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# President's Letter

by Janice Konstantinidis

Dear Fellow NightWriters,

My message this month is simple: We need volunteers! I have asked our newsletter editor, Steve Derks, to dedicate the last page of this newsletter to our need for help, both on the board and in other supporting roles. We have had positions open for many months and other positions are opening now, as some of our long term volunteers simply want to take a break, to move on to other challenges, or have health issues to address.

[Page 17](#) lists the most urgently needed open positions and briefly describes their requirements. Please peruse them and consider lending a hand. If you have skills that could be helpful to the organization, please consider volunteering.

We also need backups in almost any position. In an ideal organization, we would have knowledgeable individuals able to stand in for volunteers who experience the inevitable life emergencies. It has occurred to me, too, that sharing some positions reduces the stress and workload on our volunteers; that



is an option we will be happy to consider.

Finally, I must mention fundraising. With costs increasing and membership stable, our budget is extremely tight. We need people with fundraising knowledge to help rescue us from this difficult position.

Meanwhile, I hope your writing efforts are highly successful.

*Janice Konstantinidis, President*

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What a colorful fellow am I,  
with such shades of red 'neath my eye.  
With yellow and blues and a few other hues,  
'tis no wonder I always look spry.

*Janice Konstantinidis*



Photo by Lorraine Flakemore

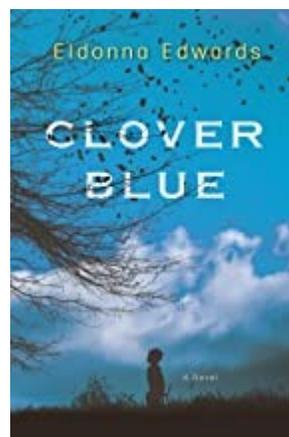
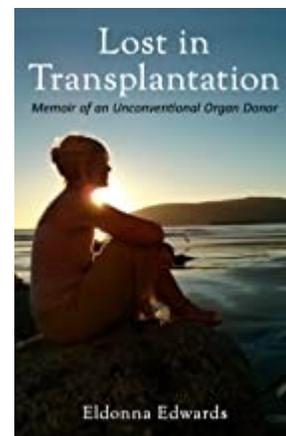
## February 11, 2020 General Meeting: The Hook: Make a Promise to Your Readers (And Keep It!) with Eldonna Edwards

No matter how beautiful your cover or how wonderful your story, you only have about twenty seconds between the time a reader picks up your book and decides whether to purchase. Eldonna will discuss how to hone your opening and deliver on the promise you made on that critical first page.

Eldonna Edwards is a beloved writing instructor, keynote speaker and former creative journaling facilitator, who grew up in a large family nestled between cornfields and churches in the provincial Midwest, an upbringing that provided a fertile background to conjure setting and characters in her award-winning debut novel *This I Know*. In her second novel, *Clover Blue*, Eldonna once again explores themes of otherness and belonging, and the true definition of home. She is also the subject of the award-winning documentary *Perfect Strangers* that follows one kidney patient and one potential kidney donor in their search for a possible match. Her memoir, *Lost in Transplantation*, chronicles this life-changing decision.

Eldonna is drawn to stories about community --the places we live, the families we're born into, and the tribes we gravitate toward. She prefers hometown settings peopled with recognizable characters from the grocery store, a neighborhood cafe or noisy schoolyard. Her books explore the bigger questions of one's meaning and purpose, and the overlapping consequences of our choices, good and bad. Eldonna integrates humor into her stories to balance the complex and sometimes darker aspects of challenging situations.

Eldonna's presentation will begin at 6:30 pm at the United Church of Christ, SLO.



For more information about Eldonna, see her website [www.eldonnaedwards.com](http://www.eldonnaedwards.com).

# WORD PLAY

by Morgann Tayllor

## Definition Impossible?

Try to define **love**. It is arguably the most powerful word in language, possibly because of its complexity, its mystery and its insubordination to one ideal or definition. Articulating **love** can be magic or tragic, real or transitory, or just a figure of speech. Understanding the context and framework of **love** in a story is more about the act than the word as it's written. To express **love** can mean anything, everything or nothing.

*How do I **love** thee, word?* With no apologies to Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Let me count the ways*. Or at least some of the ways, in which the writer can travel to a land of intrigue, scandal and poster-card pretense for their story characters. Each day the writer encounters friends, relatives, associates, acquaintances or strangers, often in some stage of angst concerning **love** or crises stemming from the lack of same. The landscape is rich in story material.



Let's drop in on the town of **Love**, County of **Infatuation**, in the State of **Amour**. Friendly drones bring us an overview of homes and activities in a quiet secluded community three miles from the throbbing **Heartbeat Freeway** that slices through **Love** like a **Cupid's arrow**.

As with any community, some live here in a State of Flux. Newlyweds Mace and Lace at **69 Lust Lane**, can be heard at top scream when they fight before falling into the arms of **desire**.

Delilah and Dean live at **110 Amity Road**. But their life is far less amicable after his day job downsizes and she works two six-hour night shifts to help pay the mortgage. The grind of reality has dampened their **passion**.

BonJoe, now Bonnie and Joe, their **ardor** now harder with five kids, are splitting themselves and their children and moving to separate condo units at opposite ends of **Divorce Court**. Living at **2020 Hind Site** are cross-dressers Rock Hardy and Brickette Stone. No one knows for sure who is which gender or if they are asexual or bi. Each is different racially and culturally but theirs is a **devotion** the community accepts.



Amid this cauldron of **concupiscence** are a vibrant couple who live in a cul-de-sac called **Rapture Run**. Jade and Ginger are considered "normal", productive, responsible citizens whose **family love** is tight. These **soul mates**

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(Continued from page 4)

married 16 years ago. They are business **partners**, donors to charity, members of civic organizations, active in church. They have two kids, now hostage to raging hormones. The 12-year-old girl admits **puppy love** for a boy at school. (Her parents don't yet know of her budding **sex play** or the 14-year old boy's attraction to **porn**.)

This month, like the other couples, Jade and Ginger celebrate **Valentine's Day**. They are the **darlings** of holiday merchants. There are red roses and dinner out. The two exchange cards, **sentiments** and delicacies that **seduce** chocolate **lovers** everywhere with guilty pleasure.



Jade and Ginger have other guilty pleasures, secrets from the public and each other. Jade enjoys two ongoing steamy **affairs**. Ginger's had three flings, including one with an **old flame**. She **loves** feeling attractive to men and seeks the deeper connection she has lost in her marriage.

Jade is a model provider, father and husband (except for the times Ginger doesn't know about), but he has taken her support and encouragement as entitlement with little effort at reciprocation. He doesn't make *her* feel wanted, special. And Jade **loves** the game of chase and conquest; it makes *him* feel virile, special. Can **romance** in this marriage be revived?



The writer can choose from a sketch above *or* beyond to further explore **unconditional love**. **UCL** is usually understood and **cherished** by people with pets; by special **friendships** grappling with occasional disagreements; or by a connected and **affectionate family** investing in **tough love** for a child of any age making unwise choices in life.

Happy endings, redemption, or disillusionment? It's the writer's choice and the reader's anticipation. Such is the power of the word **love**. Such is the challenge of writing a story unfolding the intent, context and resolution of that **love**, however it's defined.

## TIPS AND TIDBITS

by Judythe Guarnera

### LET YOUR READERS IMAGINE YOUR CHARACTER'S PAIN



"So, Judy, on a scale of 1-10, with ten being the worst, how bad would you say your pain is?"

How many times have you been in the hot seat about your pain? You're miserable and depressed and you just want the doctor to make it go away. Instead they ask you arbitrary questions. And you push the panic button:

*If I say a number too low, she'll wonder why I bothered to bring it up. If the number is too high, she'll think I'm a baby, or hungry for attention.*

Even worse, though, is the fact that whatever number you say, the next question the doctor will toss out will be something like: "What kind of a pain is it—sharp, achy, piercing, stabbing? Another dilemma. (I've found it easiest to say: all the above.)

If you have so much trouble describing your own pain to someone who actually is interested in your answer so she can treat you properly, it's not surprising that the task becomes infinitely more difficult in fiction. When an author tries to impart to his reader how painful and/or serious an injury suffered by the protagonist might be, he often struggles to describe it accurately without boring his reader.

Pain is part of the human experience, so it has a defined role in writing. It heightens the drama, raises the stakes, and gives the writer another rock to throw at the protagonist as he inches along his plot line, trying to reach the climax.

Have you ever skipped over an author's description of a character's pain when it goes on too long? If you ask any real person who's

been in a serious accident if their pain felt endless, you'll probably get a loud, 'Of course!' Your goal as a writer, though, is to convey the pain to the reader, but not to the point of boredom.

Writers can easily slip into a list of clichés to describe pain. Familiar words for pain include crushing, burning, gnawing, pounding. Throw in a few searing, nagging, shooting, intense, and your reader might have tuned you out.

Besides also leading to boredom, a cliché robs the reader of the fun of using their imagination to fill in the blanks. It's easy to insult the reader who has a darn good idea of what it feels like to have an elevator door attack his arm, or to stub his bare toe on a chair. No need to say the victim 'writhed in pain,' or that 'he was wracked with pain.'

There's also the technique of ramping up pain to increase tension in the story. If the writer goes overboard in the initial description, he has pretty much eliminated the opportunity to ramp it up to mirror scene tension later on.

Instead of looking for clichés to describe the pain a character is feeling, focus on the consequences of that pain-inducing accident. Let's say a gymnast stubs her toe. Instead of looking for words to describe her pain, focus on her anguish. Chosen to represent her school as the most promising freshman gymnast, she will no longer be able to perform.

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Without describing the pain a character is feeling, we can imagine it because of the effort of his movements. Why not describe another character present at the scene, as he observes the injured person and shoves his fist against his mouth, or grimaces, or shudders or cries out?

Injured people might double over, clutch their stomachs, claw at their throats, gasp for breath. They might collapse, howl, cry or scream. Focusing on how their bodies react gives readers the clues they need to dig into their own experiences and imagine what the

character is feeling. Remember readers like surprises, but they love it when the author sets the groundwork and let's them fill in the blanks.

Next month, we'll discuss what writers often leave out after setting up a 'painful' situation for a protagonist. Think recovery periods for accidents or surgeries, so that a week later, the victim isn't functioning as though he's in perfect shape.

*In the Rhythm of Writing,  
Judythe Guarnera*

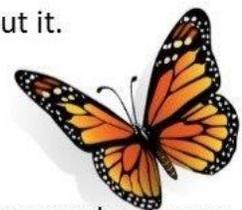
## *Sunshine Corner*

Need a Little Sunshine?

Into every life a little rain might fall, times when we long for sunshine, but no one notices.

NightWriters would like to send a card to any of its members who are ill, have lost a loved one, had surgery or an accident, but we don't always hear about it.

So, Fellow Writers, we need you!



Please email me, Judythe Guarnera: [judy.guarnera@gmail.com](mailto:judy.guarnera@gmail.com) and let me know when someone you know needs a little sunshine.

# THE ETHICS SAGE

by Steven Mintz, PhD



## PURSuing MEANING IN LIFE THROUGH WRITING

We pursue meaning in life through actions we take for our own growth and development and to better the lives of others. These actions can build a sense of self-worth. They can also delight our readers and motivate them to become better persons while, at the same time, satisfying their need for self-esteem. Writing is not only an outlet for our creative energy but motivation to qualitatively improve the communities within which we live and work.

### Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The hierarchy of needs is a motivational theory in psychology that is based on the work of psychologist Abraham Maslow from 1943 through 1970. Maslow suggests that once our basic needs are met (i.e., food, shelter, security) we move on to satisfying personal needs (i.e., love and belongingness) and then higher-level needs such as self-esteem and, ultimately, self-actualization. Self-actualization means to be all that we can be; to accomplish our highest goals in life.

Maslow classified esteem needs into two categories: (1) esteem for oneself (dignity, achievement, independence) and (2) reputation and respect from others (status, prestige). Individuals at this level act to build pride in their work and themselves as people. Maslow suggested that people need both esteem from other people as well as inner self-respect before self-actualization is possible. If

a person does not feel good about themselves and others don't value relationships with them, it seems a self-fulfilling life could not occur. This can negatively affect one's accomplishments as a writer.

### Achieving Self-Actualization as a Writer

As writers, we strive to become noticed not so much for the external need of making money but to be admired by others for our work. We want to do something worthwhile that might change the lives of others for the better. We gain pride as a result, build self-esteem and reach our highest potential as a writer. We can make our mark on society in a positive way.

If we could see the faces of our readers or speak to them about our work, we can gauge how successful we've been in adding meaning to their lives. They might learn about the world through our eyes, be better equipped to deal with relationships of trust, overcome challenges in life, learn tips that can lead to self-improvement and eventually self-actualization.

As writers, we should dedicate ourselves to making a better world. Someone must do it especially in these fractured times, so why not us?

**Steve Mintz blogs under the name Ethics Sage. He recently published *Beyond Happiness and Meaning: Transforming Your Life Through Ethical Behavior*. The book is available on Amazon in paperback and on Kindle.**

## Kudos, Kudos, Kudos...

### **Terry Sanville**

Terry's short story **Two Canes** - a serious love story for seniors - appears in the January 2020 edition of [Adelaide Magazine](#), a print journal published in New York City and Lisbon.

Terry's short story **Circling** will appear in the next issue of [Oracle of Fine Arts Review](#), an annual print journal published by the University of South Alabama.

Terry's longish short story **Glimpses** will appear in the April 2020 edition of [The Scarlet Leaf Review](#), a Canadian online and print journal. Terry says, "If you write longish stories be prepared to wait awhile because they are harder to place. This one took almost two years and about 70 rejections."

### Have Kudos to Crow About?

**Do you have a recent article or story published in a local, national or even international print or online magazine? Or a book published?**

**How about a review, or an award, honor or recognition of your writing?**

**If so, we'd like to know about it. To have your literary kudos included in *WordSmiths*, send an email to [slonnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:slonnewsletter@gmail.com) by the 20th of the month.**

# Perfume and Gasoline

by Jim Arons

I met Melody during my junior year in high school, jumping into a committed relationship way too soon. Neither of us had dated before, and we were totally inexperienced. But everyone needs to experience, enjoy, and afterward, endure our first love. It just strengthens us, I suppose.

I was drawn to Mel because she was cute, and she liked me. But it was the strength of her family that caught my attention. Unlike the war zone I came from, Mel's household was stable, quiet, accommodating, and loving.

My home life was chaotic; there was continual discord starting from the top. My parents were divorcing. It was a long, drawn-out decision spanning twelve years of iffiness in the husband and father department, which created an undue hardship on my mom. Dad committed to his long-time girlfriend after we moved to California. He left home a few months before I did.

Mel and I became inseparable, spending many hours together to the exclusion of anyone else. I was still living at home, but we found physical closeness after school because Mel was allowed to drive her Dad's car. Gas was cheap, but that didn't matter because the car was always full of gas. We spent the afternoons driving along Hwy 1 to San Juan Capistrano, Laguna Beach, and Newport Beach and rarely left the vehicle. The intimacy inside far outweighed any desire to sightsee.

Just like all kids my age, I was a music freak. Music was a much-discussed topic, and music listening equipment were must-have items. I purchased a stereo for my room. It came with headphones, so I could listen to music deep into the night without upsetting anyone. The Wherehouse sold albums as low as \$2.99, and I

taped songs by connecting the cassette deck into the stereo amplifier.

Concert going became a must-do venture, which I used advantageously to elevate my status in my friends' eyes. I worked hard to portray the image of a successful dude; I had a girlfriend, access to a car, could procure concert tickets, plus arrange transport to said show. Besides my enjoyment, it was a means to impress others, either by buying their friendship or wowing them with jealousy.

I borrowed Dad's 1966 Cougar when I arranged a road trip to San Diego to see Jethro Tull. I drove south on Hwy 5 to San Diego with three others. Mel's brother Kevin was in the passenger bucket seat, his best friend Nina was in the back. Mel sat on the hump between the two front seats behind the stick shift because that was the place the girlfriend sat in those days.

Just south of San Clemente, a white van came next to us, making overtures to pull us into a race. It would speed up, get a quarter-mile in front of us, then slow until we caught up to it. If I sped up, passing the van, it reached us even faster. Ultimately, I was going quite fast, and the van was keeping up before suddenly dropping back. It was soon out of sight.

A few seconds later, I realized why he dropped from the race. With the red lights of a patrol car blazing behind me, I pulled over to the shoulder and stopped. I looked around at my passengers...

"Are we cool? Is everyone okay?" I asked.

They nodded. Nina was eating something.

"What are you doing?"

"He's eating his joint."

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"Good, is that it?"

Everybody nodded.

I got out to talk to the CHP officer. Walking his way, I met him between our two vehicles.

"What do you think you're doing?" he yelled at me over the coastal breeze and the whiz of passing cars.

"I'm going to a Jethro Tull concert with my girlfriend."

"It was hard keeping up with you. I clocked you at 115 miles per hour, and it wasn't until you got the flat tire that I caught up with you."

I knew nothing about a flat tire, but when I looked at the right rear where the officer was pointing, I realized he was right.

"Oh, I see. Hang on, give me a second."

I walked to my door and opened it. "Can you guys change the tire? It went flat."

Kevin and Nina climbed out. I handed them the keys, and they proceeded to change the flat while I returned to my conversation with Mr. CHP.

"Why were you going so fast?" he asked in an exasperated manner, looking at me as though I suffered from low intelligence.

"I guess I wasn't paying attention," I lamely replied, kicking at the dirt with my shoe. It hit the toe of the officer's boot, smudging the shiny black polish with dirt.

"Now, why did you do that?"

"I didn't mean to do it," I replied quickly as I bent to rub out the scuff mark with my right hand. After lecturing me more on the

dangers of fast driving, the officer wrote me a ticket for speeding at 95 miles per hour, which was 25 mph over the posted speed limit on that part of the San Diego Freeway. We were all somewhat shaken. Still, we continued to San Diego.

The concert was excellent. It didn't matter Nina ate up his pot; they passed joints around the audience. The smoke in the air made the stage lights look strange and eerie. It was an intense and enthusiastic ambiance comparable to the energy level of an event kids now call a rave.

The next day after school, I preoccupied myself with fixing the flat tire, making up a story for Mom. "When we were changing the flat, a CHP officer stopped and cited us for a fix-it ticket, so I expect to be summoned to court later in the month."

When the court date arrived, Mom and I drove to the Orange County courthouse. As we shuffled into the antechamber, I saw there were seats along the wall; I suggested to Mom she sit outside while I talked to the judge.

"Where is your guardian, Mr. Aarons?" the judge asked.

"I'm here with my mom, but she's tired and wants to sit in the hall out there," I replied.

"Bring her inside this courtroom," he told me.

Mom was furious when she realized my scam. She didn't talk to me at all on the way home.

# Words, Words, Words

## Why I Write

by Judythe Guarnera

"For your born writer, nothing is so healing as the realization that he has come upon the right word."

—Catherine Drinker Bowen

Words! Words! Words!

It's all about words. That's what I believed when I decided at the age of nine that I'd become a journalist. In sixth grade I researched and wrote a report on the Nile River. It so impressed my teacher that she sent me on the circuit of eighth grade classes to share my work.

This tour did nothing to modify my standing as a teacher's pet, but it fed my love of words. My confidence in my ability to write soared. I loved what I could do with words.

I didn't become a journalist, but found a comfort zone in writing newsletters, reports, grants, and business letters in my various non-profit jobs. Putting words on paper and manipulating them to say what I thought was fulfilling.

As I approached retirement, my plan included spending as much time as possible writing. In preparation for that, I utilized my free time to read. The way other writers tell their stories has always increased my facility with words.

Over time I came to realize my writing really wasn't about 'Words,' but about 'Connection.' Words enable me to connect with others in my work, friend, and family circles.

Another discovery offered an additional source of inspiration. When my kids entered school, I volunteered with the hope the teachers would contact me. My volunteering

became more focused as I sought to connect people with resources and tools to improve their lives.

I recognized a pattern. These two discoveries advanced my writing goals by broadening and enhancing each other.

I joined a writing organization and a critique group, determined to write only about what I knew. No research for me, no fiction for me. I'd been fortunate enough to receive a good education and to learn a great deal about people and their needs in my work.

Having four children enhanced and enriched what I labeled 'my expertise.' It was fun and comfortable to sit at my keyboard and expound on familiar topics that were part of that expertise.

Writers claim to have solitary lives, but most of us benefit from interaction with other writers and people. That was true for me, but it was only part of the picture. I needed to know what I wrote made a difference in someone's life. Whether my writing entertained, enlightened or, encouraged, I wanted to believe that I and my words were connecting with my readers.

Being of a passionate mind and disposition and full of 'expertise,' I settled into writing essays to persuade others to share my

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thinking and my knowledge. I discovered that creative nonfiction served as a productive vehicle to tell stories about my life to entertain others.

My dad had convinced me if I wanted something and worked hard enough, I could get it. He also taught me to see the humor in my own life, to laugh at myself and to make others laugh. Hence the *Case of the Controlling Pants*, and "*Chocolate, Chocolate, Chocolate* were published.

My critique group scoffed when I unequivocally stated I couldn't ever write fiction. But my writing organization's annual contest tempted me, and I wrote *Joe, the Genie, and the IRS*, a spoof on gambling with a heavy message about the evils of a gambling addiction.

Years later, after many versions, *Joe...* will finally be published in an anthology. As I'm putting together a collection of 'words' I've put on paper over the years, some published, some not, I'm amazed at how much my writing has changed since the day I wrote the Nile report, and even since I wrote the first version of *Joe*.

I see a direct correlation between my journey of learning and connecting with others, because that growth has affected my writing. As I gather the pages for the collection, even when something was published, I can't stop myself from wanting to edit so it reflects the more mature, enlightened me.

When I realized how valuable a fiction story could be to promote social issues I believed needed addressing, I found another way to simultaneously influence and entertain. My novel, *Twenty-Nine Sneezes: A Journey of Healing* was written to raise awareness that

the damage of abuse continues, sometimes forever, even after the abuse ends.

This story came from my heart, as my daughter and her husband had adopted four nieces and nephews who had been severely abused. I fictionalized their story to connect their journey with others who had also endured abuse.

I could cite familiar quotes about writing, which all are somewhat true for me. "I write because I have to; I write because I can; I write because I want to, need to."

My first job after completing my bachelor's degree in my forties, was as Program Director for the American Lung Association. Each day I sat at my desk, I felt as though I was playing at working. After twenty plus years being a wife and mother, I had a paying job and it, like my writing, was fun.

Mostly that's what I experience when I sit in front of my keyboard—a sense of excitement, of fun. I can't believe I get to do this almost every day. Sure, it's tough and tedious at times, but that's good, too, because it challenges me again to find the right words to connect with my fellow human beings. What more can I ask?

Do I know or even believe that everything I write will be read by others, that I'll even have that opportunity to connect? I don't, but just the thought of the possibility keeps me writing.

Although my writing has followed a somewhat steady path, it has also taken some soft turns and has explored new directions. Whatever I write always seems to come back to the theme that guides my writing: Connecting Through Communication.

**The Essay entitled "Words, Words, Words, Why I Write," was awarded a scholarship for the Central Coast Writers Conference last fall. Judythe Guarnera submitted it to the Grover Beach Library.**

## Moved or Changed Email?

Please notify NightWriters of any change in address or email: jkon50@gmail.com. Join NightWriters and send dues or renewal checks (payable to SLO NightWriters) to: SLO NightWriters, PO Box 2986, Paso Robles, CA 93447. Or join/renew online through our website: [www.slouightwriters.org](http://www.slouightwriters.org) and pay with a credit card.

## Monthly Meetings

NightWriters' Evening Meetings: the second Tuesday of every month, year round. We encourage interested visitors to join us. Admission is free; refreshments served. Next Meeting: February 11, 2020, at United Church of Christ, 11245 Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo 93405.

General meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Round Table presentations start at 5:15 p.m. Writers' Critique Groups: Free for members, \$5 for non-members. These groups read and critique each other's work and discuss the business of writing. Visitors are always welcome. For details, visit our website: [www.slouightwriters.org](http://www.slouightwriters.org).

## 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. (Returning next issue.)

### 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

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



*Complete Editing Services*  
*Let me help you Write It Right*  
 Susan Tuttle, Award Winning Author

**Proofreading:** spelling, punctuation, and grammar only. The last step before publication.

**Cost:** \$5/3 pages

**What you get:** a corrected document. Turnaround time @ 1 week for a 250-300 page manuscript.

**Line Editing:** spelling, punctuation, grammar, word usage, sentence construction, consistency of voice / style.

**Cost:** \$5 / page

**What you get:** two documents, one corrected (spelling, punctuation, grammar only), one with suggestions in track changes. Turnaround time @ 1-1/2 weeks for a 250-300-page manuscript.

**Developmental Editing:** full evaluation of the story and plot, including character development and growth, story arc, use of language, point of view, tense, consistency / believability of story line, subplots, beginning and ending, setting, author's voice / style, etc. Includes spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

**Cost:** @ \$850-\$1,200 for 250-300-page manuscript, depending on amount of work the manuscript needs. Flat rates also available.

**What you get:** a document with track changes for spelling, punctuation and grammar, and comments, suggestions, and examples on ways to improve the work. Turnaround time: 2-3 weeks, depending on amount of work needed.

I will never rewrite your work, I will only suggest ways you can make it better, with examples for clarification. My goal is to help strengthen your unique author's voice while making sure you tell the best story you can write.

Beta Reading Services also available, \$50/book.

Contact me at: [editme1@yahoo.com](mailto:editme1@yahoo.com)

## Submit Stores, 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 are also interested in articles, kudos and event notices. And if you have any other ideas for content, please let me know.

Send all submissions as attachments to: [slonwnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:slonwnewsletter@gmail.com), and put NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION in the subject line. We're all writers... so, take advantage of this opportunity to be published in your newsletter.

*Steve Derks, Acting Editor*

## NightWriters 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.

NightWriters has set up a Review Board, where we connect member readers with 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 members. You must be a NightWriter member in good standing to take advantage of this new board.

### *Review Board Members\**

<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, 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>	nonfiction
Ruth Cowne	<a href="mailto:abuella10@att.net">abuella10@att.net</a>	memoir, flash fiction
Susan Tuttle	<a href="mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com">aim2write@yahoo.com</a>	mystery, suspense, 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: [slonwnnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:slonwnnewsletter@gmail.com) and put Newsletter Info in the subject line.*

# HELP WANTED

## Reply to: [jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com)

### GENERAL MEETING GREETER

**Note:** Our sincere thanks to Jean Moelter, who has filled this position for years with amazing friendliness and charm; she will be missed.

The greeter usually arrives first at the meeting hall to open up before the critique group begins at 5:15pm. After she sets up her table in the foyer of the meeting hall, she greets members and visitors as they arrive, answers questions, manages the sign-up sheets and collects money from people wishing to pay dues or pay for a book.

### PHOTOGRAPHER

Our photographer photographs speakers and members at meetings and other events. These photos are published in the newsletter and on the NightWriter website.

### MEETING AND EVENT REPORTERS

The newsletter summaries of our monthly meetings and other events have lapsed due to lack of reporters to observe and document what goes on at our functions. This individual works with the photographer and newsletter editor to document SLO

NightWriter events. We also need members to report on outside events that might be of interest to our members.

### CRITIQUE GROUP COORDINATOR

This board member keeps track of the Critique Groups that are active within NightWriters, reports to the board on their status and promotes critique groups on the website and in the newsletter.

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

The newsletter needs a permanent editor. This position requires knowledge of publishing software and a sizeable investment of time to produce a monthly newsletter.

### We Need Your Help

The success of non-profit organizations like SLO 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: [jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com)

### SLO NightWriter Officers

President: Janice Konstantinidis  
 Vice-President: **Vacant**  
 Secretary: Leonard Carpenter  
 Treasurer: Steve Derks  
 Program Director: Steven Mintz  
 Membership Coordinator: Jim Aarons  
 Critique Group Coordinator: **Vacant**  
 Social Media/Publicity Coordinators:  
 Meagan Friberg &  
 Abigail Aarons  
 Submissions Coordinator: **Vacant**  
 Welcome Committee: **Vacant**  
 Sunshine Chair: Judythe Guarnera  
 Website Master: Janice Konstantinidis  
 Web Assistant: Steve Derks  
 Newsletter Editor: Steve Derks  
 Photographer: **Vacant**  
 Member at Large: Susan Tuttle  
 Hospitality: Mary Silberstein