

## OUR MAY 10TH MEETING

### Saying the Unsayable: Fearless Voices in Fiction

Come join Nicholas Belardes this May. The session will be part lecture and part discussion as we challenge ourselves as wordsmiths to strive for voices that tackle the trenches and grit of life that no one else will write about.

Nicholas Belardes is a Latino writer, ghostwriter for popular fiction, and illustrator. He has contributed to *Carve Magazine*, *Pithead Chapel*, *Memoir Journal*, *826 Seattle's What to Read in the Rain*, *Knock Magazine*, *Mission at Tenth*, the *Nervous Breakdown*, the *Weeklings*, and others. He illustrated the New York Times best-selling novel *West of Here*, and he is the author of the first experimental twitterature novel, *Small Places*.

Son of a truck driver, father of musicians, he's lectured at UCLA, Regis U, BARD College, Yosemite Writers Conference, and Central Coast Writers Conference, among many others.



**nicholas belardes**  
**Saying the unsayable**



MAY 10, 2016 @ 6:30 pm

**Fearless voice in fiction**  
**SLO Night Writers**  
11245 Los Osos Valley Road, SLO, CA

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He tweets from @nickbelardes. Check out his website [www.nicholasbelardes.com](http://www.nicholasbelardes.com)

Don't miss this fascinating presenter, Tuesday, May 10. Meeting starts at 6:00 pm, or come early for one of our popular Round Tables (Critique and Instruction) at 5:15 pm.

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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.

The Instruction Round Table this month will focus on Point of View (POV). This is one of the hardest concepts for writers to master. Problems with POV can confuse readers, turn them off, and even make them laugh—and not in a good way. Come learn the 7 types of POV; how and when to use each to best advantage; how to choose the correct POV for each of your stories; how to make your characters' voices unique and easily recognizable; and how to use an unreliable narrator. All this and at the Susan Tuttle's May Instruction Round Table, starting at 5:15 pm.

See you at the Round Tables on Tuesday, March 12th at 5:15 pm.

Also, please see VP Andrea Chmelik's update on the Round Tables on page 6.

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### 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](mailto:jandkvolkov@att.net) and I'll send them a card from their SLO NightWriters family.**

*Kalila*





Dennis Eamon Young

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: INTO THE BONES

I watched *Bones* the other night. It's my wife, Carol's, favorite TV show; basically a detective/forensics show with interesting character relationships. The basic formula is that the FBI agents and police cannot find enough clues using normal detection avenues. That is where the forensics team comes in, ferreting out clues from the minutiae of blood, toxins, pharmacology and other areas of inspection within and surrounding the bones of a victim.

Show after show, the team of experts explore these seemingly unrelated and widely divergent scientific areas by searching deeper into the bones, from every conceivable, and many times inconceivable, channel. It is an ensemble show, so no matter if a member of the team comes up against a dead end: it is never a failure, but rather a channel of investigation that has been explored and thus eliminated.

It may also be when we are in the midst of a story that we could be left scratching our heads, not sure how to proceed. That could be the best time to stop and look "Into the Bones" of the story. By exploring as fully as possible the original premise of the story and delving into the profiles we have constructed for each of the characters, we may find new areas which will once again open up the story.

It is quite easy to get caught up in a secondary story arc, leading into a dead end for the main story. A slight change of emphasis, a shift of POV, or the insertion of a new action sequence might be just what you are in need of to redirect the story, thus getting back to the bones again. Perhaps your antagonist has acted in a way that is out of character. Your readers may be able to ignore this lapse initially, but it could cause a sticking point later when it will be more difficult to return to the first instance and correct it.

If you have gone on writing at a fever pitch of inspiration, you will need to go over the area carefully to be sure you didn't insert an anachronism that could cause you a problem further on. Yep! Back into the bones! If you love being a "by the seat of your pants" writer, it may be the only way for you to get the whole story down, with all the flavor and unique energy that tells the reader who you are. It might also mean a long editing slog afterwards. That is something that keeps many a writer from being able to finish their story, unless they have the patience and perseverance for the drawn out edit. Not all writers are gifted with this trait.

The best approach could be to let the Muse loose for a few chapters, then look back into the bones to be sure you are still on track. If you are part of a critique group, other

members of the group can be quick to spot these aberrations, not only pointing them out, but also perhaps suggesting some corrective measures. I find myself amazed at times that what is absolutely clear to me might stop members of my critique group dead in the middle of a chapter. Many times it is a small thing I had overlooked in my enthusiasm for the story. So it is back "Into the Bones" for me.

*Excelsior,*

*Dennis*

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## **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 website.

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## **This Month's Quotes**

This month's quotes are all from that master of writing and fiction, Stephen King. Here's the first of them:

"A radio talk-show host asked me how I wrote. My reply—'One word at a time'—seemingly left him without a reply. I think he was trying to decide whether or not I was joking. I wasn't. In the end, it's always that simple. Whether it's a vignette of a single page or an epic trilogy like *The Lord of the Rings*, the work is always accomplished one word at a time."

## Help the Kids!

Dear NightWriters,

We are looking for book donations for kids!

On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the SLO NightWriters will join Warrior Writers from Ernest Righetti high school on their field trip to deliver books and talk about love of reading and writing to sixth-graders at Liberty Elementary School in Santa Maria.

The Warrior Writers' Club has planned a field trip on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016, from 12:30-2:30 to visit the sixth grade students of Liberty Elementary School. During this visit, the high school students plan to break up students into small groups and talk about their own experience in finding the importance of reading and writing in high school and in life. The high school students also plan to read excerpts from the texts that are being donated and facilitate a short writing activity to promote enthusiasm in reading and writing for fun with the sixth grade students. The purpose of this field trip is to build and maintain a passion for reading and writing, for both high school students and elementary school students that will help create a larger population of life-long readers and learners.

We have created a list of books that are geared towards the sixth grade age group.

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/giftlist/3F16ORYXRJLJW/>

Please, feel free to purchase and ship to:

Andrea Chmelik  
RE: Warrior Writers  
971 Shafer Lane  
Pismo Beach, CA 93449



*Andrea Chmelik*

If you write books for sixth grade and would like to donate one of your books, we would greatly appreciate it!

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [chmelik.andrea@gmail.com](mailto:chmelik.andrea@gmail.com).

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,  
Andrea Chmelik

## ROUND TABLES UPDATE

When we started with our roundtables at the general meetings a couple of years ago, we were certainly hoping to spark some interest, but the ever-expanding attendance has surpassed our expectations. We are so pleased that you enjoy them!

In order to accommodate the growing demand, we have to make certain adjustments.

Starting with our May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, our critique round table will prioritize the SLO NightWriters members' work, at no charge. This is a service that we are happy to offer as a perk that comes with the membership. If time permits, non-members can have their work critiqued for \$5.

Also, the instruction round table will welcome the SLO NightWriters members free of charge, and accommodate non-members for \$5.

Our main program that starts at 6:30pm and features a guest speaker is still free of charge and open to public!

We hope that this arrangement will allow us to provide the best services to our members. Thank you for your continuous support and we look forward to seeing you at our future meetings!

Sincerely,

Andrea Chmelik

### Editors Needed

We are looking to expand our pool of editors for the SLO NightWriters organization. The mission of our organization is to advance quality writing, promote publication, and expand author recognition in a forum that nurtures a spirit of community for all its members. In order to continue carrying out this mission successfully, we are looking for members who either have professional editorial experience, or who have been heavily involved in critique groups and peer line exchanges.

If you are available to volunteer a little bit of your time, you can help your peers to become better writers and you can help our organization to provide better services. We are happy to work with you and your busy schedules to avoid overload and burn-out. Please, contact me at [chmelik.andrea@gmail.com](mailto:chmelik.andrea@gmail.com) if you are interested, or have any questions.

## KUDOS... KUDOS... KUDOS...

**Paul Alan Fahey** won a first place blue ribbon for his memoir “What I Remember” in the San Mateo County Fair Literary Contest. He also won an Honorable Mention in the same category for “When Everyone Who Remembers Is Gone.” Paul writes, “Please tell NightWriters that this is a very popular and reasonable contest—\$10 per entry—and it pays well. \$100 for first place, \$50 for second, and \$25 for third. Your work is also featured in their annual anthology, *Carry the Light*. It’s a great way to get your work out there and receive some feedback. The first, second, and third place ribbons are fun, too.”

**Dennis Eamon Young’s** profile was written up in the May issue of *Journal Plus*. The article details his career as a photographer, camera chain manager, his multi-moves across the country and his association with SLO NightWriters. Congratulations on a great write-up, Dennis!



**Terry Sanville’s** short story, “A Dry and Level Space,” will appear in the 2016 print edition of *DoveTales*, an International Journal of the Arts. The journal includes writing that explores many aspects of peace. Check them out at: [www.writingforpeace.org/](http://www.writingforpeace.org/).

**Terry Sanville’s** article, “Sanding With the Grain,” an artist profile of Atascadero woodworker Roger Combs, is included in the spring/summer edition of “Living Lavishly.” LL is a slick print and online magazine put out by the same folks that run Tolosa Press. Check them out at [www.livinglavishlymag.com](http://www.livinglavishlymag.com). (Terry writes, “But seriously, Terry Sanville writing something for Living Lavishly... Really?!? His trailer park neighbors will be proud...”)

Chicken Soup for the Soul has launched a series of inspirational podcasts to promote their books. **Judythe Guarnera’s** story, “We Did Our Best,” which appeared in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: The Power of Forgiveness*, was shared on 4/5/16 on what they call “Tip Tuesday” and continues to be available on the app. You can listen to podcasts on your phone, your computer, or your iPad or other tablet. To find the Chicken Soup for the Soul podcast, search within iTunes or your particular podcast app. The podcasts are about six or seven minutes long Monday—Thursday and they provide entertaining stories as well as great advice and easy-to-implement tips to improve your life.

## Book Launch!

### THE SHORT AND LONG OF IT: EXPAND, ADAPT, & PUBLISH YOUR SHORT FICTION

by Paul Alan Fahey

*E-book just published May 1 by JMS books. Print version due out this summer.*

Are you now or have you ever been a writer of short fiction?

Do you long to s-t-r-e-t-c-h those tight little 55ers, flash pieces, and short-shorts into longer publishable work?

Do you have a binder full of short pieces full of characters you love?

Are you dying to tell the rest of their stories?

If so, *The Short and Long of It* is for you.

Award-winning short fiction writer, Paul Alan Fahey, shows you how to expand and adapt your concise and succinct creations into longer, fuller, more satisfying stories, novellas, and novels that are pitch perfect for publication in the E-Age.

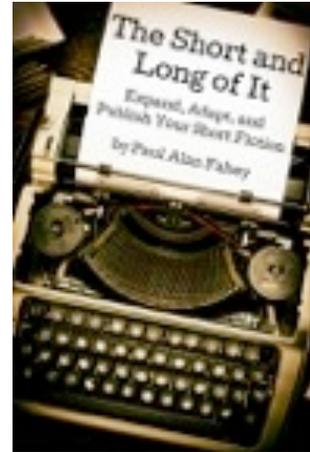
As you practice expanding your short fiction, you'll learn how to:

- Adapt flash to short stories and plays.
- Adapt flash memoir to personal essays.
- Write a tight logline.
- Develop a story theme.
- Build three-act structure.
- Use flash for character development and backstory.

\*\*Many thanks to Susan Tuttle for providing the title when Paul's brain totally stopped working.

"Timid writers like passive verbs for the same reason that timid lovers like passive partners. The passive voice is safe. The timid fellow writes "The meeting will be held at seven o'clock" because somehow that says to him...'People will believe you really know.' Throw back your shoulders, stick out your chin and put that meeting in charge! Write 'The meeting's at seven.' There, by God! Don't you feel better?"

~Stephen King





**TOLOSA PRESS**

YOUR COMMUNITY IN YOUR HANDS

## Congratulations to SLO NightWriters Mike Price and Ruth Starr!

April 7-20, 2016 • Tolosa Press

**central coast life NIGHTWRITERS**

### Uncle Charlie Versus the Pacific Ocean

By Mike Price



“Uncle Charlie, do you want to go boogie boarding?” asked Glenda, my twelve-year-old niece. I had lived in Kansas all my life, but somehow married a California girl. This was my first trip to the ocean to visit her family. Playing in the surf would be a new life experience. I glanced at my dear sweet wonderful wife and her sister Betty, sitting across from me at the breakfast table. Bill, my brother-in-law, was at the counter, making his lunch.

“Don’t look at me, my wife said. “I’m not putting my body in that water.”

“Where’s your sense of adventure?” Bill asked. “You can use my board.”

“You’ll be my favorite uncle,” Glenda said, with a puppy dog look.

I was her only uncle.

“Sure, why not?” I asked. Big mistake.

Two hours later, we were surfing across the warm sands of Huntington Beach. We brought all the beach time necessities—a cooler full of drinks, an umbrella, four folding chairs, the boogie boards. Bill’s board looked suspiciously new. We found the perfect spot and stood our feet on the shoreline.

When I took off my shirt, the ladies shrieked, their eyes from the glare.

“Oh, come on now,” I protested. “I’m not that pale.”

“Yes you are,” my wife corrected. “Hold still while I spray on some sunscreen.”

“Howed as the frigid blast hit my back. When she gave me the go ahead, I kicked off my sandals, grabbed the board, and rapped onto the sand. The burning sensation at the bottom of my feet conjured up visions of Polynesian Fire Walkers. “Ow, ow, ow,” I said, as I hobbled toward the inviting surf. But when my feet touched the cold water, I felt like a hotfoot Bikini. Surely, I thought, there must be a wayward iceberg offshore.

My niece ran by, kicking up sandy

“Yeah, right,” I said. I carefully washed in to my waist, trying to slowly acclimate to the temperature, until a friendly wave lapped across the back with chilly water. Now I felt downright hypothermic.

“Wow,” Glenda shrieked with her eyes wide open. “Hang on, Uncle Charlie!”

I turned around to see a towering wall of blue-green. I clung to the boogie board as the wave lifted me off my feet. Then it crashed over your truly, tumbling me head over heels like a ragdoll in a washing machine, and finally dumping me on the sandy bottom. I stumbled out of the water, spit out a mouthful of salt, and rubbed my stinging eyes. I retreated to the beach blanket followed by Glenda.

“Are you all right, dear?” my wife asked, in mock sympathy. She held her hand over her mouth, trying to hide a smirk.

As I dabbed my eyes with a towel, the sun felt warm on my back. I observed the people in the surf. Lots of children were playing in the waves, but no crazy adults. I realized there were no drugs. I must do. First of all, I gave my wife a big squeeze.

“Aaaaahhh,” she screamed. “You’re getting me all wet!”

Satisfied with her reaction, I grabbed my boogie board, pointed to the mighty sea, and yelled to Glenda, “Come on, buddy! Let’s boogie!”

Yes, I was her favorite uncle as we raved back into the briny brink of insanity.

**Mike Price is a retired nuclear power plant operator and current freelance writer. He spends his spare time volunteering with his church and community, traveling, and writing humorous stories. Mike is a member of SLO NightWriters, for writers of all levels in all genres. Find them online at slonightwriters.org.**

May 5-10, 2016 • Tolosa Press

**central coast life NIGHTWRITERS**

### Linens and Lye Soap

By Lillian Brown



The compulsion to appreciate and save vintage linens was due primarily to her grandmother who crocheted the edge of pillowcases and embroidered entire quilt tops. Callie’s parents, children of the Great Depression, further instilled the “make-do, waste-not-want-not” creed, so that each week she’d hand her aging Valvo to the Outfit and work the linens.

For the hundredth time Callie washed herself here to make soap, along with grandma’s soons and mustard pickles, before her mother’s stroke last winter. Her mother had been so healthy, active and engaged, despite her 80 plus years. It never occurred to Callie her beloved homemaker and gifted mother would now be sitting slumped in a wheelchair in a rest home.

Soon after the stroke, Callie dumped it into old-worm racking pans. Her week it became a chaotic, but respectful, hand-written reminder ready to be read on the second lines.

Plucking the hot iron against the

pink and blue embroidered flowers of her latest find, Callie admired the pure whiteness of the background. She brushed in the crisp scent of sun-dried linens washed and washed in the secret chemistry of lye, borax, fat, lemon, and sennecy.

On her visit that afternoon she carried the soft cloth gently over her mother’s sunken cheeks and upper lip so she could smell the sunshine. Then she caught a glimpse of Grandma’s handwork, and lost afternoon making bysoap.

**Lillian Brown is a retired journalist and public relations consultant. She has been doing on the Central Coast for ten years, trying her hand at short fiction, mostly a spoof on terms-of-the-century Chloewies, and a collection of nonfiction stories. Lillian is a member of SLO NightWriters, for writers of all kinds in all genres. Find them online at slonightwriters.org.**

We are accepting story submissions now!

Find full Tolosa submission guidelines

at [www.slonightwriters.org](http://www.slonightwriters.org)

Submit your 500-600 word short fiction to

[meaganfriberg@gmail.com](mailto:meaganfriberg@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](http://www.tolosapressnews.com)

## MEMBERSHIP MINUTE

Will return soon. In the meantime, 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? Or maybe your family members are curious about what it takes to be a writer. Or just want to know better what it is you do with that pen and paper, or computer program.

Bring them with you to the May meeting and let them find out.

We look forward to sharing what we have to offer your friends and/or family members. We hope that they like our program and our round tables. We hope they enjoy having the opportunity to 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 May 10<sup>th</sup>!

Hanje



Hanje Richards

### Hospitality Needs Your Help!

Our Hospitality Committee is doing a fantastic job of making sure we have scrumptious goodies for every meeting. But 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 our President 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?

Dennis Eamon Young: [photodennis44@gmail.com](mailto:photodennis44@gmail.com)

"There should be no telephone in your writing room, certainly no TV or video games for you to fool around with. If there's a window, draw the curtains or pull down the shades unless it looks out at a blank wall."

~Stephen King

## 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



“You have to read widely, constantly refining (and redefining) your own work as you do so. If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or the tools) to write.”

~Stephen King



by: Mike Price

## GETTING TO KNOW NIGHTWRITER MEMBERS

# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## Kalila Volkov

This month's spotlight is on the NightWriter's Sunshine Chair, Kalila Volkov

**NW:** "Who are you?"

**KV:** Howdy, I'm Kalila Volkov (think "Kahlua vodka"). Serving as the Sunshine Chair for several years has given me much pleasure—I truly enjoy sending out cards to our members, and hope to give them a little lift from all of us.

I am a journal keeper and have amassed 30 of them so far. These journals have been my lifesaver, my therapist and my source for preserving history. They comprise most of the material in my first book, *Fishing for Equilibrium: The Power of a Diary*.

**NW:** "Who is your greatest inspiration?"

**KV:** My high school English teacher probably inspired me the most. His influence spawned a great love of language in me, and to this day I'm a big stickler for proper grammar and pronunciation. (I often cringe at what's acceptable these days. Even news anchors get away with speaking poorly, i.e. "him and I.")

**NW:** I have several teachers in my family and I know it can be a thankless, frustrating task. For you, a writer to choose your high school English teacher as your biggest inspiration is, of itself, inspiring.

**NW:** "Do you have a website?"

**KV:** Yes, my website is [www.kalilavolkov.com](http://www.kalilavolkov.com). Fellow NW Leanne Phillips is updating my website for me. I'm hoping that the updated version will be up by the time the interview goes to print.

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

**KV:** For years I wrote a ton of poems and had fun writing little articles and holiday stories. My muse is on vacation right now.



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

**KV:** Last summer I self-published a children’s picture book, *Hiking Trail, Treasure Land*, with the help of Central Coast Books. The thing I love about this book was that the idea came to me when I was working at Point Buchon Trail a few years ago. The Chumash ancestry is very strong there, and I felt that a Chumash elder spirit told me to create the book.

It’s been a blast getting it into different shops, and I’m hoping to put it on Kindle this year. The book was a particularly good fit for the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History and Montana de Oro Nature Store.

**NW:** “Do you have a day job?”

**KV:** My dad recently died and my inheritance allows me to stay home. I’m a busy project-oriented person so his gift was a huge blessing.

**NW:** “How does your family support you in your writing?”

**KV:** My hubby has been a tremendous trooper to let me use a big chunk of funds to self-publish both of my books.

**NW:** “How does NightWriters help you?”

**KV:** NW is a fabulous source for networking and information. I’ve learned a lot from various speakers at the meetings and truly appreciate being kept up-to-date with marketing strategies and the like.

**NW:** “Tell us something surprising about yourself.”

**KV:** I hang upside down every day! We own an “inversion table” which supposedly has many health benefits. It feels great too.

I came out to California after college to join a commune near John Travolta’s ranch in the Santa Barbara area. The commune wasn’t a good match, so when I ran out of money, I found work, met my husband and lived there for 20 years. As nice as Santa Barbara was, I’m so grateful my soul prompted me to move to the Central Coast.

**NW:** “Besides writing, what are your other hobbies?”

**KV:** Singing is my one main hobby. I'm so lucky to have a voice that lets me perform with Canzona Women's Ensemble, as well as Lark (we sing for retirement homes/care facilities, and bedside/hospice). I also love working in my organic veggie garden and kayaking near our house in Morro Bay.

**NW:** Thanks for sharing. And on behalf of my fellow NightWriters, thank you for all you do as the Sunshine Chair.

If you'd like to be spotlighted, contact Mike at: [drjakespa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drjakespa@sbcglobal.net)

"When, during the course of an interview for The New Yorker, I told the interviewer (Mark Singer) that I believed stories are found things, like fossils in the ground, he said that he didn't believe me. I replied that that was fine, as long as he believed that I believe it. And I do. Stories aren't souvenir tee-shirts or Game Boys. Stories are relics, part of an undiscovered pre-existing world. The writer's job is to use the tools in his or her toolbox to get as much of each one out of the ground intact as possible. Sometimes the fossil you uncover is small; a seashell. Sometimes it's enormous, a Tyrannosaurus Rex with all the gigantic ribs and grinning teeth. Either way, short story or thousand page whopper of a novel, the techniques of excavation remain basically the same."

~Stephen King



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](mailto: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](mailto: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.slouidnightwriters.org](http://www.slouidnightwriters.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

**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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:rolynna@earthlink.net)

**Griselda Rivera** is seeking multiple critique groups: MEMOIRS, TEEN & CHILDREN'S, ACADEMIC/EDUCATION/LINGUISTICS. Contact Griselda at [grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com](mailto:grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com)

## Critique Group Connections, Continued

**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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:sbowder@live.com)

## Quote of the Month

"It's always easier to kill someone else's darlings than it is to kill your own."

~Stephen King

## Word of the Month "Ecdysiast"

**Definition:** (N, Gk. *ek*, out + *dyein*, to put on) a person who disrobes to provide entertainment for others.

**Synonyms:** stripper, peeler, stripteaser, exotic dancer

**Usage:** I was fairly certain, after watching the way those girls danced, that the back zipper was invented to prevent ecdysiast tendencies.

## 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](mailto: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.

"If you do need to do research because parts of your story deal with things about which you know little or nothing, remember that word back. That's where research belongs: as far in the background and the back story as you can get it. You may be entranced with what you're learning... but your readers are probably going to care a lot more about your characters and your story."

~Stephen King

## WRITER BEE: THE BUZZ ON THE WRITING LIFE



by Leanne Phillips

### Making the Most of Your SLO NightWriters Membership



You've joined the SLO NightWriters – congratulations! You've taken an important first step toward joining your local writing community and raising your profile as an author. But don't stop there. Now that you're a member of SLO NightWriters, there are many benefits available to you that will help you achieve your writing goals. Here is a Top 10 list of ways to get the most of your SLO NightWriters membership:

1. **SET UP YOUR FREE WEBSITE PROFILE:** Members of SLO NightWriters are encouraged to set up their free profile at the SLO NightWriters website, [slonightwriters.org](http://slonightwriters.org). Here, you can feature information such as your bio, your contact information, a photo and a link to your website. This is one more tool in your arsenal when it comes to getting your name and your face out there. Contact the Webmaster, Janice Konstantinidis, if you need help setting up your profile. You can also ask to have your blog or website featured on the Featured Blog Spots or Member Websites pages.

2. **COME TO GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:** General membership meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month, at 6:30 p.m., in the community room of the United Church of Christ Congregationalist, 11245 Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo, California. Meetings typically last two hours and include announcements of interest to local writers, interesting and informative guest speakers, opportunities to network and complimentary refreshments!

3. **ATTEND MONTHLY ROUND TABLES:** Each month, at 5:15 p.m. before the general meeting, two sets of round tables are held:

- The Critique Table is led by Terry Sanville and Mark Arnold. Critique sessions are free to members, \$5 for non-members. Members get priority in being read. Bring two pages, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font.
- The Round Table Workshop is led by Susan Tuttle, author of the *Write it Right* series of books and workbooks. Each month, Susan works with members on a particular topic.

Past Workshops include Story Ideas, Character, How to Begin Stories, How to End Stories and Crafting Intriguing Settings.

**4. LET SLO NIGHTWRITERS HELP YOU FIND A CRITIQUE GROUP:** When it comes to finding a critique group, SLO NightWriters offers its members a lot of options. As of this writing, SLO NightWriters has a directory of 16 ongoing critique groups held throughout San Luis Obispo County. You can find the list and details for each group in the monthly Newsletter. Don't see anything that meets your needs? Shoot an e-mail to the SLO NightWriters editors and ask them to include your own listing in the Critique Group Connections column, under "Critique Group Needs." You might also browse these listings to see if someone else is looking for the same type of group that you are seeking. Still need help? Contact our Acting Critique Group Coordinator, Janice Konstantinidis. Janice can help you find a group or guide you through the process of starting one of your own!

**5. GET YOUR NAME IN THE NEWSLETTER:** E-mail the SLO NightWriters Newsletter editor, Susan Tuttle, to get information regarding your book signings published, or to have your accomplishments mentioned in the monthly Kudos column. You can also submit articles or pitch a monthly column! Contact Mike Price if you'd like to be featured in his monthly member Spotlight column, or Elizabeth Roderick if you have a book for her Writer's Process column.

**6. SELL YOUR BOOKS!** SLO NightWriters offers its members numerous opportunities to promote and sell their books. Member book sale tables are set up at each monthly general membership meeting, at the Central Coast Writers' Conference, and at the annual Central Coast Book & Author Fair.

**7. SUBMIT A STORY TO THE SLO NIGHTWRITERS TOLOSA PRESS SUBMISSIONS MANAGER:** Tolosa Press publishes three local newspapers: The SLO City News, The Coast News and The Bay News. Tolosa prints 30,000 copies monthly distributed on 600 racks county-wide. And guess what? Tolosa Press has made a special arrangement with SLO NightWriters to publish one of our members' short stories in **each issue!** This is a great opportunity to add to your writing credits, increase your exposure, and gain invaluable experience by going through the editing process with our Tolosa Press Submissions Manager, Meagan Friberg, and her crack team of editors. All stories must be submitted through Meagan to be considered for publication. Tolosa is seeking short fiction of 600 words or less.

## 8. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SLO NIGHTWRITERS' SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE:

SLO Nightwriters has a terrific social media presence, and you can take advantage of it to boost your own!

- Join the SLO NightWriters Facebook Group to network with your writer friends, share tips and news, and ask for support for your latest projects. (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1701340913423099/>)
- Like the SLO NightWriters Facebook page to keep up on SLO NightWriters news, see photos from meetings and other events, and get writing tips and even a few laughs. E-mail or message the social media director to get your book launch, book signing or other news and events posted on the page. (<https://www.facebook.com/SLONightWriters/>)
- Follow SLO NightWriters on Twitter! SLO NightWriters will follow you back, and if you tag @slonightwriter in a tweet, you can be sure you'll get a retweet! (<https://twitter.com/slonightwriter>)

**9. READ YOUR NEWSLETTER:** As a member, you will receive the SLO NightWriters newsletter in your e-mail inbox each month. I suggest you read it cover-to-cover. It's packed with information about goings-on in the SLO NightWriters organization, news about your fellow authors, writing opportunities, and much more.

**10. JOIN THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** Membership on the SLO NightWriters is a great way to become more involved and to support the organization and its members. The Board of Directors currently has several openings. Contact President Dennis Eamon Young for more information. (\*Ed. Note: See the listing of Board Positions on page 30 for open positions, listed in red.)

NEXT MONTH: How to Hold a Successful Book Signing

"The adverb is not your friend. Consider the sentence, "He closed the door firmly." It's by no means a terrible sentence, but ask yourself if 'firmly' really has to be there. What about context? What about all the enlightening (not to say emotionally moving) prose which came before 'He closed the door firmly'? Shouldn't this tell us how he closed the door? And if the foregoing prose does tell us, then isn't 'firmly' an extra word? Isn't it redundant?"

~Stephen King

## REVIEW OF APRIL MEETING

Terry Sanville and Mark Arnold critiqued four two-page writing submissions at Round Table One. Mark and Terry discussed the importance of writing active, and not passive, voice as much as possible.

In active voice sentences the subject performs the action stated by the verb: *Tom changed the flat tire.*

In passive voice sentences the subject is acted upon by the verb: *The tire was changed by Tom.*



By Jan Alarcon

Writing sentences in passive voice as the subject of the sentence can be obscured and confuse the reader. Passive voice sentences also tend to be wordy and awkward.

Passive Voice: The ball is hit by Anna.

Active Voice: Anna hits the ball.

Passive Voice: The jar is filled with sand.

Active Voice: Sand filled the jar.

Passive Voice: Reading is enjoyed by Mary.

Active Voice: Mary enjoys reading.

Passive Voice: The town was destroyed by fire.

Active Voice: Fire destroyed the town.

Passive Voice: The room will be cleaned by John.

Active Voice: John will clean the room.

Passive Voice: Cheese was eaten by Sara.

Active Voice: Sara ate the cheese.

(Change Passive Voice to Active Voice, Your Dictionary, Web. Retrieved: 26 April 2016.)

Susan Tuttle taught us how to come up with great story ideas at Round Table Two. "Finding stories is a process of learning to find the unique in the ordinary, the amazing in the mundane. Stories are all around us: in our lives, the lives of family, friends and strangers. The seeds of ideas reside in the books, magazines and newspapers we read, the music we listen to, the TV, movies and videos that we watch."

Susan suggested that we formulate stories with a Simple Statement and an Expanded Statement:

The Simple Statement begins with 'What if...' and contains the original idea: *What if all US citizens that eat vegetables were required to shelter a farmworker family in their backyard?*

The Expanded Statement is comprised of 2 sentences. The first contains the basic plot situation, the protagonist's name and story goal. The second contains the antagonist's name, goal and how he/she opposes the protagonist: *Jose wants the Andersons to become*

*vegan so his wife can join him in their backyard. Maria wants Jose to return to Mexico so their children will not have to live in a country that does not want them.*

Travel journalist Tom Wilmer spoke at the general meeting. Tom Wilmer has logged over a million miles in travels around the globe. He said that all of his journalistic success comes from networking, never a formal interview. He travels for the human connection, not for the exotic food or the view.

Tom entertained us with his beguiling stories. I enjoyed them so much I went on his website, <http://www.thomascwilmer.com/>, and listened to even more.

My favorite was called "Alcatraz Clergyman Father Bush Recalls Time on The Rock," in which Jesuit Father Bush talks about the four years socializing with Alcatraz inmates in the 1950's. Father Bush became "best friends" with a notorious incarcerated bank robber. This inmate was released two weeks prior Father Bush's ordination and got special permission to attend. He presented Father Bush with a hand-made vestment he had secretly spent a year crocheting in his cell. The former inmate died in a car accident three weeks later.



The great creative genius Prince Roger Nelson passed away this week on April 21, 2016. We do not at the time of this writing know the cause of his death. I do know that many creative types have gone to great lengths to get a good night's sleep, often at their own peril.

Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,  
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,  
Chief nourisher in life's feast.

Macbeth (2.2.46-51)

I have no idea if Prince had this struggle, I just haven't been able to get this quote of Shakespeare out of my mind...

I will leave you with my favorite quote of the Prince himself:

"All these non-singing, non-dancing, wish-I-had-me-some-clothes fools who tell me my albums suck. Why should I pay any attention to them? There are people who are unhappy with everything."

Until next month,  
*Jan Alarcon*





“Mostly when I think of pacing, I go back to Elmore Leonard, who explained it so perfectly by saying he just left out the boring parts. This suggests cutting to speed the pace, and that’s what most of us end up having to do (kill your darlings, kill your darlings, even when it breaks your egocentric little scribbler’s heart, kill your darlings).”

~Stephen King

# WHAT DO YOU WRITE?

## A Brief Look at the Evolution of Genre in English Literature

### Part III

## The Creation of Character



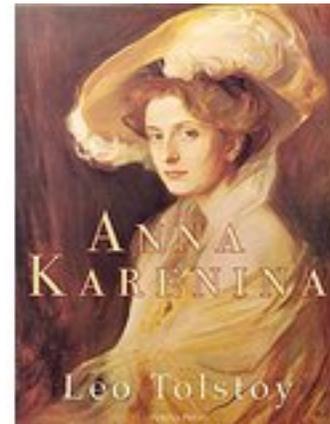
*Janice Konstantinidis*

Last month we looked at Charles Dickens, concluding with these words:

“While the neutrality of what has been written above is certainly up for argument, I think it’s fair to argue that the early characters we are seeing here in fiction are indeed created as ways for the author to express an opinion and are not evolved as a character such as we see in some modern literature.”

Some of Dickens' contemporaries are:

Louisa May Alcott  
Edward Bulwer-Lytton  
Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle  
Wilkie Collins  
George Eliot  
Ralph Waldo Emerson  
Thomas Hardy  
Leigh Hunt  
Henry James  
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow  
William T. Sherman  
William Makepeace Thackeray  
Leo Tolstoy  
Anthony Trollope  
Mark Twain



It can be argued that all the characters in the fictional works listed above were not characters that we could identify as rounded and people in their own right. Furthermore, their authors were very rigid in character development. They needed to get a message across to their readers.

For example, Anna Karenina in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* was stifled by Tolstoy, as I see it, as he wrestled with his notions of love and extra-marital love among the aristocracy of Russia. Anna is made to commit suicide by Tolstoy because he would not free her to love. The authorial intervention is very clear in this otherwise wonderfully vibrant and passionate character.

Moving ahead to D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, we can trace the character development of Connie Chatterley as she, too, enters into an extra-marital affair with a commoner. Lawrence's character does not die, however. She goes on to bear and raise her 'illegitimate' child.

D. H. Lawrence is said to have been angry with Tolstoy for killing Anna, and that he created Constance Chatterley to defy Tolstoy.

Irrespective of Lawrence's motives in the creation of Lady Chatterley, she is an example of a new kind of fictional heroine.

Going back to the time of Dickens, we can see in the creation of George Elliott's Dorothea Casaubon the same timid and impotent character we see in Tolstoy's Anna. Married to a gentleman, living in the same loveless marriage as Anna Karenina, she is unable to justify her extra-marital love of Will Ladislaw. Elliott, however, does allow Dorothea to live, but not before her husband dies of a heart attack. Only then, is she free to pursue Will.

Didactic with moral judgment seems to be an apt description of the development of these characters.

Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* begins with the biblical quote: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." We know at the outset that the author will balance the moral scale.



The search for a fulfilling sexual love and a form of marriage that will satisfy a modern consciousness is the goal of D. H. Lawrence's early novels and yet becomes increasingly problematic. None of his novels ends happily; at best, they conclude with an open question.

So again, although we are well into the 20th Century, we can see that this novelist is using his characters to process his own issues.

D. H. Lawrence was first recognized as a working-class novelist showing the reality of English provincial family life and—in the first days of psychoanalysis—as the author; the subject of a classic case history of the Oedipus complex.

In subsequent works, Lawrence's frank handling of sexuality cast him as a pioneer of a "liberation" of which he

would not himself have approved. From the beginning, readers have been won over by the poetic vividness of his writing and his efforts to describe subjective states of emotion, sensation, and intuition. This spontaneity and immediacy of feeling coexist with a continual, slightly modified repetition of themes, characters, and symbols that express Lawrence's own evolving artistic vision and thought.

His great novels remain difficult because their realism is underlain by obsessive personal metaphors, by elements of mythology, and above all by his attempt to express in words what is normally wordless because it exists below consciousness. Lawrence tried to go beyond the "old, stable ego" of the characters familiar to readers of more conventional fiction. His characters are continually experiencing transformations driven by unconscious processes rather than by conscious intent, thought, or ideas.

Since the 1960s, Lawrence's critical reputation has declined, largely as a result of feminist criticism of his representations of women. Although it lacks the inventiveness of his more radical Modernist contemporaries, his work—with its depictions of the preoccupations that led a generation of writers and readers to break away from Victorian social, sexual, and cultural norms—provides crucial insight into the social and cultural history of Anglo-American Modernism.

Lawrence was ultimately a religious writer who did not so much reject Christianity as try to create a new religious and moral basis for modern life by continual resurrections and transformations of the self. These changes are never limited to the social self, nor are they ever fully under the eye of consciousness. Lawrence called for a new openness to what he called the "dark gods" of nature, feeling, instinct, and sexuality; a renewed contact with these forces was, for him, the beginning of wisdom.

What I see as important in Lawrence's writing is his recognition of the self, the unconscious areas of the mind. This is a significant development in the development of fictional characters. He is, as I see it, a radical thinker of his time.

Next month – The last of our discussions on the genre of fiction.

Janice Konstantinidis

Bachelor of Arts.

Bachelor of Letters - English Literature (Litt B.)

Graduate Diploma in Education.

Comments, thoughts, ideas...[jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com)

## Book Signing Event

Evy Cole and Susan Tuttle had a great time at Nan's Used Books on Grand Avenue in Grover Beach on Thursday, April 14. Wine flowed, conversation bounced from book to book, and smiles lit up the store. The full display of books from only two authors was quite impressive. Even Nan's cat got in the act (poor thing just couldn't seem to relax)!



## Give Advice and Get Published!

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](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com), with NW Newsletter in the subject line.

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## GREAT BEGINNINGS

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

### THE 3 MAIN TYPES OF EDITING

These days you need to have your work “edited” before you submit it to an agent or a publisher. But what does that mean? How do you decide just what kind of editing you need for your manuscript? Here is a look at the 3 main types of editing to help you decide:

- 1. Developmental Editing:** This kind of editor will give your book a full, substantial, structural, developmental edit (this is also called substantive, structural or full editing), and will include a detailed critique of the essential elements of your story, including: setting, timeline, characterization, plot, story structure, pacing, presentation, marketability. This kind of editing comes fairly early in the writing process, after a few drafts have been completed. Not all manuscripts need this deep an editing, but if your critique group or beta readers are finding inconsistencies in the story, this might be the way to go to iron out the wrinkles.
- 2. Copy Editing:** Also called line editing. The editor goes through the full text line-by-line, looking for typos, spelling errors and inconsistencies, and includes looking for: grammatical errors, redundancies, revisions to improve sentence structure or paragraph flow, revisions to improve syntax (how words are arranged in a sentence or paragraph), and correcting or revision the format to meet industry standards. The manuscript is usually at the penultimate-draft stage when it goes to a copy editor, then the final draft is fashioned from the copy editor’s notes and suggestions. Only when you’re completely satisfied with the plot, story structure, characterizations, settings, etc., should you look for a copy-editor.
- 3. Proofreading:** This is often done as part of the copy editing, but can also be done as an independent edit just before the book is ready for printing. Often a “proof” copy is produced and the editor works from the printed pages. This step is often overlooked, especially with e-formatted books. It’s so easy to rush to publication, that authors forget to make sure their manuscript is as perfect as they can get it. It might seem like an unnecessary step, but readers will thank you (and eagerly await your next book) if you show you value their time by giving them clean copy to read.

Editing can be expensive, and not all editors are created equal. A fantastic Developmental Editor might not be very good as a Copy Editor or a Proofreader. These are 3 very specialized skills, and it makes sense to be sure, when selecting an editor for your work, you research to make sure you find the right editor for your needs.

Also, be aware that the costs go up the deeper an editor goes into your manuscript. Proofreading can be fairly affordable, but a good Developmental Editor will charge quite a bit more. Still, a good developmental editor is worth the money if he/she finds and helps fix any major problems that would keep your book from its ultimate goal: publication.

## 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](mailto:slonightwriters@yahoo.com)

President: Dennis Eamon Young  
Vice-President: **Open**  
Secretary: Carol Schmidt  
Treasurer: Susan Tuttle  
Program Director: Janice Konstantinidis  
Contest Committee Chair: **Open**  
Publicity Director: Open  
Membership Director: Hanje Richards  
Critique Group Coordinator: Rebecca Heath  
Social Media Coordinator: **Open**  
Tolosa Press Submissions: Meagan Friberg  
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: Rebecca Waddell  
NW Historian: **Open**  
Hospitality: (Coordinator: **Open**) 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: May 10th**, at United Church of Christ, 11245 Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo 93405. 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](http://www.slonightwriters.org)

## Notify NW of any change in address or email:

[slonightwriters@yahoo.com](mailto: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](http://www.slonightwriters.org) and pay with credit card.

Email all correspondence to: [slonightwriters@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.slonightwriter.org). Contact [slonightwriter@yahoo.com](mailto:slonightwriter@yahoo.com) with your critique needs and genres and we'll do our best to assist you.

## CRITIQUE GROUPS FORMING

### POETRY CRITIQUE GROUP

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](mailto: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](mailto:coinerbop@gmail.com)

### MEMOIR AND NON-FICTION

Judith Bernstein is looking for writers interested in creative non-fiction, articles, op-ed pieces and memoir. Focus is on being published. Skill level intermediate to advanced. Time and place to be determined. If interested, contact the moderator for more information.

#### **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Contact: Judith Bernstein  
[ryewit@live.com](mailto:ryewit@live.com)  
805-904-6365

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

### 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

### NORTH COUNTY RACONTEURS

Meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month in Paso Robles; the first meeting is in the evening from 6:00-8:30 pm, the second in the afternoon from 12:00 noon-2:30 pm. We prefer experienced fiction writers, short stories, novellas and novels for adult and YA. Only genre exceptions are nonfiction, memoir and poetry. We were created to help writers become better writers, so we don't expect final polished manuscripts, as those should be sent to an editor, agent or publisher, not to a critique group.

**CURRENTLY OPEN TO 2 NEW MEMBERS.**

Contact: Mikki Sadil  
mikkisadilauthor@gmail.com

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com)

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

### NORTH COUNTY CRITIQUE GROUP

Meets twice a month on Thursday from 1:30-4:00 pm at the Atascadero Library. the group includes intermediate and advanced level writers of fiction and non-fiction, both published and unpublished. Our critique process is upbeat and constructive. We send around pieces in advance, and read aloud at sessions. Potential new members are encouraged to visit to see if we are a mutual fit.

**CURRENTLY OPEN TO A COUPLE OF NEW MEMBERS**

Moderators: Lillian Brown, 215-6107  
[lilliofslo@aol.com](mailto:lilliofslo@aol.com)  
Mike Perry, 466-8311  
[dmperry1012@att.net](mailto:dmperry1012@att.net)

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

For all writers of fiction and creative non-fiction, a writing instruction class that meets weekly and takes about a year to complete. **See full description under Wed. a.m. Group.** Meets from 3:00-5:00 pm in Los Osos. Current members are presently getting their work published after only six months or so. **CURRENTLY OPEN TO ONE OR TWO NEW MEMBERS**

Contact: Susan Tuttle, 458-5234  
[aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com)

## 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  
[zsurr@aol.com](mailto:zsurr@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](mailto:coinerbop@gmail.com)

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

### LO PROSE

Meets in **Los Osos on the first and third Wednesdays at 7pm till usually 10pm**. Charlie Perryess and 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 **2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:mdcomposes@yahoo.com)

### NOVEL IDEA

Meets twice monthly on **the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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