

Publishers & Writers Monthly

THE NEWSLETTER OF PUBLISHERS & WRITERS OF SAN DIEGO

March 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 a.m. to 12 noon.

Membership

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

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 & Time: Saturday, March 27, 2010, 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Location: Encinitas Community Center, 1140 Oakcrest Park Drive, Encinitas, CA

Topic: “21st Century Book Marketing, or How the Book Launch Has Changed from 1998 to Present Day—What Works, What No Longer Works, and How the Internet Has Changed the Game”

Speaker: Arielle Ford

Arielle will offer a detailed look at how she launched her latest book, *The Soulmate Secret*, to bestseller status. She will also discuss traits of bestselling authors, creating a conversation through the Internet, how to make friends with the media, and why you say yes to every interview opportunity. Arielle has mastered the art of making things happen. A nationally recognized publicist and marketing expert, producer, author, and consultant, she has catapulted many authors and celebrities to stardom and enormously facilitated the rapid growth of the self-help and human potential movement in the U.S.

As the former president and founder of The Ford Group, a successful public relations and marketing firm, she helped launch the careers of Deepak Chopra; Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen, creators of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series; and Neale Donald Walsch, author of *Conversations with God*. She has also handled publicity for myriad best-selling authors, including Wayne Dyer, Dean Ornish, Debbie Ford, Gary Zukav, Marianne Williamson, Louise Hay, don Miguel Ruiz, Kenny Loggins, and many other notable authors, 11 of whom became #1 on the *New York Times* bestseller list.

NOTE: The March meeting will NOT be at the Encinitas Library as usual. We will be meeting in the Encinitas Community Center.

News/Announcements

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Read Local San Diego News

by Karla Olson, founder of Read Local San Diego

It's been quiet at Read Local San Diego, but that doesn't mean we haven't been working hard to create opportunities for writers to connect with readers. Stay tuned for an announcement about the opening of the Read Local San Diego Author Directory. Get listed in the directory and readers and event coordinators will be able to find you more quickly. The directory should be up and running by the end of March.

We've also been busy planning upcoming events such as book fairs and other types of activities that connect readers and authors. We'll let you know as soon as the dates are set, but we're hoping to hold book fairs in May and November. We'll need authors and volunteers, and we appreciate your involvement, enthusiasm, and help.

Volunteer Opportunity! We have an opportunity to coordinate with an existing online literary news site to get the Read Local San Diego news and information portal up and running with a tremendous amount of information about the San Diego literary community. However, I need someone to help coordinate the transition between the source and Read Local. If you have Constant Contact experience, please consider helping. This will be a wonderful resource for writers and readers. Contact me (karla@sandiego.readlocal.org) for more information.



“Naw, I don't want to see it. I had the book read to me.”

**Deciphering Social Media
Presenter: Becky Carroll**

February Meeting Recap by Elin Waldal

Becky Carroll, President of Petra Consulting, shared her expertise utilizing social media as a means to build a personal brand. Right out of the gate, Becky explained that many people believe social media is just “a set of tools.” The many options out there are enough to overwhelm anyone new to the electronic worlds of LinkedIn, Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter. Really, it isn’t about which network tool we begin with as much as it is about understanding first where the conversations relating to our subject matter are happening. When we employ social media as a strategy to build relationships, then we are allowing the tools to serve and build our own personal brand.

Given that 60% of Americans use social media, it is clear that taking careful steps can lead anyone to create a positive image. Examples came from companies such as Comcast, where they built a Twitter following by turning once-aggravated customers into evangelical customers. Or the silly Flip Video of CEO John Chambers making duck calls, which demonstrated the softer and more human side of the culture inside the offices of Cisco. Each example had one thing in common—both companies began to build loyalty by first understanding their customers’ needs.

How does that apply to our PWSD group? No matter what your discipline, there is a way to cultivate your own personal brand through social media networking. Becky recommends starting with a blog. You can easily build your blog site in a matter of minutes through such sites as Word Press (www.wordpress.com) and Blogger (www.blogger.com, run by Google). A blog is something that even the computer neophyte can master. The objective is to share your passion in brief posts—either written or video, invite people to comment, and, if possible, link back to other websites that support your message and create a two-way conversation. The key ingredient is to write or film a blog post in a way that promotes discussion: If you are in a skill-based trade, perhaps you offer “how to” tips; or if you are a writer of novels, give a glimpse into the mystery of the story’s unfolding. People want to experience both your accessibility and your competence.

Once you are comfortable with blogging, you can incorporate other social media forums into your strategy. Twitter is a fabulous way to create a buzz about your topic. This is a place where conversations are specific to subject. For example, if you want to talk about the craft of writing, you can search for other people who share that interest. Facebook offers both personal and professional options for communicating your message either via your own personal page or by creating a fan page. Either way, they each have tools to create ongoing conversations. MySpace is similar to Facebook but tends to be more popular with the under-30 set. LinkedIn is a professional option. It differs from MySpace and Facebook because it is strictly a professional networking tool, and it too has discussion boards on specific topics.

No matter the platform you choose to begin with, the most important element to consider first is to find out where the conversations around your subject are taking place. Chances are that is where you will best fit in. Remember the cocktail party example: Start as a good listener, and join the conversation in a way that complements what is being discussed. People are far more likely to encourage your participation—and even promote you—if you are adding value rather than trying to force-feed them something you are selling.

Self Morale as a Shield Against Rejection

John Wolf

There's a lot of chatter among writers when it comes to agent rejections or rejections from publishers. Rejection will always sting, but you can create an effective shield against its effects.

If writing is the only thing you do in your life, and rejections send you into tailspins of depression, then you need to pump up your self-morale. How do you do that? Expand your universe.

When you write, write great stuff, whether it's an email, a note to a friend, or short stories to pass time. Think like a Snapple flavor engineer. Work with great stuff. Get involved with groups—readers, writers, or guilds—anything where you can achieve a victory. You beat rejection by winning many small battles.

Take your writing to the streets. Give lectures, go to meetings, and tell people a story. Measure the response. When you gain a victory, like when people come up and say, "Hey, I enjoyed your talk," go out and buy a chocolate sundae. Don't just write one book and sit on it like a big egg, waiting for it to hatch into some grand exotic bird. Farm your craft in many fields. Take your stories and tell them fifty different ways and present them in front of as many people as you can. If they are accepted with respect, you have defeated rejection. You know your work is good. If rejections come, you can say to yourself, "Hey, XYZ Publishing Company, your loss, people."

Instead of always having to walk around with a stiff upper lip that makes you look like you had a bad facelift, or building a thick wall of resentment in your mind to thwart off the rejection blues, or lose friends because you're a sourpuss all the time, do an end-around play and defeat rejections with great self-morale.

Stephen King reflects in his book, *On Writing*, that he collected rejections on a spiked peg and glorified defeat by watching the stack grow. Of course, the grin on his face watching something being jammed down over a spike is fitting for his personality, but you don't have to be quite so dramatic or neurotic.

One of the common threads you read in the books experts write on approaching agents is to try to get feedback on why a rejection was made. When this rare event takes place, cherish it, consider it a blessing, and heed the words from the agent, who after all, is on the front lines. [Agents] swim in a pool of rejection as well. They usually give advice for a reason. They see something good in your writing and need you to realize with some changes your piece could find a fit.

If you see a trend in rejections, you have done something to make your work commercially a dead weight, and maybe the only useful thing to do is use it as an anchor. You need to rewrite your book. Reviewers usually won't tell you enough to make a valuable judgment. Their purpose is to look at the world through rose-colored glasses and pump up readers' enthusiasm. The language is floral, and that's a good thing. Negative attitude can turn off readers in general. What's a good read is a subjective matter. One might hate the same book another loves. The keener eye is the agent who knows what will sell. Sales is the lifeblood that floats the boat of publishing. It would be naïve to say that writing justifies itself, or it's wrong to adjust perfection. That old saw only works with paintings. Language is too graphic and exact. Force appeal is harder to find. Publishers seek a book that appeals to a large audience that is alive today and the potential sales are in great numbers while the topic is still hot. Old books that never went anywhere are only found in antique stores for ten cents a copy. The artwork in the binding is more revered than the content.

Once you realize your book isn't the only fish in the sea and that rejection can have a benefit if you react to it in a positive way, you can achieve high self-morale and grow stronger [and] beat the blues; and your writing will gain the depth and wisdom by fighting its way through the jungle to be victorious in its own time.

Never give up or you give up the bragging rights of telling people fifty publishers rejected your best seller before it was accepted by some obscure imprint and went to number one on three continents.

Janice Mueller

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

Janice: I am the author and publisher of five “**Personal Emergency Information Organizers**” (**ReadybooksSeries**) that allow the public to organize key emergency information they would need for a family plan, their homes, vehicles, and pets to keep them safer during an emergency or disaster:

- **ReadyLifeLine™**—a personal medical history organizer giving medical professionals quick access to your medical history, medications, and allergies, as well as insurance and emergency contacts, when timing is critical.
- **ReadyPlan™**—an aid to help you create a personal emergency disaster plan for you and your family; formatted to allow fast access to information you will need for home, work, school, or travel.
- **ReadyAuto™**—your vehicle history from purchase to sale, as well as maintenance, repairs, DMV, registration, insurance, and accident information.
- **ReadyHome™**—a homeowner or renter’s record of home insurance coverage, personal and emergency contacts, home inventory, home maintenance, and repair history.
- **ReadyVet™**—your pet’s medical history, allergies, medications, special diet, licensing, and breeding records, plus your pet’s preferences, to help vets and emergency personnel make better decisions in an emergency.

Our website keeps the public connected to extensive resources to find emergency information, whether they are at home or traveling. We sell the Emergency Organizers with and without a travel bag that can be used for a fast grab-and-go emergency solution in case the infrastructure goes down.

The **ReadyPlan** and **ReadyLifeline** books were purchased by the Army National Guard Readiness Center for their employees and the employees of the Pentagon, and some were purchased by a division of the State Department. Last year, the **ReadyLifeline** medical organizer was a finalist in the *San Diego Business Journal’s* Healthcare Medical Innovative Products Award.

PWM: What first attracted you to writing these books?

Janice: My first book, **ReadyLifeline**, started in the 1990s when I created a simple tool to manage my mom’s health care. I saw a serious gap in communication between her doctors, and her safety was at risk. My passion grew as I eventually saw significant medical mistakes that were happening for neighbors and friends. And as emergencies like the fires in San Diego occurred, I saw that what I had created for emergencies applied to our pets, our home, our vehicles, and our family emergency plans that we needed to have to be safer.

So I set my passion and drive to keep us all safer, even though I knew nothing of writing or publishing. But when you’re passionately attached to something that gives you purpose, it becomes exciting and fulfilling, and each step of the way you make it happen.

PWM: Did you previously have related experience in writing and publishing?

Janice: I love people and love organizing and researching. And with the aid of wonderful family experts—like my son, the paramedic; my daughter, who’s an ER trauma nurse; another son who’s an art director; and another daughter who loves people and selling—the journey of creating five emergency-response books was made easier. Fire departments, doctors, nurses, health departments, the Red Cross, CERT (community emergency response teams), the Small Business Administration, and publishing friends from IBPA and PMA, to name but a few, educated, inspired, encouraged, and helped me every inch of the way. God allowed me to be a vehicle to gather the information I needed from these wonderful people to make it happen. Without them, it never would have happened.

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

Janice: When I came to bumps in the road regarding publishing, I started going to the Publishers and Writers meetings. One thing I’ve always admired about the PWSD members I’ve met there, is that they’re all personally driven and passionate about their subject. You can hear it in their voices as they explain their books and how long they have been working and investing in their passionate pursuit to share it with the world.

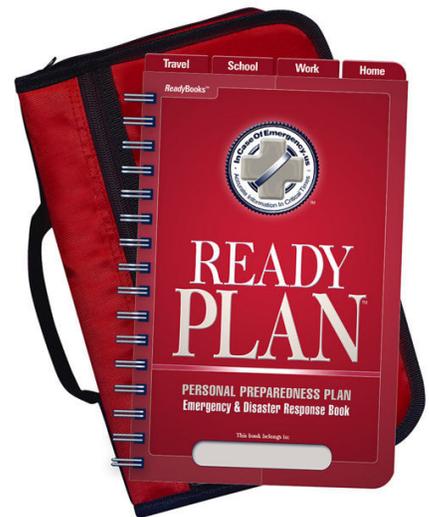
The other thing I always notice is that each person in the room is always eager to share the “how to” whenever people voice a problem or concern in creating their book. Whether it’s cover design, printing, copywriting, editing, art work, or marketing, the members or speakers cover the scope of what’s needed to succeed. People helping people ... I find it remarkable. They all have such interesting stories to share about their passion. And each featured speaker is equally passionate and driven.

PWM: What are you working on now?

Janice: My next book is a larger version of my medical organizer for those with extensive illnesses or diseases. Tracking medications, testing, and medical history seems more challenging, the older we all get. With privacy issues, mistakes in medical care, and the possibility of the infrastructure’s going down in times of emergency and disaster, we all need to have our information readily available. Our computers may not work and our batteries may run out, but our printed information will keep us safe.

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

Janice: Do go to PWSD if you’re passionately driven to write a book or help others with theirs. What makes us all better human beings is what we share of ourselves with others.



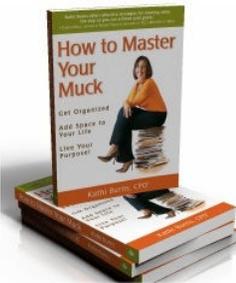
I believe we all need to help each other in these challenging times. I urge you to check out www.InCaseOfEmergency.US and forward the link to your loved ones, if only for the emergency resources to keep you and your families safer.

The Coffee Shop Chronicles Contest

Announcing the first *A Word With You Press* writer's competition! Do you write? Do you drink coffee? If you answered yes to both of these, you've almost won! PWSD member Thornton "Thorn" Sully, Editor-in-Chief of *A Word with You Press*, is putting together an anthology of 100 best stories that start or end with a cup of coffee. It can be humorous and jittery, or it can be about a life-changing event that is somehow linked to that magic brew. You can see a sample story at www.awordwithyoupress.com. All published entries will receive a \$25 gift certificate, courtesy of your favorite coffee shop and *A Word with You Press*. A cash prize of \$100 will be awarded to the most intriguing or engaging story. Submit entries, from one paragraph to one page in length, and include the name of your favorite coffee shop before May 1, 2010, as an email attachment to Thornton Sully, editor-in-chief at thorntonsully@yahoo.com. Limit is three entries per author. All rights revert to the author after first publication in *The Coffee Shop Chronicles*.



By the way, Thorn's first title, a literary novel *The Boy with a Torn Hat*, is launching at the end of March.



PWSD member **Kathi Burns'** new book, *How to Master Your Muck*, was recently reviewed by the *New York Journal of Books*. Reviewer Nicole Langan said, "Kathi Burns hits everything on the checklist for a well-designed book. A 'how-to' title? *Check*. A celebrity endorsement (in this case, *What Not to Wear's* Clinton Kelly)? *Check*. Interior text in an easy-to-read font with major points highlighted in wide margins? *Check*. The form equals the function. The book is so well organized that just flipping through its pages motivates you to want to get your life in order." Read the review at www.nyjournalofbooks.com/2010/02/how-to-master-your-muck-by-kathi-burns.html#links.



Saturday, March 20, 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. How to Make Money as a Writer.

Barbara Field will share ideas about different career paths, how to open doors, how desperation can fuel inspiration, and ways to make money freelancing and marketing yourself. Barbara has made her living as a communications consultant, author, and marketer. She has worked for CBS (NY), Harcourt Brace, ad agencies, Scripps, and UC San Diego. She has also been published in newspapers, magazines, and online. Her novel, *The Deeper, the Bluer*, won First Place for Mainstream Fiction in the 14th Annual Writer's Digest International Self-Published Book Awards. The class, sponsored by San Diego Writers Ink, is held at The Ink Spot, Art Center Lofts, 710 13th Street, Studio 210, San Diego, CA 92101 (located between F & G in downtown San Diego).

Registration is \$48 for members and \$60 for non-members of San Diego Writers Ink. To sign up for the event, please visit www.sandiegowriters.org/programs_workshops_howtomakemoney.htm.

On Thursday, March 25, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., PWSD member **Lauren Castle** will be one of the presenters at *Presenting Yourself for Success*, a one-day event to improve public speaking, training, sales, and presentation skills. Learn to control your voice, projection, tone, and speed so you can present yourself confidently in any situation. This workshop will enable you to instantly improve your image, your presence, and your impact for every presentation. Authors who do live events and book signings will learn to enhance their speaking skills. The cost is \$149, and lunch is included. The workshop will be held at Liberty Station, 2820 Roosevelt Road, Suite 201, San Diego, CA 92106. To register go to:



<http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e2pxza9o28f5164e&oseq=a01q4g51o69og>.

PWSD member and Oceanside author and etiquette coach **Elaine Swann** traveled to New York and appeared LIVE on NBC's *Today Show* on Friday, January 29. She was interviewed by Kathy Gifford on the subject, "**How to Use 'The Power of Polite' to Get What You Need,**" about her advice for getting good customer service by using politeness as a communication skill. You can watch a clip of the *Today Show* segment by visiting her website at www.elaineswann.com.

Events & Resources for the Publishing & Writing Community

Thursday, March 18, 6:30 p.m.—Monthly meeting of the **San Diego Professional Editors Network**. Anyone bewildered by the marketing potential of the booming social media communities will gain valuable insight when Web content strategist Shelly Bowen presents ***Virtual Story Telling: How to Grow Your Business with Social Media*** at the Joyce Beers Community Center, 1220 Cleveland Ave, San Diego (Uptown Shopping Center, Hillcrest).

Thursday, March 18, 6:30 p.m.—**Third Thursday Author Night** series at **Upstart Crow and Company** in Seaport Village presents Gary Winters, author of ***The Deer Dancer***, with the first presentation and signing for his new book, *The Deer Dancer*, a mature YA novel.

Monday, March 22, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.—**San Diego Writers/Editors Guild** will meet at the County Health Facility, 3851 Rosecrans, San Diego. The speaker will be John Wolf, author and editor of *The Fox and Quill* ezine. His presentation, "The Internet and the Wired Author," will provide a plethora of information on how to get involved with the wired world without getting electrocuted. Come listen to someone who spends a lot of time in the white water of the wired world.

Wednesday through Saturday, March 24–27—15th Annual Writer's Symposium by the Sea at Point Loma Nazarene University, 3900 Lomaland Drive, San Diego. www.pointloma.edu/writers.

Resources

Here are some great writing and publishing newsletters you might want to sign up for:

John Kremer's *Book Marketing Tip of the Week*, www.bookmarket.com

Dan Poynter, *Your Publishing Poynters* Newsletter, <http://parapub.com>

Rick Frishman, *Author 101* Newsletter, www.rickfrishman.com

Penny Sansevieri, *The Book Marketing Expert* Newsletter, www.amarketingexpert.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 on joining and to sign up for this newsletter.

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

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

Would you like to **take notes at our monthly meeting** and write 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.

Thanks 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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