucer, who wrote *The Parliament of Fowls* and *The Canterbury Tales* among other things, we can see a shift from the previous genre to that of a new genre, *fiction*. Chaucer writes in his prologue of *The Canterbury Tales* (1475):

When April's gentle rains have pierced the drought
Of March right to the root, and bathed each sprout
Through every vein with liquid of such power
It brings forth the engendering of the flower;
When Zephyrus too with his sweet breath has blown



Janice Konstantinidis

Through every field and forest, urging on
The tender shoots, and there's a youthful sun,
His second half course through the Ram now run,
And little birds are making melody
And sleep all night, eyes open as can be
(So Nature pricks them in each little heart),

On pilgrimage then folks desire to start.
The palmers long to travel foreign strands
To distant shrines renowned in sundry lands;
And specially, from every shire's end
In England, folks to Canterbury wend:
To seek the blissful martyr is their will,
The one who gave such help when they were ill.
Now in that season it befell one day

In Southwark at the Tabard where I lay,
As I was all prepared for setting out
To Canterbury with a heart devout,
That there had come into that hostelry
At night some twenty-nine, a company
Of sundry folk whom chance had brought to fall

In fellowship, for pilgrims were they all
And onward to Canterbury would ride.
The chambers and the stables there were wide,
We had it easy, served with all the best;
And by the time the sun had gone to rest
I'd spoken with each one about the trip
And was a member of the fellowship.
We made agreement, early to arise

To take our way, of which I shall advise.
But nonetheless, while I have time and space,
Before proceeding further here's the place
Where I believe it reasonable to state
Something about these pilgrims--to relate

Their circumstances as they seemed to me,
Just who they were and each of what degree
And also what array they all were in.
And with a Knight I therefore will begin.

The reader is led to believe that the accounts of the pilgrims were real when in fact, they were all hilarious fictional characters created by Chaucer for his own amusement. Such bawdy stories would not have been acceptable as fiction as it was frowned upon.

Moving along to Daniel Defoe (1660- 1732). Defoe is noted as being one of the earliest proponents of the English Novel. His novel *Robinson Crusoe* purports to be the true account of a shipwrecked man, but was really a creation of Defoe. Fiction was still frowned upon by society. The thinking was that any reading should be factual and/or didactic. People should learn from what they read.

It was an uphill battle to get fictional work published, since all the publishing houses were privately owned and only sold what they thought appropriate. The novel, as long narrative, normally in prose, describes fictional characters, usually in the form of a sequential story. The European novel is said to have truly begun with *Don Quixote* in 1605.¹

Many early writers of fiction were still hampered by their need to teach. The fully-rounded and developed characters we now enjoy in our fictional reading were not developed until the 19th Century.

More about this next time. I would be interested to know who you think some of these well-rounded characters are.

Write to me so I can include your ideas in the next part of the evolution of genre.

jkon50@gmail.com

Bachelor of Arts.

Bachelor of Letters - English Literature (Litt B.)

Graduate Diploma in Education.

Help! Great Beginnings Needs You!

Do you have some tips, or have you learned a strategy that could help those just starting out on their writing career? Send in 300-400 words to the Great Beginnings column and you can be a contributor to both the WordSmiths Newsletter and your fellow writers. It's a great way to help others hone their skills, and a great publishing kudo for your resume. Time to put that thinking cap on and then write: What advice would you give a beginning writer? Send to: aim2write@yahoo.com, with NW Newsletter in the subject line.

GREAT BEGINNINGS

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

4 QUESTIONS WITH EDITOR MARY KOLE

1. How important is a compelling book cover in enticing readers? Can you truly judge a book by its cover?

To be perfectly honest, covers are really important. They're one of your biggest pieces of marketing, something to entice readers to sample a lick of your gorgeous prose or sparkling flap copy. For the book to hook someone, it has to get picked up first, and there's a lot of competition.



2. What are the most common clichés you encounter in editing fiction manuscripts?

If an image feels familiar to write, it feels familiar to read. Emotional clichés like hearts hammering, stomachs churning, breaths catching, etc. is lazy telling. Get out of your character's physical body, with all of its various symptoms of emotion, and into the character's mind. What's the thought behind the hammering heart? What does she fear might go wrong? What's the worst that could happen? It's in these specifics that we learn so much more about the character than the fact that their stomach feels sick when they get nervous.

3. If you could give picture book authors (or author + illustrators) one piece of advice, what would it be?

Dream a little bigger. Too many picture books are too straightforward. They go from Point A to Point B too quickly, with a tidy little moral and one big leap of character growth. A boy needs a friend and finds one is too simple. What's the bigger picture? What am I supposed to feel about life when I finish reading? Also, picture book writers need to trust their readers more to get the story. Never explain the point. Let the story speak for itself, and make sure it has something layered to say.

4. What character traits does it take to succeed in this industry?

Tenacity and curiosity. A tenacious writer is flexible enough to realize that maybe their first few efforts weren't up to snuff. They keep trying, but with fresh or revised material. That's where curiosity comes in. A writer more likely to be successful will keep honing their craft, reading books, going to conferences, taking classes, and experimenting with their writing, just for the hell of it. They want to learn and grow stronger. And they are tenacious about it. They don't just have the one idea that they've been pitching around since the 90s, they have a wealth of ideas to pursue, and can roll with the punches. If something doesn't work, they have the curiosity to try something different, and the tenacity to try again.

NW WORDSMITHS

MARCH 2016

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: Leanne Phillips

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, 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: March 8th, 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

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 (based on the lessons and exercises in the Write It Right Series), 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

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 FULL—NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS, but visitors are always welcome. Contact the moderator for details.

Moderator: Mark Ruszczyzky
zsur@aol.com

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

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

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

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