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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.

Meetings are held on the last Saturday of each month (except November and December). If held in person, they take place from 10:00 a.m. to noon, usually at the Carlsbad Dove Library–Auditorium (1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad, CA). If held virtually, they take place from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. *Always check meeting information in the newsletter for current location and times.*

**Meeting: Saturday, September 24, 2022**

**Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 Noon**

**Location: Webinar—Zoom (watch for details)**

**Topic: “Create Your Best Author Bio (and Draw Your Ideal Reader)”**

**Speaker: Jeniffer Thompson**

**Please watch for the link in the meeting notices sent to your email inbox twice during the next few days before this FREE online meeting.**

Do you have a professional, polished, author bio that speaks to the needs of your readers? A professional bio is your chance to control the narrative of *You*. It’s your introduction to the



people who need you most—your audience. Your bio is your pitch! Remember, you’re pitching *You* because your audience needs what *You* have to offer. Does your bio speak clearly to their needs? Does it tell them how you can help them? In this class,

Jeniffer Thompson will walk you through her proven process and provide a formula to get the best of *You* into one stellar bio! Don’t wait any longer, write your best bio today!

**Jeniffer Thompson** is a personal branding expert, digital marketing strategist and host of *The Premise* podcast. She is an award-winning author and speaker and the co-owner, with her husband Chad, of Monkey C Media, creating attention-grabbing book cover designs and author websites. She is co-founder of the San Diego Writers Festival and serves on the board of the San Diego Memoir Writers Association.



**PWSD Officers**

**Karla Olson**

President

[karla@publisherswriters.org](mailto:karla@publisherswriters.org)

**Jeniffer Thompson**

Webmaster

[j@monkeycmedia.com](mailto:j@monkeycmedia.com)

**Bob Goodman**

Founder

**Andrew Chapman**

Past President

[andrew@publisherswriters.org](mailto:andrew@publisherswriters.org)

**PWSD Newsletter Staff**

**Glenna Bloemen**

Managing Editor

[gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com)

**Lynette Smith**

Copyeditor

[lynette@allmybest.com](mailto:lynette@allmybest.com)

**Lauren Castle**

Circulation Manager

[lauren@impress-express.com](mailto:lauren@impress-express.com)

**Other Key Volunteers**

**Andrea Glass**

Member Profile Editor

[andrea@writersway.com](mailto:andrea@writersway.com)

**Janet Williams**

Social Media Liaison

[gooddayjanet@gmail.com](mailto:gooddayjanet@gmail.com)



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

**PWSD News**

Desiree Duffy of Black Chateau gave a terrific, information-packed presentation in August. She shared a much needed understanding of the potential impact of #BookTok, as well as other great marketing opportunities with social media. Desiree generously shared her slides for reference as well as for those who couldn't attend the meeting. You can find them [here](#).

In September we welcome one of our own, Jeniffer Thompson, speaking on a topic that is not often addressed but so important. As the founder and co-owner of Monkey C Media and PWSD's webmaster, Jeniffer will speak on why your author bio is so important as a marketing tool and how you can make it as impactful as possible. She's spoken to our group many times before and always delivers great material in an entertaining way. Be sure to join us.

**Meeting Etiquette**

Please be sure you are muted while our virtual speaker is presenting, as background noise is distracting for all other participants. If you have a question during the presentation, please put it in the chat, and the host (me!) will monitor the questions. Please save general questions for the Q&A at the end of the presentation. The host will call on you and ask you to speak if your question needs clarification.

The meetings are not recorded. Instead, most speakers have been sharing their slides, so be sure to go to the [blog](#) to find presentations by many of our past speakers.

**PWSD Membership**

We are happy to make these virtual meetings free to participants, and we hope you will support PWSD in the following ways:

*Continued on next page*

*President's Message—continued from previous page*

1. **Make sure your membership is up to date.** Watch your inbox for a notice if your membership has expired. (If you wish, email [Robbie@bookstudiobooks.com](mailto:Robbie@bookstudiobooks.com) and he'll check your membership.)
2. **If your membership is up to date, please consider paying the meeting fee.** You can do this at [PublishersWriters.org](http://PublishersWriters.org) and clicking on RSVP.
3. **If you are not a member, please consider joining.** Membership is only \$47 per year, which helps us to get the best speakers and provide other benefits to our members. Go to [PublishersWriters.org](http://PublishersWriters.org) to join.
4. **Tell your publishing and author friends and colleagues about PWSD** and have them join us!

When you join PWSD, in addition to the reduced meeting fee, you get many other benefits, as listed on page 4. You can easily join by clicking on the link to PayPal on our website, or send a check, made out to PWSD, to P.O. Box 387, Ventura, CA 93002.

### **IBPA Membership**

If you have launched on your publishing journey and you don't know about IBPA, which can be a great support for you, I once again encourage you to explore the benefits of joining. This is the national association that includes such regional affiliates as PWSD. You can find information on their very robust and informative website at [IBPA-online.org/](http://IBPA-online.org/). Membership is very affordable, and to make it even better, PWSD members get a \$30 discount. Just enter PWSD30 in the coupon code.



*Read Local*



Go to [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!



## Care to Join Us?

**Save more and learn more:** Attend PWSD meetings at reduced member rates! Yearly dues are only \$47—one of the most economical memberships available. As a member, you save \$10 at every PWSD meeting you attend, versus the \$20 nonmember meeting fee. (Get meeting details for PWSD in each newsletter issue.) And take a look in the next section below at all the other extras you get as a member!


## Reminders for Members

**If you're a new or returning member, welcome to the PWSD family!** 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, as you'll see later on this page.

### **Subscribe to PWSD in order to optimize your membership:**

Receiving the email that accompanied this newsletter does not mean your name has been added to the regular notice distribution list. Go to [PublishersWriters.org](http://PublishersWriters.org) and click on the button that looks like what you see at right. This is necessary for you to receive any and all notices from PWSD.

### Free PWSD Newsletter

 **Subscribe to the PWSD Newsletter**  
Subscription is free: get monthly articles from our speakers, writing tips, announcements, upcoming events, and more.

**Get found in the PWSD online member directory:** Email your new or revised bio & headshot to [Webmaster@publisherswriters.org](mailto:Webmaster@publisherswriters.org) as soon as you can, for valuable publicity! Our website is very highly ranked on Google, which means you will get broader exposure by being part of the member directory at [PublishersWriters.org/member-directory](http://PublishersWriters.org/member-directory). You must be an up-to-date member to be in the directory. Unsure when you should renew? Email [Robbie@bookstudiobooks.com](mailto:Robbie@bookstudiobooks.com) and he will let you know.

**Get a snazzy permanent name badge to wear at on-site meetings:** Your badge will be available at meetings. (Please remember to turn it in as you leave.)

**Participate in occasional regional collaborative marketing efforts:** If you're subscribed (see above), you'll be notified of these events whenever they occur.

**Get a 30% discount on IBPA membership and optionally apply for a scholarship to IBPA's annual Publishing University:** If you've launched your publishing journey, join the Independent Book Publishers Association at [IBPA-online.org/](http://IBPA-online.org/) and use PWSD30 as the code to get your discount.

**Want to be profiled in PWSD's newsletter?** Contact Andrea Glass at [Andrea@writersway.com](mailto:Andrea@writersway.com). If your membership is current, she 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, to her and she will publish your finished profile in *Publishers & Writers Monthly*.

**Do you have newsletter feature articles or ideas?** Send them to Managing Editor 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 Glenna. Thank you for your continued support.



# How Kickstarter Can Pave the Way For a Publishing Deal

James Aquilone, Joe Mynhardt, and Lindy Ryan

Reprinted with permission. This article was first published in the July/August 2021 issue of *IBPA Independent* magazine, which can be accessed [here](#).

The story of *Classic Monsters Unleashed* told from the perspective of the author and two of his publishing partners.

## Synopsis

- **Author James Aquilone** discusses why he decided to use a crowdfunding campaign to create his anthology of short stories and shares five reasons others should consider it.
- **Publisher Joe Mynhardt** explains why he decided to work with James Aquilone and why crowdfunding was so intriguing to him.
- **Publisher Lindy Ryan** shares how the campaign helped her company meet new authors and creatives and expand their professional network.

## Author Perspective: James Aquilone

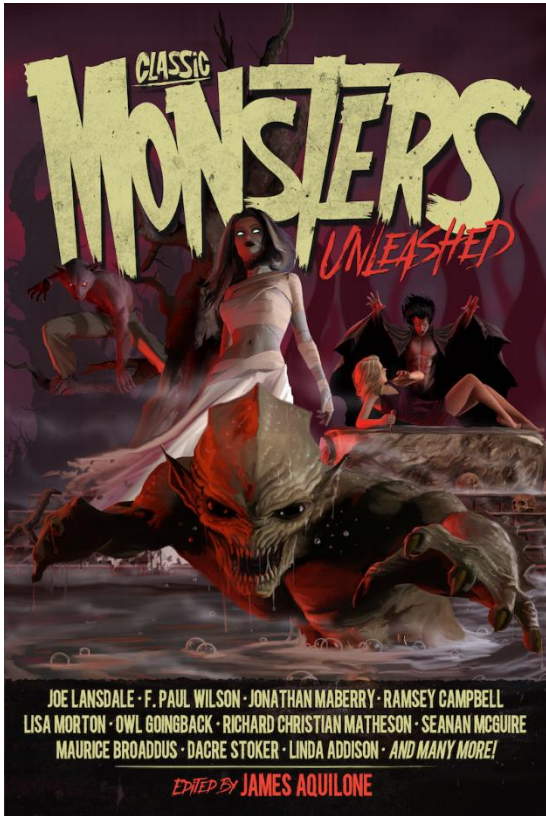
Last year, I had an idea for anthology: What if I paired the top writers in the horror genre with the greatest monsters in history? I'd add amazing artwork, which would spawn posters and T-shirts and stickers. It was an ambitious project—and not many publishers would take on such an ambitious (read: expensive) project from a first-time editor. *New York Times* bestselling authors cost money. High-quality art costs even more. Plus, I was told anthologies don't sell too well. It seemed the book would never get off the ground. Enter [Kickstarter](#).



A few years back, I had crowdfunded my first novel, *Dead Jack and the Pandemonium Device*, and I knew I wanted to return to the platform. So, when I approached Crystal Lake Publishing with the idea for *Classic Monsters Unleashed*, an anthology of short stories featuring Dracula, Frankenstein's monster, The Invisible Man, and many other famous creatures, I made a Kickstarter campaign part of the proposal. The book had so much going for it and included so many "extras" that it was perfectly suited for crowdfunding and carried minimal risk—plus, who (at least in the horror genre) can say no to classic monsters?

Thousands of creative projects have been funded on the platform since its launch in 2009, and traditional and self-published literary projects have been among the most successful.

Brandon Sanderson raised a record-breaking \$6.8 million in the summer of 2020 for what he called “an online book release party” for the 10th anniversary edition of his book *The Way of Kings*. Earlier this year, Grim Oak Press raised more than \$222,000 for a special anniversary edition of Terry Brooks’ *The Scions of Shannara*. It’s not just special editions, either. Also this year, Michael J. Sullivan raised \$169,727 for his fantasy novel *Nolyn*, the first book in his series *The Rise and Fall*.



*Classic Monsters Unleashed* shattered Kickstarter records, raising more than \$57,000 in April and becoming the highest-funded and most-backed horror fiction anthology in Kickstarter history on the strength of such contributors as Joe Lansdale, F. Paul Wilson, Jonathan Maberry, Seanan McGuire, Lisa Morton, Linda Addison, and Ramsey Campbell. The book will also contain art by the legendary Frank Frazetta and UK-based horror artist Mister Sam Shearon. It was a smashing success, but the money was only part of it.

During the 31-day campaign for *Classic Monsters Unleashed*, not only was I able to raise all the money needed to pay for the book, but I landed three publishing deals in addition to the initial deal with Crystal Lake Publishing. Independent Legions came on board to translate the anthology into Italian. Soon after, Black Spot Books joined to help expand our distribution into bookstores and libraries, and at the end of the campaign, we signed with Blackstone Publishing to produce the audiobook. Not bad for a book that’s still in development! But, and perhaps even more importantly, I gathered almost 1,000 backers, many of whom migrated to a now-extremely active

Facebook group as well as a dedicated subscriber newsletter.

### ***Reasons to Go the Crowdfunding Route:***

- ***It’s great for marketing.*** Kickstarter is a powerhouse of a marketing tool—a promotional festival starring your book. Brandon Sanderson put it perfectly when he called it “an online book release party.” And as Terry Brooks wrote on his campaign page, “Kickstarter is fun. Backers enjoy watching stretch goals being met, add-ons added, and so forth. It brings a sense of community that I’ve always enjoyed from my readers.”
- ***It creates a community.*** One of the most powerful aspects of Kickstarter is the community it creates around a project, as Brooks mentioned. Backers feel a sense of ownership—that it’s through their efforts that a project is successful and grows. In contrast, you buy a book online or at an



independent bookstore, and that's usually where the transaction ends, especially on larger, multi-author projects. Kickstarter backers are true fans who will follow you from project to project.

- ***It forces you to consider add-ons.*** Kickstarter is perfectly suited for merchandise. In fact, to guarantee the project's success, you'll need rewards or add-ons in addition to your book. Through the *Classic Monsters Unleashed* campaign, we sold hundreds of T-shirts, prints, posters, and artwork.
- ***It allows you to communicate with your readers.*** Communication doesn't end with the Kickstarter campaign, either. Through Kickstarter, you can message backers and post blog updates long after your campaign ends. The campaign page stays up forever, and you can point it to your website or Amazon page. You shouldn't see the campaign as the end but the beginning of your book's journey.
- ***It offers scalability.*** You can start small with your publishing project, gauge the interest through your campaign, and let your campaign drive the size of it. If it's popular, the project grows, perhaps into something you never would have imagined. Conversely, your project may not be as popular as you had hoped, and it's better to know that before you sink a lot of money into it.

We could have done a traditional book launch for *Classic Monsters Unleashed*, and we would have most likely done well, but we'd have missed out on so many of the benefits crowdfunding offers. We never could have offered all the merchandise or created such a robust fan base in such a short time, especially since we had no book to show.

We were also able to offer a ton of exclusives. Our backers [received] Kickstarter-only versions of our eBooks, paperbacks, and hardcovers, while our trade versions, which hit stores on July 12, 2022, will have [had] some exciting new twists and content.

With all the success of *Classic Monsters Unleashed*, Crystal Lake Publishing and Black Spot Books have decided to do a series of Unleashed anthologies powered by Kickstarter. So, crowdfunding helped us to launch not only a book but an entire series. Who can say no to that?

## **Publisher Perspective: Joe Mynhardt, Crystal Lake Publishing**

When I was first approached by James, I was immediately gripped by the monster theme, but reminded myself that [Crystal Lake](#) was taking a break from anthologies. It was 2020, and we were in the midst of so many uncertainties, it just didn't seem like the right time for such a huge investment. Even if I did believe in the potential, as a publisher you still need to invest a huge sum of time and money long before you see any returns—time and money that's required to run a small press that releases around 20 titles annually.

What intrigued me about the crowdfunding facet was the sense of community among the fans—the opportunity to reach new fans and project our brand, while also changing the minds of authors who never really considered doing Kickstarter projects.

However, what caught my eye even more than the Kickstarter aspect of James' proposal was his passion for the genre. He did a great job of presenting what he had in mind for the final product—a great skill required by any good anthology editor. I've also worked with enough editors and authors to know who I'd most likely get along with during an



arduous fundraising campaign. Crowdfunding campaigns can be pretty exhausting. Most days you'll end up spending more time corresponding with the team than you'd spend with your family. But, luckily, I share James's passion, and being a full-time publisher means we don't shy away from hard work, so we hit the ground running the very first day.

In the end, [we ended up] with an amazing project we can all be proud of, while paying authors almost double what we normally invest in anthologies—and this [didn't] even take into account all the artists involved. Readers [were also] beyond happy, since the combination of anticipation and receiving a quality product with perks and merchandise is an amazing feeling.

The project has also given Crystal Lake Publishing a nice boost in the sense of authors putting us on their dream list of publishers. One of my main objectives is to make our press appealing to authors, editors, and agents. Among many submission queries, I've also received pitches from editors who want to compile an anthology. I've even made a few professional acquaintances.

A lot of possibilities have grown from this project, and I'm excited to investigate each and every one of them.

### **Publisher Perspective: Lindy Ryan, Black Spot Books**

As an avid book nerd, horror lover, and small press publisher, I'll be the first to admit I have a special place in my heart for both anthologies and ambitious projects. We've produced two award-winning seasonal horror anthologies at Black Spot Books to date (*A Midnight Clear* in 2019 and *Dead of Winter* in 2021) and [launched] the inaugural installment in our annual women-in-horror poetry showcase (*Under Her Skin*, April 2022), and so when I was approached about joining editor James Aquilone and Crystal Lake Publishing to support the print trade release of *Classic Monsters Unleashed*, my response was a quick—and resounding—yes. Then came the second question, “What are we doing again?”



Of course, looking at the specs for the project, what publisher wouldn't [have been] enticed by the incredible list of contributors and artists already committed to reimagining some of the most quintessential horror monsters ever dreamed up? The amazing success of the Kickstarter campaign—a tool I'd frankly never spent much time thinking about—only emphasized what James, Joe, and I already knew to be true: *Classic Monsters Unleashed* was destined to be something special.

Producing an anthology is an arduous, expensive, and time-consuming task at best. Bring in an outside editor; a handful of publishers with different models and processes; and all the nuts and bolts that go with production, promotion, distribution, and so on, and the task of delivering such an ambitious project to market seems overwhelming, perhaps even cataclysmic. However, as a team of passionate, committed folks who pride ourselves on being adaptable and innovative (and even living a little dangerously), we at Black Spot Books were up for the challenge. We joined in lockstep with James and Crystal Lake and got to work.

The Kickstarter campaign behind us, [at this writing] *Classic Monsters Unleashed* still [had] a way to go before it [hit] bookshelves. However, as one of the publishers invested in the project, Black Spot Books [had] already enjoyed a nice bump in our footprint as we move away from a broader speculative fiction





bend and into a more specialized horror market. We've met brilliant new authors and creatives and expanded our professional network, too.

Looking forward, we are excited to continue on with the Unleashed series, and bring more ambitious, innovative new horror projects to readers.

Left: the contributors of the Classic Monsters Unleashed anthology.

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**James Aquilone** is a writer and editor from Staten Island, New York. His Dead Jack novels have been optioned for TV and film. He's also the managing editor of *Weird Tales* magazine. For more info, visit [JamesAquilone.com](http://JamesAquilone.com).

**Joe Mynhardt** is a Bram Stoker Award-winning South African publisher, editor, and mentor. A former primary school teacher, Mynhardt is now the owner and CEO of Crystal Lake Publishing, which he founded in August 2012. You can read more about Joe and Crystal Lake Publishing at [CrystalLakePub.com](http://CrystalLakePub.com).

**Lindy Ryan** is award-winning author, editor, professor, IBPA board member, and a 2020 Publishers Weekly Star Watch honoree. She is the founder and president of Black Spot Books, an imprint of multimedia corporation Vesuvian Media Group. Learn more at [VesuvianMedia.com](http://VesuvianMedia.com) and connect with Black Spot Books on social media at [@BlackSpotBooks](https://twitter.com/BlackSpotBooks), and with Ryan on Twitter [@LindyRyanWrites](https://twitter.com/LindyRyanWrites).



Send your announcements for this column to Glenna Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com) before the first of the month for the next month's issue.

### **Angela Shanté Johnson Has Joined IBPA as a Consulting Partner 2022–2023**

Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) announces that Angela Shanté Johnson has joined IBPA as its official diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging consulting partner for the 2022–23 fiscal year. More details [here](#). In this role, Johnson, who is an award-winning author with 20 years of education and advocacy experience—along with her team of DEI professionals—will assist IBPA in integrating its board-approved DEI goals across multiple strategic and tactical verticals. Johnson, IBPA Board Chair Karen Pavlicin, and IBPA CEO Angela Bole are available to answer any questions, and to discuss IBPA's commitment to fostering greater diversity in the publishing industry and within the IBPA membership.



**Want to be profiled in PWSD's newsletter?** Contact Andrea Glass at [Andrea@writersway.com](mailto:Andrea@writersway.com). If your membership is current, she will provide you with eight simple questions to answer. Then, along with your answers, send her your full contact information, a head shot, and one or two other images, such as book covers or action shots, and she will publish your finished profile in *Publishers & Writers Monthly*.



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



Due to COVID-19, conferences and workshops may be subject to cancellation or go online. Watch the newsletter for updates as the times get closer. BE SAFE.

## San Diego Writers Festival

October 8, 2022, Coronado Public Library, Coronado, CA

**Free admission and open to the public!** The 4th Annual San Diego Writers Festival is happening live and in person this year at the Coronado Public Library on October 8. The festival features programming from nearly 100 speakers on topics ranging from how to publish and market your book, to short-story writing, playwriting, mystery writing, children's books, poetry, podcasting, memoir, and more—you won't want to miss it! Join us for live music, local author exhibitors, kids' programming, food booths, and a wonderful day of networking. Plus, you'll have a chance to hear from and meet the festival's keynote speaker, Shilpi Somaya Gowda, as well as Academy Award nominee and Emmy award-winning writer Renee Taylor (*The Nanny*), Award-winning podcaster and book influencer Zibby Owens, *NY Times* bestselling authors Joe Ide and Quian Julie Wang, and many more.

**Be an exhibitor.** Have a book to share? A few Exhibitor booths are still available. Over 2,000 people are expected to come looking for a new story to dive into! [SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/vendors/](https://SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/vendors/).

**Volunteer your time.** Festival coordinators are looking for volunteers to join in activities leading up to and on the day of the event: [SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/participate/volunteer/](https://SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/participate/volunteer/).

**Sponsor an event.** A few programs are still available to sponsors. You'll benefit from promotion at the festival and year-round visibility on the festival's website, [SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/](https://SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/).

**Learn more about the festival:** [SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/](https://SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/).

**Get the full schedule:** [SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/2022-festival-schedule/](https://SanDiegoWritersFestival.com/2022-festival-schedule/)

**Ask a question:** [Info@sandiegowritersfestival.com](mailto:Info@sandiegowritersfestival.com)

## La Jolla Writer's Conference

Nov 4–6, 2022, San Diego, CA

Save the date! Go to [LaJollaWritersConference.com](https://LaJollaWritersConference.com) to get the details as they develop.

## Publishing University

May 4–6, 2023, Coronado Island Marriott Resort and Spa, San Diego, CA

Excited it's going to be in our home town! Save the date and [click here](#) for more information about the resort, and visit [PublishingUniversity.org](https://PublishingUniversity.org) in the coming months for updates as they develop.



Have more resources to share? Please email them to Newsletter Editor Glenna Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com), and we will be happy to include them in this list.

- Best Literary Agents Seeking Submissions in San Diego ..... [Blog.Reedsy.com/literary-agents/san-diego/](http://Blog.Reedsy.com/literary-agents/san-diego/)
- California Resources for Writers ..... [WriteByNight.net/California](http://WriteByNight.net/California)
- California Writer’s Club ..... [CalWriters.org](http://CalWriters.org)
- City of San Diego Public Library ..... [SanDiego.gov/public-library/news-events/localauthors/resources](http://SanDiego.gov/public-library/news-events/localauthors/resources)
- Independent Writers of Southern California ..... [IWOSC.org/writer-resources/](http://IWOSC.org/writer-resources/)
- Mystery Writers of America ..... [MysteryWriters.org](http://MysteryWriters.org)
- Radio Guest List (*free subscription for interview offers delivered to your email inbox*) ..... [RadioGuestList.com](http://RadioGuestList.com)
- Romance Writers of America ..... [RWA.org](http://RWA.org)
- San Diego Writer Resources ..... [SanDiegoBookAwards.org/resources](http://SanDiegoBookAwards.org/resources)
- San Diego Writers Ink ..... [SanDiegoWriters.org](http://SanDiegoWriters.org)
- SDSU 2021 Writers Conference ..... [EventsInAmerica.com/events/2021-sdsu-writers-conference/business/marketing-publishing/3tirzndsymbgli0t](http://EventsInAmerica.com/events/2021-sdsu-writers-conference/business/marketing-publishing/3tirzndsymbgli0t)
- Sixty Writers Conferences for Authors, Bloggers, and Freelancers ..... [TheWriteLife.com/writers-conferences/](http://TheWriteLife.com/writers-conferences/)
- The Top Online Writers’ Conferences ..... [SoYouWantToWrite.org/blogs/syww/Top-25-online-writers-conferences-in-2021](http://SoYouWantToWrite.org/blogs/syww/Top-25-online-writers-conferences-in-2021)
- University of San Diego—Creative Writing ..... [SanDiego.edu/cas/creative-writing/](http://SanDiego.edu/cas/creative-writing/)
- The Writers for Hire—Ghostwriting and Books ..... [TheWritersForHire.com/services/ghostwriting](http://TheWritersForHire.com/services/ghostwriting)
- The Writers Room ..... [WritersRoom.org](http://WritersRoom.org)
- Writing Conferences and Events ..... [NewPages.com/writers-resources/writing-conferences-events](http://NewPages.com/writers-resources/writing-conferences-events)



**Vanderblümen  
Publications**

Glenna A. Bloemen, J.D. MA Ed.

**Self-Publishing Coach**

*Assisting First-Time Authors  
From Page to Press*

P.O. Box 626, La Mesa, CA 91944

619.743.5192

[gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com)

**Newsletter Managing Editor**

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*Book Manuscript Scrubbing and  
Copyediting; PDF Book-Layout  
Proofreading and Layout Check*

**Lynette M. Smith**

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and Relationships!"*

714.777.1238

[AllMyBest.com](http://AllMyBest.com)

[Lynette@AllMyBest.com](mailto:Lynette@AllMyBest.com)

**Newsletter Copyeditor**



**Lauren Castle**

*Image & Branding Strategist*

858.459.7400

[Impress-Express.com](http://Impress-Express.com)

[Lauren@Impress-Express.com](mailto:Lauren@Impress-Express.com)

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**Newsletter Circulation Manager**



**Janet F. Williams**

*Full-Service Manuscript Editing  
Private Writing Coach*

760.917.6125

[JanetFWilliams.com](http://JanetFWilliams.com)

[GoodDayMedia.com](http://GoodDayMedia.com)

[GoodDayJanet@gmail.com](mailto:GoodDayJanet@gmail.com)

**Social Media Liaison**



**Andrea Susan Glass**

*Book Coach, Copy Editor*

*Nonfiction Books*

*Bestselling Author*

[WritersWay.com](http://WritersWay.com)

[AndreaSusanGlass.com](http://AndreaSusanGlass.com)

[Andrea@writersway.com](mailto:Andrea@writersway.com)

858.350.5235

**Member Profile Editor**