

Publishers & Writers Monthly

THE NEWSLETTER OF PUBLISHERS & WRITERS OF SAN DIEGO

February 2011

In this Issue

Next Meeting
News/Announcements
Meeting Recap
President's Message
Feature Article
Member Profile
PWSD Member Events
New Members
Events & Resources
From the Editor
Newsletter Team

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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 10 a.m. to 12 noon on the last Saturday of each month (except November and December), usually at the Encinitas Library, 540 Cornish Dr., Encinitas.

## 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 19, 2011

Time: 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Location: Encinitas County Library, 540 Cornish Drive

Topic: ShrinkWrite

Speaker: Julia Stroud

Please Note: This meeting is a week earlier than usual!

February's presentation will focus upon Julia's favorite part of collaborating with writers, which she calls "The Book Bible." This entails a detailed formulation of characters' histories, personalities, strengths, and pathologies, interwoven to create dynamic relationships among them. Her 30+ years of experience allow her to make suggestions regarding idiosyncratic thoughts, behaviors, and mannerisms that enhance a writer's impact.

Julia M. Stroud, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist who recently retired from private practice. She now consults with writers who wish to enrich their characters and create more intriguing story lines that ring true with their readers because the characters are psychologically congruent; they "make sense" because they could be real.

News/Announcements



I was so inspired to join over 250 local authors at the 45th Annual Local Authors Exhibit at the main library downtown. This event, which is held every January, features authors who published books the previous year. The books are exhibited in the main library in downtown San Diego through the month of January. You'll want to check it out next year; it's quite an impressive collection. This year's event made me very proud to be part of the San Diego literary scene. Also, Read Local San Diego is currently organizing its event calendar for 2011, so please help! Let us know about a street fair in your town and we will look into organizing a co-op booth for RLSD authors. We're also investigating events, such as the *Summer Sundays at The Vine: Mojalet's Place for the Arts*, that we did last summer, where an author was featured between performances. Please let us know any ideas you have of where authors can meet readers. Email Karla at karla@sandiego.readlocal.org

PWSD Officers

Karla Olson

President

karla@publisherswriters.org

Tony Vianna

VP Treasurer and Membership

simpatico1@juno.com

Bob Goodman

Founder

Andrew Chapman

Past President

andrew@publisherswriters.org

PWSD Newsletter Staff

Andrea Glass

Editor

andrea@writersway.com

Lynette Smith

Copyeditor

lynette@allmybest.net

Lauren Castle

Circulation Manager

lauren@impress-express.com

**LOOKING FOR NEW
CONTENT COORDINATOR!
WILL YOU HELP?**

MORNING CHAT WITH A LITERARY AGENT

Presented by Claire Gerus

Recap by John Wolf, Author & Speaker, Member PWSD

Our January meeting was held at the usual place, the Encinitas Library. What was unusual was the size of the crowd, the largest turnout ever for PWSD! We listened to Claire Gerus, a literary agent who has done it all. I wonder if that's how her business card reads: "Done it all."

Claire's aim was to gently let us in on the harshness of the publishing world, but in a nice way. She was very clever to not give us too much information, but just enough to stimulate the conversation, and then let the crowd pop the questions.

The audience responded gleefully and we all learned a lot. Many of us, of course, had the same questions, so this was a splendid way to get us involved in answering our own questions. Claire didn't have to guess or become tangential. It was almost like she'd done this before—well, she certainly has. Her background encompasses so much. She's been the editor-in-chief of two publishing houses; worked for eight major publishers, including Harlequin, Rodale, Random House, Doubleday, John Wiley, Kensington, and Adams Media; written articles for national media; and taught corporate communications to such clients as IBM, Kellogg's, Mutual of Omaha, and Procter & Gamble. In 1996, she established a thriving business as a New York literary agent, selling publishers books on a wide variety of subjects: business, history, memoir, religion, health, spirituality, psychology, politics, pop culture, and women's studies. She has published three books in collaboration with other authors and is presently a literary agent based in Tucson, Arizona. I'd like to hear her 30-second elevator speech!

We got off on the right foot by establishing that agents are the ones who know the marketplace that publishers will buy into. This is a mutual endeavor in that agents and publishers pique by mingling and discussing continuously what the next breakout topic might be.

The game, of course, is to get this right and attach a talented author to it before the market dries up. It was nice to hear that the classic literary agent is now in tune with the Internet and accepts queries and proposals electronically. Now, what to do with the two-hundred manuscript boxes in my garage?

The focus is currently on nonfiction, but her agency is open to quality fiction with an emphasis on uplifting and soulful works. The industry is awash in new technology, which has it grappling with changing paradigms caused by e-books, electronic readers, and the lack of buyers in big-box bookstores picking up the good old paper book. All this has to be evaluated and adjustments made as to how to establish returns for authors, agents, and publishers alike. But nothing will replace publicity and marketing. One must establish a platform—who are your fans, your support base? The literary world stops fidgeting when an author can assure them of a following and thus a potential market to sell to. Now, we can sit down and negotiate, and everything is negotiable.

Authors with blogs and websites that demonstrate excellent form, writing skills, and clever ways to display their works turn heads and get attention of agents. Some the recent fiction trends are back to sci-fi, fantasy, and spiritual works. Werewolves and vampires will be replaced with angels and demons. I was chuckling under my breath because that's right up my alley. Now, to set aside a few thousand hours to write. Short stories are being seen as a way to market to mobile readers, etc. Chick-lit is still hot, but the real money is still in that breakout novel no one saw coming. That's the one I'm going to write.

Some numbers were thrown around the room that might be of interest to you. If you have independently published, you can get the attention of agents and publishers if you have sold about 5,000 copies in a year. Publishers are looking for about 25% back from e-book sales.

For regular old traditional publishing, the distributors get 60%. Of the remaining 40%, the publisher pays, say, a 10% royalty to the author, less a remittance to the agent of 15% of the author's share, and keeps the remaining 30%. Here's an example: If 100 books (after returns) are sold at \$10 each, that's \$1,000 in sales. Of that \$1,000, distributors keep \$600. Of the remaining \$400, the publisher keeps \$300 and splits the remaining royalty of \$100 (10% of \$1,000) between the author (who keeps \$85) and the agent (who keeps \$15, which is 15% of the \$100). It's all good when you multiply this by 10,000 units sold a year, which is considered a big success. Of course, when the market saturates, it's time for you, the author, to write another book, as the whole thing falls like a soufflé in an earthquake.

It seems that contracts are changing too. The old norm was 50/50, half up front at signing and half when the book was delivered to the publisher. Now, it's split in thirds—upfront, delivery, and publication (which can be a year or two from delivery), with a good possibility of hold-offs until returns are seen. All complex enough to be sure to have a literary lawyer working with you.

Last but not least, Claire discussed details of her business. Biggest mistake authors make is sending in proposals and queries with editorial errors. Bye-bye sign-up. It's important to tell the agent who you are and how you relate to the topic. Where did you get your ideas and what makes you think your book is unique enough to develop a market large enough to support the costs of publishing the book? Personally, as an author, I don't think that's my job, but you have to obtain this groundbreaking information even if you have to hire help to get it on paper. Look at it this way: If your topic is unique, powerful, and has a market, only the author will be aware of it. Agents are pretty savvy about markets, but maybe not yours. Bring something that looks like it will float and carry weight, and you will be noticed.

An agent's best position is to get various publishers interested in the project and then pit them against each other in a bidding auction. Claire sees about 100 queries a month. Of those, 10 look good and 3 of those 10 have client potential. That should give you a gauge as to the quality of works out there.

The query/proposal needs to have a clean synopsis to grab the attention of the agent, because a whole manuscript won't be read. They're too busy. A table of contents needs to be relevant to topic, sample chapters need to be available, and platform and marketing plans are essential parts of the submittal. Good luck with all that. I will stick to my Kindle submittals for now and hope for that 5,000 book-sales figure to be met. I don't think I'll be dining in New York at the yacht club anytime soon.

I found the morning well spent and Claire's method of getting the audience to participate clever by focusing the discussion on what the participants really wanted to know. The crowd was responsive and we covered a lot of ground. Overall, the meeting was not only the largest, but one of the best. If you want to hear the meeting in its entirety, I have an MP3 recording of same. Just supply a CD, and I'll burn you a copy.



I love the way you weave together the stories of your abused childhood with these delightful recipes for muffins and scones.

President's Message

We got off to a great start with year, with a terrific presentation by agent Claire Gerus and the biggest turnout ever for a monthly meeting. It was great to see all the new faces as well as old friends in the new year. Since there were so many new faces, I want to point out the benefits of PWSD membership:

- Extremely low annual membership fee (\$37)
- Discounted monthly meeting fee (\$10 instead of the \$15 non-member fee)
- Listing in the PWSD members directory
 - Our website is highly ranked on Google, so a listing in our members directory means exposure for you and your book.
- *Publishers & Writers Monthly* newsletter
- Access to Western States Independent Publishers Catalog of Books
 - More information on this soon; to be published in August/September
- Access to PWSD YahooGroups discussion group
 - Great advice from fellow publishers!
- Free book display at meetings
- Permanent nametag

Note to new members: Please be sure to send a bio and headshot to the webmaster at webmaster@publisherswriters.org and we will add you to the member directory.

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I received this notice from IBPA and wanted to pass it on: The Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) and Ingram Content Group have launched a program under which IBPA's more than 3,000 members have options to list titles on Ingram's iPage and to have books printed on demand through Lightning Source and delivered to Ingram's worldwide customer network. IBPA president Florrie Binford Kichler commented, "This agreement will allow all of our publishers to take advantage of Ingram's distribution and marketing reach, giving small and independent publishers options to access Ingram Content Group's U.S. retail, international, and library customers. Having books available through Ingram significantly levels the playing field for our publishers." For more information, please contact IBPA at [www.ibpa-online.org](http://www.ibpa-online.org).

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Two Publishing University Scholarships Available: **Publishing University** is the best publishing seminar out there, with programs on all aspects of the publishing business from dozens of industry veterans. It's held two days before BookExpo, which is the biggest annual industry trade show, in New York City. This year's Publishing University, the 27th annual, is May 22 and 23. IBPA generously offers each affiliate two fully paid scholarships to attend Pub-U.

The scholarships are intended for publishers who need assistance in growing their publishing program. Each recipient will be able to attend at no charge all seminars during the two-day program, all food functions, and the Benjamin Franklin Awards Ceremony. The estimated value of the scholarship is \$750. In addition, PWSD will grant each recipient a \$500 stipend to pay for travel expenses.

Scholarship applicants must be:

- A member of *both* PWSD and IBPA,
- Actively participating in the publishing process as the publisher or key employee of a publishing company, and
- In a position to benefit immediately from the scholarship.

Please note: No applicant is eligible to receive the scholarship more than once. In addition, though the PWSD board will make recommendations about which applicants to accept, IBPA makes the final decision based on the application materials. The PWSD board may choose to recommend one or no applicants, if they don't feel that any of the applicants qualify under the terms specified by IBPA. Applications must be received by IBPA no later than March 31, so please submit your application no later than March 15 to Karla@publisherswriters.org or PWSD, P.O. Box 235204, Encinitas, CA 92023. Here's the link to the application: www.ibpa-online.org/files/pdf/ScholarshipApplication%282011%29.pdf

Creating Memorable Characters

by Lee Masterson

Before you begin your new story, take a little time to create fresh new characters that are your own. Using someone else's well-established formula will only brand you as a hack with potential editors. Think of yourself as the Master Planner—this is your story and only your characters are going to fit in it. Custom build them to suit your unique story-world. If you must use real people you know, then try to disguise that person's identity as much as possible.

(1) Begin by giving your main character (protagonist) a name you are comfortable working with. Remember, you'll be with this character for a while, so you should choose a name you at least like. The name must not only suit the character, but also be easy on your intended readers. If you decide the name Xzgytgml is the only name that suits your character, bear in mind that the reader is forced to stop and stumble through the unfamiliar word, which means he is no longer engrossed in your story. Aside from this, you'll also have to write or type this name every time your character appears.

(2) Create a short biography for your new character. You'll need to decide which physical aspects best suit your protagonist: height, weight, hair and eye color and age. But these alone will not be enough. Consider creating a personality outline as well. Include:

- temperament
- moral/ethical/religious beliefs
- political stance
- hobbies
- habits
- quirks or eccentricities
- likes/dislikes
- fears or phobias
- short- and long-term goals
- hopes and dreams

(3) It sometimes helps to scour newspapers, magazines and even the Internet to find a picture of someone that fits the character you are creating. Tacking an image onto a corkboard at your workstation with a brief bio beneath it can give you a wonderful visual image to work from. So now you have a character to work with, but this information is not enough to bring him or her to life. Using the principle that all good stories are about unique, individual, complex people, you'll need to map out a few more points. When you are creating your character's personality description, decide what his great strengths are. Give him several strong traits and then add one major glaring weakness. Your character must still be at least likeable, but the glaring weakness must form the underlying tension that drives his behavior. Now create a staggering problem that preys on that weakness. It must be a difficult or fearsome problem for your character to overcome, so the story can recount his struggle to turn his weakness into a form of victory at the end. Above all, never let the protagonist know he is going to succeed. That way he cannot win unless he surrenders something of inestimable value to himself.

(4) Remain with your protagonist's point of view for as long as possible. If your character doesn't see it or hear it himself, then the reader shouldn't either. This builds a sense of empathy within the reader for each piece of information he uncovers through your story. Remember to describe all five (six?) senses the character encounters. Telling your reader only what he sees and hears is not nearly so evocative as sharing what he tastes and touches and smells.

(5) Your protagonist must have a complex set of problems. The primary goal must always be in sight, but giving your character a few obstacles along the way will highlight the character traits you have chosen to help or hinder him. Secondary characters should have only one fundamental problem to solve. They need not be as in depth as your protagonist; otherwise, your plot becomes overly convoluted. Minor characters need not have any problems at all. Think of them as "stage extras"; they deliver a necessary line or piece of information, but their life history is irrelevant.

(6) Choose your crisis points. Give your protagonist an agonizing decision to make. If he must make a morally wrong choice in order to succeed and survive intact, your protagonist will gain everything

he wanted, but the price for this success must be high. He could lose his (soul/conscience/freedom/etc.) However, it must be clear in a scenario like this that choosing the morally right path would only result in his downfall or defeat. Allowing your protagonist the reversed scenario is easier (choosing a morally correct path), but making the cost a worthwhile challenge is much more difficult. If he does concur on the side of “good over evil,” be sure he is forsaking all he holds dear. He survives the struggle intact, but still must pay the price for making the right choice. Even though he is spared the downfall that threatened originally, he will ultimately lose all that he cherished/believed.

Finally, by the end of your story, your protagonist must have survived an enormous struggle, or moral dilemma, to arrive at the finale, having undergone a fundamental change. He may have lost his beliefs, or his conscience. He may even have overcome that glaring weakness you assigned to him when he was created. Whatever the change, it must be noticeable.

When you have all these pieces in place, you’ll have a complex, empathetic character that your readers will remember, and hopefully [they’ll] come back for more!

Survey of Book-Buying Behavior

Verso Digital’s 2010 Survey of Book-Buying Behavior, presented recently at Digital Book World, the new version of the same survey that Jack McKeown presented at the Winter Institute a year ago in San Jose, Calif., is available online in a mini slide show. (www.versoadvertising.com/dbwsurvey)

This survey was conducted last November and December and focuses on e-readers and e-books. Among the findings:

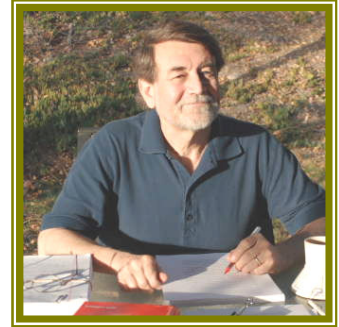
- E-reader ownership has nearly tripled in a year, to almost 8%, and is likely to reach 13%–15% this year.
- A huge chunk of readers don’t want to use e-readers: 49% of respondents said it was unlikely they would buy an e-reader.
- Some 90% of e-reader owners will continue to purchase print books.
- E-reader owners are splitting purchases almost evenly between e-books and print books, with an average of 7.2 a year. *[Editor’s note: See Slide 9 for details.]*
- 80.7% of respondents said they were very likely or somewhat likely to buy e-books from independent booksellers if titles are priced competitively.

Among conclusions:

- A “robust, hybrid (print and e-book) market will endure for many years.”
- Predictions of 50% e-book penetration by 2014 are “highly inflated and ignore the persistence of consumer preferences for print.”
- Predictions for the demise of 90% of bricks-and-mortar bookstores within 10 years are “grossly misleading.”
- Independent bookstores have “a significant opportunity to convert mindshare to marketshare in the e-book space.”



Larry M Edwards
Editor, Author, Journalist
San Diego
858-292-9232
larry@larryedwards.com
www.larryedwards.com



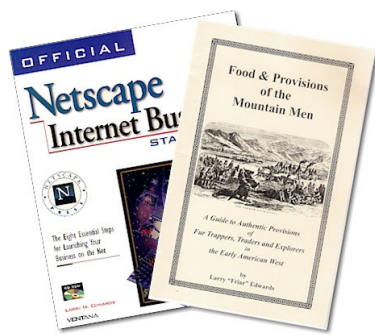
PWM: What aspect of publishing or writing are you involved or interested in?

Larry: I am primarily involved in editing book manuscripts, helping authors polish their prose and advance toward publication (fiction and nonfiction). I also assist authors with query letters and correspondence with agents and publishers, as well as with self-publishing, if they are so inclined. And I offer collaborative writing (ghostwriting) services.

PWM: What first attracted you to these areas?

Larry: I have always loved the written word—reading and writing—and when authors began coming to me for advice and mentoring, it evolved into a full-time profession.

PWM: Did you previously have related experience in these areas?



Larry: I have worked as an investigative journalist and newspaper/magazine editor for more than 25 years, including a stint as business editor for *San Diego Magazine*. During that time I won Best of Show honors from the San Diego Press Club in 1994, 1997, 2004, and 2005. I have two published books—*Official Netscape Internet Business Starter Kit* (1998) and *Food & Provisions of the Mountain Men* (2003)—and a third nearing completion. (Then there's that dreadful first novel I wrote many years ago.) I have had two short stories published, as well as a number of essays, and have written, as a ghostwriter, many magazine articles and Op/Ed pieces for corporate clients. For a number of years, I have served as a judge for the San Diego Book Awards.

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

Larry: I joined PWSD in early 2010, although I have known (or known of) a number of PWSD members for many years. I have found the organization beneficial for meeting new people and networking. The meetings are great for learning about changes and trends in the industry. I especially enjoyed last year's presentation by the book designers.

PWM: What are you working on now?

Larry: I am currently working with a number of authors who are in various stages of the writing and publication process, from book proposal to manuscript editing and rewriting to the final stages of book design and pre-press layout. In terms of my own writing, I am completing a memoir, *Betrayed: A Memoir of True Crime* (the proposal is in an agent's hands), and working (when I find the time) on a historical novel of the American fur-trade era.

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

Larry: Keep on truckin'! (And, thus, I date myself.) On a more serious note: Never stop learning; listen to what others have to say—they actually may know more than you—and be involved in the writing and editing community, not only as a participant but by giving back. It's easy to be a "lone wolf" in this profession, but if you are, you stop growing.

Welcome, New PWSD Members:

Laura Johnston Kohl, Jonestown Survivor Autobiography, lkohl1920@hotmail.com, San Marcos
Karen Scanlon, Fiction/Non-Fiction, kwscanlon@hotmail.com, San Diego
Jim Hardison, PhD, hardisonphd@yahoo.com, Solana Beach
Martha Pope Gorris, Fiction and Nonfiction, marthwrite@aol.com, San Diego
Bobbi Fischer, Video Book Trailers, bobbifischer@aol.com, San Marcos
Bruce Fischer, Book Promotion Services, bfischerppg@aol.com, San Marcos
Gene Thomas, Nonfiction and Fiction, gene-thomas@hotmail.com, Alpine
Leslie Duval, JandLDuval@sbcglobal.net, Encinitas
Chuck O'Connor, True Crimes, chuck@strategicinstore.com, Coronado
Christine E. Miller, M.S., Book Proposal Specialist, millerwrite@yahoo.com, Oceanside
Claudia Ross, Fiction, claudiahross@yahoo.com, San Diego
Carl Nelson, canelson56@cox.net, Chula Vista
Barbara Boatright, Creative Nonfiction, carlnbb@cox.net, San Marcos
John B. Lang, Nonfiction, jblang567@aol.com, Carlsbad
Val Odbert, Poetry and Essays, val.odbert@sbcglobal.net, Encinitas
Barbara Maloney, Nonfiction, blmaloney@netzero.net, San Diego
Barbara Wallace, Author/Publisher, barbara@zingiberpublishing.com, Corona del Mar
Carol Sveilich, Nonfiction Author, carol4catz@yahoo.com, San Diego

Monday, February 14, 2011; 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon: Why YOU Should Write an E-Book NOW! is a presentation by a panel of experts—PWSD member Andrea Glass, plus Judy Cullins and Beverly Bergman—who will share their expertise. This presentation is for the San Diego Professional Coaches Alliance Meeting; first-time guests are free. Registration and networking from 9:30 to 10:00; meeting and guest speaker from 10:00 a.m. to noon. No pre-registration is required. At the Courtyard by Marriott Kearny Mesa, 8651 Spectrum Center Blvd., San Diego. For more info: www.SanDiegoCoaches.com.

Monday, February 14, 6:30 p.m.: Valentine's Day Open Mic at A Word with You Press clubhouse, 802 South Tremont Street, Oceanside. Details at www.awordwithyoupress.com/2011/02/01/open-mic-bite-february-14th-valentines-day.

Sunday, February 20, 2:00 p.m.: Not Just a Launch, a Lunch! At A Word with You Press clubhouse, 802 South Tremont Street, Oceanside. Photo journalist Ron Chatham Ron, who writes screenplays and fiction, will read from "The Truck" and Other Twisted Tales. Come mingle, meet other creative types, and enjoy great food! RSVP to thorn@awordwithyoupress.com.

Saturday, February 26, 9:00 a.m.: A Word with You Press constructs the "Igloo in Oceanside." We'll have 85 flanged cardboard triangles painted white to serve as the personal canvas or computer screen of our future Nobel laureates. They can paint upon it, send a message to the universe, or staple on a story they wrote. After everyone's triangle is completed, we will assemble the triangles into a geodesic dome fuller than Buckminster. We'll pair kids who like to write with adult mentors for a series of group activities and one-to-ones designed to create confidence and pride in the ability to "put it down on paper." Our graduates of this free program will be rewarded by being published in an anthology of their own, along with their peers, and will be afforded all the rights and privileges that come with authorship, including a book signing event at the HQ of A Word with You Press. The event will be catered by our new neighborhood eatery, The Flying Pig. The event will be professionally videotaped and will be on YouTube. Find out more at www.kidxpress.us and www.awordwithyoupress.com. A Word with You Press is looking for a full-time director for Kid Expression. [Thorn Sully also writes, "Thank you to the staff at PWSD for the membership profile last month; it generated a lot of interest in our cause."]

Saturday, March 5, 2011, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.: North County Authors and Poets celebrate “The Magic and Mystery of Muses” with poetry, memoirs, and a special tribute to Dr. Seuss. Held at the Escondido Public Library, Turrentine Room, 239 South Kalmia Street, this year’s program features:

- Keynote speakers: the musical and inspiring poets and pros, Brandon Cesmat and Teresa Gonzales-Lee.
- Open mikes for local talent, including the debuting poets of *summation iii* (a new anthology release from Escondido municipal gallery and poets from inland North County).
- Panel of award-winning memoir and biographical writers and their advisors: memoir and biography panel chaired by Dr. Robert Goodman.
- Submission tips by Karla Olson.
- Special surprise performance to honor Dr. Seuss and his influence on children’s literature.
- Local publishers counseling on submissions.

To book an author’s table, contact NCAP’s Mary Quigley at gtwoink@sbcglobal.net. For more information, e-mail JoyInPoetry@yahoo.com

Events & Resources for the Publishing & Writing Community

Events

Tuesday, February 15, 7:00 p.m.: Publication Party for San Diego Writers, Ink, *A Year in Ink, Volume 4*. San Diego’s got writers! Celebrate the release of the latest annual anthology of San Diego Writers, Ink, with a night of readings, fun, and frivolity at the beautiful Cygnet Theatre in Old Town San Diego Historic Park. Now in its fourth year, the anthology features emerging and established writers from across San Diego County. This year’s anthology is edited by Laurel Corona, who judged the prose submissions, and Jericho Brown, who handled poetry. The result is a entertaining and eclectic mix of short stories, essays, and poems, and anthologies will be available for purchase. Join some of San Diego’s most talented writers as they read excerpts from their work. Complimentary appetizers and drinks will be served. This event is free and open to the public! San Diego Writers, Ink nurtures writers and those wishing to explore the craft of writing, fosters a literary community, promotes literature, and celebrates artistic diversity. Members and non-members alike participate in a wide range of classes, workshops, and informal gatherings. From craft classes to book groups and writing marathons to bus trips, San Diego Writers, Ink offers insight and inspiration for writers of every level. For more information, visit www.sandiegowriters.org or contact Kelli Wescott at kelli@sandiegowriters.org.

Wednesday through Friday, February 16–18: Writer’s Symposium by the Sea. This annual event is designed to inspire both the writer and the reader. The interviews, held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday and at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, are conducted by author and symposium founder **Dean Nelson**. They feature lively conversations about the stories behind the author’s stories, and the audience gets to eavesdrop on these exchanges and even interact with the writer during a Q&A session that follows. Specialized workshops held on Wednesday and Thursday from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. and led by published writers, provide tips and insight into the writing process. Some of the speakers include authors Mary Karr, Chris Hillman, and Rob Bell. All events take place in Crill Performance Hall in the Cooper Music Center of the main campus of Point Loma Nazarene University, 3900 Lomaland Drive, San Diego, 92106. The event is sponsored by the San Diego chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. For a complete schedule of both evening events and workshops, and to purchase tickets at \$10 per event, please go to www.pointloma.edu/writers or contact Event Coordinator Edie Chapman, Department of Literature, Journalism and Modern Languages, at 619-849-2297.

Friday through Monday, February 18–21 (Presidents' Day weekend): The 25th Annual Southern California Writers' Conference in San Diego. With nearly \$4 million' worth of publishing success behind the organization, this event is, as always, geared to get you where you want to go with your work, and it is limited to the first 200 registrants in order to ensure access and intimacy. Check www.writersconference.com often for details and updates, or subscribe to the RSS feed to be alerted automatically. Advance Submission Readers will be ready for selection beginning next week.

Monday, February 21, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.: The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild monthly meeting. The presenter is Joan Brady, who worked as a registered nurse for more than 22 years before selling her debut novel, *God on a Harley*, to Pocket Books. She had never taken a writing course. Her novel is the story of a burned-out nurse who does some deep soul searching. It became an international best-seller, endorsed by well-known self-help experts Wayne Dyer and John Gray. Her book was translated into 17 languages, and film rights were sold. Joan has established a large following in Spain and Latin America, where she has six more best-selling novels. Her latest work of fiction, *The Ghost of Mount Soledad*, is a girl-meets-ghost love story based on the real-life controversy surrounding the old white cross atop San Diego's Mount Soledad War Memorial. Joan is an internationally recognized speaker whose presentations are informative and humorous while encouraging introspection and self-growth. She lives in San Diego with her dog, Harley. For more information, visit www.JoanBradyBooks.com. All meetings are held at the County Health Facility, 3851 Rosecrans Street, in the Sports Arena area. For directions, visit www.sdwritersguild.org.

All day Saturday and Sunday, October 8 and 9: Blaze Your Own Trail: Self-Publishing Writers' Conference, will be held in the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice Building, at the University of San Diego, 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, 92111. This is the first conference held on the University of San Diego's campus focused on educating and empowering writers with the information necessary to self-publish their works. High-quality information and excellent resources will be shared by successful authors and experts in the publishing industry. Designed to help both business and creative writers, this conference will prepare attendees to use self-publishing as a means of creating a platform for more expansive opportunities. The conference includes training by industry leaders in distribution, marketing, self-publishing trends, publicity and promotion, and profitability. For more information, earlybird discounts, and updates, visit www.blazeyourtrailtopublication.com.

Resources

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 the FAQ page of www.PublishersWriters.org for membership information and the home page 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 the first half of 2011.

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!

Newsletter Team



Andrea Glass

Ghostwriting & Copyediting
leader in personal & professional development books, ebooks, blogs
www.WritersWay.com
Andrea@WritersWay.com
tel: 858.350.5235
fax: 760.635.7839

Newsletter Editor

All My Best

**Business and Nonfiction
Copyediting**

Lynette M. Smith
"Get the Results and Respect Your Writing Deserves!"
714.777.1238
www.AllMyBest.net
Lynette@AllMyBest.net

Copyeditor



"You never get a second chance to make a first impression!"

Lauren Castle

image management specialist

858.459.7400
www.impress-express.com
lauren@impress-express.com

Circulation Manager

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