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## **Publishers & Writers of San Diego (PWSD)**

is a professional association of the San Diego publishing community, with new chapters such as PWOC forming in other parts of Southern California, too. PWSD educates business-minded self-publishers and authors through networking, guest experts, open discussions, and field trips. Regular meetings are held 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the last Saturday of each month (except November and December), usually at the Carlsbad Dove Library–Auditorium (1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad, CA), but sometimes at the Encinitas Community Center (1140 Oak Crest Park Drive, Encinitas) or the Encinitas Library (540 Cornish Drive, Encinitas, CA); check meeting information in newsletter for current location.

## ***Membership***

\$47/year plus \$10/meeting for members. Non-member meeting fee is \$20. For information and to RSVP for meetings, visit [www.PublishersWriters.org](http://www.PublishersWriters.org)

***Closing date*** for newsletter contributions is the **1<sup>st</sup> day of each month**. Send to Glenna A. Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com)

***Next Meeting:*** **Saturday, January 25, 2020**  
**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

***Location:*** **Carlsbad Dove Library**  
**1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad, CA 92011**

***Topic:*** ***“How to Sell Books by the Truckload on Amazon”***

***Speaker:*** ***Penny C. Sansevieri***

Amazon is a great place to sell books, but most authors (and publishers) underutilize the free systems Amazon offers. Metadata, keywords, and Amazon's backend systems are also something that are often misunderstood, and underused. This deep-dive class will dig into all of the pieces that Amazon has to help you sell more books:

- Optimize your Amazon page—what you must do to start showing up in more searches
- Good book descriptions—how to create one that will help your book sell
- How to get more followers on Amazon, and why you should
- Yes, Goodreads can help boost your Amazon sales, and we'll talk about how to do this
- Understanding categories and how to rank consistently #1 in your category.
- The best price for your eBook and eBook discount promotion
- How to quadruple the reviews you get on Amazon
- Quick tips for gaining more momentum with your Amazon ads

**Penny C. Sansevieri**, Founder and CEO, Author Marketing Experts, Inc., is a best-selling author and internationally recognized book marketing and media relations expert. She is an Adjunct Professor teaching Self-Publishing for NYU. She is the author of 18 books, including *How to Sell Your Books by the Truckload on Amazon*, *5 Minute Book Marketing for Authors* and *How to Revise and Re-Release Your Book*.



***Welcome Back, Members, to 2020!***

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If you plan to attend one of our monthly meetings, please help and volunteer to write the **recap** for this newsletter; Contact Lauren Castle at [lauren@impress-express.com](mailto:lauren@impress-express.com)



**By Karla Olson**  
**President, Publishers & Writers of San Diego**

**News in Publishing**

Happy New Year! Happy new decade, my fifth in the publishing industry. Wow, that makes me feel old! But it also causes me to reflect on the ways in which this industry has changed—and the ways it has stayed the same. What brings us all together is our love of books, the written word, and sharing our expertise and our stories. What has changed is the definition of “publisher” and the way people discover and obtain books (thanks to the World Wide Web and Amazon). Navigating those sometimes-incompatible trends has made working in this industry frustrating for some. I’ve chosen to face the challenges with energy and excitement. There’s no other job I would rather be doing. I hope you feel that way too.

And I hope that PWSD continues to support your dreams for publishing and help you find solutions to the challenges. That’s what we are here to do—and to encourage you to create the best product possible.

We’ve got lots of exciting information to share in the coming year. Starting off in January, publishing veteran Penny Sansevieri will offer what she’s found to be the most effective ways to get your books noticed and sold on Amazon. Penny has been at the forefront of this effort for longer than most, and she is always looking for the latest strategy to make the behemoth of bookselling work easier for authors and publishers.

In February, veteran bookseller Pamela Sheppard will unlock the illuminating power of comp titles. We hear it all the time, but very few author-publishers and indie publishers—even trade publishers—know how to effectively compare their books to ones that are currently selling to leverage the momentum to launch their products. Carefully examining what is already out there selling can help you decide on price, positioning, keywords, and more. This will be a “don’t miss” program if you want to publish successfully.

More great programs to come, including David Wogahn on getting book reviews, Sean Bevula on how to be an effective speaker, and more.

**PWOC**

February 1 I’ll moderate one of our popular “Your Questions Answered!” sessions in which we brainstorm solutions to the writing and publishing problems and challenges you bring to the table. Don’t miss this one!

**Publishing University**

IBPA’s Publishing University is practically in our backyard this year. Two to three days of sessions and networking, as well as opportunities to “ask the experts,” you won’t want to miss this great opportunity. I’ll be there speaking on how to green your publishing program, and several other members will be speaking as well. There are sessions on marketing, selling, distribution, audiobooks, designing your covers and books, and much, much more. On top of all that is the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Benjamin Franklin Awards, the premier award for independent publishing. April 3–4 at the Crowne Plaza in Redondo Beach.

*Continued on next page*

## President's Message—continued

### Publishing University

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### PWSD/PWOC Membership

**Reminder to PWSD members:** You may attend PWOC meetings for the member price, \$10 per meeting. It's the same for PWOC members who want to attend PWSD meetings. Essentially, now we're all getting two great groups for one low membership fee. We encourage you to join us in Orange County sometime!

As most of you know, our yearly dues are only \$47 per year. In addition to the reduced meeting fee, you get a listing in our membership directory and a snazzy nametag. You can easily join by clicking on the link to PayPal on our website, or sending a check, made out to PWSD, to P.O. Box 235204, Encinitas, CA 92023.

**Reminder to all members:** Submit your member bio and headshot to [webmaster@publisherswriters.org](mailto:webmaster@publisherswriters.org). Our website is very highly ranked on Google, which means you will get broader exposure by being part of the directory. But you must be an up-to-date member to take advantage of this benefit. If you are not sure when you should renew, please contact me at [karla@publisherswriters.org](mailto:karla@publisherswriters.org), and I will let you know.

### IBPA Membership

If you have launched on your publishing journey, I encourage you to explore the benefits of joining Independent Book Publishers Association. This is the national association that includes regional affiliates such as PWSD. You can find information on their very robust and informative website: [www.ibpa-online.org](http://www.ibpa-online.org).

Membership is very affordable but to make it even better, PWSD members get a \$30 discount. Just enter PWSD in the coupon code.



*Read Local*

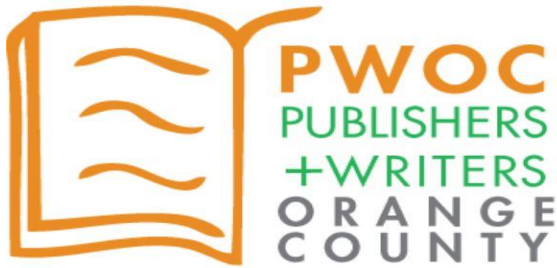


### Read Local News

Please visit [www.readlocal.org](http://www.readlocal.org) to find out more about our author marketing coalition, Read Local. While you are there, sign up for the Read Local Directory. This is one of the best ways to gain local exposure for your books. Booksellers, librarians, producers, and event planners have all used the Read Local Directory to find authors to feature in their stores and on their programs.

A Basic Listing is FREE and includes your name, the title of your book, its genre, and your location. An Enhanced Listing is only \$25 and adds a thumbnail of your cover, a book description, and other information that lets people know where to get your book and if you are available for speaking, etc. Check it out: Read Local is one of the best marketing deals around.





## IN THE OC OR VICINITY?

Come Join Us on the  
First Saturday of the Month!

10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Rotary Room, City of Orange Library\*  
407 E. Chapman Ave., Orange, CA 92866 • 714-744-2225

*\*Always check the meeting announcement  
or website to confirm the location.*

[www.PublishersWritersOrangeCounty.org](http://www.PublishersWritersOrangeCounty.org)

Tell your writing and publishing friends in the area we'd love to meet them at the next meeting; visit [www.PublishersWritersOrangeCounty.org](http://www.PublishersWritersOrangeCounty.org) and/or <http://www.meetup.com/Publishers-Writers-Orange-County/> for details and to RSVP.

**A fun, after-meeting plus:** Whenever you attend our meetings, bring your walking shoes along; weather permitting, after the meeting we walk a few blocks to a local restaurant to continue our networking and camaraderie over a Dutch-treat, possibly *al fresco* lunch. **Have other PWOC questions?** Email Lynette Smith at [Lynette@allmybest.com](mailto:Lynette@allmybest.com). Remember, as a PWSD or PWOC member, you can attend either or both chapters' functions at member rates!



**Join Us on Saturday, February 1, 2020, for  
"Your Questions Answered!"  
With PWSD/PWOC President Karla Olson, and YOU!**

**Start the year off with a clear plan and all your questions answered, so you can move your book forward with confidence.** PWSD/PWOC President Karla Olson will be there, with the help of the group, to answer your publishing and marketing questions. We'll brainstorm your development and marketing strategies and use our collective experience to offer ideas and suggestions. In addition, Karla will talk a bit about where she's heard the industry is going, and she will share some very exciting news about the upcoming IBPA Publishing University. Get off to a great start and join us for one of our most popular programs.

**Karla Olson** is the Director of [Patagonia Books](http://Patagonia Books), which publishes books as a mission outreach for Patagonia, the clothing company. She is the president of IBPA affiliates Publishers and Writers of San Diego and Publishers and Writers of Orange County, and founder of Read Local, a marketing coalition for authors. She has been in the publishing industry for over 30 years and is the owner of [BookStudio](http://BookStudio), a publishing consultancy.



*PWOC Meeting Highlights, December 7, 2019*

## “Partnering with Indie Bookstores”

*Presented by Pam Sheppard,  
Sheppard Editorial Services*

HAPPY NEW YEAR! We're at the starting line of 2020 and we at PWOC and PWSD hope you had a great holiday season and are looking forward to a successful year. At our December meeting we were treated by Pam Sheppard to a thorough lesson of getting into independent bookstores and what to do once you're there. In short, if you are going to play in the business arena (and we'd all better, if we want to make some money), be a businessperson.

What does that mean? Pam says, “Know the business,” and “Speak their language.” Bookstores don't exist merely for the love of books; they need to make a profit to stay in business.

Why is it so hard to get into an indie bookstore? The industry itself is time-pressured, and book-shelf real estate is constrained, requiring a return on investment for each inch of space. They have accounting challenges, inventory pressures, and marketing and staffing challenges. And how about the pressure of competing with Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and Costco?

To make matters harder, in the beginning of indie publishing, some indie-published books were presented to bookstore buyers unprofessionally—without doing their homework—lacking regard to the business environment of the small bookstore, or without studying the author programs offered by the specific store. Some buyers remember those attempts and haven't considered buying indie-published books in their stores since.



You may want to develop a relationship, and you should but remember this is a business. In the beginning, leave those pictures of your grandkids in your purse! These folks are busy and will literally give you only a few minutes, so make it count. You're in their territory, so it's their rules.

Know your three-minute pitch, and remember you aren't talking to your friends—they don't care to hear your cute story about when... particularly at first when they don't know you, maybe ever. As in any sales, they are concerned about their own benefit; they want to know what is in it for their bookstore if they carry your book. How are books comparable to yours doing?

Wouldn't a better angle than *I have this book I want to tell you about be, Hello, my authors have had successful events with your store, and I've promoted your store with my x, y and z efforts. Can we discuss more ways we can work together?*

What's your marketing plan? Hopefully you can show them some social media proof of your audience. What social media, email promotion and networking with local news media and organizations will you be promoting to help ensure a successful event? What discount are you offering? Are you participating in their consignment program? It amounts to *pay to play*....

For instance, [Vroman's bookstore](#) in Pasadena has the following Tier Consignment Options:

**Bronze – \$35**

Local author display for two weeks (renewable)

**Silver – \$125**

Display + featured in email updates  
Placement on local author's page for 60 days  
Available through Vroman's online store

### **Gold – \$298 (One time only)**

- Display + featured in email updates
- Placement on local author's page for 60 days
- Available through Vroman's online store
- Local Author Series book-signing event with 2–3 others

Remember, quoting Amazon statistics is a no-no! Would you try to sell clothes in Talbots by bragging about how well you are doing at Target? Not if you want to make a sale.

Invest your time and energy. Take the time to visit the store and understand their trials and the opportunities of each specific store and of indie bookstores in general. Respect the buyer's time. Don't tick-off the bookstore seller by being ignorant about their needs. Look at what they sell and who their customers are. Review their event calendar and their use of social media. What types of genres do they feature? Kids' books? How-to books? Buy something.

Know the buyer—they may offer comments as blunt as, "If you don't know what you are doing, don't call me." Take the not-so-subtle hint. You won't be able to just drop by the buyer's office; you must have an appointment. Participate in their store author programs.

Independent bookstores are bellwethers to which books are selling for publishers. If a book is released and starts to sell in 5–10 different stores, that's a signal. The small independent stores start selling the hot books before the big book retailers know. They are important for the industry.

Their goal is that they want your book to move. Remember you don't get paid until they sell your books, and the store doesn't want to deal with returns.

What does the store want from an independent author?

- A book published according to industry standards
- Ease in ordering
- A good fit with their inventory and customers
- Your book backed up with marketing
- The opportunity to promote their store with your friends and family
- The opportunity to expand their customer base
- The opportunity for a successful event result: 10–20 books per day

If you make it into a store and they hold an event for you, be sure to thank them. They always appreciate a handwritten note. We know you believe in the *golden rule* too, but it helps to know, since they get deluged with emails, they probably won't open yours.

It was an informative talk about the land of small bookstores. For buyers, authors and publishers, it's not so relaxing. But readers can find a comfortable corner on a couch with a cup of coffee and a book they are considering buying. Hopefully it's yours, and they do....

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**PWOC Scribe Penny S. Tee is a nonfiction writer, speaker, and blogger.** Of Penny's experiences in her book *Blasted from Complacency: A Journey from Terror to Transformation in Israel*, the world-renowned Jean Houston writes, "What Penny and her family learn about themselves and human courage is a testament to the endurance of our species and the hopes we all have of creating a world that works for all." Penny's book is the true account of her family's vacation in Israel in 2014, when they found themselves touring extraordinary, historic, sacred sites, and cowering in bomb shelters. The impact of being human targets caused a dramatic shift in her life, moving her to want to work on Peace. Penny is on the Jewish National Fund's Speakers Bureau and is available to speak for organizations. Check out her website at <https://pennystee.com/>.





## Susan Lewallen

Email: [slewallen@kcco.net](mailto:slewallen@kcco.net)

Website: [www.susanlewallen.com](http://www.susanlewallen.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/SusanLewallenAuthor/](http://www.facebook.com/SusanLewallenAuthor/)

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

**Susan:** I've just written and published my first novel, *Crossing Paths*.

The book is published with Konstellation Press through Ingram Spark. You can learn more about it on the detail page <https://www.amazon.com/dp/0999198963/ref>.

**PWSD:** What first attracted you to writing?

**Susan:** Reading! I've always loved to read and was frequently in trouble as a child for hiding out with a book instead of doing some dull chore. I'm (mildly) ashamed to admit that when my boys were growing up, I closed the door to them sometimes in order to get essential reading time, but I'm sure it made me a better human and therefore a better mother. Also made them realize they could bake their own muffins—and now they love reading too!

I've really enjoyed the dozens of "how to write fiction" books I've read since I started my novel. Analyzing the components of fiction fascinates me. Through the years, I've known many fictitious characters that I loved, laughed, and cried over. I wanted to see if I could develop such characters myself.

**PWSD:** What is your previous experience in writing?

**Susan:** I've published many medical research papers and some book chapters, but that's a completely different undertaking than fiction.

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

**Susan:** Another novel set in Tanzania. This time the POV character will be an American woman. I've written a couple of times on my blog ([www.susanlewallen.com](http://www.susanlewallen.com)) about writing in a POV outside the culture I grew up in. I think it was the right choice for *Crossing Paths*, given the story and intended audience, but I'm not sure I'd do it again.

**PWSD:** How long have you been a member of PWSD, and what's your objective in joining?

**Susan:** I've been coming to PWSD for about 18 months. I wanted to learn all I could about the business end of writing and publishing. It's been a shocker.

**PWSD:** What guidance or a lesson learned can you offer PWSD members?

**Susan:** The lesson for me is the whole marketing aspect. Who knew? Fiction writers especially need to listen to this.

**PWSD:** What's another factoid from your life or experience that people would find interesting and that would help us know a little more about you?

**Susan:** I'm retired from a career in ophthalmology, and I spent 20 years living in different countries of Africa, where we raised our kids. I'd love to help Americans understand not to fear people and places that are different. We humans have far more in common than we do differences.



**“PWSD likes Facebook!”**  
**Visit us on Facebook today**  
**and let us know**  
**you like us!**





**Have newsletter feature articles/ideas? Send them to Glenna Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com).**

We are currently seeking feature articles for the upcoming issues of the newsletter. If you've read something great or have an idea or an article that you believe would be of interest to your fellow members, please submit it to our Managing Editor, Glenna. Thank you for your continued support.

**Want to be profiled in PWSD's newsletter? Contact Bruce Rowe at [rbrowe@storysetfree.com](mailto:rbrowe@storysetfree.com).**

If your membership is current, Bruce will provide you with eight simple questions to answer. Then, along with your answers, send your full contact information, a head shot, and one or two other images, such as book covers or action shots. Bruce will send your finished profile to *Publishers & Writers Monthly*.

**Get found in the directory: Email your bio & headshot to [webmaster@publisherswriters.org](mailto:webmaster@publisherswriters.org).**

Our website is very highly ranked on Google, which means you will get broader exposure by being part of the directory. You must be an up-to-date member to be part of the directory. If you are unsure when you should renew, please contact Karla Olson at [karla@publisherswriters.org](mailto:karla@publisherswriters.org), and she will let you know.

**Save more and learn more: Attend both PWSD & PWOC Meetings at reduced member rates!**

Yearly dues are only \$47—one of the most economical memberships available. And when you join or renew, you are a member of PWOC as well as PWSD. As a member, you save \$10 at every PWSD and PWOC meeting you attend, vs. the \$20 nonmember meeting fee. Get meeting details for PWSD and PWOC in each newsletter issue.



**“PWSD likes Facebook!”**  
**[Visit us on Facebook today](#)**  
**and let us know  
you like us!**



## 2020 Events Calendar

*Have an event/resource to report to the publishing and writing community?  
Send your information to Managing Editor Glenna Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com)*

### **Free Writers' Workshops on Saturdays, Every Month This Year**

**Anaheim Central Library, 500 West Broadway, Anaheim, California 92805**

**Details:** <https://www.anaheim.net/DocumentCenter/View/29408/Writing-Workshop-Series-2020>

Anaheim Central Library will present a FREE Writers' Workshop Series from January through December 2020! Discover the keys to becoming a better, even a great, writer. Learn how to publish and market your work. Workshops will be held monthly on Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. for adults and teens (7th grade and up), and no RSVPs are required. Join us on the following workshop dates: January 18 ("I Write Funny"), February 15 ("Writing That First Book"), March 21 ("Writing Dazzling Dialogue"), April 25, May 30, June 20, July 18, August 15, September 19, October 17, November 14, and December 12. For more information, view the Writer's Workshop Series flyer at [Writers' Workshop Series Flyer](#) or contact Sarah Emmerson at [semmerson@anaheim.net](mailto:semmerson@anaheim.net) with questions.

### **Southern California Writer's Conference**

**February 14–16, 2020, in San Diego**

**Details:** [WritersConference.com/sd/](http://WritersConference.com/sd/)

### **IBPA Publishing University 2020**

**April 3–4, 2020, Crowne Plaza Redondo Beach and Marina Hotel, Redondo Beach, California**

**Details:** [ibpa-online.org](http://ibpa-online.org) or [PublishingUniversity.org](http://PublishingUniversity.org)

This premiere educational event for indie and author publishers will be close to home this year, just up the coast. Join more than 300 of your peers and discover fresh strategies, new connections, and innovative ideas!



# Welcome, New and Returning PWSD Members!

Congratulations on joining Publishers & Writers of San Diego, the only publishing group in San Diego County focused on the business of publishing and writing! You have made a wise investment. While there are many benefits to being a member of PWSD, you'll need to take the following two steps to optimize your membership:

1. **Subscribe to PWSD** at [www.PublishersWriters.org](http://www.PublishersWriters.org). This is necessary for you to receive any and all notices from PWSD. Receiving the email that accompanied this newsletter does not mean your name has been added to the regular notice distribution list.
2. **Enjoy a spot in the Membership Directory** with PWSD. Go to [www.PublishersWriters.org](http://www.PublishersWriters.org) to promote your business by sending your JPG photo, brief contact information, and an expanded description to webmaster Jeniffer Thompson at [j@monkeycmedia.com](mailto:j@monkeycmedia.com). (See announcement at top of this newsletter page for details.)

You'll also enjoy these additional benefits of membership:

- **Monthly meetings**, held for PWSD the first 10 months of the year (usually on the last Saturday) and, for PWOC, on the first Saturday (except on holiday weekends) for the first 11 months of the year—both offering educational programs plus opportunities to network with colleagues, showcase your business, sell your books, and save on each monthly meeting fee;
- **Our monthly electronic newsletter, *Publishers & Writers Monthly***, containing information about local, regional, and national publishing activities;
- **Discounts on national membership dues** for Independent Book Publishers Association ([www.ibpa-online.org](http://www.ibpa-online.org)), Small Publishers Association of North America ([www.spannet.org](http://www.spannet.org)), and Small Publishers, Artists, and Writers Network ([www.spawn.org](http://www.spawn.org));
- **An opportunity to stay in touch with other members** by signing up for the PWSD YahooGroup ([www.groups.yahoo.com](http://www.groups.yahoo.com)—type PWSD in the group search box);
- **Regional collaborative marketing efforts**; and
- **Attendance at any of the PWSD and PWOC meetings at the \$10 member rate**, a \$10 savings each meeting, compared to the non-member meeting rate of \$20!

Let us know if you have any questions or comments about your membership with PWSD, or any ideas to improve upon our mission. Again, welcome to PWSD.

**Karla Olson, President, PWSD**  
**Jeniffer Thompson, Web Design, PWSD**

*From the Editor*

If you're an 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](http://www.PublishersWriters.org) for membership information, and visit the home page to sign up for this newsletter.

**The closing date for newsletter contributions is the 1st day of each month.** Send your contributions to Glenna Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com).

**Would you like to help by taking notes at one of our monthly PWSD meetings and then writing up the meeting recap for the next newsletter?** If so, contact Glenna Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com). 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 and Orange County Writing and Publishing Communities!***

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PWOC Meeting Scribe