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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 March 29, 2025  
**Time:** 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 Noon  
**Location:** Webinar—Zoom (watch for details)  
**Topic:** “Capture the Spotlight with Award-Winning Success”  
**Speaker:** Hannah Jacobson

**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.**

Awards are powerful tools for authors. Readers around the world intuitively recognize the importance of award-winning status. But what does it take to win awards? How do these accolades put the spotlight on your book? And how can you craft an award-winning strategy to stand out?

Learn the secrets to garnering the best accolades for your book with the founder of Book Award Pro, the world's largest source of legitimate reviews and awards.

You'll learn the best ways to streamline for award-winning success and leverage book awards for high-impact marketing results.

**About the Speaker:** *Hannah Jacobson is the founder of Book Award Pro: the company that leads the industry in helping authors find the perfect awards and reviews for their books.*

*Book Award Pro is the industry expert on accolades, operating the world's largest database of legitimate awards and reviews. As the company's founder and as the ALLi Awards & Story Marketing Advisor, Hannah's expertise has been recognized as the leading voice in literary accolades and author advocacy. To learn more, visit the Book Award Pro website: <https://bookawardpro.com/>*





**PWSD Officers**

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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)

**Manon Wogahn**

Copyeditor

[manon@authorimprints.com](mailto:manon@authorimprints.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**

Dave Ray taught us all how to avoid “death by PowerPoint” at our February meeting. He provided so many great ideas about how to be an effective speaker, which is difficult for many authors, who think of themselves as introverts. But speaking is such an important part of marketing your book. Dave generously shared his slides, and you can find them [here](#).

March is an online meeting, and I am pleased to host our speaker, Hannah Jacobson from BookAwardPro. Book awards are another valuable way to get word out about your book, and there are many great ones to submit to. However, there have been a proliferation of organizations “selling” book awards that really aren’t discriminating or worth the entry fee. How do you determine which awards are not only valid but right for your book? And, if you win an award, how can you make it work for you and your book? Hannah will share these tips and more, so please be sure to join us.

[Here’s the Zoom link for the March meeting.](#)

Also, to amplify your publishing success even more, I encourage you to look into joining the Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA). This is a national organization that offers so much support for indie publishers, including marketing programs, educational session, and advocacy. Having recently merged with PubWest, IBPA is bigger, stronger, and better.

Finally, [IBPA Publishing University](#) is coming up May 15 –17, 2025 in St. Paul, MN. I’ll be there, for sure, and I hope you will consider attending as well. As you all know from San Diego, it is an information packed, networking rich, fun and fulfilling conference. And the prestigious IBPA Book Awards are part of it. Check it out!

Please support PWSD by making sure your membership is up to date. We do have expenses around hosting the meetings and sending out the newsletters, so your contribution through membership is very helpful and appreciated. We’ll send out an update if your membership needs renewal, or please contact [Robbie@bookstudiobooks.com](mailto:Robbie@bookstudiobooks.com) if you are not sure.

*Continued on next page*

## **PWSD News**

A couple of notes about meeting etiquette at webinar meetings held this month and in the future. 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, 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**

In-person meetings are \$10 for members and \$20 for nonmembers. We are happy to continue offering virtual meetings free to participants, but 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.) *Note: we are likely to raise the membership fee in the next few months (darned inflation!), so renew your membership now.*
2. **If you are not a member, please consider joining.** Right now, 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.
3. **Tell your publishing and author friends and colleagues about PWSD** and invite them to 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.

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 status.)
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!

### **IBPA Membership**

If you have launched on your publishing journey and you don't yet 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 very robust and informative website at [IBPA-online.org/](https://ibpa-online.org/). IBPA membership is very affordable, and to make it even better, PWSD members get a \$30 discount. Just enter PWSD2025ibpa in the coupon code.

IBPA has a monthly Roundtable that I highly recommend. It allows publishers of all shapes and sizes to share success strategies and brainstorm publishing challenges. I often attend and find them very valuable. Also, IBPA has recently created an education hub called [PubSpot](#), which assembles, in one easy-to-navigate site, all the invaluable information IBPA offers about how to succeed in publishing. From editorial to distribution and more, check out all the great articles and webinars that will help you succeed on your publishing journey.



## 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.

# Uncovering Libraries' Secrets:

## How to Engage with Public Libraries

### Cari Dubiel

*Reprinted with permission. This article was first published in December 2024 by the Independent Book Publishers Association, [IBPA-Online.org](https://www.ibpa-online.org).*

We've all been there: standing outside a public library, nervous about walking in. You might be holding a book in your hand, wondering if they'll put your book on the shelf, or you might want them to host an author event. Will you walk out successfully with a smile on your face? Or will you leave dejected and disappointed?

Never fear. I'm a librarian and hybrid author, and I've got the information you need to impress the people behind the desk. Trust me—I've been on both sides of the equation!

#### **Libraries and Indie Authors: A Complex History**

Self-publishing is nothing new. But librarians, especially those who have been around a while, often look down on the independent path to publication. Don't get me wrong: Public libraries are warming to indie authors and can support them in big ways. However, it wasn't always that easy.

Prior to the early 2000s, vanity presses dominated the market. If a writer was unsuccessful in traditional querying, they would pay to have their books produced. Many of these were poorly written, and the authors could be pushy. As a young library worker in the 1990s, I judged them too. The stigma has lifted somewhat, but librarians are still wary.

#### **How to Approach a Librarian or Library Worker**

**Start with your local library.** Sending out cold calls, emails, or bookmarks is a waste of your time and money. You want to create relationships with the people closest to you.

**Get curious!** First, find out who you're talking to and what they do. Libraries have a multitude of staff organization charts and job titles. If you want your book on the shelves, you can ask for someone in collection development. If you want to present a program, ask for the person who schedules events. Your library may be a single branch, a multibranch system, or part of your city or county, so your request may be handed off to a different team or even another building.



**Have your pitch down cold.** “I want my book in the library” is not as effective as “I wrote a book, and here’s what it’s about.” You’re selling the book to the library workers as much as you are to prospective buyers. If they’re intrigued by your pitch, they’ll be more excited about advocating for you.

**Support the library as a user.** Attend events, check out materials, and engage on social media. You could even volunteer if you have the time and want to make the effort. If you do this, don’t spend all your time pushing your book; rather, focus on being authentic so staff can get to know you as a person.

As indie authorship has become more accessible, more and more authors are approaching public libraries. I typically receive two to five submissions per month and sometimes more. You want to stand out from the crowd. Think not about what the library can do for you, but what you can do for the library.

### **Getting Your Book in the Library**

Every library has a collection development policy. These are the principles that guide the staff in what they select for their shelves. Before you begin approaching libraries, search their websites for a link to this policy. Some libraries do not collect indie books at all; others accept indie books from local authors only. Some will require you to donate your book; others will purchase it. Many require books to be professionally reviewed, but many others do not. You must do your due diligence before moving forward.

Some libraries have a specific policy or procedure for accepting material from local authors. They will often provide a form to fill out, which will let them know everything they need to catalog and add it to the collection: your name, the book’s title, publisher and publication date, and the ISBN. Cataloging can take some time, so be patient. Search for the Akron-Summit County Public Library in Ohio for an excellent example of a library that partners with indie authors in this way.

Your book must be high-quality: professionally printed and edited with an attractive cover. In my librarian life, I have received multiple submissions that do not meet these standards. I hate to turn authors away, but if their books don’t meet our collection development policy, I need to do so.

You should also be aware of a process called weeding. Yes, library workers do remove books from shelves. This is not because of censorship; it’s because there is limited space, and we are always bringing in new materials. If no one checks it out, your book may not have staying power. This is why it’s so important to “sell” material to the library workers and the readers who come in. For more, search online for the CREW method, which guides library staff on how to deselect material.

### **Events and Programs**

Once you build relationships with your local libraries, more libraries will seek you out. Librarians talk, and if you are a courteous and knowledgeable author, you can provide value to more and more communities. One way you can do that is by participating in library activities.

The public wants many services the library cannot always provide due to funding. If you are permitted to sell books at your events, you can make a little money while giving back to your community. Some libraries do offer speaking fees, often through Friends of the Library groups. These are separate nonprofit organizations that raise money to gift the library. You can generally find information about how your library is funded through your state library's website. It's not an exact science, but you'll have an educated guess about whether they will be able to pay you.

The size of the library is also a factor. If your town's population is small, you may wish to focus more on more intimate events like running a writers' group or working with a book club.

Here are a few quick tips about library events:

- Book signings do not always attract library users, especially if your name is not known in the community. Children's authors should avoid proposing story times as well. Due to liability reasons, library staff are often the only ones who can conduct story times. If you find a librarian who likes your book, though, you may be asked to help out.
- Think of a topic based on your experience. Aspiring authors love to attend programs on craft, publishing, and marketing. You can also draw on your research; for example, if your book is historical fiction, you could talk about the environment of your story and how you created it. Readers need to create connections with authors, too, and if they feel part of your journey, they'll be more likely to seek out your work.
- Collaborate with other authors. The library may already have a relationship with an author you know. That author can offer to present a program in tandem with you, or you can appear at an author fair with them.
- Seek opportunities to participate in larger events such as book fairs, community festivals, or summer reading club kickoffs. Readers are often there specifically to buy, and you get the chance to create your own booth with all your own promo material. Sometimes you will have to share with other authors, but that's also a great way to meet like-minded people. I've made many author friends from fairs where I was seated next to someone new.
- Meet with a book club. Even if they're not reading your books, participants will appreciate your insight as an author. Talking to readers will draw them to your work too, and you might all read it together for a session.

Once you decide on your direction, it's time to approach the library. For events like author fairs, the library may be soliciting authors to participate. But if they're not, you should bring printed information about your program, including other places you have presented and awards you may have won. Write a brief synopsis of the program's contents. You can find samples of program advertisements on the library's website; you can also join the library's email newsletter or follow them on social media. You may also be asked to fill out a program proposal form. This is another way library staff can collect information about your program.

## **Forging Positive Relationships**



Indie writers have many opportunities to develop partnerships with public libraries. As a librarian, I have forged positive relationships with more authors than I can count, and I get to participate as a writer in events at other libraries. It's sometimes difficult to cross that bridge, but the end results are fulfilling. Take my advice and find those librarians who champion your work and talent. You won't regret it.

***Cari Dubiel*** is the assistant director at an Ohio public library. She has published multiple short stories, including the recent collection *I Loved the Mothman and Other Stories*. Dubiel is an active member of *Sisters in Crime* and a previous library liaison for the group's national board. She is the lead editor for the co-op publisher *Duskbound Books*. The Author's Guide to Libraries is now available anywhere books are sold.



## **FEEDBACK GROUP FOR NONFICTION WRITERS**

PWSD member Andrea Susan Glass is hosting a feedback group for nonfiction writers on Thursday, March 20, from 9 to 11 am, at Front Porch Gallery, 2903 Carlsbad Blvd, Carlsbad.

Join a group of writers to receive constructive feedback on any nonfiction writing: a memoir, a business book, an essay... Led by Andrea Susan Glass, nonfiction book coach, bestselling author, and UCSD instructor.

RSVP at [EventBrite.com under Writing/Carlsbad](https://www.eventbrite.com/under-writing/carlsbad), or email [andrea@writersway.com](mailto:andrea@writersway.com).



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.

## **San Diego Writers Festival** **April 5, 2025, Coronado, CA**

Celebrate the craft of writing by joining the 6th Annual San Diego Writers Festival coming up on April 5, 2025! For more details: [info@sandiegowritersfestival.com](mailto:info@sandiegowritersfestival.com).



## **IBPA Publishing University** **May 15–17, 2025, St. Paul, MN**

Featuring hands-on sessions, in-depth workshops, and the in-person magic you can't duplicate on Zoom, IBPA Publishing University 2025 will empower you and your publishing program to Connect, Collaborate, and Transform!

- Celebrate and live IBPA's motto of "helping each other achieve and succeed!"
- Educational tracks will help your publishing business Connect, Collaborate, and Transform With a "Start Strong" track for Indie and Author Publishers who are in their first few years and books of their publishing journey; a "Level Up" track for Indie and Author Publishers who have ten or more books already published; and an "Everyone" track to collectively look at some of the biggest issues/opportunities with publishing, like AI, the business case for DEI, and how to pitch your book for TV and movies.
- Participate in fun networking events built to connect you with other publishers and service providers who offer helpful solutions for publishers like you. And make sure to sign up for IBPA's ever-popular one-on-one "Ask the Expert" mentoring sessions!
- Attend a gala dinner and awards ceremony where we'll celebrate the Gold and Silver winners of the 36th annual IBPA Benjamin Franklin Awards – come for the reception, enjoy the inspirational speeches, and stay for the after-party!

[Learn more and register today.](#)

**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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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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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**



We help authors professionally  
self-publish books using their  
own publishing imprint.

Manon Wogahn

[manon@authorimprints.com](mailto:manon@authorimprints.com)

[AuthorImprints.com](http://AuthorImprints.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**