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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 (1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad, CA 92011). 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, May 27, 2023  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon  
**Location:** Carlsbad Dove Library  
**Topic:** “Media Training Works! How to Use Interviews to Build Your Brand and Sell More Books”  
**Speaker:** Leann Garms

Media is one of the most cost-effective ways to raise your visibility as an author and sell more books—if you know how to do it. Leann Garms, BBL Media & Publishing and BookPublicity101.com founder, will share her behind-the-camera insights and practical tips to get media publicity and give a great interview. You’ll learn:

- What you need to get started—The 3 P’s
- Why media training is critical—and when to do it.
- How to prepare for radio, TV, and even print interviews.
- The #1 secret to a topnotch interview—it’s not what you think.
- Why you must define your 3 talking points for every interview and how to make sure you get to use them.
- What to do and not do during your interview—dress, body language, tone, speech patterns.
- How and why you *must* answer questions in short, quotable bullet points.
- Secrets for turning your interview into book sales—without sounding like a commercial.
- How to turn every interview into a valuable marketing asset to **raise your credibility, get more interviews, and sell more books.**

**About the Speaker:** A 30-year veteran of public relations, trained in journalism, Leann Garms uncovers the unique story that motivates the media and the market to pay attention. Her clients have included authors, speakers, film festivals, theaters, and environmental nonprofits who have been featured in local and national radio, TV, and print, including ABC, CBS, CNN, CNBC Power Lunch, Larry King Live, Spirituality & Health, Biography Magazine, Good Morning Texas, Great Day Houston, Good Morning San Diego, The Bob & Tom Show, KTLA Morning Show, and over 1500 radio and TV shows nationwide.





**PWSD Officers**

**Karla Olson**  
President  
[karla@publisherswriters.org](mailto:karla@publisherswriters.org)

**Jeniffer Thompson**  
Webmaster  
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**Bob Goodman**  
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[andrew@publisherswriters.org](mailto:andrew@publisherswriters.org)

**PWSD Newsletter Staff**

**Glenna Bloemen**  
Managing Editor  
[gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com)

**Lynette Smith**  
Copyeditor  
[allmybest4you@gmail.com](mailto:allmybest4you@gmail.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**

First, thank you so much to Rich “Trigger” Bontrager, who gave a robust webinar presentation in April. We learned so much about how to present yourself and your book as a brand. Your extensive experience was greatly appreciated, Trigger.

It was also so wonderful to see so many of you at IBPA Publishing University earlier in the month. What a great conference! From the keynotes to the break-outs, and including the one-on-ones and the Ben Franklin Awards, this is (of course) my favorite publishing conference. We listened, we talked, we learned, and we celebrated. What an amazing few days! Thank you to all who participated.

A reminder that we will hear from our two scholarship recipients, J. Kevin Smith and Marla Markman. They promised to share the best ideas they heard at Publishing University. Watch this space for their articles.

We are excited to welcome one of our own to May’s meeting. Leeann Garms of BBL Media and Publishing and a PWSD member, will share her mini media training. Doing publicity well is so important to book sales, and Leeann will share all her tips and suggestions. Please be sure to join us for May at the Carlsbad (Dove) Library.

A couple of notes about meeting etiquette at webinar meetings held in even-numbered months. Please be sure you are muted while our 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.

*Continued on next page*

## **PWSD Membership**

We are happy to meet in person on alternating months; when we do, the regular \$10/member and \$20/nonmember meeting fees apply. Our virtual meetings, taking place on the remaining months, are free to participants. We hope you will support PWSD in the following ways:

- 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 will check your membership.)
- 2. If your membership is up to date, please consider paying the meeting fee even at virtual meetings.** 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 5. 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 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 robust and informative website at [IBPA-online.org/](http://IBPA-online.org/).

Membership is very affordable. To make it even better, PWSD members get a \$30 discount. Just enter PWSD30 in the coupon code.





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!



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and join the conversation!**



## 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!

## Member Welcome and Reminders

**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 in-person 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 nine 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*.

**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.

# Working with Ghostwriters 101

By Hannah Gordon, Deborah Herman, and Lindy Ryan

Reprinted with permission. This article was first published in the January/February 2022 issue of *IBPA Independent* magazine, which can be accessed [here](#).

**How an author, a publisher, and a ghostwriter can collaborate so true success can happen.**

There is a sense that writing as a career is a glamorous pursuit. There is also a misconception that all writers can make a living doing it full time.

There are writers who can earn a living as wordsmiths if they are willing to use their skills to become working writers rather than focusing on the front-line world of the “talent.” There are movies stars, and there are the people who make films happen. It is the same in the publishing industry. There are the people who have huge platforms or significant stories to tell, and then there are the people who do the heavy lifting to make a book a success.

In a recent article in *Publishers Weekly* titled “[Ghostwriters Come out of the Shadows](#),” Rachel Deahl described the specialized work of ghostwriters—who are now being given the more prestigious term *collaborator*—largely because they are an accepted part of a project and they want to be recognized for their contribution. As Deahl aptly pointed out, “In today’s industry, where publishers are more and more reliant on nonfiction projects by authors with significant platforms, good collaborators are in higher demand than ever.”

What makes a good collaborator? According to Deahl, “industry sources say the best collaborators are equal parts editor, reporter, writer, mimic, and shrink.” We would have to agree. In talking about the most important qualities for publishers to prioritize when searching for a ghostwriter, three stood out as crucial nonnegotiables.

## ***Relationships Management/Match***

A ghostwriter has an interesting pair of shoes to fit, and identifying the right pair can sometimes be like finding the perfect match for Cinderella’s missing glass slipper. In addition to the right skill set for the job, when bringing in a ghostwriter, it’s important to make sure the ghostwriter and author are good dancing partners as well. The two form a partnership and must be able to move together in harmony—even better than Cinderella and Prince Charming.

The ghostwriter’s job is to bring out the best for author and capture their voice and story, so it’s imperative that the two have a good working relationship and appreciation for what each other brings to the table. In this case, it’s not just a match of skills and story, but of personality as well.

This relationship management becomes even more imperative depending on the subject matter, particularly when a ghostwriter is enlisted to assist in telling an author's story that may involve trauma or other tender/confidential information. This is where Deahl's prescription as a ghostwriter as a mimic and a shrink come in. A ghostwriter—whether rewriting a drafted manuscript, interviewing the author to create the manuscript, or working hand in hand co-writing a manuscript—must know when and how to ask the right questions. If a ghostwriter pushes a topic too soon, it could derail the interview at best or cause the author to lose trust in their ghostwriter.

As a former literary agent, an author, and now a publisher, Deborah Herman knows firsthand the many—often unanticipated—challenges in collaboration. In her most recent book, *Member of the Family: My Story of Charles Manson, Life Inside his Cult and the Darkness that Ended the Sixties* (William Morrow), with Dianne Lake, the youngest member of the Manson Family cult, she had to learn the delicate balance of questioning and listening that capturing the story of a traumatized person demands.



Deborah Herman

“I have ghostwritten several books that were nonfiction prescriptive. The author had the credentials and the information, but they didn't have the writing skill,” Herman says. “For my first job as a working ghostwriter, I had to fix a manuscript that was rejected by the publisher.

These are the more common types of books where ghostwriters can find work. With the book I wrote with Dianne Lake, this became more of a true collaboration.”

This is the direction taken by many professionals today who make their living as writers for hire. The skill of interviewing and writing is given more credibility and, as Deahl points out in her article, many “collaborators” have agents who match them up with the bigger projects.

“The most important skill I needed while working with Dianne was trust building,” Herman says. “I have education as a journalist, but this is a different form of interviewing. As a collaborator, you are not looking to find the story; you are looking for the voice and perspective of the person with whom you are writing. You need to build trust and take it slowly. The first time I interviewed Dianne, it was as if she was sitting in front of me but talking from the other side of the room. She revealed things in a monotone where I had to say, ‘Whoa, back up. Did you just say...[?]’ It became a journey we took together, and I learned to accept my role as a sacred trust where I could not push her beyond her capacity to reveal her memories.

“Dianne described the process as a circle. We would talk about general information, and then I would move closer to the trauma. When the revelation was made, I would back away to give it time to settle in her psyche and my own. As the collaborator, you take the journey with the author and need to make sure you don't become overwhelmed with their trauma. In the end, the greatest compliment you can receive is if people see the subject and recognize their voice and not yours. It is challenging but very rewarding.”

### ***Subject Interest or Experience with Subject Matter***

Like any good job candidate, a ghostwriter should bring a strong résumé to the table and be prepared to show examples of their work. Depending on the genre, the ghostwriter should have appropriate subject matter knowledge or expertise (nonfiction), genre structure or formula-writing savvy (fiction), as well as an understanding of audience and target market readers to ensure they are the best fit for the task. Not only does this help support the ghostwriter's proficiency for the project, but it adds value in the form of

additional insight and experience that benefit the project. Taking time to evaluate a ghostwriter’s portfolio is important due diligence that will inform the understanding of their style and familiarity with genres/topics based on previous work. Deahl’s mention of ghostwriters as reporters comes to mind. “The ghostwriter’s job is multifaceted, but one of the most valuable skills they can bring to the project is familiarity with the subject matter and/or the target audience for the book,” says Lindy Ryan, president of Black Spot Books. “Shaping the story to appeal to genre readers and stand strong in the market is as much a part of the ghostwriter’s role as helping the author write the book.”



Lindy Ryan

Ryan recently edited *Defending a Serial Killer: The Right to Counsel* (Vesuvian Books), a memoir from attorney Jim Potts who recounted the legal and ethical dilemmas he faced as a law student when defending convicted serial killer Michael Dee Mattson. Though the book touched on areas outside of her expertise, the book was geared toward law and ethics students, and Ryan, who is a longtime professor at Rutgers University and the author of several textbooks and other academic publications, was recruited to edit and reshape the manuscript for academic adoption.

“I was very fortunate to be part of this project,” Ryan says. “Not only did I learn a good bit about constitutional rights and the judicial process, but I was able to use my knowledge of nonfiction editing and pedagogical development to help the author tell his story in a way that would help educators, students, and others studying law to learn from his experiences in a meaningful and tangible way. Jim and I worked so well as partners in a writer/editor/ghostwriter paradigm that we are now exploring our next projects together, taking more of Jim’s firsthand experiences into publication.”

### ***Strong Editorial Sense***

Often, the purpose of hiring a ghostwriter—from any perspective—is to make the writing and editorial process of manuscript creation go more smoothly. Ghostwriters should contribute to the editorial process, not become an extra step.

In addition to their writing skills, a ghostwriter should lend a certain level of editorial prowess: write strong, edit smart, and contribute to solid story development. In many cases, a ghostwriter takes the place of a developmental editor, and should be able to complete a manuscript without introducing continuity problems, plot holes, or other developmental errors that necessitate more work for an editorial team. In fact, this is why developmental editors sometimes turn into ghostwriters.

When a developmental editor is elbows-deep in a manuscript, it may be most efficient—for the publisher and the author—to shift the role into a ghostwriting position where the editor-turned-writer then has the capacity to implement even more substantial changes and take more creative license with the manuscript.

Hannah Gordon, author, publishing consultant, and freelance editor and ghostwriter, has walked the line between developmental editor and ghostwriter more than once—with different outcomes each time.

“The first middle-grade manuscript I edited at my former company needed a lot of work. The bones of the story were there, but they were definitely not in the shape of any skeleton I’d seen before, and there were no muscles or ligaments to speak of,” she says.



Hannah Gordon

The lack of cohesion and large plot holes are what turned Gordon into a ghostwriter instead of a developmental editor.



“After a bit of work, it was clear the manuscript needed a rewrite, adding a few more significant characters and plot points. It was historical fiction for kids, so it needed to be engaging and entertaining but also present an accurate snapshot of history to teach from.

“An editorial sense is like a Spidey-Sense,” Gordon says. “Sometimes you know a manuscript has to be driven by plot, others by theme. You have to sense what the manuscript needs—who will read it, why, how, and when? And, above all, what is the message the author is trying to convey, and what is their most natural method of conveying it?”

Ghostwriting may not seem as anatomical as Gordon makes it sound, but it certainly does necessitate a lot of moving parts work together to create a fluid, engaging manuscript—so perhaps the bodily comparison isn’t too off.

Publishers need quality writers for the books they want to acquire, and there are those writers who want to work steadily even if they have dreams of writing the great American novel. Publishers will likely work with ghostwriters who come through the literary agents who present the projects. While publishers may have favorite writers, it often falls more within the job of the agents to make this match.

“I got lucky,” says Herman, recalling her first experience as a ghostwriter. “I was working with an agent to develop book proposals when I was offered the job of revising the manuscript that had been turned down. It was a work for hire, and in the end, I might have earned five cents per hour. I didn’t know if I could do the job, but I threw myself in it to learn.”

Learning how to include ghostwriters in your process as an indie publisher may feel a lot like Herman’s first experience ghostwriting. But when the author, publisher, and ghostwriter all prioritize the most important aspects of the collaboration, true success can happen.

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***Hannah Gordon** is an author, editor, marketer, and podcaster. She freelances in the publishing industry, frequently editing and ghostwriting for indie publishers and authors. She welcomes connections through @HR\_Gordon on all major social media platforms and her website [HannahRGordon.com](http://HannahRGordon.com), where she blogs about plants, books, cooking, and life.*

***Deborah Herman** is a bestselling author specializing in true crime memoir and has worked on all sides of the publishing world as a writer, editor, literary agent, indie publisher, and author branding specialist. Subscribe to her blog at [micropublishingmedia.com](http://micropublishingmedia.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](http://VesuvianMediaGroup.com). 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).*



## **Book Marketing Support Group**

The purpose of this group is to share book marketing ideas among published nonfiction authors. We'll share what has worked and what has not, and how we can improve. We'll consider collaborative marketing efforts such as shared giveaways and reviewing each other's books, for those in the same genre. Attendance will be open to all nonfiction authors who are interested in improving their marketing efforts. There's no membership, and attendees can come to any meeting. We meet the second Monday of the month at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (8:00 p.m. Eastern) in my Zoom room. Anyone interested should email me, Andrea Susan Glass, at [andrea@writersway.com](mailto:andrea@writersway.com) for more information.



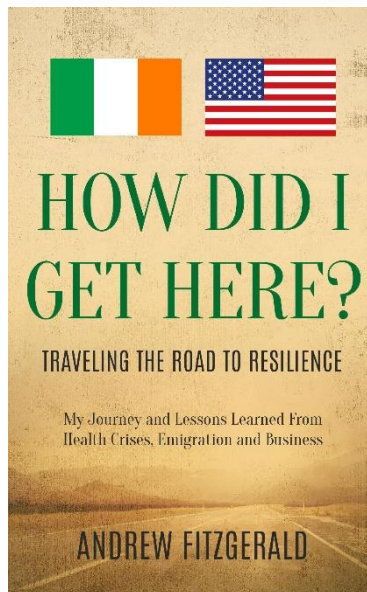
## **May 19 Non-Fiction/Memoir Fast-Track Writing Retreat**

PWSD Member Debra Valentina is hosting this daylong event in beautiful La Jolla. More details are available in the Calendar of Events section on the next page.



## **Book Giveaway and a \$25 Gift Card**

For more details, [click here](#) or on the book image below. For answers to any follow-up questions or concerns, contact Andrew Fitzgerald, Global Beverage Sales Expert and Author of *How Did I Get Here?* at 619-508-6995 (cell).



Some conferences and workshops could go online or be cancelled, due to pandemic or other considerations, so check the newsletter or event websites for updates.

## **Non-Fiction/Memoir Fast-Track Writing Retreat**

**Friday, May 19, 2023, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., La Jolla, CA**

Do you have a non-fiction book or memoir bubbling up that you'd like to complete with velocity and ease? If so, come join us for a daylong retreat in beautiful La Jolla in May! Expert book development mentoring will be provided by Debra Valentina—PWSD member, international best-selling author, and seasoned coach. PWSD member price is \$237 (20% discount from \$297 price). For more information and to register, [click here](#).

## **Clarion 2023 UCSD Workshop**

*for Short-Story Writers of Sci-Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror*

**June 25 – August 5, 2023, UC San Diego Campus**

Intensive six-week summer program focused on fundamentals, with instructors among the most respected writers and editors working in the field today. Over one-third of the graduates have been published, and many have gone on to critical acclaim. Clarion participants selected from applicants with potential for highly successful writing careers and who submit writing samples with an application. Nonrefundable \$70 application fee; partial scholarships may be available. Full workshop details are available at <http://clarion.ucsd.edu/2023-workshop/>.

## **20th Annual Southern California Writers' Conference: A Weekend for Words**

**September 15–17, 2023, Irvine, CA**

“The Great White Art” is what John Gardner called it, what it is that we writers do, crafting pages from blank. While artists we may be, today's publishing realities mandate that, in order to win over the needed, passionate advocates of our work, we must also become *entrepreneurial* authors. Entrepreneurial in spirit. Entrepreneurial in execution. Excellence in craft alone no longer cuts it. But excellence in craft and a meaningful book still matter most. For more information, go to [WritersConference.com](http://WritersConference.com).



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.

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| California Resources for Writers .....                                                                 | <a href="http://WriteByNight.net/California">WriteByNight.net/California</a>                                                                                                  |
| California Writer's Club .....                                                                         | <a href="http://CalWriters.org">CalWriters.org</a>                                                                                                                            |
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| Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) .....                                                   | <a href="http://IBPA-online.org">IBPA-online.org</a>                                                                                                                          |
| IBPA's Distributors and Wholesalers ( <i>distinctions and list</i> ) .....                             | <a href="http://IBPA-online.org/page/distributors">IBPA-online.org/page/distributors</a>                                                                                      |
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| Independent Writers of Southern California .....                                                       | <a href="http://IWOSC.org/writer-resources/">IWOSC.org/writer-resources/</a>                                                                                                  |
| Mystery Writers of America .....                                                                       | <a href="http://MysteryWriters.org">MysteryWriters.org</a>                                                                                                                    |
| Radio Guest List ( <i>free subscription for interview offers delivered to your email inbox</i> ) ..... | <a href="http://RadioGuestList.com">RadioGuestList.com</a>                                                                                                                    |
| Romance Writers of America .....                                                                       | <a href="http://RWA.org">RWA.org</a>                                                                                                                                          |
| San Diego Writer Resources .....                                                                       | <a href="http://SanDiegoBookAwards.org/resources">SanDiegoBookAwards.org/resources</a>                                                                                        |
| San Diego Writers Ink .....                                                                            | <a href="http://SanDiegoWriters.org">SanDiegoWriters.org</a>                                                                                                                  |
| Sixty Writers Conferences for Authors,<br>Bloggers, and Freelancers .....                              | <a href="http://TheWriteLife.com/writers-conferences/">TheWriteLife.com/writers-conferences/</a>                                                                              |
| The Top Online Writers' Conferences .....                                                              | <a href="http://SoYouWantToWrite.org/blogs/syww/Top-25-online-writers-conferences-in-2021">SoYouWantToWrite.org/blogs/syww/<br/>Top-25-online-writers-conferences-in-2021</a> |
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| The Writers for Hire—Ghostwriting and Books .....                                                      | <a href="http://TheWritersForHire.com/services/ghostwriting">TheWritersForHire.com/services/ghostwriting</a>                                                                  |
| The Writers Room .....                                                                                 | <a href="http://WritersRoom.org">WritersRoom.org</a>                                                                                                                          |
| Writing Conferences and Events .....                                                                   | <a href="http://NewPages.com/writers-resources/writing-conferences-events">NewPages.com/writers-resources/writing-conferences-events</a>                                      |

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

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

[AllMyBest4You@gmail.com](mailto:AllMyBest4You@gmail.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)

760.268.9053

**Member Profile Editor**