

OUR JAN. 10TH MEETING The “Catch 22” of Writing

How do you break the Catch 22 of writing? Do you believe in the Law of Attraction? Award-winning author, columnist, journalist, editor, teacher, inspirational speaker and freelance writer Patricia Alexander does—and it shows in what she calls her 40-year “highly eclectic career.”

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Patricia fell into her first writing job in 1976 working for Rona Barrett on *Good Morning, America*. She went on from there to work in animation, advertising, public relations and marketing while freelancing dozens of articles to magazines and newspapers, including an editorial in the first edition of the *Los Angeles Weekly*. A cover story she wrote for the *Ventura County Reporter* in early 2000 was picked up by the TV news show *48 Hours*, which bought her notes and gave her an on-screen credit.

Patricia says she “finally” even wrote a book: *The Book of Comforts: Simple, Powerful Ways to Comfort the Spirit, Body & Soul*, with her late husband, Michael Burgos. It went on to win the Silver Benjamin Franklin Award for Best Spiritual Book.

Along the way, Patricia also started up writing support groups wherever she lived and currently leads the North County Writing Support Group in Paso Robles.

“I’m absolutely delighted to be talking to my fellow writers about my almost quirky writing career. My family doesn’t want to hear my stories—so this is a huge treat for me! And I really do think I can point out the Catch-22 “breaker” that constantly gave me entry into new fields of writing.” She adds, “I hope what I learned over 40 years will be helpful to other writers. I know I’m going to have a blast!”



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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 2 pages, typed, 12-point font, double spaced**. Note at the top what the genre is, and the age of your audience.

It's important to format your piece properly. It's good practice for when you are ready to submit to agents/editors/publishers.

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.

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.

The Instruction Round Table is taking a hiatus this month, but will return next month with more invaluable information to help your writing skills grow. Look for a description of the next Instruction Table in next month's WordSmiths.

Critique Round Table begins at 5:15 pm, free to NW members, \$5.00 for visitors.

See you back at UCC at 5:15, or at the general meeting that follows at 6:30 pm.

Fellow Writers!

Is a writing partner sick? Need encouragement?

Getting married or having a baby?

Suffering from the loss of a loved one?

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

Kalila



Help NightWriters stay as vital as ever. We need your energy, your talent and your ideas. Consider joining the NW Board of Directors. We have jobs big and small and everything in between. Something for everyone, so everyone will benefit. Talk to Dennis or any other board member at the January meeting!



Dennis Eamon Young

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: PARTY'S OVER, BACK TO WORK!

My daughters have gone back home now. The Christmas tree is beginning to sag a bit. All the packages have been gently, or not so gently, unwrapped. Friends have been visited and in some cases re-visited. We ate more than was necessary and duly washed it all down with a greater variety of beverages than usual. New wineries have been discovered. We have danced and hugged and kissed the New Year in, until what passes for the wee hours for us these days. Yes, the party is over!

The first Board meeting of the year nips at our toes, so back to work is now the key phrase. There is much to do. We must get ready for our very own election at the February meeting. Please come and be ready to vote and perhaps step up to a position, short or long term, in order to have NightWriters continue functioning smoothly in the exciting year to come. We have good presentations and interesting meetings ready for everyone to enjoy and learn from, but there is always much to do.

I look forward to seeing an exciting new President guiding NightWriters into uncharted waters, thinking of new ways to approach old issues and handling new ones with vitality and aplomb. The job calls for a good backup team and that's why it is important for more of our membership to give some of their time to helping in a variety of ways. Come speak to me and other Board members at the next meeting. Ask not what NightWriters can do for you, but what you can do for the NightWriters community by volunteering some of your time and effort. In the process, you will meet more writers, make invaluable connections and have fun.

Being a writer has been called a lonely endeavor, but every writer is surrounded by the love and admiration of their family, friends and other writers, so it is hard for me to view the craft in that lonely light. The Muse is always at the ready. It is only a matter of getting started on the work at hand, in order to invite her/him to come join in and help. That's my kind of work. Whether I am working at my photography, writing, or drawing, it is such a satisfying and joyous experience that it becomes something other than what I consider work (except editing!).

To concentrate your energies in such a productive manner is to make your time and energy profoundly of value and elevate the human spirit in us all. When I create something with its own intrinsic value and am able to share that with other people, I am receiving real joy. There is, in this type of work, an energizing factor that allows you to search your own

depths and then see beyond your current limits and find new horizons. This is work that you can feel a sense of pride in, rather than working at something you feel just saps your time and energy without any recompense other than making money.

So yes, I say unequivocally: The party's over, let's get back to work!

Excelsior,
Dennis

NW MEMBER AUTHORS, SELL YOUR BOOKS!

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

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

Ingrid Reti Competition

The deadline to enter the 2017 Ingrid Reti Literary Award is fast approaching: **Friday, January 20, 2017.**

Each year the award focuses on a specific literary genre, rotating between poetry, playwriting, short stories, novels and essays. For 2017, the Ingrid Reti Literary Award will be given for excellence in **essay writing**. There is \$1,000 available for the year, and it may be given to one recipient or split between multiple recipients depending on the merit of the submissions. The award is granted based on the quality of applicants' artistic work and creative expression addressing a sense of place, natural and/or cultural. The winner(s) will be announced in March 2017.

The Ingrid Reti Literary Award, established in memory of writer and teacher Ingrid Reti, is an effort to continue her work mentoring San Luis Obispo County writers. This award is a partnership between ARTS Obispo and the family of Ingrid Reti, who provided funding for this annual award.

This award program is open to all San Luis Obispo County writers 18 years of age and older. The Award Application Guidelines can be found in the Documents & Links box on the Ingrid Reti Literary Award page at: artsobispo.org/ingrid-reti-literary-award.

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

Terry Sanville's highly-political short story "A Time to Believe" will appear in the January 2017 issue of *A Long Story Short*, a full-color print and e-zine. Check them out at <http://alongstoryshort.net>

"Old Guy Playing Guitar", a flash fiction story by Terry Sanville, will appear in the inaugural issue of *Wild Musette*, a paying print journal of music, mystery and myth out of Carrboro, North Carolina.

Calling All NightWriters!

Publishing Opportunity

Call for submissions for volume #2 of *Central Coast Kind*, a new high quality magazine that focuses on the positive in all areas, especially Acts of Kindness, Love, Gratitude, Service to Others, etc. Study the current issue (available at the Dec. meeting) for examples.

February issue: Theme = Love Is In The Air

Publisher Kim Iribarren is open to all kinds of love stories.

Think outside the box: ex, Anniversary Kindness; Honeymoon and fun engagement ideas; a long-married couple's story. Consider love stories, love weddings, love engagements, love anniversaries' love of animals, children, the Central Coast, wine, vacations. Get creative!

Kim is looking for profiles of people, places, stories and **even poetry**.

For questions, queries, submissions, contact Kim directly:

kim@centralcoastkind.com

Central Coast Kind does not yet pay for submissions, but it is a wonderful kudos to be featured in a magazine of this quality. Definitely a plus for your writing resume. Don't wait to submit for the February issue, Love Is In The Air!



Congratulations to SLO NightWriters Sharyl Heber and Cynthia Replogle



28 • December 1 - 14, 2016 • Holiday Guide

Into The Winter Light

By Sharyl Heber

Max and I risk the Vermont Mountains. The delight of snowfall should enchant like Currier and Ives, but the bare Maple forests boom, machure against the gray sky. Had we gone to Buffalo, we'd be belting out Motown and Broadway. Instead, a gothic Poe-like death knell peeks. Our collie, Pru, sneezes in the back seat.

"Where the hell have you been?" is her holiday greeting. Max's mother, Grace—a catastrophic error in nomenclature. "We already started," her wine glass sloshing, "if you can call this dinner." I offer my bean casserole. "It's cold," Grace snaps.

Back in October his sensible brother and sister booked hotel rooms early. I knew then the burden would be ours. "Well stay with your mother," I told him. I can survive two days.

We seat ourselves mid-siege. To brother, Grace blasts: his lame career and strumpet wife. To sister: never marriage material with that girl. To all: we're one colossal letdown. Pru's head turns with every volley. I find a break in the barrage and stand, clink-

ing my knife on the faux crystal glass to command their attention. "We have perfect time to tell. Max and I are having a baby!"

Grace eyes my stomach and slurs, "That's why you're so fat."

"Due in June," Max says. "A little gift."

Grace watches the conversation brighten with congratulations from the siblings and she jumps in quick. "Well, I'm giving birth to hemorrhoids." Then, through a mouth full of yams, she lambasts her gay neighbors and all candy-ass liberals. I bring up the new light display in town, but can't seem to extricate us. A trade on her worthless dead husband prevails. Max winces at the shredding of his gentle father.

One hour in, his sister checks her watch, feigns stomach cramps and makes a hasty exit. His brother and wife chime in unison, "we'd best get back to the kids," and follow her out.

"I haven't even had my damn pie!" Grace shouts. She glares, daring us to leave. We stay seated. She knocks her wine glass over, then stumbles up to bed.

Max and I stack the dishes. They'll keep till morning. Grace will explode at the sight of them, but she'd be ranting on some other disappointment anyway. Upstairs in Max's childhood room, we shove beds together and get as close as we can without falling between. I sneak Pru in next to me. Grace relegated her to the screen porch, but it's thirty degrees out there.

"Merry Christmas," Max tells me. We both grin in the dark. "You're my favorite surprise," he whispers and kisses me. We're careful not to let the bed-springs screech as we touch. I stroke his face and tell him with my fingertips that I thank every god in every religion for the gift of him. Pru smuggles in with a contented canine sigh.

I think on Grace and can't imagine not feeling appreciative for at least one thing in life. What a prison—the drip, drip of acid eroding her soul.

Max wipes tears from his eyes. "We won't be doing this again," he promises. It cripples him every year. Interventions and compassion combust like kerosene on Grace's rage.

"Healthy boundaries are a gift," I say, kissing his neck. "And, gratitude, the greatest gift of all." I inhale the healing power of that notion as Max puts his hand on the swell of my belly.

Our baby will always know that we thank the moon and stars for her every breath.

Sharyl Heber is a novelist, screenwriter and poet. She has served as the Director of the SLO NightWriters Golden Quill writing competition and as judge for the SLO Coastal School District student writing competition. She has won awards of her own for prose and poetry, including First Place in Short Fiction in the 2016 Central Coast Writers Conference Contest. Sharyl is a member of SLO NightWriters and has served on their Board of Directors—For writers at all levels in all genres, find them online at slonightwriters.org.

Submit your stories for the newly revamped Tolosa Press

The name may have changed, but our column is still going strong. We need submissions, so get yours in now.

Full submission guidelines at www.slonightwriters.org

Submit your 500-600 word short fiction to Meagan at meaganfriberg@gmail.com



Meagan Friberg

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

Let's Get Social

Help SLO NightWriters expand our social media presence! We know how much our members love SLONW but we need your help with expanding our reach throughout SLO County and beyond!

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!

New Year's Resolution

If you're struggling to come up with your New Year's Resolution, we have one for you which will bring you reading pleasure and information and help you to support your fellow authors: *Read Local Authors*

And to help you keep your resolution, we have the perfect event for you.

Date: January 15

Place: Coalesce Bookstore

845 Main Street - Morro Bay, CA. 93442 (805) 772-2880

Time: 1:00 – 4:00

Event: NightWriter Authors Showcase Books

Judythe Guarnera, Anne R. Allen, Elizabeth Roderick, Paul Alan Fahey, and Eldonna Edwards will be reading from and signing their latest novels.

Elizabeth and Eldonna recently presented at NW meetings.

Anne is an award-winning blogger who has been a regular presenter at meetings

Judythe is the Editor of the SLO NW anthology and originator of the NW column in Tolosa Press and a former board member.

Paul is a writing guru who shares his expertise at the drop of a hat.

As an added attraction, Mara Purl, who has been a frequent presenter at the Central Coast Writers Conference, as well as for NW, will read from her essay in Paul's anthology.

REVIEW OF DECEMBER MEETING

Three NightWriters presented work at Round Table One. The importance of consistent *point of view* was discussed.

Definition: Point of view is the eyes, be it a character or narrator, from which we see the action of a story.

First Person Point of View is when the character / narrator tells us the story using **I**:

“It was times like these when **I** thought my father, who hated guns and had never been to any wars, was the bravest man who ever lived.” Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

“**I** could not unlove him now, merely because **I** found that he had ceased to notice me.” Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*.

“And **I** like large parties. They’re so intimate. At small parties there isn’t any privacy.” F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*

Second Person Point of View is when the character / narrator tells us the story using **You**. This point of view is often used for oration and instructions:

“My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for **you**, ask what **you** can do for your country.” - John F. Kennedy

“**You** must be the change **you** wish to see in the world.” - Mahatma Gandhi

"Be who **you** are and say what **you** feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." - Bernard M. Baruch

Third Person Point of View is when the character / narrative tells us the story using **He/She/They/It**.



By Jan Alarcon



“Wilbur never forgot Charlotte. Although **he** loved her children and grandchildren dearly, none of the new spiders ever quite took her place in his heart.” E.B. White’s *Charlotte’s Web*.

“Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four Privet Drive, were proud to say that **they** were perfectly normal, thank you very much.” J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*.

“Mrs. Allen was one of that numerous class of females, who society can raise no other emotion than surprise at there being any men in the world who could like them well enough to marry **them**.” Jane Austen’s *Northanger Abbey*.

One of the stories presented had a main character with a mysterious *tragic flaw*.

Definition: Tragic flaws are character traits that lead to an individual’s, often the hero’s, downfall.

Here are some examples of tragic flaws in well-known Shakespeare’s characters:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <u>Character:</u> Hamlet | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Hesitance |
| <u>Character:</u> Ophelia | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Dependence |
| <u>Character:</u> Juliet | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Impatience |
| <u>Character:</u> MacBeth | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Ambition |
| <u>Character:</u> Lady MacBeth | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Materialism |
| <u>Character:</u> Julius Caesar | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Arrogance |
| <u>Character:</u> Othello | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Jealously |
| <u>Character:</u> King Lear | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Pride |
| <u>Character:</u> Prospero | <u>Tragic Flaw:</u> Naiveté |



Susan Tuttle taught us about *Beginnings* at Round Table Two. "The opening of a story is the most important part of the entire piece. If the opening doesn't entice readers to read on, it doesn't matter how good or well written the rest of the story is."

Great first paragraphs should:

1. Grab the reader's attention;
2. Introduce a character readers will care about (protagonist);
3. Set the story's mood;
4. Establish the Author's style and voice;
5. Orient readers to the protagonist's world;
6. Lock in the genre;
7. End in a way that's both satisfying and surprising (makes them turn the page);
8. Draw readers into one aspect of the story.

Susan suggested that we read the opening lines of 30-50 books, sort them by those that attract us and those that repel us, and then analyze each pile. Below is a list of first lines from contemporary children's novels that intrigue me:

1. "There will be no awakening." Rick Yanev's *The 5th Wave* (2013)
2. "One summer night I fell asleep, hoping the world would be different when I woke." Benjamin Alire Saenz's *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* (2012)
3. "First the colors." Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief* (2006)



4. "When I wake up, the other side of the bed is cold." Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* (2008)
5. "There was a hand in the darkness, and it held a knife." Neil Gaiman's *The Graveyard Book* (2008)
6. "I am a blood-soaked girl." Stephanie Oakes' *The Sacred Lies of Minnow Bly* (2015)

The guest speaker at our general meeting was Elizabeth Roderick. Elizabeth writes dark, gritty novels with themes of death, madness, gang warfare, and of course, love. Her published books include *The Other Place*, about a teenager with the diagnosis of schizophrenia; *Love or Money*, about a young woman recently been released from prison; and *The Hustle*, about a young woman struggling with drug addiction.

Liz taught us how to present our manuscripts at twitter pitch contests. It turns out we can launch our publishing careers by explaining our completed novels to fellow authors, agents and editors in 140 characters. Three contests Liz highly recommended are Pitch Wars, Nightmare on Query Street, and #PitMad.

We are at the end of 2016, a complicated year for nation and for many of us. We boldly move forward into an uncertain future. I leave you with my favorite translation of a much-loved Rumi quote. It is my heart-felt message to all of you:

"Somewhere beyond right and wrong there is a garden, I will meet you there."

Until next month,
Jan Alarcón, PhD





by: Mike Price

GETTING TO KNOW NIGHTWRITER MEMBERS

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Corrie Lynn Player

One of our founding mothers, a permanent member, Corrie Lynn writes this from Utah:

What a delightful group you've become. I organized SLO NightWriters in 1988 while I was teaching at CalPoly. I'm so proud of the inclusive attitudes prominently displayed in the newsletter.

I live in Cedar City, Utah, running a geotechnical company with my husband. I don't have much time to write but am trying to organize the business so that I can write the three non-fiction books tapping at my soul. I do still write a regular column for a local weekly paper, the *Sanpete Messenger*. Mainly to keep my fingers limber, as the publisher is a dear friend and we all know what a challenge the print media continues to face.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 2016

Corrie Lynne Player has made family issues and child advocacy her life's work. She and her husband are the parents of nine children, including three adopted from the foster care system, and grandparents of 42. They specialized in attachment disorders and behaviorally challenged adolescents.

Corrie Lynne has been an active member of the National Foster Parents Association (NFPA) since 1990 and served as VP of Region 8. Today, she focuses her energy on recruitment and training of foster parents, rather than direct care. She routinely gives workshops on relationships and parenting throughout the U.S., especially the Rocky Mountains.

Corrie Lynne has written about, consulted with and helped expand various adoptive and foster parent programs. She writes a regular column for two local newspapers titled, "Heaven Help Us" and has published several books, as well as multiple newspapers and magazines—both in print and online.

Kenny Lake Ventures, LLC
CORRIE LYNNE PLAYER, M.Ed.
WRITING RESUME

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Society of Women Engineers: Editorial Board

Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)

American Consulting Engineers Council (Associate Member; national committee member).

National Federation of Independent Businesses

Rocky Mountain Environmental Issues Implementation Committee (White House Conference on Small Business 1995); Co-Chair.

Founder and First President of SLO Nightwriters and Cedar City Nightwriters (both current).

League of Utah Writers (current, professional status).

The Authors' Guild, Inc. (current).

PUBLICATIONS (More material is available on request)

National business publication credentials include:

"How to Avoid a Rural Waste Management Nightmare," *World Waste Magazine*; January 1997.

"What I Wish Schools Would Teach," *Self-Employed Professional*; May 1998.

"How Brain Power Becomes Money," *Society of Women Engineers (SWE) Magazine*; May/June 1998.

"When a Loved One Struggles with Addiction," *The Ensign*; April 2004.

"Building Bonds with Your Foster Child," *Fostering Families Today*; September/October 2014.

Since 1972, Corrie Lynne's work has appeared in such publications as *McCall's*, *Family Circle*, *Woman's Day*, and *Ladies Home Journal*, as well as many regional and specialty publications.



"Everybody walks past a thousand story ideas every day. The good writers are the ones who see five or six of them. Most people don't see any."

~Orson Scott Card

Quote of the Month

"I do not want to just read books; I want to climb inside them and live there."

~Anonymous

Word of the Month

"comminute"

Definition: (adj, vt. L *com* + *minuere*, to lessen)

1. to pulverize, as in a chemical processing; triturate; 2. powdered or crushed; pulverized

Synonyms: bray, mash, crunch, grind, fragment, break up

Usage: After the marauding teenagers left the area, Shelly stared at the comminuted remains of her room and cried.

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 our webmaster, Janice Konstantinidis, (jkon50@gmail.com)** 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.

"Cheat your landlord if you must, but do not try to shortchange the Muse. It cannot be done. You can't fake quality any more than you can fake a good meal."

~William S. Burroughs



by: Liz Roderick

A WRITER'S PROCESS

(If you would like me to feature your book, please contact me at [elizabethroderick@att.net!](mailto:elizabethroderick@att.net))

I will read your book and contact you via email with questions about your writing process.

A Brief History of Poetry

Unlike other literary forms that we can date to precise texts and time periods, it's a challenge to pinpoint the earliest work of poetry. In one form or another, poetry has been around for thousands of years. However, we might think of the epic poem as the first instance of poetry, appearing as early as the 20th century B.C. Jumping hundreds of years ahead, we might turn, then, to the sonnet form and its early appearance in the 13th century. Before moving into more modern poetic forms, it's important to consider Restoration poetry of the 17th century and the satirical verses of John Dryden and Alexander Pope.

When most of us think about poetry's beginnings, we're drawn to the work of notable Romantic poets or to the American fireside poets who responded to the work of those British writers, reusing old forms and creating new ones. Yet by the 20th and 21st centuries, Modernism and the waves of change brought about by world war also influenced poetry, resulting in works by poets with distinct voices who came to enjoy global circulation.

Where Does Poetry Begin? Discovering the Epic Poem

Who wrote the first work of poetry, and is it something that a collector can seek out in an antiquarian bookstore? *The Epic of Gilgamesh* often is cited as one of the earliest works of epic poetry, dating back to the 18th century B.C. Consisting of Sumerian poems, it's a text that was discovered through many different Babylonian tablet versions during archaeological excavations. Other examples of early epic poems might include the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, the latter of which has become an important narrative in both Hindu and Buddhist mythology throughout regions of Asia.

A list of the most notable works of epic poetry—at least in the Western world—would have to include the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, both works of Greek mythology that have

been attributed to the poet Homer. Written in dactylic hexameter, the *Iliad* recounts the battle between Achilles, a famed warrior, and King Agamemnon during the Trojan War. A companion of sorts to the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* depicts the long journey of its hero, Odysseus. Although these poetic works initially were composed thousands of years ago, even modest collectors can seek out translations for their libraries. For instance, you might look for T.E. Shaw's 1951 translation of the *Odyssey*, published by Oxford University Press.

Onto the Sonnets

Wouldn't it be a crime to discuss the history of poetry without mentioning the creation of the sonnet form? While many of us simply learned to distinguish between Petrarchan and Shakespearean sonnets in a high school or college English class, it's important to know that these works are fundamental to the history of verse. Traditionally, sonnets are written in iambic pentameter and the rhyme scheme varies depending upon whether you're looking at an Italian or an English poem.

Petrarca, for whom the Petrarchan sonnet is named, is perhaps one of the most famous early writers of the sonnet. Following his work in the 13th century, other poets created variations of the sonnet, but it became best known as an English poetic form through the work of William Shakespeare in the 16th century. Where did the poetic form lead after the sonnet? Elizabethan poetry of the 1500s soon shifted into Restoration poetry and a marked turn away from the sonnet.

Collecting early examples of poetry might seem like a difficult challenge, but it turns out that locating different editions and translations of these works can make for an exciting challenge. In addition, the more we read poetry from the 18th century and earlier, the more likely we are to recognize those forms, themes, and images in modern and contemporary works.

Don't you want to know more about how the epic poetry of Homer ultimately resulted in the new forms created by contemporary writers like T.S. Eliot, Derek Walcott, and Seamus Heaney? Experimentation with the poetic form didn't begin with 20th-century modernism, but rather in distinct variations on traditional forms that popped up hundreds of years prior.

Restoration Poetry and Satire

Following the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, the English Restoration period (from 1660-1689) saw the rise of literary elites, such as John Dryden. Perhaps one of the best-known names of English literary criticism, translation, drama, and poetry, Dryden made his name as a poet with his satirical mock-heroic, or mock-epic, poems. The most famous of these is a work written while he was Poet laureate, *Mac Flecknoe; or, A satyr upon the True-Blew-Protestant Poet, T.S.*

It's no secret that Dryden drafted this poem to mock Thomas Shadwell, another of Dryden's contemporaries. Richard Oden, a Dryden scholar, explained that Dryden wrote the

mock-heroic in response to Shadwell's "offenses against literature." Another of Dryden's notable mock-heroics is *Absalom and Achitophel*, published in 1681 toward the end of Restoration. While Dryden crafted his poetry more than 300 years ago, it's still possible to get our hands on interesting editions of his works. For instance, you might keep an eye out for 19th-century editions of his work with gilt page edges, such as *The Poetical Works of John Dryden*.

The form of the mock-heroic and the use of poetic form for satire didn't end with Dryden. Alexander Pope, most famous for his work *The Rape of the Lock* (1712), carried on Dryden's tradition of using poetry for comedic ends.

The Romantics and 19th-Century Poetry

Since we're keeping this history brief, it's difficult to provide any kind of full accounting of poetry in the 19th century. However, some important poets to consider include key Romantic poets such as William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, and John Keats. And naturally, if you're familiar with American poetry in this period, you've come across some of the fireside poets like Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and William Cullen Bryant.

In other circles, Walt Whitman revolutionized the 19th-century American spirit with his *Leaves of Grass*, while most of Emily Dickinson's use of language fragments, hyphens, and em-dashes, written in the mid-to-late 1800s, were published only posthumously.

Into the 20th Century

Toward the turn of the 20th century as Whitman continued to revise his 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, he wrote, "Of Modern Man I Sing," ushering in a new period—and a variety of forms—for poetry. The newfangled, modernist language of Gertrude Stein gloriously overwhelmed American and expatriate readers who bought *Tender Buttons* in 1914. Those same readers were to be startled again a short time later by T.S. Eliot's use of ancient languages and invocation of previous poetical texts in his famous poem, *The Waste Land* (1927).

Yet modernist poetry wasn't limited to Americans living abroad. The seminal work of Claude McKay, an African American poet born in Jamaica who immigrated to the U.S. in 1912, carried the Caribbean region into his distinctly American poetic voice. Writing of war, racism, and memories of Jamaica, McKay authored notable poems such as "If We Must Die," "The Lynching," and "The Tropics in New York."

The 20th century also witnessed a number of poets winning the Nobel Prize, from the United States to India. Rabindranath Tagore, who resisted colonial language intrusion and wrote solely in Bengali, won this esteemed award in 1913, followed by Irish poets like William Butler Yeats in 1923 and Seamus Heaney in 1995. If you're collecting the work of some of these Nobel Laureates, you might look, for example, for Heaney's *Human Chain* (2010), *Electric Light* (2001), or *The Haw Lantern* (1987). Other significant poets who won the Nobel Prize

include Rudyard Kipling, Wole Soyinka, and Derek Walcott. Walcott's *Tiepolo's Hand* (2000) or *The Star-Apple Kingdom* (1979) would be interesting additions to any poetry collection.

Whether you're interested in first editions of modern and contemporary poetry signed by the authors, or earlier works in interesting new editions and translations, collecting poetry can provide you with many different text forms from various regions across the world. And reading poetry can help to expand your historical and political knowledge, too. Who knows--after reading the poetry of Kipling, Soyinka, and Walcott, you may just find yourself with a newfound appreciation for postcolonial literature and aesthetic forms of resistance.

Contributed by Janice Konstantinidis

Written by: Audrey Golden

10 Great Book Adaptations to Film

from Michael Schilf for The Script Lab

Not all movie adaptations are terrible. Here are 10 lesser-known adaptations that were so good, audiences on the whole didn't bother about their loyalty to the original work. Simply put, these movies stand alone.

1. **Stand By Me (1986):** Based on a Stephen King novella, it captures King's morbid humor.
 2. **JFK (1991):** An adaptation of two dense historical texts in a way that makes sense.
 3. **Sin City (2005):** Penned by the original author who used 4 of his graphic novels and used them as scripts, with dialogue almost word-for-word.
 4. **Fight Club (1991):** Chuck Palahniuk, author of the novel, has stated that David Fincher's film version is superior to the original novel.
 5. **The Treasure of the Sierra Madra (1948):** Vision and practical production skills—combined with a great literary work—can redefine an original story.
 6. **Midnight Cowboy (1969):** Waldo Salt's adaptation of James Leo Herlihy's novel set the tone for 1970s films—bleak, cynical and critical of society.
 7. **12 Angry Men (1957):** Adapted from a teleplay rather than a book, this story takes place in one room, in real time, and gets more interesting as it goes on.
 8. **All the President's Men (1976):** A solid, historical text for future generations to study.
 9. **Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (1964):** A film whose original material was critically hailed, and when re-conceived into the absurd comic end of the spectrum, maintained and even grew its audience.
 10. **The Graduate (1967):** This film struck a cultural chord with America that turned into a phenomenon.
-

Q&A with December's published authors of Tolosa Press

Sharyl Heber and Cynthia Replogle

By Meagan Friberg

During the month of December, two of our SLO NightWriters members, *Sharyl Heber* and *Cynthia Replogle*, had stories published in the three Tolosa Press papers: SLO City News, Coast News and Bay News. Both authors have been nice enough to share some insight into their story-writing process as well as their experience working with our NightWriters editorial committee.

My hope is that by opening up to their fellow NightWriters, these authors will inspire each and every one of you to work on a story of your own during this New Year, 2017.

Many thanks to Sharyl and Cynthia – here's what they had to say:

Sharyl Heber, author of Into the Winter Light

NW: Where did you come up with the idea for your recent story, *Into the Winter Light*?

Sharyl: The first version of this story was set at Thanksgiving time – Giving Thanks – Gratitude. I thought, how devastating to not feel grateful for the gifts in our lives and I wanted to explore the impact of that. The theme seemed to work for Christmas as well.

NW: How was the editing process with the NW editorial team?

Sharyl: It was very smooth. I was not asked to make changes with this story, but I have been in the past with other Tolosa submissions. It's a great service to have others give feedback and I think my stories were improved by the editorial process. The new Coordinator, Meagan, is open and inviting. It's a very friendly process.

NW: What did you learn during this process?

Sharyl: When I have gotten editorial feedback from this team, they've pointed out gaps in logic and areas of confusion. Things I could not perceive myself. It was very helpful and most appreciated!

NW: Will you consider submitting stories for Tolosa again in the future?

Sharyl: Absolutely, yes! What a great opportunity we have for publication in this collaborative relationship with Tolosa Press!



Sharyl Heber

Cynthia Replogle, author of *Twelve Days* and *Almost a Year: A Christmas Letter*

NW: *Where did you come up with the idea for your recent story, *Twelve Days and Almost a Year: A Christmas Letter*?*

Cynthia: While listening to the “Twelve Days of Christmas” song, I thought about what life would be like for the woman whose true love gave her all of those animals, performers and more, not just at the time, but at some point in the future. Perhaps she’d write one of those chatty Christmas letters to tell her friends and family about it.

NW: *How was the editing process with the NW editorial team?*

Cynthia: It was a small challenge to cut the piece to fit the word count requirement, but the suggested changes were minor and I was fine with incorporating them.

NW: *What did you learn during this process?*

Cynthia: The biggest thing I learned is that it meant a lot to have my writing published in physical form – ink on paper instead of pixels on a screen like all of my other articles.



Cynthia Replogle

NW: *Will you consider submitting stories for Tolosa again in the future?*

Cynthia: Yes!

Three Habits of Successful Writers

1. **Write Regularly:** “Inspiration exists, but it has to find you working.” (Pablo Picasso) To be a successful writer, you need to write—even when you don’t feel like it. The more regularly you write, the more regularly you produce work worth reading.
2. **Edit, Edit, Edit:** “No one cares about your first draft.” (Neil Gaiman) Editing takes focus and perspective. It also takes time; time to do it, and time to leave your work alone for a while so you can go back with a fresh mind and do what needs to be done.
3. **Keep Submitting:** “Editors never buy manuscripts that are left on the closet shelf at home.” (John W. Campbell) Submit regularly to magazines, journals, agents, publishers. Make a clear number-based goal on how many submissions you want out at a time, then stick to it. When you receive a rejection (and you will), send another submission out. Make sure your edited and polished work is being considered out in the world. After all, that’s why you wrote it, right?

Join The NightWriters 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,
Joanne Feeney



“No man who bothers about originality will ever be original: whereas if you simply try to tell the truth (without caring twopence how often it has been told before) you will, nine times out of ten, become original without ever having noticed it.”

~CS Lewis

Let's Hear It For the Descriptivists

adapted from Misty Adoniou on iflscience.com

Grammar is how we organize our sentences in order to communicate meaning. Traditional grammar rules were made up in the 18th Century by **prescriptivists**, who used the rules of Latin to cobble together the grammar rules we learned in school.

But today, **descriptivists** advocate rules that describe how English is used by different people, for different purposes. They recognize that language isn't static, and it's not one-size-fits-all.

Here are five "rules" we learned long ago, that aren't so hard and fast anymore.

1. **You can't start a sentence with a conjunction:** Prescriptivists say it's incorrect to start a sentence with a conjunction like "but" or "and". But descriptivists say that, at this point in our linguistic history, it's fine to start a sentence (like this one) with a conjunction in an op-ed article, in a novel, or in a poem. Times are certainly changing.
2. **You can't end a sentence with a preposition:** Yes, in Latin, you can't. But in English, we do it all the time. Actually, we have a choice between: Who did you go to the movies with? and, With whom did you go to the movies? It all depends on our audience. Know who you are writing for and you can make grammatical choices to speak and write for a wide range of audiences.
3. **Put a comma when you need to take a breath:** Writing and breathing have nothing to do with each other, which is why commas are so poorly used. In short, commas provide demarcation between like grammatical structures, such as a group of adjectives, nouns, phrases, or clauses that butt up against each other. Commas can also separate out words, phrases or clauses that are embedded in a sentence for effect. Like, for example, the commas in this sentence.
4. **To make your writing more descriptive, use more adjectives:** No, Mark Twain had it right. "When you catch an adjective, kill it. No, I don't mean utterly, but kill most of them—then the rest will be valuable." For truly descriptive writing, play with your sentence structure. Here's one from Liz Lofthouse's children's book, *Ziba Came On A Boat*: "Clutching her mother's hand, Ziba ran on and on, through the night, far away from the madness until there was only darkness and quiet." Beautifully descriptive and not an adjective in sight.
5. **Adverbs are words that end in 'ly':** Yes, lots of adverbs do end in 'ly', but lots don't. Adverbs give information about verbs. They tell when, where, how and why the verb happened. So words like tomorrow and deep can become adverbs. What's best? Use strong verbs and you won't need to give more information about them.

If you want to understand what our language can do and how to use it well, read widely, think deeply and listen carefully. And remember, neither time nor language stands still—for any of us.

"Critique Group Connections"

NW Members—Please, email critique requests to: Janice Konstantinidis (jkon50@gmail.com) We'll print your specific request in this **Critique Group Connections** section of the newsletter for all NW members to view, increasing opportunities for NW critiquing. Use this information to find a match for your needs, make contacts, or to start a new group or critique partnership. Contact Janice for assistance if needed and she'll get you to the right people. And, if you form a group, please let Janice know so she can list it on the website. She can also forward your group's information to the newsletter. Critique Group Guidelines are available on the website at www.slomightwriters.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.

Tony Taylor is seeking a critique group for FICTION, YA, CHILDREN'S MIDDLE GRADE or VARIED GENRES, preferred skill level is advanced/experienced writers. Preferred location is SLO City area. Contact Tony at 805-704-3528 or by email: tony@anthonyjtaylor.com

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

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

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

Contact Griselda at 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

David Flamm is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange or 1:1 writing mentor/partner or editing fee for service, for COMMERCIAL FICTION. Preferred Skill Level is Intermediate to Advanced. Preferred locations for meetings are SLO City, South County/Santa Maria, Orcutt. Contact David at 805-868-3779 or by email: david.flamm@yahoo.com

Christina Grimm is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for VARIED NO GENRE RESTRICTIONS. No skill restrictions. Preferred location for meetings is SLO City, Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria, but can travel to other locations. Contact Christina at 805-459-4923 or by email: grimmpsych@gmail.com

Jill Stegman is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for LITERARY FICTION or LITERARY HYBRIDS WITH THRILLER, SUSPENSE, MYSTERY. Preferred skill level is advanced. Preferred location for meetings is SLO City, Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria or North County. Contact Jill at 805-466-1956 or by email: jastegman@gmail.com

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

Alycia Kiley is seeking a critique group for VARIED GENRES but primarily POETRY, NON FICTION and ARTICLES; skill level is intermediate. SLO City location is preferred. Contact Alycia at 602-7075 or by email, alyciakiley@gmail.com

George Klein is seeking a critique group or 1:1 writing mentor/partner for COMMERCIAL FICTION; No particular skill level or meeting location restrictions. Contact George at 712-3378 or by email, fangio@charter.net

Steve Bowder is seeking a critique group that concentrates on true stories embellished to make them interesting, but that stay true to the facts that are known. Contact Steve at: sbowder@live.com

The 51 Most Commonly Misused English Words/Phrases

From Steve Pinker, a linguist and cognitive scientist at Harvard University:

1. **Adverse:** unfavorable, harmful; commonly confused with adverse, which means disinclined.
2. **Appraise:** to evaluate the value of something; commonly confused with apprise, which means to inform.
3. **As far as:** the same; commonly confused with the phrase “as far: which means “with regard to.”
4. **Begs the question:** implies a conclusion that isn’t supported by the evidence; confused with “raises the question.”
5. **Bemused:** bewildered; commonly confused with amused, which means entertained.
6. **Cliché:** a noun; commonly misused as an adjective.
7. **Credible:** believable; commonly confused with gullible.
8. **Criteria:** a plural word often misused as a singular. The singular is criterion.
9. **Data:** a plural word, commonly used as a singular noun. Singular is datum.
10. **Depreciate:** to decrease in value; commonly confused with deprecate, which means to disapprove of.
11. **Dichotomy:** a division between two things; commonly confused with “a difference.”
12. **Disinterested:** unbiased; commonly confused with uninterested.
13. **Enervate:** to cause someone to feel drained; commonly misused to mean to energize.
14. **Enormity:** extremely bad or morally wrong; commonly confused with enormous.
15. **Flaunt:** to show off; commonly confused with flout, which means to openly disregard.
16. **Flounder:** to struggle helplessly; commonly confused with founder, which means to fill with water and sink.
17. **Fortuitous:** to happen by chance; commonly confused with fortunate.
18. **Fulsome:** Excessively flattering; commonly misused to mean full or copious.
19. **Homogeneous (home-genius):** commonly misspelled as homogenous.
20. **Hone:** sharpen or refine; commonly misused in the phrase “home in on” which means to move toward a goal or target.
21. **Hot button:** an emotionally or politically charged issue; commonly confused with hot topic.
22. **Hung:** suspended; commonly misused to mean suspended from the neck until dead.
23. **Intern (verb):** to detain or imprison; commonly confused with inter, which means to bury a body.

24. **Ironic:** to happen in a way that's opposite of expectations; commonly misused to mean unfortunate.
25. **Irregardless:** not a word, but commonly confused with regardless.
26. **Literally:** a fact; commonly confused with figuratively or metaphorically.
27. **Luxuriant:** rich or lush; commonly confused with luxurious.
28. **Meretricious:** to appear attractive but lack value or sincerity; commonly confused with meritorious, which means to deserve praise.
29. **Mitigate:** alleviate; commonly confused with militate, which means to be a powerful or conclusive factor in preventing.
30. **New Age:** spiritualistic and holistic; commonly misused to mean modern or futuristic.
31. **Noisome:** smelly; commonly misused to mean noisy.
32. **Nonplussed:** surprised or confused; commonly misused to mean bored.
33. **Opportunism:** exploiting opportunities; commonly misused to mean creating opportunities.
34. **Parameter:** a variable; commonly misused to mean a condition or limit.
35. **Phenomena:** a plural noun, commonly misused as a mass noun. Singular = phenomenon.
36. **Politically correct:** inoffensive or appropriate; commonly misused to mean fashionable.
37. **Practicable:** to be able to put together successfully; commonly confused with practical.
38. **Proscribe:** to condemn; commonly confused with prescribe, which means to recommend.
39. **Protagonist:** an active or lead character; commonly confused with proponent.
40. **Refute:** to prove something false; commonly misused to mean to allege to be false.
41. **Reticent:** restrained or shy; commonly confused with reluctant.
42. **Shrunk, sprung, stunk and sunk:** all are used in past participle (with had) and are commonly misused alone in the past tense.
43. **Simplistic:** overly simple; commonly misused to mean pleasantly simple.
44. **Staunch:** loyal; commonly confused with stanch, which means to stop the flow.
45. **Tortuous:** twisting; commonly confused with torturous.
46. **Unexceptionable:** not open to objection; commonly confused with unexceptional, which means ordinary.
47. **Untenable:** Not sustainable; commonly misused to mean painful or unbearable.
48. **Urban Legend:** a false and widely circulated story; commonly misused to mean someone who is legendary in a city.
49. **Verbal:** in linguistic form; commonly confused with spoken.
50. **An effect** = an influence. **To effect** = to put something into effect. **To affect** = to influence or fake.
51. **To lie** (lies, lay, has lain) = to recline. **To lay** (lays, laid, has laid) = to set down. **To lie** (lies, lied, has lied) = to fib.

GREAT BEGINNINGS

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

QUERY TIPS FROM EXPERTS

1. Don't query until Mss is ready to send, in case agent requests it.
2. Check out agent's website, tweets & blog posts to get a sense of style & taste.
3. Make sure you have a great query letter to go with that great mss.
4. Fiction, with few exceptions, must be finished before querying an agent.
5. Query to specific age groups: YA and MG do not go together. (young adult/middle grade)
6. Under 20,000 words for MG is too short; it usually gets rejected.
7. Many stories turned down after 50 pages because the story doesn't start in the right place.
8. Don't send query on just completed mss; beta-read, revise, edit, etc. long before querying.
9. An agent or editor should never be your first reader.
10. Assemble a good team of editors, beta readers, bloggers, other authors, etc.
11. Test your pitch on people who haven't read the mss. Do they get what the story is about?
12. 30k words is not an adult novel.
13. Don't use self-publishing because you're impatient or want a "test drive." Make it a conscious and professional choice.
14. One line is a pitch; a synopsis should tell all major plot points, not just the start.
15. All submissions, fiction and nonfiction, require a query letter. A proposal is not a query.
16. Email your query to a few friends to make sure your formatting isn't wonky.
17. Don't overstate the popularity of your blog/website. It's too easy to check.
18. Have an online presence, so agents can easily find your contact info.
19. Format your book summary on cover copy of your favorite reads. What convinced you to read them? Use that formula.
20. Don't send an agent what he/she doesn't like or doesn't want. They're not in the business of making exceptions, no matter how well written your work is.
21. Don't let someone else send your query; email it yourself.
22. Don't limit yourself by offering an exclusive. Research well and send to others, too.
23. To find what agent repped a specific book, check the acknowledgments page of the book, or search on www.publishersmarketplace.com (there's a fee involved there, though).
24. Look for new agents; they're hungry, looking to grow and can often give extra time.
25. Check the dates on agent interviews; what they wanted in '09 the might not want now.
26. Don't put "copyright 2014" on your mss if querying in 2017. Makes it look like it's been shopped around for 3 years. In fact, best not to put any copyright on the mss.
27. If you write prescriptive nonfiction, make sure you have a platform.
28. For collaborations, always have written agreement with clear splits, even if it's your spouse.

We Need Your Help!

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

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

President: Dennis Eamon Young
 Vice-President: **Open**
 Secretary: Carol Schmidt
 Treasurer: Susan Tuttle
 Program Director: Janice Konstantinidis
 Contest Committee Chair: **Open**
 Membership Director: **Open**
 Critique Group Coordinator: **Open**
 Social Media/Publicity Coordinator: Joanne Feeney
 Tolosa Press Submissions: Meagan Friberg
 Welcome Committee: **Open**
 Sunshine Chair: Kalila Volkov
 Website Master: Janice Konstantinidis
 Web Assistant: Steve Derks
 Newsletter: Susan Tuttle, Elizabeth Roderick **Open**
 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: January 10th, 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.sltonightwriters.org

Notify NW of any change in address or email:

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

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

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

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

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

MEMBER SITE LINKS!

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

BOOK REVIEWS!

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

WRITERS SERVICES!

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

FACEBOOK!

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

LinkedIn!

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

CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

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

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

CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

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

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

MEMOIR AND NON-FICTION

Disbanded until there is more interest. If you would like to explore re-starting this group, please contact Judith directly.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

Contact: Judith Bernstein
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

This group has disbanded for various reasons until further notice.

SOUTH COUNTY WRITERS

Meets on the **second and fourth Saturdays from 9:30 AM to noon in Grover Beach.** This group thrives on variety, writing short stories, articles, poetry and novels, all genres from fiction to biography and memoirs. Members exchange work by email at least one week before the meeting in order to receive in-depth critiques aimed at eliminating weaknesses and increasing strengths in everything from plot and character development to grammar and proper manuscript preparation. Intermediate to advanced writers are welcome. We meet in a casual and fun atmosphere and are serious about fully developing each member's writing talent, whether for publication or self-satisfaction. Visitors are always welcome.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS

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

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

Meets every **Wednesday morning in 5 Cities area from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.** Not a traditional NightWriter critique group. Work is produced in each session, then analyzed according to the objective of the day's goal. Based on writing exercises designed to jump-start the creative process (based on the lessons and exercises in the *Write It Right* Series), these sessions take writers through the process of writing fiction from inception of idea to the final resolution. This group is for all writers who want to learn the process of crafting a well-told story while developing their own voice and style. We explore such topics as ideas, character, story arc, tone, voice, POV, tension, dialogue, resolution, writing mechanics, etc. There is a small monthly fee involved for this class to cover materials.

CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS.

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

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

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
Mike Perry, 466-8311
dmperry1012@att.net

FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

THE THURSDAY GROUP

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

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

Moderator: Mark Ruszczyzky
zsur@aol.com

PISMO WEDNESDAY GROUP

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

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

Moderator Tom Snow
coinerbop@gmail.com

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 **2nd & 4th Fridays every month, from 10 am to 12 noon** in Arroyo Grande. Bring paper and pencil, or your laptop if you are so inclined—flash pieces, 1000 word strict maximum.

CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS – call or email Diane to be placed on a waiting list.

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

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

POETRY CRITIQUE GROUP

This group is currently inactive.

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