

# Publishers & Writers Monthly

THE NEWSLETTER OF PUBLISHERS & WRITERS OF SAN DIEGO

October 2009

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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. (informal networking during the first and last half hours).

### **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.

**Closing date** for newsletter contributions is the **last day of each month**. Send contributions to [Newsletter@PublishersWriters.org](mailto:Newsletter@PublishersWriters.org).

If you would like to sign up for a **member profile**, contact Lynette Smith at [lynette@allmybest.net](mailto:lynette@allmybest.net).

## *Next Meeting*

**Date: October 31, 2009**

**Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 noon**

**Location: Encinitas Library, 540 Cornish Drive**

**Topic:** Web 2.0. Nettie Hartsock will talk about online social media and three specific tools we should use to market our books: Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Nettie runs an online visibility and digital strategy agency, and she's a veteran journalist who's interviewed such renowned authors as Erica Jong, Salman Rushdie, Ben Stein, and Pulitzer-Prize winner Doris Kearns Goodwin.

## *News/Announcements*



REMINDER! **Read Local San Diego kickoff** event is **Saturday, November 14, 2009, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.** at Horton Plaza, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor sundeck, downtown San Diego.

It will be a day-long celebration of San Diego's terrific literary talent! Author readings and presentations, book tables, music from local artists, and more! The day will end with a gala reception, toasting this new organization with wine, beer, and refreshments! Listen as local authors read their work; meet your favorite authors as they sign their books; mingle with others in the writing and reading community!

For more information, if you have any questions, if you're a local author, or if you'd like to volunteer, contact Karla Olson at [karla@sandiego.readlocal.org](mailto:karla@sandiego.readlocal.org) or (760) 753-2279. Visit the newly launched website at <http://SanDiego.ReadLocal.org>.



**Nautilus Book Awards, 10th Year, Early Entry Discount for Publishers & Authors. Enter Your Life- and World-Changing Books (& Audio Books) in the 2010 Nautilus Book Awards.**

The **2010 Nautilus Book Awards** contest is open to all publishers and self-published authors of **books** and **audio books** in one or more of 8 categories. All **books** and **audio books** published or produced in 2008 and 2009 in the English language are eligible. Check out the website for guidelines & entry forms at [www.nautilusbookawards.com/Guidelines for Entering.html](http://www.nautilusbookawards.com/Guidelines_for_Entering.html). For more info, email: [marilyn@nautilusbookawards.com](mailto:marilyn@nautilusbookawards.com)

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## Effortlessly Unleash Powerful Word-of-Mouth Buzz for Maximum Sales with Minimal Work!

By Peter Bowerman

Sound like snake oil? Too good to be true? Typical overblown hype? Classic over-promising with inevitable under-delivering? Actually, no. Ask any publisher or self-publishing author what's the most effective strategy to sell more books, and all the answers you get will likely fall under the overarching umbrella of "Marketing." Lots of review copies. Tons of live appearances. Scads of news releases to mainstream media. A powerful website. Radio. Ezines. Blogging. Social media. Writing articles. And ideally, a healthy mix of all the above.

All are "bricks in the wall" of a comprehensive book marketing campaign and should be consistently pursued and implemented. But what if you could do **one thing** before any of these that would turbo-charge the effectiveness and yield of all of them? Something that would dramatically simplify your overall marketing job and help you sell far more books with far less effort—not to mention boost sales of your related products and services. And here's the best part: it's something you have complete, absolute, 100% control over. What is this amazing tactic?

### Write a Really Good Word-of-Mouth Book

What has people buy a book and then spread the word? As my experience is in "how-to" books, I can only speak authoritatively on that genre. That said, some of my observations below would no doubt apply to other genres as well (especially straight nonfiction).

**1) In-Demand Subject Matter:** When I wrote *The Well-Fed Writer*, I was reasonably confident (okay, 100% dead certain) there was a market for a book that offered a step-by-step blueprint for making \$75–\$100–\$125+ an hour as a writer. With only one other book on the market on "commercial" freelancing at the time, there was room for another. As for *The Well-Fed Self-Publisher*? With all the authors out there running into brick walls trying to land a publisher OR tired of making no money with one, I knew a book with the no-hype subtitle, "How to Turn One Book into a Full-Time Living" would find a warm reception out there. I was right. What about yours?

**2) Offer Practical Information:** Because my books are essentially firsthand accounts of how I (and others) specifically went about the process in question (i.e., starting a lucrative commercial freelancing practice or profitably self-publishing a book), there's nothing theoretical about them. It's real-world stuff, written by someone who's actually done everything a reader would be doing. This authenticity makes it credible and compelling.

**3) Provide Nitty-Gritty Detail:** Get into a level of detail not found in other books. Readers want you to spell things out. Don't tell me I need to have a press release. Show me how to create a good one. Don't just mention buying shipping envelopes for my books. Tell me what kind, the company, the model number, and how to reach them. Don't just talk about what should go into a press kit; tell me how to craft the different pieces, down to "scissors-and-glue-stick" steps (and I do... no kidding). Offer specific, proven resources. Give them easy-to-follow game plans. Don't talk generalities. Get micro.

**4) Make It Fun and Readable:** A book that offers a ton of practical, detailed, in-demand information, and does it in an engaging, accessible way is tough to top. If you want someone to hang with a book, make it worth their while to do so. Make learning a good time. If you don't feel you can write in a way that draws readers in and keeps them engaged, consider hiring an editor or ghostwriter who can inject some life and color into your prose.

**5) Produce It Well:** You can release a book containing the most in-demand subject matter going, with tons of practical, real-world detail, written in a fabulously engaging style, but if it looks like the work of an amateur, it won't come close to reaching its potential. Invest in professional resources to handle editing, cover design, interior layout, indexing and printing. Cutting corners just isn't worth it. Over the years, countless seasoned book industry folk have commented on how UN-self-published my books look.

Bottom line, write a book that's better than it has to be. Keep asking: "How can I provide even more value to readers?" Don't be stingy. The more you share, the more you'll be seen as a generous author, the more fans you'll make, the more those fans will talk, the more books you'll sell, and the more they'll want to buy anything else you create. Success breeds success. Do all this and you will absolutely make your ongoing marketing job infinitely easier and more fun. You'll absolutely work less and make more money. I'm living proof it works just like that.

Bonus Tip: Take a look at the testimonials for TWFSF on Amazon (currently about 80+ reviews, mostly five stars. Not too shabby. But part of the reason I have so many five-star reviews is because I do something laughably simple: every time someone emails me to tell me how much they've enjoyed the book, I thank them, and ask (using a pre-written cut 'n paste reply in my email stationery) if they'd mind writing a review on Amazon. And I provide the link to do just that. In virtually every case, they'll write back, "Of course. Be happy to!" Why wouldn't they? If they thought enough of my book to email me and tell me so, you can bet they'll write a five-star review.

*Peter Bowerman is a professional copywriter, self-publishing coach, and the self-published author of the award-winning "Well-Fed Writer" titles (52,000 copies in print and a full-time living for more than seven years). For more details, visit [www.wellfedsp.com](http://www.wellfedsp.com).*

*Everywhere I go I'm asked if I think the university stifles writers. My opinion is that they don't stifle enough of them. There's many a best-seller that could have been prevented by a good teacher.*

~ Flannery O'Conner

*With 60 staring me in the face, I have developed inflammation of the sentence structure and a definite hardening of the paragraphs.*

~James Thurber

## Member Profile

**Tom Leech**

**Presentations Press, San Diego**

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

**Tom:** Mainly I write books, until recently with publishing organizations. For my recent book, ***On the Road in '68: A Year of Turmoil, a Journey of Friendship***, I took the path of self-publishing, working with Booksurge (owned by Amazon.com). The publisher of record is my own new firm, Presentations Press. My preferred involvement is as author, less as publisher, though as I get further into this new process that may shift. I'm also a longtime freelance writer, with articles in business publications, airline magazines, *San Diego Magazine*, our hometown paper, etc. I have fun writing poetry and have had a few poems published, plus I have used some in my books.

**PWM:** What first attracted you to writing and publishing?

**Tom:** I started writing for *San Diego Magazine* 40 years ago, with an article based on my living in South Mission Beach and the subject of OTL—Over The Line (a team softball game and tournament of some stature). From this start I became a regular contributor to *SD Magazine*, with many features about business and the San Diego lifestyle. During these years I worked full time for General Dynamics, developing a special expertise in business presentations. I started teaching at National University and providing coaching and training for GD, corporate wide. This provided the basis for my first book, ***How To Prepare, Stage & Deliver Winning Presentations*** (AMACOM), an important key for my independent coaching, training, and speaking consulting business. As far as self-publishing, I chose that for my latest book after trying, without success, the usual agent-publisher route. The self-published route has become much more workable over the past decade, so I dug into the wealth of info about this avenue, finally deciding to move forward with it.

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

**Tom:** With other writers I was a contributor to two other books. ***The Best of San Diego*** (1982, Rosebud) started with the publisher of *The Best of LA*. Unfortunately, the writing market sagged seriously around 1983, and our book did a quick goodbye (though *The Best of LA Edition XX* is still in bookstores, 25 years later, &\*&^%###@). I thought of taking over the publishing of *The Best of San Diego*, but after trying to convince a couple of others with no success, I opted out. (Being a publisher then was no easy task.) My section was about San Diego's outdoors world. That led first to my becoming editor of the Outdoors Forum when *San Diego Magazine* started its online edition, and finally to our co-authored book, ***Outdoors San Diego: Hiking, Biking & Camping*** (2004, Premier Publishing, a small local publisher). The other was a joint effort by a group of experts to create ***The Nine Keys to Winning Proposals***, self-published by one of the experts in 1988.

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

**Tom:** I joined about 18 months ago. I value the information gained from the programs and getting to know a wider range of people involved in this business. I'm starting to tap into the benefits of IBPA, Authors Guild, and so on.

**PWM:** What are you working on now?

**Tom:** I'm heavily involved in getting my new book out into the marketplace, as well as promoting my older books. Ahead are a couple of new writing projects: the second edition of ***Say It Like Shakespeare*** (likely to be

self-published; the first edition was published by McGraw-Hill), plus a humorous poetry book for which I'll be seeking a publisher-partner. I also have several freelance articles I'll be pursuing with magazines and newspapers.

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

**Tom:** Make it happen. If you want to write, do some research about your likely topic, target market, differentiators from similar books, and possible publishers/agents. Pick the brains of fellow PWSD members and speakers. Get going with the writing, and write steadily.



Best selling Romance novel author  
Duane Heathcot starts another of  
his typical scorchers.

## *PWSD Member Events & Announcements*

**Andrea Glass** will host a tele-interview on **Tuesday, October 20 at 6 pm PT**. She will interview Patsy Bellah of Great Transcriptions on “How to Create an Info-Product in an Afternoon (or Morning!).” Patsy will discuss a simple A-B-C formula to create information products in an afternoon, how to transform your ideas into info-products faster than your competitors, and how to find the time when you didn’t think you had any. You’ll also learn how you can apply these ideas to create special reports, press releases, blog posts, and articles. To sign up for this free event, visit [www.writersway.com/102009](http://www.writersway.com/102009).

**Lynette Smith, owner of All My Best Business and Nonfiction Copyediting**, has just written and published four tips booklets titled *Good Ways to Write a Treasured Letter To Your GROOM When You Marry, To Your BRIDE When You Marry, To Your PARENTS When You Marry, and To Your SON or DAUGHTER Getting Married*. Lynette created these booklets to show people how to write treasured letters to loved ones. The booklets are available in PDF and hard copy from [www.goodwaystowrite.com](http://www.goodwaystowrite.com). For additional information, contact Lynette at [lynette@goodwaystowrite.com](mailto:lynette@goodwaystowrite.com).

**Virg Erwin**, author of *Cat Lo—a Memoir of Invincible Youth*, was awarded the Military Writers Society of America 2009 Gold Medal for memoir. “I thank Bob Goodman and his reviewers for the 2009 San Diego Book Award. It was the encouragement I needed to publish this memoir. I’ve learned so much from the Publishers and Writers of San Diego, even the title of this book came from one of the Saturday morning sessions. Thank you all.”

## *Events & Resources for the Publishing & Writing Community*

**October 16–18, the San Diego County Library** is hosting its first annual Literary Event, “**Page One: Celebration of the Written Word.**” The festival will feature such nationally known, best-selling authors as Joseph Wambaugh, Victor Villaseñor, Susan Vreeland, Jesse Kellerman, David Brin, Richard Lederer, and Byrd Baylor, as well as more than 60 other published authors, such as Sue Ann Jaffarian, Denise Hamilton, Steve Gray, Rafael Lopez, Laura Preble and Kathi Diamant. The weekend-long event will include author talks, panel presentations covering a variety of book genres, receptions, and book signings in the Bonita-Sunnyside, Encinitas, Poway, and Vista libraries, as well as the County Administration Center. The event is free of charge and the public is invited.

**Monday, October 26, 6:30 p.m. – The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild** monthly program will feature Dale Featherling, who will speak on *Ghost Writing*. All meetings are on the 4th Monday of the month at the Joyce Beers Center on Vermont Street, across from Trader Joe’s in the Uptown Shopping Center in Hillcrest. See the website for more information. [www.sdwritersguild.org](http://www.sdwritersguild.org).

**The Eric Phleger Gallery**, 828 North Coast Hwy. 101, Encinitas, is currently hosting a solo exhibition, “In Readable Ardor,” by the artist Cheryl Sorg. Inspired by literature, Sorg transforms books into artworks, sculptures, and photographs. She takes viewers on a mesmerizing journey through great works of literature and the creative process. The show will be on display at the gallery until **October 30**, and it’s recommended for anyone passionate about art and the written word.

**Friday–Saturday, November 6–8**, is the 9th annual **La Jolla Writers Conference** at Paradise Point Resort & Spa in San Diego. Limited to 200 attendees, the conference sold out last year. For more on the La Jolla Writers Conference, call Antoinette or Jared at 858.467.1978 or check out [www.lajollawritersconference.com](http://www.lajollawritersconference.com).

**Saturday, November 7, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**, Oceanside Library will hold its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Authors' Day at 330 N. Coast Hwy., Oceanside (760.435.3065). The topic of the day's activities is "Beyond The Basics: Advice to Struggling Authors." With over 100 attendees at its first event titled, "So You Want to Be an Author!" the library is again inviting the public to this free event to be held in the Civic Center Library's Community Room. This year's featured speakers include Richard Lederer, Karla Olson, Marj Lacey, Virg Erwin, Mary Quigley, Nancy Burnett, and Antonio (Tony) F. Vianna. (Recognize some PWSD members?)

*For a complete listing of news, events, resources, etc.  
in the San Diego writing and publishing community,  
visit [www.sdway.org](http://www.sdway.org).*

## **Resources**

**Best of History websites**, [www.besthistorysites.net](http://www.besthistorysites.net). Links to over 1,000 history websites; useful for your historical novel.

**Lark Productions**, [www.larkproductions.com/about.html](http://www.larkproductions.com/about.html). A website for a group of literary agents for authors who want a traditional publishing relationship.

**OmniBiography**, [www.omnibiography.com](http://www.omnibiography.com). The largest directory of biographies on the Web, with more than 110,000 important people from the past to the present.

**OttoBib**, [www.ottobib.com](http://www.ottobib.com). Make a bibliography for free. Just insert the ISBN number.

**Plagiarism Checker**, [www.plagiarismchecker.com](http://www.plagiarismchecker.com). Check for plagiarism on any website.

**WordNik**, [www.wordnik.com](http://www.wordnik.com). This site's goal is to show you as much information as possible, as fast as it can be found, for every word in the English language.

***If you hear of an event or discover a valuable resource for publishers or writers,  
please send it to [newsletter@publisherswriters.org](mailto:newsletter@publisherswriters.org).***

*From the Editor, Andrea Glass*

If you are a self-publisher, independent publisher, consultant, author, editor, proofreader, ghostwriter, book designer, marketing specialist, Web designer or professional coach, consider joining PWSD. Be sure to visit [www.PublishersWriters.org](http://www.PublishersWriters.org) for more information 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](mailto:newsletter@publisherswriters.org).

**Member profile** signups are now being accepted for the first half of 2010. Interested? Contact Lynette Smith at [lynette@allmybest.net](mailto:lynette@allmybest.net).

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