

## OUR AUGUST 11TH MEETING

# MYSTERIES AND THE LGTB MARKET

As writers, we want as large an audience as we can get. Blending the elements of mystery into our stories will help. So will expanding the nature of our characters. LGBT is the hottest genre in publishing today. Come learn how to blend elements of both genres into your own work and increase your audience.

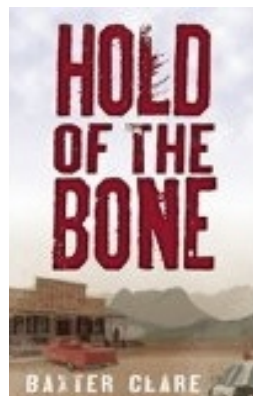
Baxter Clare Trautman earned a master's degree in biology at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and promptly turned her hand to writing. "My stories live in rough places—South Central L.A., war zones in the Middle East—and my characters are raw around the edges. If you'd rather be moved than distracted, and care for hope in a story more than happily ever after, you've found your author."

A practicing wildlife biologist, she lives in central California with her wife, dogs, cats, and chickens. Trautman is a Rainbow Award Winner and Lambda Literary Award finalist.

Don't miss this fascinating presentation by Baxter Clare Trautman, August 11 at 6:30 pm. We're back at our permanent home, the UCC on Los Osos Valley Road in SLO. See you there!



*Baxter Clare Trautman*



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## Master Fiction Writing Intensive

Shelly Lowenkopf and Toni Lopopolo will hold a two-day writing intensive for fiction writers on August 22 and 23 in Santa Barbara. They say, "Give us 14 concentrated hours over a two-day weekend, and we'll give your 21st Century writing street creds with what agents and publishing editors look for right now."

Receive one-on-one attention to your novel. Both instructors will work one-on-one with each writer. This is intense personal focus you will not receive anywhere else. Learn the conventions, genres and way to tell story for the 21st Century.

You'll come away with:

1. A new understanding of how characters must tell their own stories
2. How and why characters reveal and betray things through action
3. How 21st Century characters speak
4. What agents and editors expect from writers today
5. How to find your own best way to work
6. How to think series novels
7. How and why to begin and end stories

And much more.

The weekend session costs \$395.00 and is limited to six writers. Contact Toni Lopopolo for more information: [LopopoloBooks@aol.com](mailto:LopopoloBooks@aol.com)

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## IDEAS AND COPYRIGHT

You have a terrific idea for a story and you want to protect it. Can you copyright the idea to keep someone from stealing it before you finish the book and get it into print?

The answer, unfortunately, is no. Ideas cannot be copyrighted. According to Section 102(b) of the Copyright Act, "in no case does copyright protection...extend to any idea, procedure, process, system, method of operation, concept, principle or discovery, regardless of the form in which it is described, explained, illustrated or embodied."

So, what does the copyright law cover? "Original works of authorship" that are fixed in tangible form (written on paper, typed on computer, scribbled by crayon on a napkin, etc.). It protects the specific words of your book after it's written, not the idea that triggered the book. It's the specific words you write, in that specific order, that are protected under the law.

The idea of Romeo and Juliet—two people from rival families falling in love—has been written many times since Shakespeare penned his play. If ideas were copyrightable, we wouldn't have West Side Story or Disney's High School Musical. So don't worry about who has the same idea as you; write the story only you can write, so we all can enjoy it.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: FOLLOWTHROUGH



*Dennis Eamon Young*

The July NightWriters meeting brought us a different kind of treat. Our guests were Dave Congalton and Guy Rathburn. These two radio personalities presented us with a double-barreled and fun filled evening of how to be a radio show guest. Most writers are ill prepared to jump into the marketing aspect of book promotion that has fallen on them. The days of having your book taken on by a publisher and relying on them to do all the promotional footwork are long gone. Finishing the book is just the beginning.

Even those of us who begrudgingly take on this newest aspect of the writer's life may not be quite prepared for the complete gamut of hurdles facing us. We must ferret out a variety of places and ways to get word of our book in front of the public. One of those ways would be to obtain a spot on a radio show, in order to speak about our work.

Radio shows need a constant supply of guests to fill their airtime, so that should be an easy mark to hit, you may think. Not necessarily so, we found out, as they receive a flood of solicitations from writers all year long. The book needs to be interesting, but the writer also must be interesting and literate in their manner of speaking. You may manage to get on the air the first time, but if you do not understand how to be interesting and fill your allotted time without a barrage of dead spaces and gaffs, it may be your one and only such visit.

I recently sat in on a session of Toastmasters and participated in their proceedings. As a guest, you are allowed to just sit and listen, but taking part in their Table Topics can be a fun experience. You are given a subject and must speak extemporaneously on that subject. Not only do you have a time frame to work within, afterwards you are rated based on subject interest, delivery and quality.

My feeling was that we could all benefit from spending some time with these folks. Their aim is to help people feel more at ease in public speaking, be it in front of an audience or in that radio interview. Their critiques of one's speaking are much like our writers' critique groups. Their focus is based on trying to help you get your message across in the best and most interesting way.

When a writer creates a plot, there must be followthrough. When presenting a reader with a cast of characters, there must be followthrough for the actions of each of them. It is the same in music, sports or any other human activity. Our predecessors were the bards. They were the keepers of the history and stories of their tribes, using an oral tradition, until such time as everything began to take a written form.

One of the aspects of writing that our own Susan Tuttle teaches is to read your work aloud. This allows you to hear how the words and rhythm present your ideas and dialog to your audience. It is all a matter of followthrough.

*Excelsior,  
Dennis*

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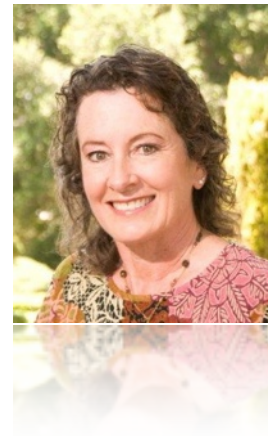
## Fellow Writers!

**Is a writing partner sick? Need encouragement?**

**Getting married or having a baby?**

**Suffering from the loss of a loved one?**

**Email me at [jandkvolkov@att.net](mailto:jandkvolkov@att.net) and I'll send them a card from their SLO NightWriters family.**



*Kalila*

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## HAVE YOU NW-BLOGGED TODAY?

Be sure to check out our Blog for information, insights, encouragement, connections, etc. You'll find writing prompts, ideas, encouragements and lots more. Feel free to leave a comment on any of our posts. And join us on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, too!

Join us on our Blog: [www.slonightwriters.com](http://www.slonightwriters.com)

You can also access the blog from our website: [www.slonightwriters.org](http://www.slonightwriters.org). And make sure your bio and book listing is up-to-date on our website. As we continue to grow and gain an international reputation, your social media presence grows right along with us.

*"You write until you come to a place where you still have your juice and know what will happen next, and you stop and try to live through until the next day when you hit it again."*

*~Ernest Hemingway*

## NIGHTWRITERS “ROUND TABLES”

Join Terry Sanville and Mark Arnold at the Critique Table as they give feedback on pieces brought to the table. Please **keep your submission to two pages, typed, 12-point font, double spaced**. This is a great—and safe—way to see what the critiquing process is all about, get valuable feedback from two fantastic writers, and practice reading your work to a small audience. Round Tables start at 5:15 pm.

Susan Tuttle's Round Table will explore Subplots this month. Subplots are essential to add depth, interest and tension to your stories. They help keep readers hooked and coming back for more. Discover how and where to find the best, most organic subplots for your story. Come explore the types of subplots and how to structure them for maximum effectiveness. Every story can be enhanced by at least one subplot, if not more. Join the Subplot round Table on August 11 at 5:15 pm to learn how to make subplots work for you.

See you at the Round Tables on Tuesday, August 11th at 5:15 pm.



## NW MEMBER AUTHORS, COME SELL YOUR BOOKS!

Sell your books at our general monthly meetings! If you are a member of the SLO NightWriters, we encourage you to take part. We will have a table set up for you to display, discuss and sell your books.

Please note—SLO NightWriters holds no liability in this process. All authors participating are responsible for their own money exchanges and for the security of their own funds and books. Your dues with the SLO NightWriters must be current in order to participate.

We hope that you will welcome this opportunity. For more information about our meeting, please visit our web-site.

We look forward to seeing you!

Sincerely,

Andrea Chmelik  
SLONW Vice President

## PODCASTS AND BOOKS

Did you know that now you can listen to your favorite podcasts in your car? Both Apple and Google (Android Auto) have signed up auto manufacturers to include their technology in the cars' audio systems—40 for Apple and 31 for Android Auto.

Having your own podcast show is probably way more than you want to bother with. After all, our time needs to be spent writing our books, not just talking about them. But you can tap into this new way to get the word out by doing podcast interviews.

With the huge amount of competition out there today, we can no longer rely on just one or two methods of book promotion. Exposure is what sells books, and using a multitude of marketing strategies will ensure word of your work gets out to your audience. The best part of podcast interviews is that it allows you to connect with readers and establish rapport. They get a sense of who you are and you don't have to worry about what to wear or if it's a bad hair day. When listeners get to know, like and trust you, that translates into book sales.

When planning a podcast interview, keep in mind that large is not always best. The aim is to connect to an audience who will want to buy your book after hearing you talk about it.

1. **Identify the Compelling Aspects of Your Book:** It's the compelling parts that will draw listeners in. Be clear on the exact content you want to share on different podcast shows—and the amount of content. Don't give away everything during the promotion process. For fiction, a compelling aspect could be the setting. Why did you choose it? What made it special for you? How does it enhance the story? The answers will give you options on different shows, and the audiences will find you and your book interesting and relevant.

2. **Consider the Listener's Interest:** Know your audience for each podcast, and plan according to their interests. If people don't hear something relevant to them, they will lose interest in you and your book. Highlight the location of the story for a travel podcast, noting why it is central to the story. Or highlight exciting features of the places that listeners can visit to make it relevant to them.

3. **Repurpose Your Content:** Ask for a copy of your podcast, and use parts of it in further marketing promotion. Edit the file into sound bites, upload to SoundCloud (first 180 minutes are free!) and share across your social media platforms. Create a video file and upload to YouTube with an image of what the clip is about. Transcribe the interview and use on your blog or website, or use as a guest blog feature to further the reach of your promotion. Most of all create content in various formats to reach as many people, and sell as many books, as possible.

## KUDOS... KUDOS... KUDOS...

Children's book author **Beryl Reichenberg** has three events in August. On the 15th from 1 to 3 PM, she will be at the SLO Botanical Gardens to show kids how to make a butterfly book, talk about Monarch butterflies and share with the children her two books, *When Butterflies Dream* and *Butterfly Girls*.

On August 21, **Beryl** will teach her paper craft and bookmaking, monthly class at the Studios on the Park in Paso Robles from 3:30 to 4:30. This month the kids and their parents will learn how to make a floral flag book. And on the 29 from 3 to 4, **Beryl** will be at the Santa Maria Discovery Museum for her monthly craft class showing children and their parents how to make a Happy Dragon book and reading her picture book, *A Real Dragon*.

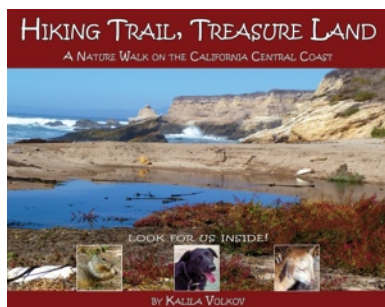


**Beryl Reichenberg's** new children's book, *Lost in a Dark Forest*, is now available and she will be selling her book at the next NightWriter's meeting.

**Terry Sanville's** short story, "Sharing," will be included in an upcoming edition of "The Humorist," a print magazine out of Washington, D.C. Check it out at your local libraries or newsstands. (Do they even have these any more? Terry asks.)

"Down to Size," a short story by **Terry Sanville**, will appear in the September 2015 edition of "Queen Anne's Revenge," an online and print literary journal named after Blackbeard's ship. (Arr matey! Terry adds.)

On July 16, **Judy Salamacha's** book, *Colonel Baker's Field: An American Pioneer Story*, was featured in the Bakersfield Californian in a story about her presentation at the Writers of Kern monthly meeting. Congratulations, Judy!



**Kalila Volkov** has published a children's picture book with the help of Central Coast Books, titled *Hiking Trail, Treasure Land*. It's a feast of photos with captions of Kalila's previous job at Point Buchon Trail. This is sure to be a tourist souvenir as well as a family favorite.



## HAVE YOUR STORY PUBLISHED IN LOCAL PRESS!

Tolosa Press publishes three community newspapers in San Luis Obispo county: **The SLO City News, The Coast News and The Bay News.** Tolosa Press prints 30,000 copies that are distributed in more than 600 racks/locations in the county, as well as online.

SLO NightWriters is proud to have the members' stories featured in each issue of Tolosa Press, including the online edition.

We are looking for **SHORT FICTION STORIES**, with a strict word limit of **600**.

Want to write, but need an inspiration? How about one of these prompts to get you started—use them as the first sentence of your story, or incorporate them as you write along.

- She had waited twenty years to return it.
- Spare some change, please?
- He had kept his mother alive in his thoughts. Too alive, perhaps.
- He looked at his phone, turned pale, then quickly left the room. She watched him, smiling.
- What do you mean, you lost the lottery ticket?

**Happy Writing!**

### Tolosa Press Submissions Guidelines

*\*To be eligible to submit, your NightWriter dues must be current.*

*All submissions must be the original work of the author. You may submit previously published or submitted material if it was not published locally.*

#### Accepting:

- Short stories – fiction and creative non-fiction. All themes are accepted, but please keep in mind that Tolosa Press is a family-friendly publication. The publisher prefers pieces that grab the readers and keep them interested until the end.

#### Not Accepting:

- Poetry, Essays, Opinion pieces, Excerpts from novels, “How To” articles.

#### Submission Guidelines:

- Send your submission as an attachment, not in the body of the e-mail. Attach as a word document.
- Word limit (strict!) – 500 – 600
- Double space; use readable 12 point font, preferably Times New Roman.
- Insert a header, which should include: title, your name, word count, genre.
- Include a two sentence bio and insert at the bottom of your submission, even if you have submitted before.
- Submit to: [sharylheber@gmail.com](mailto:sharylheber@gmail.com)



*Sharyl Heber  
Tolosa Coordinator*



## How To Get Involved

Dear NightWriters,

Here are some of the ways you can become involved in SLO NightWriters—for just a little time, or more time, depending on how much you can spare. Your Board works hard, but we can't do it alone!



*Andrea Chmelik*

### **Social Media:**

I would love to have a team of social media contributors. If you use Facebook and Twitter a lot and come across interesting content that your writer peers could benefit from, then you can share it with the NightWriters. Our blog is currently being underutilized because I simply don't have enough time to contribute more. If you are interested, contact me at [chmelik.andrea@gmail.com](mailto:chmelik.andrea@gmail.com).

### **Newsletter:**

Our editors Susan Tuttle and Elizabeth Roderick would welcome contributors to the newsletter. You can provide them with material monthly, or just once in a while. For more details please contact Susan at [aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com), or Elizabeth at [elizabethroderick@att.net](mailto:elizabethroderick@att.net).

### **Publicity:**

While most of our publicity at this time happens via social media, there is a number of local newspapers, radio shows and other outlets in which we would like to advertise. Often it's nothing more than adding an event to the calendar on their website.

As you can see, all of these are simple tasks, yet added together they can become overwhelming. The board members are volunteers. We do what we do in our free time. We welcome new participants with open arms.

Come join us! Our board meetings are held every first Sunday (the upcoming one

September 6<sup>th</sup>) from 1-3pm and we meet at the same location as our general monthly meetings (United Church of Christ, 11245 Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo), in the building opposite to the Fellowship Hall. Feel free to join us, ask questions, bring new ideas and some new energy!

We look forward to seeing you and hearing from you!

With thanks,  
Andrea Chmelik  
SLONW Vice President

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## MEMBERSHIP MINUTE

Will return at a future date. Stay tuned for more information.

If you have questions, please contact me: [jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com)  
805-238-3153

Hanje



Hanje Richards

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## A WRITER'S PROCESS



by: Liz Roderick

This month we look at the Western historical novel of the Selinen indians, written by Anne Schroeder.

**Q:** *Cholama Moon* is a work of historical fiction, taking place in the area around Cholame where I live, and where you grew up. Could

you tell us a bit about how the novel came about? How did you get the idea to write it?

**A:** When you grow up in a valley, the natural setting: shape of the hills, the flow of the river, the way the moon looks when it rises, stays with you. If you're a writer, the story wants to be told as a way to honor the past. When I was a girl, riding with my father over

the Cottonwood Pass to take sheep to market, I used to daydream about being stuck out there growing up. So I wrote my fears.

**Q:** How many of the characters were based on real people? How many of the events that took place were true?

**A:** The events are accurate to the era. The minor characters, historical characters and the places are real. I made up the central characters so they could act in outrageous ways. I wanted to write Nettie Imus as the main character, but Don Imus, the radio “shock jock” is her great-great something uncle and I didn’t want to get sued so I used the Imus family, the first white settlers in the area as important secondary characters.

**Q:** Tell us what research you did in order to complete this book.

**A:** Read a ton of local histories. Spent three weekends at the Parkfield Inn touring the area, including on horseback. Talked to a ton of locals and got them to give me Jeep tours of their ranches, show me Indian relics, and tours of old adobe houses. My husband loves history so we do a lot of it together.

**Q:** How long did it take you to write *Cholama Moon*?

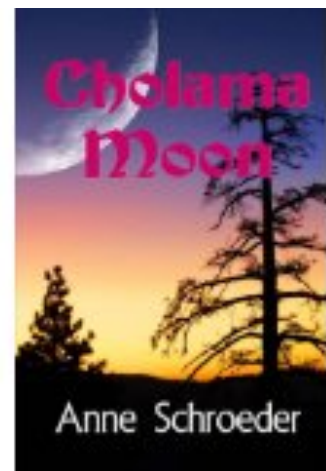
**A:** About 18 months. Most of my novels take that long, mostly because of the research. I don’t write every day because I have to balance writing with stretching exercises, gardening, gym. At my age it’s really bad to sit too much.

**Q:** What is your writing process or routine to get writing done?

**A:** I spend about three months just doing research. I visit the settings and fill notebooks with notes and sketches, read 15-20 resource books. I spend time outside thinking about the big picture. I make a timeline on a long sheet of white butcher paper, putting in every detail I can think of. The story is in the details, (like the fleas I saw dying of heat at Mission San Miguel on an August day--priceless.) Then I start writing.

**Q:** What is your editing process?

**A:** I start each session by reviewing some of my previous chapters. I am a fast writer, my technical skills are often atrocious and I don’t always see the details so I have to go over and over. When I think I’m finished I send it to my editor. I’ve had several before I found someone who can line edit as well as give substantive advice.



Currently I'm using Bill Scott, a fellow NightWriter, who also writes historical fiction and has won many top awards. It helps if my work is clean to start with. Afterwards I send the ms off to several Beta readers for feedback. I have a wish list of national authors in my genre and I always ask. Lucia St. Clair Robson of *Ride the Wind* fame has offered a cover blurb for *Maria Ines*.

**Q:** Tell us about your publishing journey. How did you go about pitching the novel?

**A:** I sent the manuscript to a friend as a lark before it was finished. When she began working as an acquisition editor for Oak Tree Press she acquired it. Publishing was a nightmare. She left the company. They moved and changed contact info. The revised manuscript that I submitted was lost and the first version was printed. Still, Stu Rosenfeld of True West Magazine named it "Best non-traditional western of 2014." It's currently up for a WILLA Award. Fingers crossed.

After I signed a contract I heard back from two other publishing companies that also wanted it. Go figure!

**Q:** Are there any marketing tips or wisdom you can give us?

**A:** Write the best book you can. When you're ready, the industry seems to sense it. I attended a lot of western conferences and met agents and publishers, but they wanted traditional westerns. When I tweaked my stories into the historical romance genre they became easier to sell.

**Q:** Tell us about the sequels to this book.

**A:** The overworked Salinan Indian cook in *Cholama Moon* intrigued me. I wanted to write about her life so I went to the Salinan Indian Council and asked for help. *Maria Ines* traces Mission Indians born at San Miguel and San Antonio Missions through the Spanish, Mexican and American eras. The third book, *Time of the Troubles* is about her son, who loses everything he loves when Americans pour from the goldfields and destroy his culture. He rides as a bandito with Joaquin Murieta to get revenge.

*Maria Ines* is being acquired by a New York publisher of western historical fiction for release in hardbound library and ebook editions. I had an agent friend fine-tune the contract, that includes a respectable advance.

**Q:** What else are you working on that you'd like to tell us about?

**A:** I'm in the process of pitching an Oregon Trail romance to Five Star Press-Cengage. I started the manuscript ten years ago. When I moved to Oregon I finished it. The head of the Oregon Trail Association says it is the most accurate novel of the Oregon Trail he has ever read, so I'm encouraged to keep doing what I love.

## "Critique Group Connections"

**NW Members—Please, email critique requests to: Janice Konstantinidis ([jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com))** We'll print your specific request in this **Critique Group Connections** section of the newsletter for all NW members to view, increasing opportunities for NW critiquing. Use this information to find a match for your needs, make contacts, or to start a new group or critique partnership. Contact Janice for assistance if needed and she'll get you to the right people. And, if you form a group, please let Janice know so she can list it on the website. She can also forward your group's information to the newsletter. Critique Group Guidelines are available on the website at [www.slouthernwriters.org](http://www.slouthernwriters.org).

\*\*\*SLO NW cannot guarantee critique group formation or availability but do we strive to facilitate connections between writers so they can initiate and develop their own writing affiliations. While we cannot be, and are not, responsible for any outcomes from these associations, we hope they lead to great creative magic and magnificent literary works!

### CRITIQUE GROUP REQUESTS

**Maryanne Gackle** works in fiction, nonfiction and screenwriting and is seeking a critique group or peer edit/critique exchange group. She is looking for an intermediate group, or those with some writing experience. She has no location preferences and is willing to travel for the right group. Contact Maryanne at 805-709-6019, or email her at: [muffy18@att.net](mailto:muffy18@att.net).

**Holly Thibodeaux** works in fiction, non-fiction, screenwriting, memoir and experimental fiction. She is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange with writers in a more structured environment with accountability to boost productivity. Intermediate level preferred; no location restrictions. She would also like to find others interested in exploring the philosophy of writing and the psychology of storytelling. Contact her at:

**Katie** is seeking a critique group for YA and FICTION. She is interested in either a critique group, or 1:1 electronic peer exchange. She has some writing experience and prefers SLO City location. Contact Katie at: [dreamsofcitylights@gmail.com](mailto:dreamsofcitylights@gmail.com).

**Tony Taylor** is seeking a critique group for FICTION, YA, CHILDREN'S MIDDLE GRADE or VARIED GENRES, preferred skill level is advanced/experienced writers. Preferred location is SLO City area. Contact Tony at 805-704-3528 or by email: [tony@anthonyjtaylor.com](mailto:tony@anthonyjtaylor.com)

**Rolynn Anderson** wishes to organize a **NEW PLOTTING GROUP** for LITERARY FICTION with elements of suspense and mystery. Preferred skill level is advanced. Preferred location is Arroyo Grande/Los Osos/SLO area. Contact Rolynn at 805-473-5847 or by email [rolynna@earthlink.net](mailto:rolynna@earthlink.net)

**Griselda Rivera** is seeking multiple critique groups: MEMOIRS, TEEN & CHILDREN'S, ACADEMIC/EDUCATION/LINGUISTICS. Contact Griselda at [grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com](mailto:grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com)

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## Critique Group Connections, Continued

**Colin McKay** is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for COMMERCIAL FICTION – CRIME, YA, or SCREENWRITING. Preferred skill level is advanced. No location restrictions for meetings but would prefer Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria. Contact Colin by email: [mckay01@gmail.com](mailto:mckay01@gmail.com)

**David Flamm** is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange or 1:1 writing mentor/partner or editing fee for service, for COMMERCIAL FICTION. Preferred Skill Level is Intermediate to Advanced. Preferred locations for meetings are SLO City, South County / Santa Maria, Orcutt. Contact David at 805-868-3779 or by email: [david.flamm@yahoo.com](mailto:david.flamm@yahoo.com)

**Christina Grimm** is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for VARIED NO GENRE RESTRICTIONS. No skill restrictions. Preferred location for meetings is SLO City, Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria, but can travel to other locations. Contact Christina at 805-459-4923 or by email: [grimmpsych@gmail.com](mailto:grimmpsych@gmail.com)

**Jill Stegman** is seeking a critique group or peer edit exchange for LITERARY FICTION or LITERARY HYBRIDS WITH THRILLER, SUSPENSE, MYSTERY. Preferred skill level is advanced. Preferred location for meetings is SLO City, Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria or North County. Contact Jill at 805-466-1956 or by email: [jastegman@gmail.com](mailto:jastegman@gmail.com)

**Deborah Brasket** is seeking a critique group, online peer edit exchange, or 1:1 writing partner for ADULT LITERARY FICTION, NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES, AND FOR CHILDREN'S MIDDLE GRADE NOVEL. Preferred experience level is intermediate to advanced. North County is preferred. Contact Deborah at 221-5405 or by email: [dbrasket51@gmail.com](mailto:dbrasket51@gmail.com)

**Alycia Kiley** is seeking a critique group for VARIED GENRES but primarily POETRY, NON FICTION and ARTICLES; skill level is intermediate. SLO City location is preferred. Contact Alycia at 602-7075 or by email, [alyciakiley@gmail.com](mailto:alyciakiley@gmail.com)

**George Klein** is seeking a critique group or 1:1 writing mentor/partner for COMMERCIAL FICTION; No particular skill level or meeting location restrictions. Contact George at 712-3378 or by email, [fangio@charter.net](mailto:fangio@charter.net)

**Steve Bowder** is seeking a critique group that concentrates on true stories embellished to make them interesting, but that stay true to the facts that are known. Contact Steve at: [sbowder@live.com](mailto:sbowder@live.com)

“There are very few writers who are not cranks in some way.”

~Paul Theroux

## Quote of the Month

"In times of unrest and fear, it is perhaps the writer's duty to celebrate, to single out some of the values we can cherish, to talk about some of the few things we know in a cold world."

~Phyllis McGinley

## Word of the Month "Limpid"

**Definition:** (adj.; L. *limpidus*, clear)

Characterized by transparent clearness; easily intelligible; easily or pleasantly heard; flowing or moving gracefully.

**Synonyms:** liquid, clear, pellucid, transparent, crystalline, lucid, bright, pure

**Usage:** The limpid notes soaring through the air gave evidence of the glee with which the birds greeted the dawn.

## SLO NW e↔Line Edit Exchange

Can't find a critique group? Don't have time for meetings? Have specific needs for feedback on your work? Our Electronic Peer Review Line Edit Exchange is perfect for out-of-town members, or those with restricted time schedules.

All E-Exchange Partners are SLO NW members.

- Exchange views with other writers
- No fees charged, no credit expected or required.
- Participants contact each other, set their own rules and time frames.
- Use your own style of editing/commenting.
- If you don't find value in the feedback, try someone else on the list.

To be added, **contact Sharyl Heber** ([sheber@charter.net](mailto:sheber@charter.net)) with: Your Name, Email, Genre (if you desire a specific one), Skill Level (if you require a specific level). She will add you to the list. Then you can reach out on a one-to-one basis and find the right writing partner for you.

## CRAFTING SUBTEXT PART 1 – STORY STRATEGIES

by: Sharyl Heber

Part 1, in the July issue, addressed Subtext in Dialogue. This month in Part 2, I offer some strategies to craft subtext in the body of the story.

“Subtext is content underneath... conflict, anger, competition, pride... or other implicit ideas and emotions. Subtext is the unspoken thought and motive of a character—what they really think and believe.” *Wikipedia*

Subtext is sometimes referred to as the *iceberg principal*. The small tip, that which is explicit, is obvious on the page. The larger, deeper, more compelling content lies beneath the surface, subtly and creatively implied and alluded to. Don't *tell* us “Benny's life is falling apart,” *show* us by example and by implication. Let us watch his old friends avoid him. Let us see his bills stack up and the beer bottle graveyard in his living room. Introduce us to new his loser friends. Tweak any of the strategies below or create your own.

### Story strategies to reveal subtext:

- **Location** – luring a character back to the scene of a past incident can build tension or tenderness etc.
- **Props** – an old coat, a cat, a necklace, a first car, etc. – Anything that holds special meaning between characters e.g., leaving a white rose on a pillow can be chilling and horrifying or heartbreaking and nostalgic.
- **Body carriage** – strut, stomp, sulk, slump, sneak... let the body tell a story.
- **Gestures/actions** – unique character physicalizing of an underlying emotion: chewing nails, obsessive cleaning, picking teeth, out to the garden, off in the car, removing of sunglasses, it can all *mean something*.
- **Other players** – the actions/ reactions, looks and gestures, (or lack of them) from others in the scene can impart information. Looks of disgust, fawning admiration, keeping their distance, phone calls not returned, all clues to deeper issues.
- **Internal thoughts** – especially when truncated or cryptically phrased can add depth.
- **Pets & animals** – cowering, hissing, growling, wagging tails, purring, swarming – let an animal hint at the mood, danger or moral character of a player.
- **Addictions** – onsets or relapses may indicate general or specific trouble.
- **The 5 Senses** – the recurrence of a sound, smell, taste, touch, a visual— an appearance or lingering sensation can evoke the presence of a memory, something deeper that was alluded to earlier in the story which then becomes the tag for a



meaningful entity e.g., the smell of pipe tobacco means father's on an abusive rampage.

- **Wardrobe** – how a character dresses in general or for a specific incident can reveal unspoken intension (or abrupt changes in dress style.)
- **Friends** – the folks a character surrounds herself with may speak volumes about her self esteem and life goals.
- **Notes** – cryptic notes on the fridge, on the dashboard, lipstick on the mirror, all hints to something larger.
- **Creativity/Art** – a character's artistic creations or interpretations can speak volumes about deeper themes and emotional issues; photographs, doodling, poetry, journal entries, paintings etc.
- **Collections** – what a character surrounds himself with in his home can be revealing; the books and tchotchkes on his shelves.
- **Weather** – let Mother Nature give a clue (or false clue) to the mood or outcome.
- **Lighting/ambiance** – mood, intention, foreshadowing, threat can all be alluded to with choices in setting.
- **Rituals** – patterns, habits, routines with positive or negative associations. A cigarette on the porch may mean a beating will follow, a cup of coffee brought to the bed may mean all is forgiven. Breaking of ritual can indicate ...something's different or not right.
- **Altered states** – drunken-stupor-ranting, dreams/nightmares, fantasies, hallucinations can reveal depth. Exaggerated perceptions in uber color or decibel or a heightened state of awareness reveals focus.
- **Obsessive focus** – stalking behaviors, extreme image collages of a target can reveal obsessive love or criminal intention.
- **Misinterpretations** – subtle, extreme or chronic misinterpretations may reveal a mental block or bias
- **Involuntary body responses** – sweat, heart rate, stomach bile, intestinal issues, hives etc. reveal emotion.
- **Passage of time** – accelerated clock or calendar, or slow motion can reveal stress or overload.
- **Hygiene** – can reveal state of mind and emotional health.

The above bullets help to add depth and to *show* the story, not *tell*. The list is by no means exhaustive. If you add more, share them with me. I love to collect them! The more we become closet psychologists and observers of psyche and behavior, the better writers we'll be. Subtext is also helpful for imparting critical but dry backstory without the deadly expository 'explainy' passages. The more implication, the greater the mystery.

## REVIEW OF JULY MEETING

We were not able to meet at our regular location, since the United Church of Christ was performing a corporal work of mercy: sheltering the homeless. We met instead at King David's Masonic Lodge on Marsh Street.

Freemasonry is an organization inspired by the wisdom and courage of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. Masons strive to make good men even better. The building was so majestic, I thought I had been transported back to Washington D.C. Our Mason hosts were warm and welcoming. The evening began with two roundtables: one conducted by Terry Sanville and Mark Arnold, and the other conducted by Susan Tuttle.

Terry shared the technique he uses to choose age-appropriate names. Determine your character's year of birth, then google "most popular names in (that year of birth) and choose a name off the list that comes up.

Female characters born in 1995 can be named Taylor, Ashley, or Emily, but not Betty (1925), Barbara (1945), or Lisa (1965). Male characters born in 2005 can be named Aidan, Jacob, or Ethan, but not Harold (1935), Gary (1955), or Jason (1975). Google and learn.

Mark cautioned us about unintentionally *anthropomorphizing* our animal characters. We *anthropomorphize* when we give an animal or object human traits.

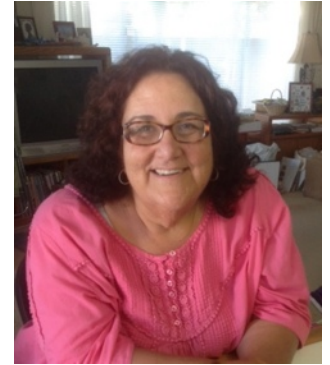
You will find anthropomorphized animals in classical mythology, fairy tales, and Disney stories. If you do it, make sure you do it intentionally and consistently. So don't have your otherwise non-humanoid cat suddenly wish you happy birthday. But do, if you are Dr. Seuss, have cats *balance fish bowls on their umbrellas and attempt to fly kites indoors*.

Susan taught us that *story statements* are comprised of two sentences. The first contains the basic plot situation, the protagonist's name and the story goal. The second contains the antagonist's name, goal, and method for opposing the protagonist.

Susan has developed a great technique for generating story ideas called *What If...?* Start with one idea, and from that idea brainstorm as many scenarios as you can. *Do not judge the ideas, just let them flow and write them down. Allow your subconscious mind to take you to places you might not ordinarily go and you'll discover the unique and amazing.*

I played *What If...?* in my very first class with Susan. I am still mining the ideas I generated that day. *What if every person who eats vegetables has to adopt a farmer worker? What if vegans have to adopt two?*

Radio personalities Dave Congalton and Guy Rathbun taught us how to prepare for a radio interview at our general meeting. Radio interviews are a great venue for book-



By Jan Alarcon



pitching because many radio listeners and book readers tend to be over fifty.

Never contact the host without first listening to their show; assemble a press kit; assume the host has not read your book; keep up your end of the conversation; refer to your book by its title; make friends with the receptionist; and let the host know you are willing to be a last-minute guest.

For further information, read the e-book *The Talk Radio Guest Book: How to*

*be the Perfect Talk Radio Guest* by Dave Congalton and Deborah Bayles.

My story *Birthday Cake* was published in the Tolosa Press this week. I learned so much and got so much affirmation from writing and submitting my story. The editing suggestions were invaluable. Tolosa publishes a Nightwriter story every other week, I encourage all of you to submit your stories too.

I just finished reading *Go Set a Watchman*, by Harper Lee. No spoilers, but I think I'm renaming my imaginary son. In this prequel/sequel to *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Scout returns to Maycomb and sees her town and family through different eyes.

*I am their blood and bones, I have dug in this ground, this is my home. But I am not their blood, the ground doesn't care who digs it. I am a stranger at a cocktail party.*

Many Nightwriters will gather together on Tuesday, August 18, 2015, 7:00pm to 9:00pm to discuss this book. You are welcomed to join us. Contact me for more details: [janmariealarcon@hotmail.com](mailto:janmariealarcon@hotmail.com)

Until next month,  
*Jan Alarcon*





## Great Beginnings Needs You!

NW Wordsmiths is still looking for a writer—or group of writers—who would like to submit a monthly column for our Great Beginnings department. This is information for writers just starting out, as well as a refresher for those of us who have been around for a while. This is a great way to get publishing credits (the newsletter has a circulation of about 250 each month) while honing your writing skills. We're looking for around 400-500 words on technique, writing skills, publishing, marketing, social media—any subject on writing for those starting out. See Great Beginnings in each newsletter to get an idea of what's being done. Then email your submissions to: [aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com) with NW Newsletter in the subject line. You know you want to do this... so email me today!

## AN EVENING WITH ANNE PERRY

by: Jan Alarcon

On July 23, 2015, I attended Anne Perry's free presentation at Cuesta Community College in San Luis Obispo. Anne shared the stage with anthologist Victoria Zackhiem.

Anne had been scheduled to present at the 2014 Central Coast Writers Conference but was not able to attend at the last minute due to a passport snafu. Anne presented the keynote address by skype and promised to come to the Central Coast to give a free lecture once she was free again to enter the country. Anne made good on her promise that July night - I was the beneficiary.

Anne Perry has sold more than 26 million copies of her more than 80 novels. *The Times* selected her as one of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century's "100 Masters of Crime." Anne is contracted to write three books a year, an addition to her Victorian William Monk series, an addition to her post-Victorian William Pitt series, and a Christmas novella. Anne sits at her computer six days a week, eight to ten hours a day. In the evenings she outlines upcoming stories by hand on her living room couch. She exercises regularly, eats well, gets a good night's sleep and encourages us to do the same. She relaxes by reading British World War I poets, including A.E. Housman, C.K. Chesterton and Rudyard Kipling. She is a practicing Mormon and does not write on Sundays.

Anne encouraged us to develop our voice but to also have something to say. *Your voice does not matter if you do not write what people want to read.* She said that every scene in every genre should have tension and further the suspense of the story.

Anne writes the middle of her stories first. She starts the story's turning point, that moment when the main protagonist's internal resources are not enough to face the challenge at hand. Life is forcing them to change. Anne loves to write mysteries because they afford her the opportunity to write about how people, and those they love, react under pressure.

*I think it's a terrible thing to write and not enjoy it. It's a sad thing. But of course a lot of people do work because they need to eat. And we all need to eat, but that's not the only reason to work. You couldn't have paid me not to write. If you said you'd give me x thousand—or a hundred thousand dollars, or a million dollars a year—not to write I would tell you to keep your money, because what am I going to do? You've got to do it. I think it's the same for people who act or sing or play music or dance, whatever.*

Anne sells tote bags on her website that carry her slogan, "Put Your Heart on the Page."



Anne Perry

## In the OM Zone

by: Kalila Volkov

Choosing to escape chaos  
we can release ourselves to quiet  
and surrender to the ocean of breath  
joy and gratitude ablaze in our hearts  
As we remember to trust divine wisdom  
we take a step into paradise  
and linger where all is comfort

Resting in awareness  
of soul wholeness  
we can soak in the power of positivity  
and bathe in a galaxy of peace  
letting our gifts of blessings pour out

May we all attune to our gentle inner teacher  
dipping into spirit's well of serenity  
Let's connect with our centers and each other  
with the true sight of non-judgment  
and restore an undivided brotherhood



## POINTS TO PONDER

"To love and to express it is to be vulnerable. To create works of art is to be vulnerable, and it's hard for people to let themselves be vulnerable. Especially in this world, where the internet lets us democratically savage one another, it's even scarier, but the courage to be an artist means also the courage to love and to express it."

~Robert Olen Butler

"Fiction is a temporal art form. Poetry can choose to ignore the passage of time, for there is a clear sense of a poem being an *object*, composed densely of words, existing in space. This is true even when the length of the line is not an objectifying part of the form, as in a prose poem. And a poem need not overtly concern itself with a human subject. But when you have a human being centrally present in a literary work and you let the line length run on and you turn the page, you are, as they say in a long storytelling tradition, **upon a time.**"

(source: [narrativemagazine.com](http://narrativemagazine.com))

## GETTING TO KNOW NIGHTWRITER MEMBERS

### SPOTLIGHT ON...

Will Return Next Month

If you'd like to be spotlighted, contact Mike at:

drjakespa@sbcglobal.net



*by: Mike Price*

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## 9 STEPS TO BLOGGING SUCCESS

Robert Lee Brewer, Senior Content Editor of the Writer's Digest Writing Community, offers this advice to writers so they can achieve success with their blogs:

1. Create a Niche: From the niche you can determine the best name for the blog to its content. Plus, readers support a blogger when they know what they can expect.
2. Craft an Editorial Calendar: Once you know your niche, create a calendar of subjects to write about. This helps avoid the dreaded "blogger's block" when you just can't think of what to write about. It's already decided for you.
3. Put Blog Readers First: Don't put your own goals ahead of your readers. The only way to win in this game is to consider and meet your readers' needs, not just yours.
4. Design Readable Blog Posts: Use short paragraphs, break up text with images, use lists whenever possible, keep text concise. Remember, most people skim, so give them something fun and easy to skim.
5. Track Your Blogging Success: Use the tracking tools to check which subjects get the most hits, which fall by the wayside. That way you can adjust content to satisfy your readers' needs and not bore them with irrelevant (to them) subjects.
6. Plan Out Blog Posts in Advance: Use an outline approach to the subjects identified in Step #2. You can even write the posts up ahead of time and queue them to post automatically on a designated date and time.
7. Develop a Blog Post Promotion Plan: Know how you plan to share each post as it goes live. Be consistent; link to Twitter and Facebook, etc.
8. Utilize Guest Posts: Trade guest posts with bloggers whose posts you like and whose content fits your blog. Do advance promotion for each guest post.

9. Build mega-posts that refer back to previous posts. For example, each bold title could be a link to an original post that covers that specific subject in more detail. Those who merely want a quick list will have it, and those who want more information can simply click and get it—without leaving your blog.

Bloggng is a great way to build and intrigue an audience for your writing. Even if you only post once a month, using these 9 steps will help you achieve the success you need.

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## LIMERICK CORNER

### The limerick's origins

Although no one knows for sure, the limerick form is thought to have germinated in France during the Middle Ages, after which it crossed the English Channel. An 11th century manuscript demonstrates the limerick's cadence:

*The lion is wondrous strong  
And full of the wiles of wo;  
And whether he pleye  
Or take his preye  
He cannot do but slo (slay)*

The form contains five lines with trimeter (three-beat) measures in the first, second, and fifth lines and dimeter (two-beat) measures in the second and fourth. While this rhyme scheme of *abcbb* differs from an Irish limerick, the similarity is unmistakable.



Janice Konstantinidis

### From Shakespeare to Mother Goose

Five centuries later, William Shakespeare used the limerick's rhythm in Stephano's drinking song in *The Tempest*, as well as in *Othello* and *King Lear*. Yet it wasn't until the early 1700s that soldiers returning from the continent-wide War of the Spanish Succession brought the limerick form to Ireland. In 1776, it appeared in published form in *Mother Goose's Melodies*; 25 years later, when Mother Goose nursery rhymes attained fame, the limerick was forever affixed to children's literature. During that time, a group of local Irish poets composed limericks during drinking sessions at various pubs – including, some say, a pub in Limerick that was already noted for its pub crawl chorus, "Will you please come up to Limerick?"





## The limerick craze

The limerick appeared throughout Irish and British literature in the mid-19th century, most notably the printing (1846) and reprinting (1863) of Edward Lear's *A Book of Nonsense*, the latter celebrating Lear's 40-plus years of writing what he called "nonsense verse." While Lear didn't invent the form, he certainly popularized it. From that release came a magazine, *Punch*, that ran limerick contests and launched the limerick craze. By century's end, poets and writers such as Alfred Lord Tennyson, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Mark Twain experimented with and published the form. Limericks became the subjects of weekly newspaper contests, with large prizes awarded. The humor and easy creation of limericks infused oral poetry across class-lines. Wrote one critic, "It is the vehicle of cultivated, unrepressed sexual humor in the English language."

## Limerick experimentation

Like its more staid poetic cousins, the limerick has undergone experimentation and adaptation. The traditional five-line verse has been joined by such variations as the double limerick (10 lines), extended limerick (six lines), reverse limerick (replies to other limericks), beheaded limerick (nonsense verse), tongue-twisters, limeraiiku (three lines, 5-7-5 syllable count), and truncated limerick (short last line).

## Limericks and LIMERICKS

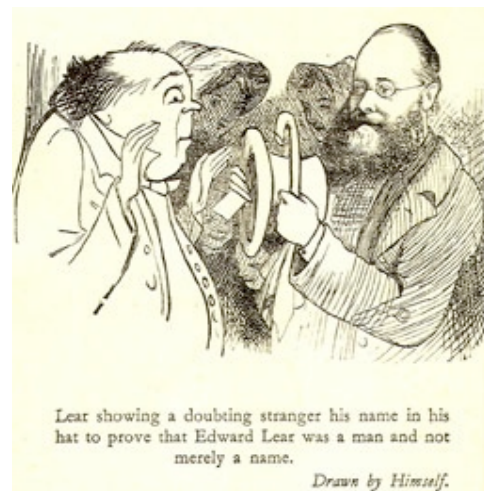
Limerick expert Don Marquis identified three types of limericks: "limericks to be told when ladies are present; limericks to be told when ladies are absent but clergymen are present; and LIMERICKS."

## Delightful simplicity

A look at memorable limericks, each with five lines and an *aabb* rhyme scheme, clearly shows their intended audiences, as well as the bawdiness, nonsense, humor, and delightful storytelling simplicity of the form. Here are two by Edward Lear:

*There was a young lady of Lucca  
Whose lovers completely forsook her;  
She ran up a tree  
And said "Fiddle-de-dee!"  
Which embarrassed the people of Lucca.*

*There was a Young Lady whose chin  
Resembled the point of a pin:  
So she had it made sharp,  
And purchased a harp,  
And played several tunes with her chin.*



## Fun and easy – Merriment in rhyme

Limericks are fun to create. They are humorous, often bawdy, full of folk wisdom, and delightfully entertaining. They are also easy to write. The subject matter is basic and often self-deprecating. With only three metrical feet on three lines, and two feet on the other two lines, carrying a beat is straightforward, fueling an uncomplicated rhyme scheme: *aabba*. Best of all, for spoken-word performers, limericks are as simple to think up and memorize as they are to write.

## Natural and flashy

The key to writing a limerick is to devise an opening line, and then let the verse tumble out—crazy though it may seem. The faster you roll with the verse, the more natural and flashy the limerick. That’s the goal.

## Establish the subject

The first line of limerick needs to establish the subject without giving the story’s intentions away:

*There once was a man on the run*

This line sets up a fast journey (he’s running, not walking). It also leads to a few quick questions: Why? Where to? Who is he? Questions like these should spring from the first line of a limerick, opening the floodgates to the poem.

When crafting this first line, don’t forget to fit your words into typical rhythm of the opener. Here’s that opening line one more time:

~    x    ~    ~ x    ~    ~    x

*There once was a man on the run*

You’ll need an eight syllable line containing one iamb (an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable) and two anapests (two unstressed syllables followed by one stressed syllable). Now, contorting your language into these metrical feet can be frustrating, but think of it as a game. Open up your thesaurus and find the best word that’ll fit to match your rhythm. Otherwise, you risk losing the special sound normally associated with the limerick.

## Set up the action

The second line defines the subject, or the consequences of a past action the subject took. Again, it is important to give the reader (or listener) this information to set up the action of the poem. The relationship between the first and second lines is made even stronger by the rhyme scheme.

~    x    ~    x    ~ ~    x

*Who lost his mind in the sun*

Here you have two iambs and an anapest. This second line’s anapest matches the ending anapest in the first line. Not only do these two pairs of rhyming anapests help keep a consistent rhythm, but the rhythm also helps the rhyme ring true.

## Make the switch

The next two lines explain the action taken by the subject, which are the guts of the limerick. You're now switching from trimeter (three metrical feet) to dimeter (two metrical feet), so make your two beats per line count.

~ x      ~      ~ x

*He ran      down the street*

~ x      ~      ~ x

*No brains led      his feet*

## The close

Next comes the punch line. You can use wordplay, a surprise twist or a tongue twister. If you follow Edward Lear's model of nonsense verse, his term for a limerick, the last line can be anything you'd like.

~ x ~ x ~ ~ x

*And never had so much fun*

Overall, the key to writing a limerick is to let your ideas fly through the poem while also bending and contorting the language into the proscribed rhythm and rhyme. This will make your surprising and humorous content slip right into the joyous sound of the limerick.

As you can see, the limerick has a long and rich history and is well liked by many. We'd love to see your limericks in the Newsletter. I am currently writing a book of limericks—watch this space. In the meantime here's a nod to our illustrious president, Dennis Young.

A book whispering chappy named Young,  
 loved to read as he sung.  
 His voice oh so clear,  
 bought many a cheer,  
 the words slipped right off his tongue.

by: Janice Konstantinidis

There once was a writer who shook;  
 Her words read like gobbledygook.  
 They just wouldn't do,  
 What she wanted them to,  
 So the Art of the Write she forsook.

by: Susan Tuttle

"It is as interesting and as difficult to say a thing well as to paint it. There is the art of lines and colors, but the art of words exists too, and will never be less important."

~Vincent VanGogh

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## GREAT BEGINNINGS

...INFORMATION FOR BEGINNING WRITERS (AND EVERYONE ELSE TOO)

### 5 WRITING CHALLENGES AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

Most writer's challenges fall into five broad categories. Here is self-advocacy counselor and writer Cherilynn Veland's advice on how to deal with these interruptions to our creativity:

1. **Distractions by Family Members (especially kids):** They're not really as helpless as they seem, especially the kids. The best way to deal with this issue is to make sure they have a place to go and something to do. Then you leave the house. Go to your favorite coffee shop with your laptop or notebook and splurge on your favorite drink. Wear something you feel good in. And turn off the cell phone for the duration. You might only have an hour or so, but without interruptions, you'll be amazed at how much you can get done.
2. **Feeling Overwhelmed by Daily Demands:** Create a mental firewall to turn off those stresses that drain your time and creativity. It can be a mental image (a glass-walled room, a high wall, a closed door), a mantra that reminds you why you write, or a simple statement: Sorry, I'm working and can't be disturbed. Please help yourself." Of course, you can't fully neglect family and friends. We need to cherish our children and loved ones. But we also need to build in some cherishing of ourselves, too.
3. **The Terrible Silence:** When you don't get any response from your audience, it can be disheartening. Silence lets doubts trickle in. But it takes time to build your audience. A good critique group or writing partner can help boost your self-esteem by reinforcing what you are doing right while you wait for your audience to build.
4. **Too Much Feedback:** Especially if you are writing memoir or nonfiction, you will find your audience sharing their personal stories and heartaches with you. It's hard not to let what they are going through weigh you down. Again, a good writing friend or personal confidant you can talk things over with will help ease that burden and put in in perspective.
5. **Negative Feedback:** When mistakes get made (and we all make them) or readers don't agree with or understand our message, it can be soul crushing. We need to remind ourselves that mistakes can be easily corrected in this digital age of printing. A simple "Thank you," to your reader is sufficient. (Ed note: I will often joke that I made that mistake deliberately to make the piece my "Amish story," because the Amish always put one deliberate mistake in everything they do. People laugh and I feel better about the error.) Also, remind yourself that not everyone will see things the way you do, or understand your message. That's okay. Those that need to, will. That makes it important enough to keep writing.



*Cherilynn Veland*

## We Need Your Help!

The success of non-profit organizations like NightWriters depends on its members. We all have talents other than writing that any organization could make use of.

NightWriters has many special opportunities for members to get involved, working "behind the scenes." If you'd like to assist in any capacity, email: [slonightwriters@yahoo.com](mailto:slonightwriters@yahoo.com)

President: Dennis Eamon Young  
Vice-President: Andrea Chmelik  
Secretary: Sharyl Heber  
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Program Director: Janice Konstantinidis  
Contest Committee Chair: Tia Araminta  
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Art Director: Dennis Eamon Young  
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Board Assistants: Sharyl Heber, Rebecca Waddell  
NW Historian: Sharyl Heber  
Hospitality: Leanne Philips (coordinator), Baxter Trautman, Mike Price, Rebecca Heath, Brian Schwartz

## About Our Monthly Meetings

NightWriters' Evening Meetings: the second Tuesday of every month, year round. We encourage interested visitors to join us at 6:30 pm. Admission free; refreshments served.

**Next Meeting: July 14th**, at United Church of Christ on Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo. General meeting begins at 6:30 pm. Round Table presentations start at 5:15 pm.

Writers' Critique Groups: For paid members only. These groups read and critique each other's work and discuss the business of writing. Visitors welcome; phone ahead to make arrangements. See details below, or visit our website: [www.sltonightwriters.org](http://www.sltonightwriters.org)

## Notify NW of any change in address or email:

[slonightwriters@yahoo.com](mailto:slonightwriters@yahoo.com). Join NW and send dues or renewal checks (payable to SLO NightWriters) to: SLO NightWriters, PO Box 6241, Los Osos, CA 93412-6241. Or join/renew online through our website:

[www.sltonightwriters.org](http://www.sltonightwriters.org) and pay with credit card.

Email all correspondence to: [slonightwriters@yahoo.com](mailto:slonightwriters@yahoo.com) or snail mail to: SLO NightWriters PO Box 6241 Los Osos, CA 93412-6241. We must have your **current email address** in order to send the Newsletter and other important NW announcements.

**Newsletter Submissions:** Send by the 15th of the current month for next month's publication. Send in kudos, writing articles, quotes, facts and tidbits, etc. Mark email "for newsletter" and send to: [slonightwriters@yahoo.com](mailto:slonightwriters@yahoo.com)

## Have You Checked Out Our Website Lately? Control Your Own Information!

Post your bio, picture, book covers and ordering links! Contribute a writing blog post! Free publicity!

### MEMBER SITE LINKS!

List your website(s) and blog(s) with live links — makes it easier for the public to find you and helps build your platform!

### BOOK REVIEWS!

Get your book reviewed. Write a review—it's a valid publishing credit!

### WRITERS SERVICES!

Do you have a writing or professional skill? Get listed on our new Services Page.

### FACEBOOK!

Become a "Fan" of NightWriters! Visit NW's Facebook page and sign up today! Also, link your Facebook page and your websites and blogs to NW sites!

### LinkedIn!

New! Connect with NW on LinkedIn! Help build your author platform with writing professional connections.

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

NW Critique Groups are a wonderful benefit of NW Membership. Some groups are full, but many welcome visitors. **Always contact the group leader** listed for specific information regarding group availability and visiting options. SLO NW cannot guarantee critique group formation or availability but we do strive to facilitate connections between writers so they can initiate and develop their own writing affiliations. While we cannot be, and are not, responsible for any outcomes from these associations, we hope they lead to great creative magic and magnificent literary works! Contact our webmaster and the newsletter editor at [slonightwriter@yahoo.com](mailto:slonightwriter@yahoo.com) to list your critique group and critique needs in the NW Newsletter and on the NW Web site.

**Can't find an existing group? START ONE. It's easy!** If you're new at this, don't be intimidated. It's fun and there are no lofty requisites. All it takes is two or more folks committed to reading/hearing the work of others and providing honest, constructive feedback. Critique groups are not teaching sessions. They are writers learning from reading and critiquing each others' works. Effective formats may include exchanging the review/editing service by mail or electronically, or meeting face-to-face and reading aloud to each other, or any combination that works for the group. One of our groups takes a lesson/learning approach and does practice writing exercises every meeting. Some groups focus on a particular genre; others accept all kinds of writing. Each group is different depending on their needs and interests. **Group members set their own times, dates, meeting locations, and parameters.** We have **Critique Group Guidelines** on our website to help get you started and we can provide a mentor to attend a few sessions if needed. [www.slonightwriter.org](http://www.slonightwriter.org). Contact [slonightwriter@yahoo.com](mailto:slonightwriter@yahoo.com) with your critique needs and genres and we'll do our best to assist you.

## CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

### POETRY CRITIQUE GROUP FORMING

Poetry Critique Group Emerging! Any poet can join. Any poet can benefit from input of a group, regardless of experience. Call and together we can set time and place to meet.

#### **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Contact: Irene Chadwick, 481-3824  
[irenekooi@gmail.com](mailto:irenekooi@gmail.com)

### 'JUST US' CHILDREN'S BOOK CRITIQUE

Meets in the South County. Critiqued at a fast pace, in a process where members critique each other's writing electronically, followed by a face-to-face meeting twice a month. **Meetings are held 1st and 3rd Saturdays at 10 am.** Contact moderator for details and directions.

#### **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Lili Sinclair, 904-9697  
[liliasinclair@gmail.com](mailto:liliasinclair@gmail.com)

### PISMO SATURDAY GROUP

New group starts Saturday May 10. All levels and genres, short stories, poetry, novels and memoirs. Work is exchanged one week prior to group meetings. 1500 word limit on submissions. Meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 9:00-11:00 am. Contact moderator for location.

#### **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Tom Snow  
[coinerbop@gmail.com](mailto:coinerbop@gmail.com)

### HI HOPES

This group was invented to fill a need for a Los Osos/San Luis Obispo group that incorporates writers who generate stories, essays, novels, poetry—you get the picture—writers of any description. Whether or not you wish to publish, we'll help you with ideas to improve your writing. Led by Sharon Sutliff, we meet on the **2nd and 4th Mondays at 9 AM and usually**

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

**wrap up in time for lunch.** We meet in various locations. Call one of the moderators to arrange a visit, or get more information. **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderators: Sharon Sutliff, 544-4034  
Audrey Yanes, 748-8600

### THE THURSDAY GROUP

This group meets at 9:00 am every other Thursday at The Coffee Bean in Pismo Beach. Anyone interested in joining them can email the moderator for full details.

**CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS.**

Moderator: Mark Ruszczyzky  
[zsur@aol.com](mailto:zsur@aol.com)

### WRITE IT RIGHT WRITING GROUP II (Wed. p.m. Group)

For all writers of fiction and creative non-fiction. Meets **every Wednesday in Los Osos from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.** Not a traditional NightWriter critique group. Work is produced in each session, then analyzed according to the objective of the day's goal. Based on writing exercises designed to jump-start the creative process (gleaned from a variety of published authors), these sessions take writers through the process of writing fiction from inception of idea to the final resolution. This group is for all writers who want to learn the process of crafting a well-told story while developing their own voice and style. We explore such topics as ideas, character, story arc, tone, voice, POV, tension, dialogue, resolution, writing mechanics, etc. There is a small monthly fee involved for this class to cover materials.

**CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Contact: Susan Tuttle, 458-5234  
[aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com)

### WRITE IT RIGHT WRITING GROUP I (Wed. a.m. Group)

Meets **every Wednesday morning in 5 Cities area from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.** Not a traditional NightWriter critique group. See description under Write It Right Group II. There is a small fee involved for this class to cover materials.

**CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS.**

Contact: Susan Tuttle: 458-5234  
[aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com)

### North County Storytellers

This group focuses primarily on novel length works, though we often mix it up with flash fiction and short stories. Members may agree to read larger chunks of material at a time to allow for developmental critique. Items must be electronically distributed at least one week prior to the meeting. Beginning in the Fall, the group will meet the first **Tuesday of each month from 7-9 pm in Atascadero**, and the **third Tuesday of each month from noon to 2 pm in Templeton.** Summer schedule varies.

**CURRENTLY OPEN TO 2 NEW MEMBERS.**

Contact: Tina Clark  
[theclarkfour@sbcglobal.net](mailto:theclarkfour@sbcglobal.net)

## NEW GROUPS FORMING!

### ADULT NOVELS

Lili Sinclair is considering **FORMING A NEW GROUP** for **ADULT NOVELS** in a process where members critique each other's writing electronically, followed by a face- to-face meeting.

Contact: Lili Sinclair, 904-9697  
[liliasinclair@gmail.com](mailto:liliasinclair@gmail.com)

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

### PISMO WEDNESDAY GROUP

New group began Meeting on May 1. All levels and genres: short stories, novels, poetry, memoir. Work is exchanged one week prior to each meeting; 1,500 word limit on submissions. Meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 9:00-11:00 am in Pismo Beach.

**CURRENTLY FULL—NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS.** Visitors welcome. Contact moderator for location.

Moderator Tom Snow  
coinerbop@gmail.com

### LO PROSE

Meets in **Los Osos on the first and third Wednesdays at 7pm till usually 10pm.** Charlie Perryess and Anne Allen share hosting responsibilities, running a tight ship so that everyone can read. No cross talk permitted. At the beginning and at our break we socialize. We're all serious but fun-loving. Presently the writing covers several genres: YA novels; short stories; short stories woven into a novel; fantasy; humorous mystery novel; political satire novel; and personal essays. We write just about everything except poetry. **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS** but guests are welcome. It may happen that space could be made for a compatible writer.

Moderators: Charlie Perryess, 528-4090  
Anne Allen, 528-1006

### LONG STORY SHORT

**Flash Fiction/Nonfiction only** meets the **2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays every month, from 10 am to 12 noon** in Arroyo Grande. Bring paper and pencil, or your laptop if you are so inclined—flash pieces, 1000 word strict maximum.

### CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW

**MEMBERS** – call or email Diane to be placed on a waiting list.

Moderator: Diane Smith 858-414-0070  
[mdcomposes@yahoo.com](mailto:mdcomposes@yahoo.com)

### NOVEL IDEA

Meets twice monthly on the **2nd and 4th Wednesdays in San Luis Obispo**, dealing with book-length works. The group is fully committed to helping one another craft material in the chosen genres with helpful critiques and encouragement. Marketing techniques are part of the on-going exchange. We are currently full but welcome one-time guests to observe how our group functions in the hope of encouraging establishment of new groups. **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Barbara Wolcott, 543-5240

### FICTION/NONFICTION

**Meets on 1st and 3rd Mondays from 9:00 am to noon in San Luis.** Members bring original work to each session and read aloud to the group. The group provides constructive suggestions for improving the writing and the structure of the stories. Prose forms of literature—short stories, novels, memoirs, essays, newspaper and magazine articles, travel—are this group's forte. It welcomes writers who are serious about producing work for publication. Those interested in attending or who need more information should telephone. **CURRENTLY FULL — NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderators: Terry Sanville, 541-0492  
Gloria Pautz, 543-2049



# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

### **SOUTH COUNTY WRITERS**

Meets on the **second and fourth Saturdays from 9:30 AM to noon in Grover Beach**. This group thrives on variety, writing short stories, articles, poetry and novels, all genres from fiction to biography and memoirs. Members exchange work by email at least one week before the meeting in order to receive in-depth critiques aimed at eliminating weaknesses and increasing strengths in everything from plot and character development to grammar and proper manuscript preparation. Intermediate to advanced writers are welcome. We meet in a casual and fun atmosphere and are serious about fully developing each member's writing talent, whether for publication or self-satisfaction. Visitors are always welcome.

### **CURRENTLY FULL – NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Judy Guarnera, 474-9598  
[j.guarnera@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j.guarnera@sbcglobal.net)

### **NORTH COUNTY GROUP**

Meets every other Thursday from 10:00 am-12:00 noon at the Atascadero Library, preceded by "a bit of socializing, for those so inclined" at the Starbucks by Vons. Fiction, creative non-fiction, short and book length writers of moderate to advanced level comprise the group. **CURRENTLY FULL —NOT OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

Moderator: Lillian Brown, 215-6107  
[lilliofslo@aol.com](mailto:lilliofslo@aol.com)