

Publishers & Writers Monthly

THE NEWSLETTER OF PUBLISHERS & WRITERS OF SAN DIEGO

February 2010

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## Publishers & Writers of San Diego (PWSD)

is a professional association of the San Diego publishing community. PWSD educates business-minded self-publishers and authors through networking, guest experts, open discussions and field trips. Regular meetings are held the last Saturday of each month (except November and December) at the Encinitas Library, 540 Cornish Drive, Encinitas, 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

## Membership

\$37/year plus \$10/meeting for members. Non-member meeting fee is \$15. Visit us online at [www.PublishersWriters.org](http://www.PublishersWriters.org) for information and to RSVP for meetings.

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Closing date for newsletter contributions is the **last day of each month**. Send contributions to newsletter@publisherswriters.org.

If you would like to sign up for a **member profile**, contact Lynette Smith at lynette@allmybest.net.

Next Meeting

Date: Saturday, February 27, 2010

Time: 10 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Location: Encinitas Library, 540 Cornish Drive

Topic: "Deciphering Social Media: What You Need to Know to Market Your Book and Yourself"

Speaker: Becky Carroll, Petra Consulting/Customers Rock

There's a lot of talk (and hype) about social media; everyone seems to be on Twitter and Facebook. Should you be using these tools? If so, what's the best way to use them? Through real-world examples and case studies of corporations and small businesses, Becky will help you cut through the techno-babble and learn how to use these tools effectively to manage your contacts, your career, and maybe even your personal brand.

News/Announcements

Monday, February 15 — 7:00 p.m. **A Year in Ink, Vol. 3**, edited by Roger Aplon and Jennifer Silva Redmond, will be released at a **Publication Party** and reading at the Old Town Theatre. For more information, check the **San Diego Writers, Ink** website at www.sandiegowriters.org.

Thursday, February 18 — 6:30 p.m. **Upstart Crow Bookstore & Coffee House** presents its **Third Thursday Local Authors Night** with **The Ghost of Mt. Soledad, A Love Story** by Joan Brady. Jointly sponsored by Sunbelt Publications and Upstart Crow. Ms. Brady is the author of *God on a Harley*. 835 West Harbor Dr. For additional information, 619-232-4855 or www.upstartcrowtrading.com.

Monday, February 22 — 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The **San Diego Writers/Editors Guild** announces its speaker will be Penny C. Sansevieri, whose topic will be **Internet Marketing and Social Media**. Ms. Sansevieri, CEO and founder of Author Marketing Experts, Inc. (AME), is a best-selling author and internationally recognized book marketing and media relations expert. All meetings are on the fourth Monday of the month at the County Health Facility located at 3851 Rosecrans Street in the Sports Arena area. www.sdwritersguild.org

Saturday, February 27 — 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. **Who Wants to be a Published Author?** This nuts and bolts workshop covers publishing via a publisher, agent, self-publishing, vantage press, e-publishing, and print-on-demand. Instructor: Sally Gary, local author. Held at Grossmont College in Room 53-554. Visit www.cuyamaca.edu/preview/writing.asp. call 619-660-4350, or contact Sally Gary at SallyGary@aol.com.

Meeting Recap

January 30, 2010 Meeting

Everything You Need to Know about Book Distribution **Jennifer Silva Redmond, Sunbelt Publications**

Recap by Karla Olson

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Editor-in-Chief **Jennifer Redmond** from Sunbelt Publications shared insights about the essential role of a book distributor in the publishing supply chain.

She started by clearing up any confusion about the difference between a wholesaler and a distributor. A **wholesaler** represents many publishers on a non-exclusive, demand-response basis. In other words, a wholesaler puts a title into its database and fulfills an order when it comes in, but doesn't do any active selling.

A **distributor**, on the other hand, acts as the sales department of the publishing client in an active partnership. Distribution relationships are exclusive—they're the only company selling the book—and they use their in-house sales staff to contact, inform, and call on accounts to make them aware of your book. A reputable distributor will engage in an agreed-upon level of marketing, such as including the book in a catalog, on a website, and in mailings.

The key to distribution is to find the right partner, a company that thoroughly understands your book and has established relationships with book retailers in the right kinds of stores for your books.

Sunbelt, for instance, specializes in titles that feature natural history, cultural heritage, outdoor adventure, natural science, fiction, memoir, and travel, with a focus on California, Mexico, and the Southwest U.S. It takes on only those books that make sense in these markets and that it can get behind with its niche marketing expertise.

However, Sunbelt does expect the publisher to develop and implement its own marketing and promotion plans and will support the publisher as much as possible to achieve maximum coverage.

If you feel your book has a market in the bookstores, it's essential to secure distribution. Research the distributors—national or regional—that distribute books into areas or categories that fit with your book. This is key; otherwise, neither of you will find the relationship fruitful.

Ms. Redmond also described Sunbelt's financial terms, which are representative of all book distributors: The publisher receives 60% of net sales, while the distributor takes 40%. In other words, if a retailer buys a book at a 43% discount off retail, the publisher and distributor split the remaining 57%, 60/40. Sunbelt remits payment twice a year, in October and April.

Ms. Redmond invites publishers to submit books to Sunbelt for consideration. However, she encourages publishers to first become familiar with Sunbelt's list and to be able to clearly articulate why the book will fit into the Sunbelt program.

SOCIAL NETWORKING ON BLOGS

We all know that it's great to hop on social networks like Facebook, Squidoo and Twitter, right? But have you ever considered that a blog is a social network, too? You bet it is, but I'm talking specifically about the comment section within each blog. We all know that it's great to pitch bloggers for your book or product, right? But there's more to it. Really, it's about online networking or cyber-schmoozing. Before you even target a blog for your pitch, you should get to know them first. Here's how:

First, you'll want to get to know the blogs in your market. To do this you'll want to follow them and communicate with them via the comment section on their blogs. You can find these blogs through blog search engines like Google Blog Search and Technorati.com. Once you find the blogs that are top in your market (I suggest going after the top 5–10 to start with) then you'll want to see what they post on and comment on their blog posts. What does this do? Well, it'll help give you a voice on your top blogs and give the bloggers a chance to get to know you. Here are some tips for commenting intelligently on blogs:

- **Be interesting and thought-provoking.** Save the "wow, great blog" comments for when you are really looking to *not* impress someone.
- **Watch, then comment.** I recommend following the blog for a few weeks before jumping in. You want to get a sense of the tone of the blogger and how he or she responds to comments.
- **Try commenting on at least five blogs a week,** this way you're not spending *all* of your free time doing this and still you're able to get a voice out there in the blog-o-sphere.
- **Offer additional insight to the blog post,** perhaps you've had a different experience than what the blogger cited. If so, politely and intelligently tell them your viewpoint and invite other ideas.
- **Be entertaining, engaging, and helpful.** Always. Don't push your book; yes, you can mention it—but don't push it. That's a big no-no.
- **Try to build a rapport with the blogger** by being consistent; that's why you don't want to follow too many bloggers. You'll be too fragmented this way.
- **Be inspiring; readers love inspiration.** Don't just gush for the sake of gushing.

Commenting on blog posts is a sort of social networking—even better, in fact, because blog posts and their associated comments are searchable. Keep in mind that you'll want to always list your URL when you log in (and most blogs require that you do log in and leave your online "footprint"). Once you have spent sufficient time online you'll start to get to know the bloggers that are a significant "voice" in your industry. This type of networking will help when you go back to pitch them your story, book or product. Remember that bloggers, like any other on or offline media, want the scoop. So give them what they want. Here are a few tips for pitching bloggers once you've networked with them:

- **Know what they like:** Don't pitch them a book review if they don't review books. Just because you have become commenter-extraordinaire doesn't mean that they'll bend the rules for you. Well, they might, but better to let them suggest it.
- If the blogger does review books and/or products, **check out their submission guidelines** before sending them a pitch.
- If you're sending them a story idea, **be sure and tell them if you've pitched this idea to anyone else.** If they have an exclusive, tell them and give them a (reasonable) deadline for responding if you're going to shop this around.
- **Present the unexpected:** It's OK to take chances, it really is, as long as you stay on topic. Pitch the blogger; you never know what could happen.
- **Make it easy:** If you're pitching them a story, don't just pitch them and expect them to do all the work. Make it easy on them by offering to co-interview (when appropriate) or offering them experts you think might work well for the piece.

The key is that as you're getting known online, the Internet is one big networking party. Just because you can hide behind your monitor doesn't mean that you're invisible. Remember that everything is your résumé and everything leaves a footprint. The best thing you can do is get out and cyber-schmooze; the worst thing you can do is be unprepared. Do your homework and remember: Online networking (when done effectively) can benefit you enormously both in your online footprint as well as [in] the connections you'll make. Don't worry about spending hours on this; it's really about quality, not quantity. Get out there and social network on blogs. You'll be glad you did.

Reprinted from The Book Marketing Expert newsletter, a free ezine offering book promotion and publicity tips and techniques. <http://www.amarketingexpert.com>

Member Profile

Lois Winsen

Editor on Tap

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PWM: In what aspect of publishing or writing are you involved or interested?

Lois: Book editing. As a freelance editor I have enjoyed editing a wide variety of books, including general fiction, mystery, science fiction, romance novels, uplifting personal memoirs, nonfiction how-to books, pop psychology, and even a hilarious comic dictionary, as well as scholarly papers and articles.

PWM: What first attracted you to it? And did you previously have related experience in writing or editing?

Lois: As copy chief and owner of advertising agencies during my earlier career, I spent thousands of hours editing my own writing and the writing of others. So when an author friend was looking for a new editor, I suggested myself, and he gave me his latest novel. He was delighted with the result, and I found the process creatively stimulating and challenging. Freelance book editing allows me to work at home, while the Internet lets me extend my reach nationwide. Also, it provides me the opportunity to “give back” to aspiring writers through coaching and mentoring during the editing process.

PWM: How long have you been a member of PWSD, and what role has the organization played in your success?

Lois: I discovered PWSD about two years ago and joined immediately, attracted by the warmth, friendliness, and breadth of knowledge of its members. The group has given me the opportunity to broaden my scope locally, and to incorporate ideas on Web networking I probably would never have considered. Tweet!

PWM: What are you working on now?

Lois: A lightly fictionalized family history written by a Texas woman who came to me five years ago, wondering if she had the ability to write. A quick study and hard worker, she is now regionally well known and the published author of three fiction books.

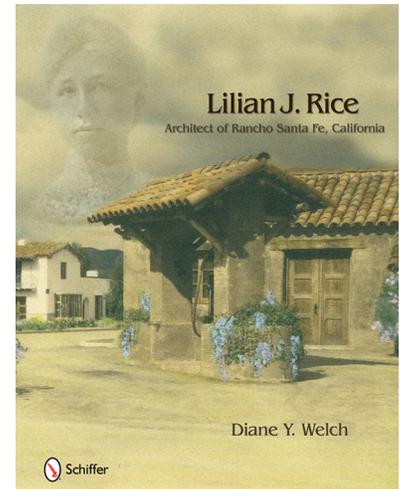
PWM: What guidance or lessons learned can you offer the members?

Lois: If you want to be an author, read good books and analyze what makes them compelling. Try to write something every day. Come to PWSD meetings. Even if you take home only one idea, the right one can make a world of difference.

Lilian J. Rice: Architect of Rancho Santa Fe, California by PWSD member **Diane Y. Welch** will be released by Schiffer Publishing in the spring. The book contains almost 400 illustrations, many of them photographs taken by award winning San Diego architectural photographers. Included are reproductions of floor plans, sketches, and artistic paintings of building elevations, skillfully rendered by architectural professionals.

Welch spent four years researching the life of her subject, who designed the buildings now comprising San Dieguito Academy and major structures in Rancho Santa Fe, including the Inn at Rancho Santa Fe, the commercial block at La Granada and Paseo Delicias, and the first elementary school. The book contains extensive scholarly notes, a thorough project list, and a concise bibliography.

Explaining the significance of Rice's body of work, Gabe Selak, public programs manager for the Museum of San Diego History, said, "The work of architect Lilian Rice is important to the history of San Diego's built landscape. Having a definitive biography of her work is significant, not only because it houses a compilation of source materials about Rice's works in one edition, but also because it saves those stories for future generations."



“Instead of a thousand word theme,
I brought you one good picture.”

Saturday, February 20, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Opening reception: **Andrea Kertesz photography exhibit “On Reading”** depicts the power and beauty of reading as a universal pleasure. Cannon Art Gallery, Carlsbad City Library, Dove Lane.

Saturday, February 27, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Local Authors’ Event: Meet and mingle with local authors covering a mix of literary genres as they discuss their works and sign books. Carlsbad City Library, 1775 Dove Lane.

Saturday, February 28, 2:00 p.m. Magee Park Poetry Reading. Georgina Cole Library community room, 1250 Carlsbad Village Drive.

March Workshops at UCSD Extension:

Thursdays, March 4–18, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (3 meetings): **Advanced Screenwriting Workshop.** participants are expected to bring new or rewritten pages to share with the class each week.

Saturdays, March 6–20, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (3 meetings): **First Steps to Publishing.** This course will focus on tools and techniques to increase a book’s marketability and the author’s role in the publishing and promotional process.

Tuesdays, March 9–16, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (2 meetings): **The Business of Writing.** Participants will receive tips on breaking into print media, marketing their writing, and other aspects of successful freelance writing. The course will be taught by PWSD member Barbara Field, a UCSD communications manager who has written and edited for CBS, Harcourt Brace, Scripps Health, and various newspapers and magazines. Barbara’s novel, *The Deeper, the Bluer* won first place in the 14th annual Writer’s Digest International Self-Published Book Awards.

For more information on the above courses, contact ahl@ucsd.edu. Register online at <http://www.extension.ucsd.edu/writing> or call 858-534-3400.

Resources

Grand Central is launching **Grand Central Life & Style**, a new imprint dedicated to the lifestyle and wellness categories. The move will see current GCP imprints Springboard Press (focused on nonfiction books for baby boomers) and Wellness Central (focused on health titles) folded into the new line. For more information, contact Beth Walsh of Clearpoint Agency, Inc., at www.clearpointagency.com or call her at 858-724-2500.

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Great print-on-demand publisher—Persona Publishing: www.personapublishing.com

If you hear of an event or discover a valuable resource for publishers or writers, please send it to newsletter@publisherswriters.org.

From the Editor, Andrea Glass

If you're a self-publisher, independent publisher, consultant, author, editor, proofreader, ghostwriter, book designer, marketing specialist, Web designer or professional coach, **consider joining PWSD**. Visit www.PublishersWriters.org for more information and to sign up for this newsletter.

The closing date for newsletter contributions is the **last day of each month**. Send your contributions to newsletter@publisherswriters.org.

Would you like to appear in a **member profile**? If so, contact Lynette Smith at lynette@allmybest.net. Lynette is taking signups for 2010.

Would you like to help out by taking **notes at our monthly meeting** and writing up the meeting recap for this newsletter? If so, contact Lauren Castle at lauren@impress-express.com. She's accepting signups for 2010. We're looking for one volunteer a month so we can have each meeting covered.

Thank you for pitching in to help Publishers & Writers Monthly become a more valuable newsletter for everyone in the San Diego Writing and Publishing community!

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