

## OUR APR. 10TH MEETING

### Ask Me

### Anything—Live

### Can you really make a living as a writer?

What does it take to turn your writing into a viable career? Unconventional paths and emerging opportunities will be discussed. The Ask Me Anything format will reveal new truths and one-of-a-kind insights. In the AMA Live format, the traditional meeting format is flipped upside down.

The upside-down format allows you to learn from our members, our attendees and our special guest, Tom Franciskovich, founder of SLO Life Magazine. Last year's AMA Live event was well received: "So informative" (Sue McGinty); "One of the best meetings of ANY group I've seen." (Leonard Carpenter); "This was NightWriters at its best. Thanks to all!" (Dennis Eamon Young); "Looking fab, as ever! x" (Kate Plumridge).

If you attended last year's inaugural AMA Live meeting, you know how good it was. If you missed last year's event, here's your chance to come and learn and be amazed! Meeting starts at 6:30 pm.



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## NIGHTWRITERS “ROUND TABLES”

There are **two types** of critique tables that meet before our general meeting.

1. **Peer Group Table:** at Rosie Makinney’s table, participants critique each others’ work in a safe and supportive environment. Get feedback on your work in progress and practice your constructive critiquing skills. It’s also a great way to get to know other writers in the group, and learn the critiquing process if you’re new to it. You do not have to bring work to participate.

2. **Professional Level Table:** Terry Sanville and Susan Tuttle will give feedback on pieces from a professional editor’s viewpoint. **This includes formatting.** If you feel your work is almost ready to send out, or if you want a deeper look at the mechanics of your piece, this is the table for you.

Bring three copies of your work: one for Terry, one for Susan, and one for you to read from. **All submissions must be only 2 pages, typed, 12-point font, double spaced, 1” minimum margins all around. Note at the top what the genre is, and the age of your audience.**

More and more writers are coming to the Critique Table. If you want to make sure your piece is read, arrive before the start time to get your name on the list. The Critique Round Table starts at 5:15 pm sharp.

**Critique Round Tables begin at 5:15 pm and run for an hour. They are free to NW members, \$5.00 for visitors.**

The General Meeting follows at 6:30 pm.

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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, Torry Dickinson, at [torrydickinson@gmail.com](mailto:torrydickinson@gmail.com)  
and I’ll send them a card from their SLO NightWriters family.**

*Torry*



*Janice Konstantinidis*

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: HAPPY SPRING!**

Hello Fellow NightWriters,

Let me take this opportunity to wish you all a happy spring! We celebrate a new season, watch new growth and resolve to write more and often.

I am hoping the recent rains have washed away all the nasty winter bugs we seemed inundated with over the last few months, and that those of you who were unwell are doing a lot better now.

I am happy to announce that Tammie Burnsed was elected to the position of Vice President at our March general meeting. Once again, welcome Tammie.

The SLO NightWriters policy for sexual harassment and code of conduct is currently being developed by a SLO NightWriter's board committee. It was thought that we needed to be in step with societal developments across the various levels of interpersonal relations and interactions that arise as a product of working and meeting together as an organization. We agreed that we should have initiatives in place should we need to draw on them in the future. Our aim is that we cover as many contingencies as possible, and to be mindful and inclusive of gender equity in all our policies.

I will let you know when we have our finished documents.

We will be having a writing contest for members of SLO NightWriters this year. We are currently discussing a theme. Winners will be invited to read their entries at the September general meeting. I will let you know more details about the contest in the coming weeks.

I hope those of you who celebrate Easter will have a joyful and happy Easter. To those of you who celebrate Passover, I wish you happiness.

Once again, to you all, a happy spring!

Write Often

*Janice Konstantinidis*

President SLO NightWriters.

[jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com)

## Writers on the Radio

NightWriter Jean Moelter is the host of **Artsy People**, the radio show that promotes local artists of all kinds, their work, and events. Thursdays at 2:00 pm with a rebroadcast Mondays at 5:00 pm. It's heard on KYXZ Excellent Radio 107.9 FM out of Grover Beach.

Have you just published a book? Would you like to tell the community about it? Consider being a guest on Artsy People. Just send an email to Jean at [artsypeople@yahoo.com](mailto:artsypeople@yahoo.com). Or, if you have an event coming up, such as a book signing, email an announcement to Jean and she'll read it on the air.

Jean interviews a different artist, live, each week at the Excellent Radio station. So far, three NightWriters have been guests on the show. Jean has also interviewed musicians, storytellers, actors, and comedians.

To listen to past interviews, and to see the list of upcoming guests, go to Jean's website and click on Artsy People in the menu: <https://sites.google.com/view/jeanmoelter>.

Don't miss this great marketing opportunity for authors!

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## HOW TO WRITE A GOOD BOOK REVIEW

First, remember the review is about the book, not you. Second, it's about whether a reader should read the book, not about the author. Third, be honest. Don't be abusive, but give an honest appraisal from your perspective. Remember that poor reviews can tank sales, so also be kind.

Star Ratings: Usually from 1 to 5, and both are fairly rare. Save a 1 for a book that's a complete failure, 2 for one you really don't like, 3 for borderline success, 4 for a good read, and 5 for exceptional.

To write the review, include a brief synopsis of the storyline without any major reveals or spoilers. Then tell your reaction. Did you like feel uplifted, and why? Disappointed, and why? Did you have a hard time putting it down, or was it hard to plow through, and why?

Give specific concrete examples of what you liked or didn't like, elements like character development, use of setting, plot, pacing and detail, without giving any spoilers. For nonfiction, focus on detail, organization, passion for the subject, language, and depth of topic.

Praise the author only if the author earned the praise and explain why. You don't want the review to sound like you're best friends with the author.

Reviews don't need to be any particular length, but online reviews tend to be shorter. Use the KISS principle: Keep It Short and Simple.

If you write reviews for more than one site, don't use the same review; rewrite it for each site. And be honest. If you know the author, or received an advance review copy, tell your readers. Honesty in reviews, as in all other things, always is the best policy.

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

**Terry Sanville's** short personal essay, "A New Beginning," will be included in an anthology titled *Surprised by Joy*, published by Wishing Up Press of Decatur, GA. Terry writes, "I submitted this piece to the last Golden Quill contest. It didn't cut it, but the folks in Decatur seem to like it just fine. Goes to show that even work written for a specific contest or magazine can find a home elsewhere. I make it a point to never write something that cannot find a home."

"After First Contact," a short story by **Terry Sanville**, is included in a FREE e-book anthology titled *(Dis)Ability: A Short Story Anthology* just released by John Hopkins University. Check out the free e-book at: [www.smashwords.com/books/view/801344](http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/801344)

**Susan Tuttle** will read her poem titled "Becoming in Los Osos" on Friday, April 6 at the King David's Masonic Lodge in downtown SLO, as part of the Arts Obispo Art After Dark event. She is awed and excited that the poem was selected to be included in the city-wide event.

**Terry Sanville's** non-fiction piece, "The Other Women in My Life," appears online in *Uncharted Magazine*, a literary magazine from the Hampton Roads part of our country. This story is unique in that it includes fifteen colored images. Check it out at: [www.uncharted-magazine.com/the-other-women-in-my-life.html](http://www.uncharted-magazine.com/the-other-women-in-my-life.html)

"Faces," a flash-fiction story by **Terry Sanville**, will appear in the Spring 2018 edition of *Penumbra*, an annual print journal published by Cal State University, Stanislaus. Terry's story was awarded an Honorable Mention prize, a \$50 Amazon Gift Certificate.

"There is a zone to writing. It takes some effort, some hours of struggle to reach, but once you're there, the words flow as if from a spigot. Thoughts fill up the page. Your fingers function independently of your body and brain... It is that sweet moment in a race car when everything slows down despite the speedometer reading 175 miles per hour. Everything doable in life has a zone like this. Find it and get into it.

~Joe Kita



## Simply CLEAR MARKETING & MEDIA

Central Coast Life • March 29 - April 11, 2018

### Restoration Nightwriters By Tammie Burnsed

CC LIFE

#### A Good Ride

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"Fifty-nine degrees," Curtis whispered to himself, sitting among the waves on his Lightning Bolt surfboard. His body cooled and bowed in response to each movement of the surf, his legs set astride, fading into the water. "Yep, fifty-nine degrees, warm for this time of the year."

Glancing over his shoulder, Curtis watched the swells roll out from the horizon. The offshore breeze blew westward from land to sea, pushing the waves back, holding them up. It was a good day for a ride. Three more till the big one, he thought, no telling how long for the right one. After years in the surf, he knew it was all about selecting the wave, not because it's the next one, or the biggest, but because it's yours.

Seeing a swell form in the distance, his heart raced. That's it, he thought, my ride, but as the swell approached, a pale fin broke the surface of the water, slowly escalating until he could see the silhouettes of the creature below: Shark.

He pulled his arms and legs up onto the board, but the fin, still some distance away, continued to slice through the water, leaving a gentle wake. Curtis felt the tug of the surf pulling him, calling him to act, but he remained still and hoped for the best. The shark continued without hesitation and, unlike Curtis, survived without the expectation of luck or divine intervention.

He couldn't feel anger towards a creature that moved through the water, through its life, aware of everything and nothing. He did hate his own ability to passively watch his life be spared or lost without expressing his will. Whatever happened, he knew if he didn't act, he would regret it for the rest of his life, however long or short it may be.

As the wave lifted Curtis up, signaling his last chance, he ploved his hands deep into the water and pulled with all of his strength. The fin disappeared.

As his surfboard skied down the growing mountain of water, he pushed himself to his feet and dropped in for the ride of his life. Looking down, he noticed the shadow of his adversary beneath. One mistake, and it would be over. Nothing could be counted on, he thought, only experienced. In that instant, as if a veil had been lifted, he knew what to do.

The shark wasn't his enemy; but a guide. Just under the surface, it rode the wave with more skill than Curtis had ever dreamed possible, and now above the surface, he mirrored its every move, not running from the shadow, but embracing it, becoming part of the perfection that makes up all things. The fear was gone.

At that moment, the shark broke free and coasted away, paralleling the broken waves. Safely on shore, Curtis stepped off his surfboard and watched the shadow disappear into the unknown depths of another world. The moment had passed, but it was part of him now, and he would not forget the lesson it taught.

Glancing back over his shoulder, Curtis watched the swells roll out from the horizon. The offshore breeze blew westward from land to sea, pushing the waves back, holding them up. It was a good day for a ride.



Mike is a retired teacher currently living in Arizona. Pivoted on a mountainside net so far from the Grand Canyon, he enjoys writing short stories and screenplays. Most recently, he won 1st place at the Phoenix Film Festival for his short screenplay, "Half an Inch." Mike is a member of SLO Nightwriters, for writers at all levels in all genres; find them online at [slonightwriters.org](http://slonightwriters.org).

Annie wiped her hands on the heavy green apron she always wore in the shop. The mere act of lifting the garment from its hook produced an endorphin rush, a lift that beat any of the medications therapists had suggested over the years. The handprints left behind by a fine dusting of red cedar sawdust looked like smears of blood against the sheath of faded forest-green cotton. If she noticed them at all, the blood-like streaks didn't distract Annie's focus or dampen the enthusiasm she felt for the task at hand. Bringing her mother's old cedar chest back to its original glory had been a long-time goal of Annie Chesney's, a goal delayed by the fact she'd had to outlive her younger brother, Jim, in order to get her hands on the heirloom.

When their mother died from the same genetic heart disorder that recently caused Jim's heart to fail, Annie lived four states away working two minimum wage jobs and refinishing furniture on the weekends. By the time she flew back to Rhode Island for Jim's funeral, Jim had already claimed the Kodak print, the stamp collection and the Fabergé egg—their once-wealthy parents' only remaining valuable possessions—as his own. Annie let it slide, until she saw the chest was missing.

"You don't even care about that thing, only that I helped Dad build it," she'd shouted at Jim on the front porch of their childhood home.

"I care that you want it," he sneered. Annie knew if there was anything Jim disliked more than her, it was a public scene. She raised her voice a few more decibels.

"You put that chest in your house, I'll break in and steal it someday. I swear to God."

"You'll get this hunk of junk over my dead body," he'd hissed back. Only two years later, she did.

He never should have taken it to start with," Annie snarled at her sister-in-law, Marry, at the funeral reception.

Marry silently led her husband's sister into the walk-in closet where he kept the object she knew Annie had come for.

"Empty his crap out, or whatever's in there goes with me. Paying those

movers outside by the hour, so chotchky." Annie nodded her head vaguely in the direction of a van waiting outside.

Marry stood aside and crossed her arms.

As the peculiar parade of characters marched a wooden box through her living room, past the casseroles and bowls of potato salad and conservative flower arrangements, Marry finally found her voice.

"It's all right, everyone," she announced. "This is James' sister, Anne. Please stay and have lunch with us Anne? It's good for family to be together at this time."

"Bug off," Annie replied.

The movers had barely set the trunk in her workshop before Annie began caressing it with a square of fine-grit paper. Blood pumped through her heart at a dangerous speed. Settle down, girl, she told herself. Minor scratches, a crack in the lid, and crayon scribbles one of Jim's brains must have left behind, Annie knew she had the skills to erase every scar. The trunk would look as beautiful as the day she and her father had finished it.

She lifted the cedar lid and inhaled the bracing scent of unfinished wood. It took a moment to recognize the familiar mahogany picture frame, the egg-shaped carrying case and the worn edges of her father's stamp album. Excitement tightened her chest.

Annie grasped her breast in disbelief. She opened her mouth to laugh but loosed a cry of pain instead. No, she uttered, before her heirloom heart stopped beating.

Tammie Burnsed is a fiction writer currently revising a novel that took her way too long to complete. She lives in Fosse Robles with three gentlemen, two of which have four legs. Tammie is a member of SLO Nightwriters, for writers at all levels in all genres; find them online at [slonightwriters.org](http://slonightwriters.org).



## Congratulations to SLO NightWriters Mike Orton, and Tammie Burnsed published in March!

### Submit your stories for inclusion in Simply Clear Marketing & Media

Full submission guidelines

at [www.slonightwriters.org](http://www.slonightwriters.org)

Submit your 500-600 word short fiction to Jeanie

Hundertmark at [clementyne@gmail.com](mailto:clementyne@gmail.com)

Pick up copies of SLO City News, Bay News and Coast News at local stores and kiosks. Visit the SCMM on-line archives to read other NW stories published in the CC Life section of SCMM at [www.tolosapressnews.com](http://www.tolosapressnews.com)

## NW MEMBER AUTHORS, 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.

### Volunteers Needed

With our goal of extending member involvement and continuing to fulfill SLO NightWriters' mission of supporting and advancing fellow writers, we are seeking volunteers for the following Teams:

1. **Meeting Room Organization:** Helping to organize the meeting room before the general meeting and assisting with packing up at the end.
2. **Contest Director:** Needs good organizational skills and enough time to see the contest through for 2018 (about 3 months). Includes taking in entries and sending them to judges, contacting winners, etc.
3. **Board Members at Large:** These are members who attend board meetings and who can be on call to help as needed.
  - a. **Backup Positions:** we need people who will learn key board positions, and who can act as backups when needed.
    - i. Administration; Treasury; Website; Programs; Editing of Newsletter.

Our board meetings are open to all; come sit in and see how it all works. We meet on the first Tuesday evening of every month at 6:00 pm, right at the United Church of Christ, in a room adjacent to where our general meetings are held.

Please respond to President Janice Konstantinidis ([jkon50@gmail.com](mailto:jkon50@gmail.com)) if you are interested and/or available to help in any of these jobs. And, if you think of other ways you can help out, we'd love to hear from you.

Come visit a board meeting and see where your skills might come in handy!

## REVIEW OF MARCH MEETING

Terry Sanville and Susan Tuttle reviewed submissions, answered questions and advised on possibilities for changes and/or upgrades in the main room. They led discussions within the group and took questions from 5:15 to 6:15.

At the same time, Rosie Makinney led peer review and critique in the auxiliary room.

In the General Meeting starting at 6:30, there was a two-part presentation.

Susan Tuttle started the evening by explaining the often confusing and mis-understood rules of formatting. If you intend to submit your work to a professional source of any kind, she explained, your submission must show the respect of being professional also. If not, you risk a summary deposit in a waste bin. Editors are mostly under extreme pressure to go through a mountain of manuscripts, looking for those rare gems. You cannot expect them to waste time on someone who may not understand to present themselves in a professional manner from the outset. Using a time saving re-usable template and understanding professional expectations will go a long way to furthering your writing career.

In Part Two of the evening, Rebecca (Becca) Waddell tackled the nerve racking gambit of the query letter, the do and don't game, the importance of grabbing the attention and interest of the editor or agent you are trying to hook. Make them want you! Help them to understand who you are and what your life work is about, so they will believe they are just right for you and you for them. Additionally, Becca explained the business letter and its structure.



By Dennis  
Eamon Young





It was a lively session, questions flying all over, jokes being made and a serious matter made a bit less frightening to those who are not yet initiated into the world of dealing with sending out their "Precious" to some stranger. Big applause followed.







*by: Dennis  
Eamon Young*

## NIGHTWRITER ALL-STARS

# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## “Teachers in the Mist”

As I write about in *Writer By The Sea* (pg. 15), I attended and photographed the MARCH FOR OUR LIVES in SLO on Saturday and I was quite taken with the eloquence of the teenagers’ speeches, songs and spoken word performance. They stayed totally on message, used good English and displayed outstanding communication skills throughout their presentations. I have been observing other students across the country and this seems to be the case for the whole of the student movement.

One such example would be a student who went toe-to-toe and word-for-word with Senator Ted Cruz, who has been touted as a good debater. The young man cut through the Senators’ bluster, stayed exactly on message and showed him to be nothing more than an empty suit. Substance over hot air.

I join a group we call the Symposium for lunch every other week. They are scientists, educators and clear thinkers. We discuss everything from black holes and Elon Musk to the disrepair of our educational system and lack of critical thinking in our society. We have discussed many times the under-appreciation and underfunding of our educational institutions and teachers, and the deleterious effect this is having on our younger generation for the future of our country.

While this holds true in general, the eloquence in the students I described above does not appear from a black hole of education. We can see the invisible hand of dedicated teachers at work here. The hard work of helping to rein in and shape the enormous energies of young people, enticing and challenging them to focus their minds on realistic communicative models, has obviously been attended to by these nameless unsung heroes of our culture. Teachers across the nation have been toiling away at their profession, despite the challenges heaped upon them by an otherwise unappreciative society. These are our “Teachers in the Mist”.

When I arrived in San Luis Obispo in 2007, my wife introduced me to her great friend Judy Guarnera, a SLO NightWriter. I quickly joined the prestigious organization, found a place in a critique group, went to conferences and advanced my writing skills, thanks to so many other writers and their good influences.

Judy's husband, Steve Kliewer invited me to join in an outing to an amusement park with a busload of students. They would outfit themselves with instrumentation, to take various measurements such as velocity, acceleration, and g-forces, etc., while on different rides, then on the bus ride back to the school they would use their computers to chart what they had learned and perform calculations. This is hands-on learning, wherein the most important part of the exercise is to learn how to utilize and understand the process rather than just learn to quote answers from a book. Small wonder Steve has been voted Teacher of the Year. He is a wonderful friend and has been a true resource for SLO NightWriters, always willing to lend a helping hand.



*Steve Kliewer*



*Susan Tuttle*

Susan Tuttle, a critique partner, editor, award winning novelist and writing instructor, has been instrumental in countless writing careers, teaching the art and form of writing in a series of instructional books and hands-on classes, from A to Z. Susan has presented at the Central Coast Writers Conference. She is co-chair of a critique table before each NightWriter meeting, helping writers to identify, understand and improve problem areas and always at the ready with a kind word of reassurance and motivation.

Paul Alan Fahey, whom we lost to cancer last year, had come from a distinguished career of writing and editing, had created the MINDPRINTS journal of Alan Hancock College, and presented writing sessions at the Central Coast Writers Conference. Paul was considered a writing godfather to many NightWriters throughout the years. You could stop him any time for advice and he would be more than willing to look over a piece of work and help. Paul's infectious good humor and boyish charm put one and all at ease, making it easy to follow his good advice.



*Paul Alan Fahey*



*Anna Unkovich*

Another great loss to cancer last year is our beloved Anna Unkovich, who came to us from a long teaching history in the Midwest, where she was the first woman sports coach of male teams. She instilled a winning combination of striving to be one's best while learning to have compassion for others. Even in her various writing groups, she was known to push others to be better, work harder and stay the course. She commanded the volunteers at the Central Coast Writers Conference with such excellence that when her sickness incapacitated her, it took a team of others to get the job done. She was a colorful presence, a loving and caring friend and inspiration to all, in her books as well as life.

There are many other teachers in our organization and beyond, all of whom I salute for the kindness, caring and dedication they bring to their profession, by which the whole of our society profits to an untold degree. We must not let them disappear into the mist of obscurity. We need to appreciate them properly.

(To contact Dennis about being featured in the Spotlight On... column, email him at: [photodennis44@gmail.com](mailto:photodennis44@gmail.com))



## Tips And Tidbits



### THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

When considering a book for purchase, readers usually have their own way of checking it out. Some go directly to the back cover to read the synopsis. Others read the first few pages. Others might skip around and read snippets of the story.

What might cause a customer to set the book down?

When the perusal shows jerky or stilted dialogue;

When it shows poor grammar or spelling errors;

When chapters are way too short or too long.

But sometimes, especially true of young readers, he or she might put the book down if the page is a dense block of text.

There are reasons why children like picture books with a limited amount of text. They have short attention spans and need to be distracted and/or engaged with pictures in-between the text.

Now, I'm not trying to insult younger readers, but rather to point out that the speed of information distribution today has trained readers to absorb things in shorter, faster—moving gulps.

- Think of TV commercials which flash advertising in rapid fire.
- Think of the news interspersed with TV commercials.
- Think sports events interspersed with commercials.
- Think commercials interspersed with commercials. (This at least makes it possible for the viewer to get up and get a snack or use the facilities.)

So, unless you want to write the 'Great American Novel' picture book style, consider shorter chapters with more white space.

Some rules are meant to be broken. I believe one to be broken is that you only start a new paragraph, if a new idea is introduced or a different character speaks.

In *Zen in the Art of Writing*, Ray Bradbury suggests: "Think of each paragraph as a single camera shot in a movie. Every time the shot changes (e.g. change in camera angle,) start a new paragraph."

Don't forget to vary the length of your paragraphs for a visual rest for your reader. One writer suggests you use a shorter paragraph if the action is happening quickly, and longer ones if the events are happening more slowly.

Then, if you're going 'long' for slower tempo and 'short' for quicker tempo, and varying these two when possible, you'll give the reader an action/tempo break.

Tune in next month for some tips on monologues and talking heads.

In the Rhythm of Writing,

Judythe Guarnera

## Quote of the Month

"If you don't have time to read,  
you don't have the time or the tools to  
write."

~Stephen King

## Word of the Month

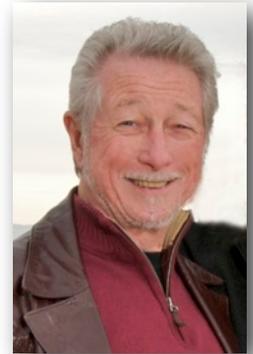
"quaggy"

**Definition:** (adj, origin unknown) 1. soggy, resembling a marsh; 2. soft and flabby; 3. not firm, yielding easily to pressure or weight.

**Synonyms:** boggy, marshy, mucky, soggy, swampy, waterlogged, pulpy, spongy

**Usage:** After all the rain, the back yard felt quaggy when we walked across it.

## WRITER BY THE SEA

THE TIMES THEY ARE  
A'CHANGING—AGAIN

by: Dennis

Eamon Young

I found myself in two time periods today, while photographing the SLO March For Our Lives. There on the steps of the Mitchell Park gazebo, surrounded by thousands of people, young and old, holding signs and coming together peacefully, I had one foot in 2018 and the other in 1969. I guess you could be cynical, shrug your shoulders and say “Been there, done that,” but that dog would not hunt. You could say it, but the words would turn to acid on your tongue and you could only feel shame. It’s the same old battle, yet it’s new again. My head buzzed with it.

I stood, making camera adjustments, changing angles, studying these young faces, and listening to vehement words of brilliant wisdom. I told a lady near me that I would rather trust my fate to these young leaders on today’s battle lines than the alleged leaders now running the show in our capital. She smiled and nodded her agreement. The sun was almost as bright as these children growing older in front of our eyes. The young were bold and the old were renewed. The sound of this human cornucopia felt like a revival meeting in full swing.

A sweet young girl, thin and fresh, slid a guitar around her shoulder and stepped up to the microphone. Her earnest look and soft voice reminded me of my daughter, Eireann, now an old hand at rallies and demonstrations. As this girl sang the Bob Dylan anthem to another time, the crowd sang with her and many tears fell from faces old and young. She led us in “The Times They Are A Changin’,” and somehow we were transformed into a chorus: knowing the words, deeply feeling the truths. Time slowed. I scanned the crowd and I was back at Woodstock again.

These words of a bard, poetry hard as iron, are more powerful than any tin horn usurper of democracy. These are the oldest weapons against those who would seek to enslave us, selling our children off on the cheap. These young people are on the rise. They will not be shunted off by mealy-mouthed politicians spewing tired old words which even they do not believe. These young folks wield their fresh-formed words with vigor, using the power of truth and shining honesty.

A young black student told of escape from a war-torn Ethiopia, where “the sound of gunfire was just a part of the average day.” He spoke with an open eloquence we do not

hear in our leaders or our news-spin cycles. That young man is part of a future we all could be proud to be part of, if only we stand behind the students now rather than giving in to apathy. As I took photos of the crowd, I noted the variety of signs. They were not slogans of lewd hate but rather an adamant plea to be heard, to come together for a common good with kindness and respect.

Two girls came to the fore and performed an amazing “Spoken Word” piece, fiercely describing the similarities and differences of guns and the parts of guns, as opposed to human bodies and their parts. I cannot find words to impart the thoughtful dynamism and power of their performance. I hope to hear it somewhere in our flood of social media. If the current situation were dependent on a “War of Words”, my money would be placed on the students. They bring powerful words ringing clear with an honest longing for what is right and fair.

As a writer, I found myself reminded of the power of words and the variety of forms that may be brought together to form a powerful context to initiate change. The confluence of hand-made and pre-printed signs, speeches, songs, conversations, and even social media became a total visual and auditory experience of the power of words on display. It was a day to be proud of all my various fellow writers, and I look forward to more of the same, with thanks to all.

Excelsior!

*Dennis*

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## Submit Your Stories, Photos, and Ads to the Newsletter

We will publish **advertisements** for NightWriters’ **books and book- or writing-related events**. This advertising is Free For Members. Please provide the graphic (book cover or other graphic) for the announcement.

We will also accept **original photographs**, and **unpublished Flash Fiction** between 400-800 words from current members. **Excerpts from published works**, if they stand alone as their own mini-story, are also acceptable.

We **always** need **articles, kudos and event notices**. And if you have any other ideas for content, please let me know.

**Send all submissions as attachments to: [aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com), and be sure to put NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION in the subject line.**

We’re all writers... so, take advantage of this opportunity to be published in one of the best organizational newsletters around!

Susan Tuttle, Editor

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## Let's Get Social

Be sure to give us a “like” on **Facebook** at SloNightWriters and take it a step further by “liking” and “sharing” our posts.

On **Twitter**, our moniker is @slonightwriters—tweet us a hello sometime soon!

And, we have recently launched our **Instagram** account—follow us at slo\_nightwriters and we'll follow you back!

Looking forward to connecting with all of you online, on your smart phone, tablet, or however you like to enjoy your social media!

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## 5 Ways to Garner 5-Star Reviews

Novelists live and die by reviews, yet uncovering what garners a gushing ovation or blistering takedown is often a mystery. Here, professional critic Paul Goat Allen, who for two decades has worked as a freelance fiction book critic for such outlets as BarnesandNoble.com, Publishers Weekly, Kirkus Reviews and the Chicago Tribune, lays out what it takes to earn five-star book reviews.

1. **Readability:** Narrative clarity, narrative fluidity, having a coherent style is directly related to how often a book is put down unfinished. Unputdownable books also have strong chapter beginnings and endings, which compel readers to keep reading. Books aren't putdownable when every chapter begins and ends with a cliffhanger sequence, bombshell plot twist, or powerful statement. When writers focus on craft, their books become better and better.

2. **Immersion:** The ability of readers to not only lose themselves in the novel, but also to experience the story intimately, living vicariously through the characters. It's accomplished through a continued focus on setting, rich descriptions and atmospherics. While many writers excel at world-building and meticulous description at the beginning of the book, they often not only lose focus but also completely ignore description once the action and adventure ramp up. Rich description for the first 100 pages, then almost nothing in the final 200, doesn't keep a reader immersed. The goal is to make time vanish for readers, to make hours pass in what feels like minutes.

3. **Character Depth and/or Plot Intricacy:** Emotions wield power. If readers aren't emotionally invested in the characters, the narrative impact of the story will be negatively impacted. Three-dimensional, interesting, and identifiable characters bring emotional connectivity and intensity to the read. You succeed when you can bring readers to tears,

make them laugh out loud, or scare them to the point of checking under the bed. But steer clear of stereotypes; even if brilliantly rendered, they will underwhelm and disappoint most readers. Plot intricacy is also key. Why read a novel when you can accurately predict the outcome after only a few chapters. Whether you're writing a fantasy, thriller or romance, make the plot intricate enough to keep readers simultaneously engaged and a bit off balance.

4. **Originality and Innovation:** Too many books these days are built on unoriginal, rehashed, derivative storylines. Don't play it safe. Write a story you've never read before. Embrace originality. Fantasy novelist Michael J. Sullivan (Age of Myth) said, "It doesn't matter if it's been done before. It just matters if it's being done well now." The key is to re-envision and reimagine and be innovative—put a new twist on the old mythos, turn a stereotype on its head. Think of all the fairy tales that are now being re-imagined.

5. **Thematic Profundity:** The hope of every reader is that when they finish the book, they will have encountered some kind of spiritual and/or existential wisdom, some kind of revelation or insight that will change the way they look at themselves and the world around them. Stories, no matter the genre, have the capability of changing lives. After all, readers read for two inextricable reasons: to escape, and to discover what it means to be human. A writer's aim should always be to write a commercially successful and critically acclaimed novel that is both entertaining and enlightening.

~From the Writer's Digest Blog

"You want to be a writer? Good for you. So does that guy. And that girl. And him. And her. And that old dude. And that young broad. And your neighbor. And your mailman. And that Chihuahua. And that copy machine. Ahead of you is an ocean of wannabe ink slaves and word earners. I don't say this to daunt you. Or to be dismissive. But you have to differentiate yourself, and the way to do that is by doing rather than pretending."

~Chuck Wendig

## WILD WEST SALOON

by: Susan Tuttle

I had no luck at the emporium, the stable, or at the seamstress's house. No one at any of those places admitted to seeing Amelia the day she disappeared. Either that, or they just weren't comfortable discussing it with me, the strange woman who'd mysteriously shown up in the middle of a snowstorm. Not for the first time in my life did I wish I fit in better with the status quo: less exotic looks; less majestic height; hell, even less intelligence and snark.

I stood on the boardwalk and gazed around the quaint street as the sun approached the horizon. Even after four days, I still had trouble believing this was Colina in 1884, despite the lack of modern amenities like electricity, running water, and indoor plumbing. Riders and wagons rattled past me, kicking up dust that made me sneeze. A cold wind blew in from the surrounding desert. Shawl-draped women in bonnets hurried along the walkways on both sides of the street, bearing packages in their arms. And a steady stream of men sporting holstered six-shooters wandered into the saloon, three shops away from where I stood.

Saloon. Sounded like a good idea to me. I sauntered down to the swinging doors and pushed through, forgetting that I didn't even have money with me, much less an escort.

Conversation ceased when I entered. All eyes turned my way. The piano player didn't actually stop, but his fingers stuttered on the keys, sending up a few discordant notes. The bartender stared, shook his head, then went back to wiping down the bar top. I chose not to take the hint and kept going, slowly crossing the room. Conversation resumed in a low buzz as I passed the tables, and I was sure the subject of most of the tete-a-tetes was yours truly.

A woman alone in a bar. What scandal!

I almost laughed aloud, but since I was after information I figured it wasn't a great idea to antagonize anyone any more than I already had. I leaned against the bar and smiled at the bartender.

"Hi," I said. "I don't suppose you have Coke or Pepsi, do you?"

He stood stock still, staring at me with a wary look in his eyes. I laughed.

"It's a joke," I said. "You'll get it in about seventy-five years or so." I thought back to the old Bonanza episodes that were reprising on cable. "What I mean is, Sarsaparilla. Could I get a glass of Sarsaparilla?"

He took a breath, nodded, and seemed to relax as he reached for a dark bottle and a glass. He filled it about halfway and set it in front of me. I smiled my thanks.

"My name is Sklark... um, Ather—"

"Yeah, I know who you are."

He said it with such cold resentment that I realized I'd have to pull teeth to get much cooperation from him. I wondered how he'd react when I told him I couldn't pay for the drink. Maybe I should have brought a gun with me.

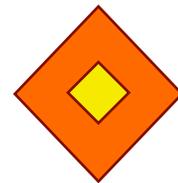
This story can be found in:

*Tiny Tales—Skylark, PI Series: 5 Minute or Less Reads for Busy People*

Send your 450-550 word story to: [aim2write@yahoo.com](mailto:aim2write@yahoo.com) for inclusion in the next issue of WordSmiths. Be sure to put Newsletter Submission in the subject line.



## WORD PLAY



By Morgann Tayllor



Our **Wordsmiths** editor crafts character names from her typos. In a recent email exchange, Susan Tuttle shared one of her “best” typos: **bhasr** (BAYser). She had “no idea what... (she) was trying to type”, but she thought it would be “a great name for a villain.” **Bhasr** is now the “bad guy” in one of her sci/fi fantasy stories.

The back story: My return email accidentally made a typo of her typo, spelled “Bhast”, an unlikely name candidate that could only be laughed about. Which we did.

My *faux pas* aside, Susan’s method of using throw-away words to birth stow-away characters is a great tool for mining creative gold.

\* \* \*

Naming characters can be fun; opportunities are endless. Below are examples from other story fragments:

**Pete** Clancy had a pit bull named **REpete** who followed him around like... well, a dawg. Not only that, he copied everything **Pete** did or asked him to do. Almost.

In the Deep South, when feral hogs went on a rampage, tearing up the countryside with their tusks and rooting the earth into upheaval, folks living in the local piney woods found the Clancy's quite neighborly and all, lending **REpete** for a nose-to-tusk encounter with the pesky critters.

**REpete** was known far and wide as *the* "hawg dawg" to have, especially if there was a wild boar on the prowl. Only trouble was, **REpete** was apt to get into trouble hisself, for all his perfect hawg nose.....

\* \* \*

**Beethoven** slept on the piano. An orange marmalade with a white vest, he was elegant, if you could call a neutered tomcat elegant.

True to his species, he was meticulous. No party leftovers, like a saucer of beer for him. If there was any foam left, he tried to cover it up.

He preferred champagne poured straight from the bottle into his porcelain saucer. And it had better be Dom Perignon. Champagne was a holiday treat, along with turkey warm from the oven (breast meat only, please).

Still, **Beethoven** was no pushover. He could frown his displeasure and flick an agitated tail with the best of his peers. He could dash across the piano keys in a clatter and fly out the front door to confront any intruder, whether it was the neighborhood greyhound or the guy next door in drag wanting to borrow the Roomba...

\* \* \*

**Fess Fowler** owned a parrot he called **Confess** to keep him company while his wife Anna, a junior executive, commuted sixty miles daily to a women's clothing startup in the city. She was always late getting home.

His other preferred company was Marilla, the seductress next door. She even wooed the trust of **Confess**. Sometimes she made lunch in the **Fowler** kitchen, then painstakingly taught **Confess** new words and phrases in the man-cave office, such as: "Oh, that's good, **Fess**, good!" and "Annie, get your gun!" Anna the exec was now Annie Oakley, the frontier sharpshooter. This would send Fess and Marilla into fits of laughter, followed by sizzling sex on the daybed. Afterwards, **Fess** would give his mistress a perfunctory kiss at the computer before returning to his most consuming passion, video poker and fantasy football.

One mid-afternoon as **Fess** and Marilla dressed after their tryst, the office door flew open and there was Anna the exec.

**Confess** screeched, "Annie, get your gun!"

Everyone jumped. No one laughed.

Anna was crisp and cold. “**Confess** hinted about your affair weeks ago and I guessed the rest. But what really infuriates me are the dirty dishes I just saw in the kitchen sink!”

**Confess** cackled, “Oh, that’s good, Annie, good!”

Anna reached into her handbag, whipped out a compact 9mm handgun, aimed point blank at the astonished lovers and squeezed the trigger.

The gun misfired.....

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## Turn Your Blog Into A Book

You can’t just cobble together a bunch of posts and publish an e-book. It takes work to be successful. Here are some tips from Nathan Bransford on the process.

1. **Hone in on your book idea:** the blog is just a jumping off point. Flesh out the gaps, polish and expand on posts, create exclusive material. The blog is only a starting point, not a finished product.
2. **Know your genre:** Where will the book sit on a bookstore shelf? Is it a novel, a memoir, self-help, a guide? Knowing your genre and what it needs will help you flesh out the book so it’s actually salable.
3. **How to publish it:** Which way do you want to go, traditional or indie? Only if you have a very, very popular blog will a traditional publisher consider buying it. It’s important to know which way you want to go before you begin writing, because if it’s nonfiction, you only need to write a proposal and the first chapter to find an agent/publisher. If you go the novel or memoir route, you have to write the whole book before looking for publication. Ask yourself: Is your book a niche/passion project, or does it have broad national appeal? How much control do you want to have over the publishing process: How much does the validation of traditional publishing matter to you? How important is it for your book to be in bookstores and libraries? How capable are you at marketing and self-promotion? How much money can you afford to invest in your book? How patient are you (traditional publishing can take forever!)?
4. **Profit:** If you have a well-trafficked blog, you have a leg up in a core audience who will be inclined to purchase the book. It still takes a lot of promotion and social media shout-outs, the same as for anyone who publishes their book, either traditionally or independently. But there’s nothing quite like the heft of that book in your hands.

## "Critique Group Connections"

NW Members—Please, email critique requests to: Pat Gimer ([patgimer@gmail.com](mailto:patgimer@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.

If you form a new group, please let Pat know so she can list it on our website, in the newsletter, and offer any assistance you might need. (Critique Group Guidelines are available on the website at [www.slownightwriters.org](http://www.slownightwriters.org).)

\*\*\*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!

## A MESSAGE FROM PAT GIMER

I recently visited Kick Start, a new group organized by David Schwab. Kick Start meets monthly in SLO on Monday evenings at Dave's home near Broad and Tank Farm. The group currently has four members. Dave Schwab is a motorcycle-riding aficionado who is working on a book that incorporates years of his biker experiences.

Steve Bowder has already drafted thirty-plus chapters of an historical novel inspired by a 5 page booklet entitled "a Brief History of the Massacre of the Wiseman Children" based on 1895 interviews with his great grandfather, Henson Wiseman, some 32 years after the incident.

Rhonda Collin's book about sexual abuse in athletic programs was published before it was ready (it's a long story!) and she is now working feverishly on editing the work so more copies can be printed.

Pat Gimer has the beginnings of a novel, but lately her muse is distracting her with short stories and poems. This group that is still developing its working structure, can accommodate a couple of new members. As is customary for all NightWriter groups, visitors are welcome.

See pages 26 & 27 for open groups, and page 28 for closed groups you can visit.

## CRITIQUE GROUP REQUESTS

**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)

## CRITIQUE GROUP REQUESTS, CONTINUED

**Griselda Rivera** is seeking multiple critique groups: MEMOIRS, TEEN & CHILDREN'S, ACADEMIC/EDUCATION/LINGUISTICS.

Contact Griselda at [grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com](mailto:grissilvarivera58@yahoo.com)

**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: [grimmpsyche@gmail.com](mailto:grimmpsyche@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)

## 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: Janice Konstantinidis  
 Vice-President: Tammie Burnsed  
 Secretary: Leonard Carpenter  
 Treasurer: Steve Derks  
 Program Director: Janice Konstantinidis  
 Membership Coordinator: Jim Aarons  
 Contest Committee Chair: **Open**  
 Critique Group Coordinator: Patricia Gimer  
 Social Media/Publicity Coordinator: Meagan Friberg  
 Simply Clear Submissions: Jeannie Hundertmark  
 Welcome Committee: Jean Moelter  
 Sunshine Chair: Torry Dickinson  
 Website Master: /Membership Janice Konstantinidis  
 Web Assistant: Steve Derks  
 Newsletter: Susan Tuttle, Lillian Brown  
 Art Director/Photographer: Dennis Eamon Young  
 Member at Large: **Open**  
 NW Historian: **Open**  
 Hospitality: Baxter Trautman, 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: April 10th**, at United Church of Christ on Los Osos Valley Rd, San Luis Obispo 93401. 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

### WRITE NOW

These bi-weekly Wednesday critique meetings are for more experienced and tech-savvy writers. Submit up to 3,500 words of your current project to Dropbox by Sunday night, and then, using track-changes in Word, upload your reviews of each other member's work to Dropbox by 6:00 pm Wednesday. Meeting time is used to cover discussion-worthy items: logic issues, theme problems, etc. Commas, punctuation, and spelling are left on the written page. We follow these [Rules of Conduct](#). Recommended reading is [Story](#) by Robert McKee.

Meetings are every other Wednesday at 6:00 pm. Email moderator for location and dates.

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

Moderator: Cynthia Replogle  
[cynthia.replogle@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.replogle@gmail.com)

### FICTION/NONFICTION

Meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays from 9:00 am to Noon in San Luis. Members bring original work to each session to 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—are this group's forte. It welcomes writers who are serious about producing work for publication. Those interested attending or who need more information should telephone.

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

Moderators: Terry Sanville (541-0492)  
Gloria Pautz (543-2049)

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## CRITIQUE GROUPS WITH OPENINGS

### 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 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

### 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. 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 (based on the lessons and exercises in the *Write It Right* Series), 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 II (Wed. p.m. Group)

For all writers of fiction and creative non-fiction, a writing instruction class that meets weekly and takes about a year to complete. **See full description under Wed. a.m. Group.** Meets from 3:00-5:00 pm in Los Osos. Current members are presently getting their work published after only six months or so. **CURRENTLY OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS**

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

### 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,** and visitors are always welcome. Contact the moderator for details.

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

### KICK START

Looking for three to four writers who could meet on Monday or Tuesday evenings in SLO, near Marigold Center (Tank Farm/Broad area). For fiction, action adventure, memoir type pieces. Start May 1 or 2. Moderator has a Fine Arts degree and an MBA.

**CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR MEMBERS.**

Contact moderator for details.

Moderator: David Schwab  
805-459-3200

# CRITIQUE GROUPS LISTING

## FULL CRITIQUE GROUPS: CALL TO VISIT

### PISMO WEDNESDAY GROUP

Meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 9:00-11:00 am in Pismo Beach.

To visit, contact: Tom Snow  
[coinerbop@gmail.com](mailto:coinerbop@gmail.com)

### LO PROSE

Meets in Los Osos on the first and third Wednesdays at 7pm till usually 10pm.

To visit, contact: Charlie Perryess, 528-4090  
Anne Allen, 528-1006

### NORTH COUNTY CRITIQUE GROUP

Meets twice a month on Thursday from 1:30-4:00 pm at the Atascadero Library.

To visit, contact: Lillian Brown, 215-6107  
[lilliofslo@aol.com](mailto:lilliofslo@aol.com)  
Jeanie Hundertmark,  
878-2158  
[clementyne@gmail.com](mailto:clementyne@gmail.com)

## INACTIVE CRITIQUE GROUPS

### POETRY CRITIQUE GROUP

This group is currently inactive.

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

### PISMO SATURDAY GROUP

This group is currently inactive.

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

### SOUTH COUNTY WRITERS

This group is currently inactive.

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

### NORTH COUNTY RACONTEURS

This group has disbanded for various reasons until further notice.

### MEMOIR AND NON-FICTON

Disbanded until there is more interest.

Contact: Judith Bernstein  
[ryewit@live.com](mailto:ryewit@live.com)  
805-904-6365

### LONG STORY SHORT

This group is currently inactive.

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