

## OUR MAY 8TH MEETING

# THE PROCESS

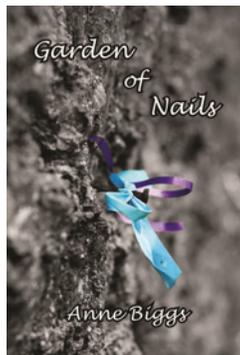
### How Anne Biggs Did It After 150 Rejections

Anne Biggs taught both English Literature and Special Education for 25 years. Her search for her birth mother resulted in journals, book chapters, then a book of fictional letters. She ended up with over 500 pages with no organization or structure, but she sent out queries anyway.

Then she retired, joined a local writing group and for the first time shared her work. She began to go to conferences, including our CCWC. She learned how to write, to rewrite, to edit and to organize.

She finally found a small press publisher, HBEPublishing, who helped with the editing of *The Swan Garden*, a fictionalized account of her mother's story. It was published in February of 2016. The second volume of the trilogy, *Garden of Nails*, is the daughter's fictionalized story as she discovers the secrets of her past. It came out this past February. The final volume of the trilogy will be released in the Fall of 2019.

Join us at 6:30 pm on May 8th as Anne Biggs tells us about her writing process, her experience in publishing, and the promotion of her novels. We're all sure to learn lots of valuable information!



#### In This Issue...

- Page 2 – Round Tables
- Page 2 – Sunshine Reporter
- Page 3 – President's Message
- Page 4 – Writers on the Radio
- Page 4 – Book Launch/Signing
- Page 5 – Member Kudos
- Page 6 – Simply Clear Kudos
- Page 7 – Sell Your Books
- Page 7 – Volunteers Needed
- Page 8-10 – May Meeting Review
- Page 11-12 – Spotlight On... Brian Schwartz
- Page 12 – Submit to the Newsletter
- Page 12 – Quote from Bonnie Friedman
- Page 13-14 – Tips and Tidbits
- Page 14 – Word and Quote of the Month
- Page 15-16 – Writer By The Sea
- Page 16 – Let's Get Social
- Page 16 – Quote from Sidney Sheldon
- Page 17-18 – The NW Review Board
- Page 18 – Quote from Helen Hayes
- Page 19 – The Sound of Silence
- Page 20-21 – Word Play: Four Letter Words
- Page 22-23 – Workshop Corner
- Page 24-22 – Critique Group Connections
- Page 26 – About NW
- Page 27-28 – Open Critique Groups
- Page 29 – Full and Inactive Groups

## NIGHTWRITERS “ROUND TABLES”

There are **two types** of critique tables that meet before our general meeting.

1. **Peer Group Table:** at Rosie Makinney’s table, participants critique each others’ work in a safe and supportive environment. Get feedback on your work in progress and practice your constructive critiquing skills. It’s also a great way to get to know other writers in the group, and learn the critiquing process if you’re new to it. You do not have to bring work to participate.

2. **Professional Level Table:** Terry Sanville and Susan Tuttle will give feedback on pieces from a professional editor’s viewpoint. **This includes formatting.** If you feel your work is almost ready to send out, or if you want a deeper look at the mechanics of your piece, this is the table for you.

Bring three copies of your work: one for Terry, one for Susan, and one for you to read from. **All submissions must be only 2 pages, typed, 12-point font, double spaced, 1” minimum margins all around. Note at the top what the genre is, and the age of your audience.**

More and more writers are coming to the Critique Table. If you want to make sure your piece is read, arrive before the start time to get your name on the list. The Critique Round Table starts at 5:15 pm sharp.

**Critique Round Tables begin at 5:15 pm and run for an hour. They are free to NW members, \$5.00 for visitors.**

The General Meeting follows at 6:30 pm.

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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, Torry Dickinson, at [torrydickinson@gmail.com](mailto:torrydickinson@gmail.com)  
and I’ll send them a card from their SLO NightWriters family.**

*Torry*



*Janice Konstantinidis*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: HAPPY SPRING!

Hello Fellow NightWriters,

It's that time of the month yet again! I hope you're all enjoying the sunshine.

I am happy to announce that our Harassment and Discrimination Policy is now live on our website. One of our members asked me if this policy was created in response to anything or anyone in particular. I explained that this was not the case.

We thought we needed to be ahead of the curve. We think that it's best to have a policy in case we need to call on it. We wanted to be as clear as we could about what our expectations are in respect to harassment and discrimination.

There is a plethora of incidents arising from the #metoo movement and other social developments about what people see as acceptable and what's not.

I would like to add that we wrote the harassment policy understanding that we are a group of writers and that we would not see anything contained in the written word of any author as harassment. Matters shared in groups that are meant to inform or elucidate aspects of writing are not the object of this policy.

As mentioned above, the policy can be found on the website for your reference.

I would like to give a huge "Thank You" to **Baxter Trautman** for the fantastic job she has done as refreshment manager. Baxter has stepped down now. Thank you so very much, Baxter. Your help has been so very valuable.

I am calling for members to step up to take Baxter's place. Some board members are wearing two or more hats, and I am very conscious of burn out. **Please step up and give us a hand.** It's a once-a-month commitment for each general meeting. We are all grateful for the variety of nibbles at each meeting. SLO NightWriters will reimburse you for all purchases of food and supplies.

I think it would be very good if we could have a committee comprised of two or more members to distribute the load. We've done this in the past and it's worked well.

Coffee, tea and hot chocolate will be available until we find a new refreshment manager.

Contact me at [jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com) if you are interested.

April was poetry month. I hope all our poets have been immersing themselves in the many activities offered by Arts Obispo *et al* throughout the month. Contests, readings and many other opportunities for poets are available.

Please click on the following link to read some of the local poems.

<http://www.sloartscouncil.org/slo-county-poet-laureate>

I wish you all peace and happiness as we embrace spring.

Write More.

*Janice Konstantinidis*

President SLO NightWriters.

[lkon50@gmail.com](mailto:lkon50@gmail.com)

## Writers on the Radio

NightWriter Jean Moelter is the host of **Artsy People**, the radio show that promotes local artists of all kinds, their work, and events. Thursdays at 2:00 pm with a rebroadcast Mondays at 5:00 pm. It's heard on KYXZ Excellent Radio 107.9 FM out of Grover Beach.

Have you just published a book? Would you like to tell the community about it? Consider being a guest on Artsy People. Just send an email to Jean at [artsypeople@yahoo.com](mailto:artsypeople@yahoo.com). Or, if you have an event coming up, such as a book signing, email an announcement to Jean and she'll read it on the air.

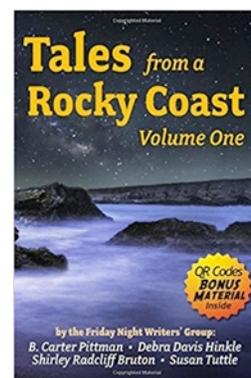
Jean interviews a different artist, live, each week at the Excellent Radio station. So far, three NightWriters have been guests on the show. Jean has also interviewed musicians, storytellers, actors, and comedians.

To listen to past interviews, and to see the list of upcoming guests, go to Jean's website and click on Artsy People in the menu: <https://sites.google.com/view/jeanmoelter>.

Don't miss this great marketing opportunity for authors!

## BOOK LAUNCH/SIGNING

Join the authors of *Tales From A Rocky Coast: Volume 1* at Barnes & Noble on Saturday, May 12 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm and learn all about this ground-breaking anthology. Comprised of memoir, creative nonfiction, poetry and genre fiction, it has something for everyone in its pages. An added bonus: QR codes that give readers access to bonus material. Get your copy signed by all 4 authors! B. Carter Pittman, Debra Davis Hinkle, Shirley Radcliff Bruton, Susan Tuttle.



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

**Janice Konstantinidis's** essay, "Annie's Baby," was shortlisted as a finalist in the 2018 Memoir Magazine #MeToo Essay Contest. Her name appears on their website as a shortlisted submission.

**Judith Amber's** humorous pieces "Yalp Goes to the Cemetery," "The worst Part of Aging is the Awful Birthday Cards," and "Aging Isn't For Sissies," appeared in Points In Case, an online humor magazine.

On March 9, **Judith Amber's** poem, "Am I A Racist?" appeared in Ascent Aspirations Magazine, Friday Poems. "Poetry Chest" was published by American Society of Chest Physicians. "Last Tango" will appear in the next issue.

**Terry Sanville's** short story, "I Am Not Lazy," will appear in the 2018 edition of Perceptions Magazine, a full-color annual put out by Mt. Hood Community College since 1969 that includes work by national and international contributors.

Two short stories by **Terry Sanville**, "The Watcher" and "Thrift Shop Swan," will appear in the 35th edition of the Suisun Valley Review, an annual print journal put out by Solano Community College located in Fairfield Ca. Check them out at: <https://suisunvalleyreview.wordpress.com/>

**Susan Tuttle's** *Tiny Tales: 5-Minute or Less Reads for Busy People* are now out. They're divided into genres: Flash Fiction, Mystery & Suspense, Sci-fi/Fantasy, characters in her upcoming Skylark PI series, and how a writer's mind works. Her cover artist designed the covers so the background creates all one picture. The books are available on Amazon in print, and will soon be available in e-format.





Central Coast Life • April 26 - May 10, 2018

## Hardscrabble

NightWriters

By Morgann Tayllor

June begged Dad to let her ride with him that day; it would be an adventure. Her father hesitated. Her mother said no. But Dad won out, arguing that at nine, June was old enough and could ride well enough to join him on an all-day horseback ride leading four horses to a different ranch pasture miles away. Besides he needed an extra hand.

When June was three, Mama would hand her over to Dad in the saddle of his big paint horse. June felt special wearing her first pair of hand-tooled leather cowboy boots for the short ride around the ranch house and corral. To her delight, she had a front row seat, snuggled between the saddle horn and dad's protective arm around her waist.

At five, June soled on a bay horse named Jughead. He trotted like a pile driver and had a stubborn streak, along with a mean habit of kicking at her when she tried to mount. When Jug kicked, Dad kicked back hard in the belly with his pointy-toed boots. Jug soon unlearned his bad manners.

So it was Jug under June that unforgiving day as she rode with her dad, leading the four horses by halters over miles of uneven rocky ground.

There was no horse trailer. They rode horseback on the isolated ranch road until they got to the highway right-of-way leading more directly to the new pasture. The right-of-way was the same natural landscape seen by pioneers in this remote West Texas ranchland where the nearest neighbor could live twenty miles away.

The day was a monotony of glaring hot sun and a stiff wind that powdered riders and high desert shrubs from dust kicked up by the six horses. Shade was sparse.

By noon the air was pungent with the smell of horse and human sweat when June sighted the trick black Ford coupe parked off the highway. Mama had brought sandwiches, potato salad and sweet tea. She would meet them again at the end of the horseback ride and they would all drive back to town.

June and her dad ate in their

saddles. After riding four hours, June was getting stiff but she didn't get off her horse because neither did her dad. She wanted to prove to her father she was up to the job and a "big girl" capable of riding straight through to the end of the full day's journey.

And she did, but not without jarring her insides, trotting and lunging over rough terrain, through gullies, constantly yanking the rope halters of the two horses behind her.

Three hours later a wide curve revealed a squeaking windmill pumping water into a dirt livestock tank the far side of the barbed-wire fence next to the right-of-way. Long shadows from a flat-topped mesa across the road signaled journey's end. The horses heaved sighs of relief.

June sagged in the saddle. Her whole body ached from exhaustion.

"Get off!" said her father.

She couldn't move. "I can't."

"I said GET OFF!"

June's mama interceded. "Bill, get her off that horse!"

Boys would be expected to tough it out and dismount. But a nine-year-old girl? When realization set in, June's dad slowly pulled her out of the saddle and laid her on the back seat of the car.

At home Mama put June to bed to soothe her throbbing body, while she dabbed the stinging, but necessary, Mercurochrome antiseptic on June's rope-burned wrists.

June spent the next day recovering and went back to school on Tuesday. She would always remember that ride, but her parents never mentioned it again.

*Morgann Tayllor has traveled extensively as a journalist and freelance writer and believes every person has an interesting story to tell. Today she enjoys writing as an adventure of the mind, which includes, but is not limited to, fiction and creative non-fiction. Morgann is a member of SLO NightWriters, for writers at all levels in all genres; find them online at slonightwriters.org.*

Central Coast Life • April 12 - 25, 2018

## The Sound of Barking

NightWriters

By Lillian Brown



The intermittent high-pitched "arf-arf-arf" broke through his heavy sleep and rose slowly to consciousness. "I'm coming," he mumbled. "I'm coming."

"Meh! dog. Get up. Get up. Get up."

"I know it's you. What can you be chasing in the middle of the night? Opossum? Hope not a porcupine," he said with an irritated laugh.

His wife Margaret named the puff ball Spitz puppy. Sugar, as at nine weeks old she'd seemed as sweet as a cold drizzle and the musty smell of cedar.

"Sugar," he called, pulling the robe tight around his neck. "Where are you? I know it's you. What can you be chasing in the middle of the night? Opossum? Hope not a porcupine," he said with an irritated laugh.

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"Meh! dog. Get up. Get up. Get up."

terroting squirrels, lizards, birds and even chasing the muskrats into the currents. She swam as aggressively as she did swimming alone, arising from the frigid water like a soaked mop, a giant grin lighting her face.

The only time Sugar rested was when she lay her head in her favored owner's lap, as Margaret sat knitting in front of the woodstove most evenings, the dog's sides rising slightly, elevating the basket of yarn in a comforting rhythm.

"The barking keeps up. I'm not getting any sleep," he told Dr. Frances, the psychologist his daughter insisted he see after revealing he heard Sugar barking. "I hear it, coming from down by the river. I even thought I saw something white skirting among the trees."

"Why do you think the dog is visiting you Mr. O'Brien?" Dr. Frances said. "Is there something you can attribute it to? Sugar died peacefully in her sleep about three months ago, is that correct? And you weren't particularly attached to the dog?"

"That's about right. I liked her okay, but she was Margaret's. She was crazy about that dog."

"Mr. O'Brien, how is Margaret taking the death of her beloved pet?" Dr. Frances said, shuffling through Melvin's office file. "Does she hear the barking as well? Is she seeking help, perhaps from another practitioner?"

Melvin raised his head abruptly, taking his eyes from where they'd been fixed on his weathered hands resting on his knees, to look directly at the doctor.

"Margaret passed away 15 months ago. The dog died one year to the day of her death."

"Oh, Mr. O'Brien. I'm so, terribly sorry. In these some reason you neglected to mention your wife's death in the paper work you filed out?"

Melvin cleared his throat, pushed his glasses back on the bridge of his nose and sat up straight. "Does it matter?" he asked, scooting to the edge of the sofa as if to stand. "It's over a year ago. Cancer. I don't talk about it."

"You've experienced a tremendous loss, Mr. O'Brien." Dr. Frances reached across from her rolling chair to place her lotion-soft hands over his calloused ones. "It's a common psychological phenomenon to hear voices or see images after the death of a loved one."

"I'm not nuts?"

"I see this all the time." She smiled reassuringly.

Melvin sighed and leaned back against the sofa.

"Now we know why Sugar is barking," Dr. Frances said and glanced at her watch. "Same time next week."

Lillian Brown is a retired journalist and public relations specialist trying her hand at fiction since returning to the Central Coast over 10 years ago. She has published numerous short stories, as well as nonfiction articles, and is currently focusing on an historical novel. Lillian is a member of SLO NightWriters, for writers at all levels in all genres; find them online at slonightwriters.org.

**PLEASE JOIN US TO SUPPORT JACKIE ELLIOTT**

**JACKIE ELLIOTT MEDICAL BENEFIT/AUCTION**

FRIDAY APRIL 20TH 2018 @ 5PM  
1490 GOLF COURSE LANE  
BLACKLAKE GOLF COURSE BAR & GRILL

- Live Music with Louie Ortega Band
- Raffle
- 50/50 Silent Auction

Come on out and support a 35 year resident of our community. Jackie is a beloved wife, mother, daughter, sister, aunt, neighbor, and friend. She has been faced with surmounting medical bills and needs our help. Our goal is to raise \$7,000, and we can do it! Jackie is always there to help others, now it is our turn to help she and her family.

God bless

PLEASE CONTACT ASHLEE HILLIER @ (805)478-2978  
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER, DONATE AUCTION ITEMS, OR HELP IN ANY WAY.

**Congratulations to SLO NightWriters Morgann Tayllor, and Lillian Brown published in April!**

**Submit your stories Today!**

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

Submit your 500-600 word short fiction to Jeanie Hundertmark at [clementyne@gmail.com](mailto:clementyne@gmail.com)

Pick up copies of SLO City News, Bay News and Coast News at local stores and kiosks. Visit the SCMM on-line archives to read other NW stories published in the CC Life section of SCMM at <http://yourcoastnews.com/category/cc-life/> or <http://yourbaynews.com/category/cc-life/nightwriters/>

## NW MEMBER AUTHORS, SELL YOUR BOOKS!

Sell your books at our general monthly meetings! If you are a member of 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.

### Volunteers Needed

With our goal of extending member involvement and continuing to fulfill SLO NightWriters' mission of supporting and advancing fellow writers, we are seeking volunteers for the following Teams:

1. **Meeting Room Organization:** Helping to organize the meeting room before the general meeting and assisting with packing up at the end.
2. **Hospitality Coordinator:** One person or a committee of two or more members to provide refreshments at our monthly meetings. All expenses are reimbursed the day of the meeting.
3. **Board Members at Large:** These are members who attend board meetings and who can be on call to help as needed.
  - a. **Backup Positions:** we need people who will learn key board positions, and who can act as backups when needed.
    - i. Administration; Treasury; Website; Programs; Editing of Newsletter.

Our board meetings are open to all; come sit in and see how it all works. We meet on the first Tuesday evening of every month at 6:00 pm, right at the United Church of Christ, in a room adjacent to where our general meetings are held.

Please respond to President Janice Konstantinidis ([jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com)) if you are interested and/or available to help in any of these jobs. And, if you think of other ways you can help out, we'd love to hear from you.

Come visit a board meeting and see where your skills might come in handy!

## REVIEW OF APRIL MEETING

First the early birds flew in at 5:15 for the critique group get togethers. All the birds of a feather did flock together, as could be observed in the landings which took place.

Peer Group Table, hosted by Rosie Mackinney is where the newer flock of writers gathered to critique work presented by one another, with sweet Rosie moderating and leading everyone down a fruitful path. Some just came to listen and get a feel for how the process goes.

Professional Level Table, with Terry Sanville and Susan Tuttle holding court, was where the more seasoned birds alit. Writers here got the feel of how a piece is looked over by a professional editor; what will grab an editors' attention (good or bad) and how to fix these things. Formatting was explained, so everyone could get a feel for how to at least pass muster in the first look, as editors do not have extra time on their hands.

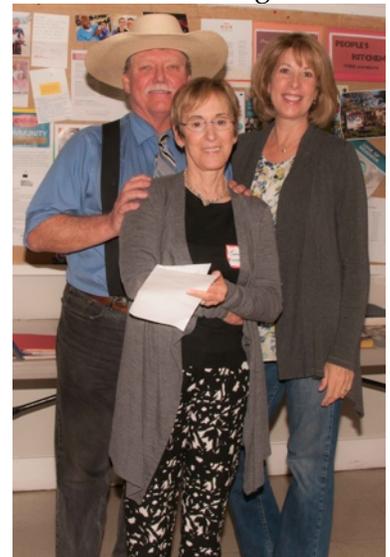
Table Time ended at 6:15, socializing and snacking (Thanks to Baxter) commenced, engaging in shop talk, jokes and general relaxation.

General Meeting began at 6:35 with a call for Kudos, so we can all be encouraged by what other writers have accomplished in the last month. Even a rejection is a step forward, and we all gather them—as well as rosebuds—along the way to publication.

An announcement was made for the exciting Writers in Action (From Idea to Publication) day of writing panels that will discuss all the nuts and bolts it takes to put a writing career together. This mini-conference is the first annual event presented by Sisters in Crime, Central Coast Chapter. It will cover all genres and the panelists will be answering all questions. The date is May 19, 2018 and will be from 9 AM to 5 PM. SLO NightWriters will be attending and be represented on the panels. Yes, there will be plenty of books available! Contact Sisters in Crime ([www.sinccc.com](http://www.sinccc.com)) for details.



By Dennis  
Eamon Young





Jean Moelter reminded the assemblage that she would like to interview writers on her radio show, *Artsy People* on KYXZ in Grover Beach (see page 4).

The main event was next. Brian Schwartz presented a second outing of his massively popular program, “The Hot Seat”, or ASK ME ANYTHING! This time we were able to entice Tom Franciskovich, publisher of SLOLIFE magazine, here on the Central Coast. Tom was quite charming and very engaging. He really loved the format, in which random attendees were selected to come up to the front to sit with Tom and ask him any question they wanted. The second part of the program was when Tom would ask questions of whomever came up to the Hot Seat.



We all learned about how Tom got into the magazine business and what drives him to pour heart and soul into such a demanding format. He is a writer, editor and a consummate businessman with a great sense of humor. He described the qualities he looks for in those he hires and the works they produce. He held forth on the importance of and approach to branding and platform building.

On the other side of the equation, because of Tom’s insightful questions, we learned a lot more about many of our own fellow writers, how they approach their writing, where their interests take them and the qualities and values they hold dear.

For those who want to refresh their memories of the evening, or those who were not able to attend, you could listen to the recording and even comment on it at:

<http://ask.50interviews.com/tomfranciskovich.md>

The next “Hot Seat” event is being planned for an upcoming NightWriters meeting. Stay tuned for more details, and plan on coming early to be sure of a seat.

A few last cookies were eaten and a few last questions asked, as the happy flock flew off into the night.



# NW WORDSMITHS

MAY 2018





by: Dennis  
Eamon Young

## NIGHTWRITER ALL-STARS

# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## “Brian Schwartz”

Who’s that jumping up to help at a NightWriters meeting?  
Brian!

Who’s that bringing an exciting new program to the fore?

Brian!

Yes, Brian Schwartz seems to be all over the place, helping in so many ways. They say “If you want something done, ask a busy person to do it.” Well, that certainly holds true for Brian. As busy as he is, you would think he was a perpetual motion energizer bunny.

What most people don’t know about Brian is that he is the discoverer of the YUM recipe of happiness and health. Yoga – Ukulele – Meditation = YUM! Who could have guessed? Brian is such a great team player that he recently sacrificed going to a big ukulele shindig to be a speaker and panelist at the upcoming Sisters in Crime WRITERS in ACTION mini-conference on May 19 at the PG&E Energy Center.

When Brian speaks, people listen and I don’t only mean NightWriters: “Brian is an extremely knowledgeable, highly professional, world class e-publishing expert.” This is from John Echols, CEO/Senior Consultant at Mindbiz Coaching & Consulting.

Brian has been a presenter at many different venues, including NightWriters. Last year he designed a Hot Seat program called Ask Me Anything for us. He brought in a New York Times best-selling author for this two-part program where random members of the audience would come up to sit next to the author and ask any question they wanted. In the second part, others would come up and he would ask them questions.

The program was so well-received that it was done again for our April meeting and the hall was packed. The guest speaker this time was Tom Franciskovich, publisher of SLOLIFE magazine. The night was a wonderful exercise in give and take between Tom and those who sat with him, as well as the audience in general. Brian mused that, “It was probably the best session on branding and platform building I can recall.” We’ll be doing it again soon in an upcoming meeting.

Brian’s stated mission is to bridge the gap between self-publishing and traditional publishing by applying the proven strategies and techniques of successful independent

publishers. He's committed to forced positivity—get going, do something, be involved!

Brian is CEO of Self Publish.org and you can contact him at:

Support @selfpublish.org  
[www.selfpublish.org](http://www.selfpublish.org)



Brian Schwartz

(To contact Dennis about being featured in the Spotlight On... column, email him at:

[photodennis44@gmail.com](mailto:photodennis44@gmail.com))

Susan Tuttle

## Submit Your Stories, Photos, and Ads to the Newsletter

We will publish **advertisements** for NightWriters' books and book- or writing-related events. This advertising is **Free For Members**. Please provide the graphic (book cover or other graphic) for the announcement.

We will also accept **original photographs**, and **unpublished Flash Fiction** between 400-800 words from current members. **Excerpts from published works**, if they stand alone as their own mini-story, are also acceptable.

We **always** need **articles, kudos and event notices**. And if you have any other ideas for content, please let me know.

**Send all submissions as attachments to: [aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com), and be sure to put NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION in the subject line.**

We're all writers... so, take advantage of this opportunity to be published in one of the best organizational newsletters around!

Susan Tuttle, Editor

"Successful writers are not the ones who write the best sentences. They are the ones who keep writing. They are the ones who discover what is most important and strangest and most pleasurable in themselves, and keep believing in the value of their work, despite the difficulties."

~Bonnie Friedman

## Tips And Tidbits



### THE CASE OF THE MISPLACED MODIFIER AND OTHER TROUBLESOME HABITS

Whether your modifier is missing or dangling, you can bet your reader will be confused.

What's worse than working hard at something, like baking a cake from scratch, and having it fall when you take it out of the oven? Especially when you baked it for that someone special's birthday?

After toiling for hours on a story, doing fastidious editing, you, a writer want your reader to understand what you wrote. Below are some things you can watch for in your writing that will ensure your readers aren't shaking their heads in puzzlement.

So, what is a Misplaced Modifier? A source describes it this way:

A Misplaced Modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that is improperly separated from the word it modifies or describes. This results in the sentence sounding awkward, ridiculous, or confusing.

**Example:** The dealer sold the Lincoln Continental to the college professor with leather seats.

(Hmm, is this a new trend—instead of leather patches on the elbows of his jacket, the professor has them on his seat?)

**Fix it:** The dealer sold the Lincoln Continental with leather seats to the college professor.

**Example:** The waiter served dinner rolls to the woman that was well buttered.  
(Did you mean to say she was well-heeled—or well-endowed?)

**Fix it:** The waiter served dinner rolls that were well-buttered to the woman.

Or, better, yet: The waiter served well-buttered dinner rolls to the woman.

So what is a Dangling Modifier? One source describes it this way:

A Dangling Modifier is a phrase or clause that is not clearly and logically related to the word or words it modifies.

**Example:** *Walking to the movies, the cloudburst drenched Jim.*

(My first thought is that the cloudburst walked to the movies.)

**Fix it:** The cloudburst drenched Jim as he walked to the movies.

**Example:** *Having been fixed the night before, Priscilla could use the car.*

(My interpretation of this is that Priscilla must be a cat or a dog. But, I'm wondering in what way she was going to *use* the car.)

**Fix it:** Since the car had been fixed the night before, Priscilla could use it.

I admit I was having a little fun with you, but everyone can remember reading or hearing examples such as you read above, when your head popped up, your forehead wrinkled and you said: "It did *what?*"

Keep an eye out for examples of this in your own writing and eliminate them to give your reader the best reading experience ever. After a while, you won't even write them the first time.

In the Rhythm of Writing,  
Judythe Guarnera

## Quote of the Month

"The stories of childhood leave an indelible impression, and their author always has a niche in the temple of memory from which the image is never cast out."

~Howard Pyle

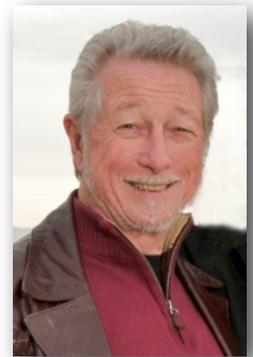
## Word of the Month "orotund"

**Definition:** (adj, L. ore rotundo, with round mouth) 1. (speech) characterized by strength, fullness and clearness; 2. (speech or writing) pompous or bombastic.

**Synonyms:** mellow, plangent, resonant, sonorous; declamatory, flowery, grandiloquent, overblown, high-sounding

**Usage:** The political climate of the day gave way to the practice of orotund oratory.

## WRITER BY THE SEA



by: Dennis  
Eamon Young

## KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL, YOUR HAND UPON THE WHEEL

It was one of those oddly magical moments, when you know there is a sense of humor at work in the universe. We had just had a couple of relaxing hours watching some recorded shows downstairs and were now preparing to call it a night. There had been some laughs, a couple of snacks, nothing odd. I grabbed the tray with glasses, plates, etc. and got three steps up the spiral staircase when it struck. An irresistible tickle in my nose that demanded to be scratched. Do I back down the stairs? Try to balance the tray and scratch? Put the tray on the stairs?

I kept wiggling my nose until I made the second-floor landing, put the tray down and of course, my nose stopped tickling. The universe had gotten it's laugh on me, then gone on its way.

I laughed. I believe there are magical moments when you have a choice: you can just be annoyed, or you can stop to appreciate the fact that you are wholly alive and in the moment. It reminds me to keep my eye on the ball as much as I possibly can. These are the moments when your muse may come to you, or you just take a deep breath and know that life is good.

Life can become so hectic that people cannot dare slow down for a moment for fear of missing the next turn. They rush headlong into the next moment, blind to the world around them. No time to stop and chat or admire the clouds, they are a mote in the eye of the storm, not aware that they are alive, not tasting that very moment. A cornucopia of sweet mysteries, ideas and discoveries swirl around us at every moment, but are too easily lost to us in that maddened flight we subscribe to.

We are now entering the Celtic season of Beltane, the Summer quarter, a time of vitality, a time to be aware of and pursue new ideas. Dance with the knowledge of steps conjoined with the joy of improvisation. It is the time for the spirit to be free, most prepared

for the coming of the muse. Keep your eye on the ball, for when the moment comes, it is the essence of freedom.

Those in the arts know the feeling of grasping, but not being able to reach. Writer's block is one name for what can happen when someone cannot bring the muse. But that free flow of the intuitive spirit does not work on a schedule or by demand. It cannot be forced or coerced. You must keep your hand on the wheel—stay calm and relaxed. It will happen only of its own volition. In sports it's known as being in the zone. Whatever name you call it by, it's still the same spirit at work (or not at work!), or rather, at play.

Excelsior!

*Dennis*



## Let's Get Social

Be sure to give us a “like” on **Facebook** at SloNightWriters and take it a step further by “liking” and “sharing” our posts.

On **Twitter**, our moniker is @slonightwriters—tweet us a hello sometime soon!

And, we have recently launched our **Instagram** account—follow us at slo\_nightwriters and we'll follow you back!

Looking forward to connecting with all of you online, on your smart phone, tablet, or however you like to enjoy your social media!

“Usually, when people get to the end of a chapter, they close the book and go to sleep. I deliberately write a book so when the reader gets to the end of the chapter, he or she must turn one more page. When people tell me I've kept them up all night, I feel like I've succeeded.”

~Sidney Sheldon

## HOW TO WRITE A GOOD BOOK REVIEW

A short review of how to review: First, remember the review is about the book, not you. Second, it's about whether a reader should read the book, not about the author. Third, be honest. Don't be abusive, but give an honest appraisal from your perspective. Remember that poor reviews can tank sales, so also be kind.

Star Ratings: Usually from 1 to 5, and both are fairly rare. Save a 1 for a book that's a complete failure, 2 for one you really don't like, 3 for borderline success, 4 for a good read, and 5 for exceptional.

Include a brief synopsis of the storyline without any major reveals or spoilers. Then tell your reaction. Did you like feel uplifted, and why? Disappointed, and why? Did you have a hard time putting it down, or was it hard to plow through, and why?

Give specific concrete examples of what you liked or didn't like, elements like character development, use of setting, plot, pacing and detail, without giving any spoilers. For nonfiction, focus on detail, organization, passion for the subject, language, and depth of topic.

Praise the author only if the author earned the praise and explain why. You don't want the review to sound like you're best friends with the author.

Reviews don't need to be any particular length, but online reviews tend to be shorter. Use the KISS principle: Keep It Short and Simple.

If you write reviews for more than one site, don't use the same review; rewrite it for each site. And be honest. If you know the author, or received an advance review copy, tell your readers. Honesty in reviews, as in all other things, always is the best policy.

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## NW Review Board

As writers, we need to read in order to see what's being done out there. We also learn what works and what doesn't, what we need to avoid and what we want to incorporate into our own bag of skills.

So, as long as we're reading, why not read other members' books and then write reviews for them? It's a win-win for everyone: we learn by reading, and authors garner those all-important reviews for their work.

NW has set up a NW Review Board, where we connect NW member readers with NW member writers' new works. Below you will find a listing of members who are willing to read and review (on Amazon, Goodreads, or their other favorite review site) specific works by other NW members. You must be a NW member in good standing to take advantage of this new board.

If you have a new book for review, just contact the reader(s) listed here, and arrange to have a book sent to them. Please check carefully to make sure your genre fits the genres each person reads. Have fun!

| <u>Name</u>      | <u>Email</u>   | <u>Genres</u>                                      |
|------------------|--|--|
| Tina Clark       | <a href="mailto:theclarkfour@sbcglobal.net">theclarkfour@sbcglobal.net</a> | sci-fi, creative nonfiction                        |
| Jim Aarons       | <a href="mailto:jim@jeadv.com">jin@jeadv.com</a>                           | historical fiction                                 |
| Steve Bowder     | <a href="mailto:sbowder@live.com">sbowder@live.com</a>                     | historical novel                                   |
| Jennifer Rescola | <a href="mailto:jkrescola@charter.net">jkrescola@charter.net</a>           | autobiography, novels                              |
| Steven McCall    | <a href="mailto:steven.mccall7@gmail.com">steven.mccall7@gmail.com</a>     | literary fiction                                   |
| Jody Nelson      | <a href="mailto:jjnteacher@gmail.com">jjnteacher@gmail.com</a>             | fiction, creative nonfiction                       |
| Mary Silberstein | <a href="mailto:luvlamas@gmail.com">luvlamas@gmail.com</a>                 | poetry, fiction                                    |
| David Brandin    | <a href="mailto:dbrandin@earthlink.net">dbrandin@earthlink.net</a>         | political, historical, general,<br>science fiction |
| Martha Raymond   | <a href="mailto:mrth.raymond@gmail.com">mrth.raymond@gmail.com</a>         | YA fiction, literary fiction                       |
| Brian Schwartz   | <a href="mailto:brian@selfpublish.org">brian@selfpublish.org</a>           | non-fiction  |
| Ruth Cowne       | <a href="mailto:abuela10@att.net">abuela10@att.net</a>                     | memoir, flash fiction                              |
| Susan Tuttle     | <a href="mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com">aim2write@yahoo.com</a>               | mystery, suspense,<br>paranormal suspense          |
| Mark Arnold      | <a href="mailto:markarnoldphd@gmail.com">markarnoldphd@gmail.com</a>       | historical, science fiction                        |

\*To be added to our Review Board listing, write to: [aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com) and be sure to put Newsletter Information in the subject line.

“My mother drew a distinction between achievement and success. She said that achievement is the knowledge that you have studied and worked hard and done the best that is in you. Success is being praised by others, and that’s nice, too, but not as important or satisfying. Always aim for achievement and forget about success.”

~Helen Hayes

## THE SOUND OF SILENCE

by: Judith Amber

Rain splats on the window, a faint sound.  
No refrigerators hum, nobody's television  
Squawks tales of tweets, political crises,  
Celebrity scandals.  
Only the sound of palm fronds  
Blowing in billowing sweeps of rain.

There is no sign of life on the internet,  
No way of hearing menacing news on  
Radio or TV, no way to sign the unending  
Onslaught of petitions from multiple causes  
Threatened by the new regime, led by  
The Emperor with No Clothes.

Only the sounds of dripping, of my cat scratching  
His ears and scattering fur fluff far and wide.

I can't connect, am cut loose from my moorings.  
And it's a blessing, not a curse, a respite from  
The national storm while a storm rages in virtual reality.

The sound of silence descends like the merciful rain  
On California's parched, scorched earth

Send your poem or your 450-550 word story to: [aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com) for inclusion in the next issue of WordSmiths. Be sure to put Newsletter Submission in the subject line.

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# WORD PLAY

By Morgann Tayllor

A four-letter word is code for obscenity. But not all four-letter words are obscene. Not all obscenities are four letters. Truth is, our literary landscape is littered and glittered with four-letter words. The good, the bad and the ambivalent.

If a story's abundant profanity is for shock value, it becomes a GASP (Gratituous Anglo-Saxon Profanity). Tired, overused, commonplace. Crutch words. Fillers.

GASPing aside, there's nothing more satisfying to the narrator than an occasional well-placed, well-timed, in-character Anglo-Saxon profanity. Like a belch bomb, it gets attention.

EX: The four-letter word **shut** has a groupie following, some of them rabblers: **shut up, shut down, shut in, shut out**. Try "**shut** the f . . k up!" and you get two four-letter words for the price of one sentence. Your story protagonist might even get a bonus: a dust-up with the object of his ire.

But many four-letter words, year after century, have been unheralded mainstays of plots immortal: love, hate, good, evil, rage, calm, the list goes on. There are so many of them, we will only focus on a few this month.

\* \* \* \*

In the beginning, the word **nice** was anything but. Old French, borrowed from Latin, defined this word as someone *simple-minded, stupid*. In the fourteenth century, Chaucer used **nyce (nice)** to describe a now-obsolete sense meaning *wanton* or *lascivious* (House of Fame c. 1380).

By the fifteenth century, **nice** began to tire of its back street reputation. A sixteenth-century play by Shakespeare (c.1594) noted "a lady in Milano...is **nice**..." meaning *coy, reserved, diffident*. By now, the word was in the Eliza Doolittle makeover mode.

John Milton used **nice** to define *fastidious, particular or finical* (finicky) around food (*Paradise Lost* c.1667) but it was not until the eighteenth century that **nice** generally came to mean *pleasing, pleasurable or agreeable*.

About mid-nineteenth century, irony added the sense *bad or inappropriate* to **nice**, as in “You’re a **nice** one to talk!” This phrase is still heard occasionally, the word now just an echo of its bawdy past.

\* \* \* \*

**Love** is another four-letter word. Poets, writers, playwrights, lyricists; logophiles and lexicographers, have grappled with precise definitions that could describe **love** in all its infinite variety.

The word **love** has few letters, but is one of the most complex in language. One online dictionary alone lists 29 types and subgroups of **love**, with encyclopedic articles on unconditional versus conditional love.

And that’s just the beginning.

\* \* \* \*

**Cool** became hot in the last mid-century and managed to maintain its coolness while other Slanglish has dated itself. But the adjective **cool** has a serious history, with humble beginnings as an Old English word for moderately cold weather or temperature. From the fourteenth century on, literary applications broadened **cool** to describe human attributes and demeanor running the gamut from *lukewarm feelings* to *trendy acceptability*. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Cather, Kerouac and others helped refine and retool **cool**.

In the 1720s, **cool** hooked up with large sums of money, as in *he won a cool 100 dollars*. In the 1940s **cool** jazz meant *the best, the greatest*. Later **cool** was *anything acceptable or fashionable*. Into the 1950s and beyond, **cool** was the standard-bearer for the beat and hippie cultures, later giving birth to a spin-off, *chill* or *chill out* (relax).

**Cool** ebbs and flows. But the original four-letter word is still with us, some 700 years in all its colorful senses. So how **cool** is that?

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# WORKSHOP CORNER

by: Tammie Burnsed

Attending or hosting a writing workshop is a fantastic way to jumpstart your creativity and bond with fellow writers. Workshops can include any number of exercises and focus on any aspect of writing, but it may be best to decide on the parameters of your workshop in advance of the event. You know how writers are, they'll talk the afternoon away if you don't set some boundaries from the get-go! One suggestion is to begin your event with a 20-minute free-write to get participants warmed up and then present a more focused exercise to delve deeper into writing craft. For example, a simple warmup exercise might be to write about a recent dream or favorite food, while the main challenge could be to write a complete story about a character chosen by the workshop host.

There really is no end to interesting writing prompts, but if you are stuck for ideas there are great sources for workshop ideas on the web. Random plot generators like [plotgenerator.org](http://plotgenerator.org) are handy. Peruse through your many books on writing (Come on, we know you have them!) to find more ideas. Focus on crafting the best possible beginnings, on character development, on story arc or whatever seems most helpful for your group.

What's The Point?

Sure, a lot of what gets written during a 20-minute exercise is silliness that will never see the light of day. But you might be surprised at the number of good stories that got their start at a workshop. In fact, after much polishing, a workshop piece I recently wrote ended up getting published. Hurray!

Participating in workshops can help improve your writing skills overall, take the characters from your WIP in new and exciting directions, and generate story ideas when creativity runs dry. Want to try, but you don't have a group to write with? No worries, we can have a virtual workshop right here.

This week's Workshop Challenge: In 30 minutes, write a story that includes the following words: wristwatch, square, skyscraper, car dealer, pristine, ravine, buried, velociraptor, stack, friends. Send your finished, but unpolished, results to [writertjburnsgmail.com](mailto:writertjburnsgmail.com) and it might be featured in the next NightWriters Newsletter.

Let's break the ice, here's my own first and rusty draft:

## Grandpa's Bones

"Ya got ta give me more, Joe. This watch belonged to my Grandpa Earl—you remember him."

"Yap," answered Joe.

"You know he never saw a day without this wristwatch. Took death to part him with it.

"Yap, Tommy. I remember. But sentimental value don't pay my bills. This timepiece is a nice memory, but it ain't no Rolex. Most I can do is the twenty, and that's because I'm inclined to help you out.

"Twenty's not gonna make it, Joe. They're coming to take the Mustang tomorrow if I don't square on my payments by 5:00 o'clock tonight."

"Listen, I'll give you 25, and that's just because we're friends. You and I both know you've got something else I want. Give ya top dollar for it right now. Cash on the barrelhead."

"I can't sell it, Joe. Can't. Grandpa Earl spent half his life digging that gold mine. Them dino bones were the only thing of value he ever found. They're his life's work."

"Yap. And a velociraptor skeleton as pristine as that one he found is probably worth millions. I'll give you 200,000 dollars for it right now."

Joe reached into the safe below the counter and took out ten bundles of cash. He piled them into one tall skyscraper of money. Tommy liked his lips.

"At least let me pawn it" Tommy begged.

"Nope. Sale—done and final. You know if those boys from CarMart come pay a visit they're gonna do more than take the Mustang. Martin Johnson didn't get to be the richest car dealer in three counties by letting his debts go. Be no safe place for you if you try and run from him, Tommy. Sell me the bones."

Tommy knew Joe was right. Johnson's goons would take their pound of flesh along with the Mustang. \$200,000 would get him square and then some. He could move to Nashville and be the first country rapper to play at the Opry. Maybe get a mansion in Branson. Meet B.J. Thomas or maybe even Crystal Gayle.

"500,000 and that skeleton is yours. Give me the 200K now, and I'll show you where grandpa buried it."

"Deal," said Joe.

As they shook hands on it, Tommy wondered how he would kill Joe when they got to the ravine where the bones had stayed buried until the flood of 2012 washed them all downstream.

## “CRITIQUE GROUP CONNECTIONS”

**NW Members—Please, email critique requests to: Pat Gimer ([patgimer@gmail.com](mailto:patgimer@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.

If you form a new group, please let Pat know so she can list it on our website, in the newsletter, and office any assistance you might need. (Critique Group Guidelines are available on the website at [www.slownightwriters.org](http://www.slownightwriters.org).)

\*\*\*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!

## A MESSAGE FROM PAT GIMER

I recently visited Kick Start, a new group organized by David Schwab. Kick Start meets monthly in SLO on Monday evenings at Dave's home near Broad and Tank Farm. The group currently has four members. Dave Schwab is a motorcycle-riding aficionado who is working on a book that incorporates years of his biker experiences.

Steve Bowder has already drafted thirty-plus chapters of an historical novel inspired by a 5 page booklet entitled "a Brief History of the Massacre of the Wiseman Children" based on 1895 interviews with his great grandfather, Henson Wiseman, some 32 years after the incident.

Rhonda Collin's book about sexual abuse in athletic programs was published before it was ready (it's a long story!) and she is now working feverishly on editing the work so more copies can be printed.

Pat Gimer has the beginnings of a novel, but lately her muse is distracting her with short stories and poems. This group that is still developing its working structure, can accommodate a couple of new members. As is customary for all NightWriter groups, visitors are welcome.

See pages 26 & 27 for open groups, and page 28 for closed groups you can visit.

## CRITIQUE GROUP REQUESTS

**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)

## CRITIQUE GROUP REQUESTS, CONTINUED

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

Contact Griselda at [grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com](mailto: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](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: [grimmpsy@gmail.com](mailto:grimmpsy@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)

## 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: Janice Konstantinidis  
Vice-President: Tammie Burnsed  
Secretary: Leonard Carpenter  
Treasurer: Steve Derks  
Program Director: Janice Konstantinidis  
Membership Coordinator: Jim Aarons  
Contest Committee Chair: **Open**  
Critique Group Coordinator: Patricia Gimer  
Social Media/Publicity Coordinator: Meagan Friberg  
Simply Clear Submissions: Jeannie Hundertmark  
Welcome Committee: Jean Moelter  
Sunshine Chair: Torry Dickinson  
Website Master: /Membership Janice Konstantinidis  
Web Assistant: Steve Derks  
Newsletter: Susan Tuttle, Lillian Brown  
Art Director/Photographer: Dennis Eamon Young  
Member at Large: **Open**  
NW Historian: **Open**  
Hospitality: **OPEN**

## 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 8th**, at United Church of Christ on Los Osos Valley Rd, San Luis Obispo 93401. 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 WITH OPENINGS

### WRITE NOW

These bi-weekly Wednesday critique meetings are for more experienced and tech-savvy writers. Submit up to 3,500 words of your current project to Dropbox by Sunday night, and then, using track-changes in Word, upload your reviews of each other member's work to Dropbox by 6:00 pm Wednesday. Meeting time is used to cover discussion-worthy items: logic issues, theme problems, etc. Commas, punctuation, and spelling are left on the written page. We follow these [Rules of Conduct](#). Recommended reading is [Story](#) by Robert McKee.

Meetings are every other Wednesday at 6:00 pm. Email moderator for location and dates.

### CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Moderator: Cynthia Replogle  
[cynthia.replogle@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.replogle@gmail.com)

### FICTION/NONFICTION

Meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays from 9:00 am to Noon in San Luis. Members bring original work to each session to 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—are this group's forte. It welcomes writers who are serious about producing work for publication. Those interested attending or who need more information should telephone.

### CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Moderators: Terry Sanville (541-0492)  
Gloria Pautz (543-2049)

# 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

### 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)

### 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 NEW MEMBERS**

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

### THE THURSDAY GROUP

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

**CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS,** and visitors are always welcome. Contact the moderator for details.

Moderator: Mark Ruszczyzky  
[zsur@aol.com](mailto:zsur@aol.com)

### KICK START

Looking for three to four writers who could meet on Monday or Tuesday evenings in SLO, near Marigold Center (Tank Farm/Broad area). For fiction, action adventure, memoir type pieces. Start May 1 or 2. Moderator has a Fine Arts degree and an MBA.

**CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR MEMBERS.**

Contact moderator for details.

Moderator: David Schwab  
805-459-3200

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

### PISMO WEDNESDAY GROUP

Meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 9:00-11:00 am in Pismo Beach.

To visit, contact: Tom Snow  
[coinerbop@gmail.com](mailto:coinerbop@gmail.com)

### LO PROSE

Meets in Los Osos on the first and third Wednesdays at 7pm till usually 10pm.

To visit, contact: Charlie Perryess, 528-4090  
Anne Allen, 528-1006

### NORTH COUNTY CRITIQUE GROUP

Meets twice a month on Thursday from 1:30-4:00 pm at the Atascadero Library.

To visit, contact: Lillian Brown, 215-6107  
[lilliofslo@aol.com](mailto:lilliofslo@aol.com)  
Jeanie Hundertmark,  
878-2158  
[clementyne@gmail.com](mailto:clementyne@gmail.com)

## INACTIVE CRITIQUE GROUPS

### POETRY CRITIQUE GROUP

This group is currently inactive.

Contact: Irene Chadwick, 481-3824  
[irenekooi@gmail.com](mailto:irenekooi@gmail.com)

### PISMO SATURDAY GROUP

This group is currently inactive.

Moderator: Tom Snow  
[coinerbop@gmail.com](mailto:coinerbop@gmail.com)

### SOUTH COUNTY WRITERS

This group is currently inactive.

Moderator: Judy Guarnera, 474-9598  
[j.guarnera@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j.guarnera@sbcglobal.net)

### NORTH COUNTY RACONTEURS

This group has disbanded for various reasons until further notice.

### MEMOIR AND NON-FICTON

Disbanded until there is more interest.

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

### LONG STORY SHORT

This group is currently inactive.

Moderator: Diane Smith 858-414-0070  
[mdcomposes@yahoo.com](mailto:mdcomposes@yahoo.com)