



February 17, 2007 Speaker

Antoinette Kuritz

author, speaker

From Book to Bestseller!



Antoinette Kuritz, nationally published writer, founder of the *La Jolla Writers Conference* and host of the *Writers Roundtable Radio Show*, has mentored scores of writers onto the *New York Times Best Sellers List* – authors such as John Edward and Kaza Kingsley, to name a few. A successful author in her own right,

Antoinette has received the *International Reading Association Award*, has written articles for the *Ladies Home Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe* and the *New York Times*, and has been featured on *CNN*, *Dateline*, *Larry King*, *Fox* and

Friends and *MSNBC*.

“This is a business and I know the secrets you need to know to succeed,” Antoinette says. “You will learn how to plot your book, how to find an agent, how to handle publishers and how to avoid the five most common marketing mistakes made by new authors. These facts are ‘musts’ for the up-and-coming author and apply to non-fiction and fiction works, alike.”

Want to know how to write so that others won’t be able to put down your manuscript? Interested in how to make sure your book is a commercial success? Join us on February 17 at the Southern California Writers Association meeting, and glean a wealth of knowledge from celebrity/writer Antoinette Kuritz.

Note: Kuritz spoke to SCWA last year, but this year’s topic is completely different. If you heard her speak last year, you know how fascinating her talks are. Please come back and soak up yet more of her writing wisdom.

Sol Stein and the SCWA

Dear SCWA Members:

Sol Stein called with regrets that he is unable to speak to us at our February 2007 meeting. However, to make-up in small part for our disappointment, he is willing to offer our members personal counsel and advice through his web site.

This does NOT mean that he will review, read or edit our works, in full or part. Sol usually charges a large amount of money per hour for such services and, at this time, is no longer taking on new clients. But, he WILL answer specific questions from SCWA Members for up to 60 days at www.firstaidforwriters.com. (The service is

See *Sol Stein*, page 7

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President's Message

Vice-President Membership and Assistant

Polly Dunn had to resign from being our VPM for personal reasons. I suspected the job was getting too big for one person to handle, so I asked the board to split it into two positions. Welcome to Sheila Cassidy, as our new VP Membership, and to Deidre Knab (new member), as our new Assistant to the VP Membership! I'll be working with both gals to help them learn their new duties. Sheila will be the main person you send your dues payments to and she'll be maintaining our official membership list. Deidre will be taking Sheila's list to prepare the monthly newsletter mailing labels file and the registration desk check-in list.

Budget

January is often a month for looking ahead to the coming year and your Board has been busy doing just that. We prepared a detailed budget in order to see what our expenses and revenues should be in 2007.

One major expense that we needed to increase is the amount we pay our speakers. As you can guess, getting top quality speakers is a lot of work and even though some speakers do not charge a fee, we need to be polite and offer them some compensation for their expertise and travel expenses. Up until January we had been giving our speakers only \$50, a paltry sum. Even though we would dearly love to give them something like \$500, we simply can't afford that, so we settled on an increase to \$150. Note: This increases our expenses by \$1,200 per year.

Right now it takes about \$13,000 a year to keep SCWA afloat financially, but 65% of that goes to pay the restaurant for the meals and rental of the meeting room and is offset by what we collect for each meeting. Our next biggest expenses are what we pay our speakers and what it costs to give you a newsletter each month.

Meal charge increased for walk-ins

We would have had a net loss of \$1,100 projected for this year and in order to bring our budget close to balancing, we have decided to increase what we charge non-members.

We thought that since our members are paying for our speakers with their dues, we felt non-members should share some of this expense. We have kept our prices for meals the same, with one small addition of \$5 to what non-members pay who do not reserve. Here are the four prices:

Meal price schedule		
Member	RSVP	\$20
	Walk-in	\$25
Non-member	RSVP	\$25
	Walk-ins	\$30
RSVP who do not show		Billed

See *President's Message* page 3

Dues to go up slightly in March

President's Message, continued from page 2:

Please note: When you make a reservation but do not show up, you will be billed for your meal.

SCWA is obligated to pay for RSVP meals when those people do not show up and pay. In December and January, we had six members who reserved but did not pay. That's not fair to the membership, so we've decided that when someone reserves a seat (meal), they should have to pay for that, even if they don't show up. That's usually what RSVP means! This new price schedule means **if you are sure you will show up**, it is to your advantage to make a reservation.

Dues increase by \$5

Oh boy, it happens now and then. Costs everywhere go up and SCWA is not exempt. I've asked around and found that most other writers groups of our size in Orange County and southern California charge \$40 or more for dues. The board voted for the following new dues price schedule:

Dues Price Schedule	
Students	\$15
Jan-Feb	\$25
Mar-May	\$30
June-Sept	\$25

Starting March 1, dues will go up to \$30 per year. Take advantage of this by renewing before March 1 for only \$25. See our website for details on how to pay or pay at the next meeting.

Need for a volunteer to help our registration desk

Carolyn Smith, our Treasurer, needs someone who can be relied upon to attend every meeting and help during the crunch of 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. when so many folks come in the door to check-in. Can we rely upon you to help during that time as the new Assistant to the Treasurer? Send an e-mail to treasurer@ocwriter.com to talk with Carolyn about what she needs. It's not difficult and takes only 30 minutes per month.

Victory Crayne
President
Victory@crayne.com

SCWA News & Announcements

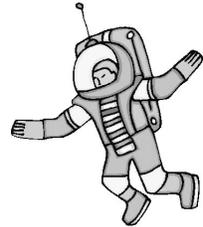


NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:

March 17—Ray Bradbury

Sci-fi Literary Icon

If You Want to Write....



January Highlights on *Low Hunter: Screenwriting that Sells!* will be in next month's issue.

Contact *Writers News* Editor Mary Michel Green at (949) 361-6581 or green.mary@cox.net.

SCWA Critique Committee Open to Members of SCWA

Nonfiction & Fiction

Roy King 3kings@urs2.net
Roy will take any amount of writing for critique. He prefers to see the entire ms at one time.
Please mail your manuscript to Roy at:
15772 Heatherdale Road, Victorville, CA 92394

Poetry

Dr. Joyce Wheeler
Joyce will critique up to five poems.
Please mail your work to Joyce at:
3801 Chestnut Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90807

Executive Committee

President Victory Crayne
V.P. Programming Lynnette Baum
V.P. Membership Sheila Cassidy
Secretary Janet de Marco
Treasurer Carolyn Smith
Publicity Director Larry Porricelli
Webmaster Tony Stoklosa
Newsletter Editor Mary Michel Green
Associate Editor Belinda Falk
Tape Librarian Sharon Walters

Membership Information

Sheila Cassidy, V.P. Membership
membership@ocwriter.com

Meeting Reservations

Carolyn Smith, Treasurer (949) 675-4244

Critique groups in Southern California

I've heard so many requests for years for information on critique groups that I've decided to create a list on my web site. There is a link to it on the SCWA web site.

Currently there are 10 critique groups from Orange, Los Angeles, and other counties, including two run by members of SCWA, with five more groups under consideration. I expect this page will include 50 or more critique groups in a few months. It is my goal to create a central place for any writer

in the southern part of our state to find critique groups in their geographical area.

If you know of a critique group in southern California, please send information about it to me. If you would like to link to this list on your web site, please list it as "Critique Groups in Southern California" at www.crayne.com/critique-groups.htm.

Victory Crayne
President
Victory@crayne.com

Writer's Corner

Rejection Happens - Don't Give Up

- Dr. Seuss's first children's book was rejected by 27 publishers. The twenty-eighth sold six million copies of that title alone.
- Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* was turned down by more than 25 publishers.
- Jack London got six hundred rejection slips before selling his first story.

From Jack Canfield's essay in *Snoopy's Guide to the Writing Life*, edited by Barnaby Conrad and Monte Schulz

Mary Michel Green
Newsletter Editor
green.mary@cox.net

Goal Setting

In 1953 Yale University surveyed the graduating class on their written goals.

- They discovered that **3%** of the graduating class had **actually written** down their goals of what they want to do with their lives.
- The next **10%** had **thought** about their goals but had not written them down.
- And the rest of the class did **not have any** goals.

Twenty years later, they recontacted all the members of that graduating class to see how they were doing. Here's what they found.

- 20% were living on the public dole or were depending on others for their support.
- The next 67% were just living from paycheck to paycheck. Sound familiar?
- The next 10% who had done no more than just **think** about their goals had, as a group, outperformed the less achieving balance of the class by **10 times!**
- And the **3%** who had originally **written** down their goals had, as a group, out-earned the other **97%** by almost **40 times** the income!

The lesson here is simple: Even just **thinking** about your goals helps you be more successful than having no specific goals at all.

But **writing** your goals down will help by a **quantum leap!**

So - to help you get started, try writing three goals for yourself right now.

1. Short Term Goal: One to be done **this** week.
2. Regular Weekly Goals: One to be done **every** week.
3. Long Term Goal: One to be done in the next 6 months or year.

Victory Crayne
President
Victory@crayne.com

What Keeps You From Writing?

By Patricia L. Fry

Will you ever write that novel that's rolling around in your head? Why do you keep putting off writing your memoirs or that nonfiction book you've outlined?

There are many reasons why people who want to write, don't write. For some, it is a matter of priorities. They want to write a book, but life gets in the way. Others have stories inside them that are simply itching to be told, but they're timid about putting them down on paper. While some writers can't not write—writing is their passion—others claim they want to write, but they just can't get started.

What keeps you from writing? See if you recognize yourself here:

You just can't find the time to write. "Not enough time" is the excuse that most would-be writers use. Or they'll say, "I'm just too busy." I heard a new author being interviewed on the radio this morning. She said that she has always wanted to write a book, but, like so many other would-be writers, she just couldn't find the time. A few years ago, she began to examine how she was spending her time. She suddenly realized that those frequent business trips, which she thought prevented her from writing, might actually provide opportunities for her to write. And she began writing during long airport waits and flights. Within a matter of months, she completed her book and promptly found a publisher.

What if you don't fly? Examine how you spend your allotted twenty-four hours each day (your 168 hours each week/your 720 hours each month). Can you find windows or even pockets of time during which you can write? If you can eke out just an hour per day, that's seven hours per week or thirty hours every month. Even on this schedule, little by little, bit by bit, you can write a book. Statistics show that it takes approximately 740 hours to write a nonfiction book. I completed a book once in eight months while holding down a full-time job and writing for only twenty hours each week.

You come up with every excuse not to write. You are the queen/king of excuses: "I can't find my fuzzy bunny slippers—there's no way I can write if I'm not wearing my fuzzy bunny slippers." Or "It's supposed to rain today—I can't write when I'm distracted by the sound of raindrops outside my window." Or how about this one, "The neighbors have a new dog. What if he barks while I'm trying to concentrate on my work?"

I can't tell you how many people I meet every year who say they are going to write someday—after their kids are in school, become teenagers, start college or marry and have kids of their own. When they become grandparents, they start all over by saying, "I'll write when the grandkids start school, become teenagers..."

What is your excuse? Will you start writing when you retire, get a day off, move, set up office space, lose weight or win the lottery?

Face it folks, excuses keep you stuck in a do nothing, go nowhere mode. If you truly want to write, short circuit those excuses with an action such as—oh, I don't know, maybe sitting down at the keyboard and actually writing something.

You are a writing class groupie. You spend all of your time and energy taking writing classes and attending writing seminars. Classes, workshops and conferences are wonderful opportunities to learn about the writing craft and the publishing industry. I recommend them to writers at any stage of their passion. But I also caution those writers to pace themselves. Don't use these learning opportunities as excuses not to write. Instead of seeking more and more instruction, inspiration and feedback, put what you've learned to practice. Some would-be authors become so enamored with the conference environment that they can't seem to move forward on their own. They find it a cozy, comfortable womb where they can write what they want—where there is no real pressure or requirements. They talk about being published, but never actually enter the sometimes wicked and competitive world of publishing.

If you resemble these remarks—if you stay on the fringes of the real writing/publishing world through seminars and workshops and writers critique group, hiring a steady string of consultants and editors—maybe it's time for a reality check. If you truly want to become a published author, sit down and actually write something and then be brave enough to submit it.

You refuse to seek the help you need. At the other end of the spectrum is the writer who has his/her own agenda. He has a story to tell or advice to give readers and refuses to get any kind of help. He just forges ahead right or wrong, with visions of accolades and book sales dancing in his head. The only "go it on your own" writer who experiences publishing success is the one who just happens to luck out.

Hopeful authors who don't study the publishing industry, who avoid seminars, books, articles and advice about how to write, publish and promote a book, generally aren't aware of their options, make the wrong choices and fail.

You can't handle rejection. The world of authorship may look easy to penetrate. There are certainly plenty of books out there in bookstores and at Amazon.com. But once you actually drum up the courage to submit a book manuscript to an agent or publisher, you quickly learn about rejection.

A gentleman told me recently, "I sent my manuscript to ten publishers and received rejections from all of them. That's it for me. I'm not putting myself through that again." I told this man that he hasn't even begun to experience the rejection that many successful authors do. Authorship carries with it a lot of rejection. Of course, there are those who slip right in on an angel wing, land the publisher of their dreams and rake in enough in royalties to finance an expensive sports car. But most authors—even some

See *Fry*, page 7

SCWA Writers News

Break Through That Writer's Block

Fry, continued from page 6:

of the most acclaimed—have been rejected by some of the best publishers around. It's part of the game. And it is certainly no reason to throw in the towel.

It's widely known, for example, that James Redfield's *Celestine Prophecy* was rejected by every publisher he approached before he decided to self-publish. Warner Books now publishes this bestselling book. Richard Paul Evans received several rejection letters for his novella, *The Christmas Box* before Simon and Schuster agreed to publish this very popular book.

The sure way to fail is to quit writing or marketing your manuscript or to stop promoting your book.

You're a closet writer. Some of you are marvelous writers and your friends keep nagging you to seek a publisher for your latest manuscripts. But you just can't get it together to actually show it around to publishers. You enjoy writing and a part of you would like to have your work read, but you're afraid. Some of you are afraid of failure and others are afraid of success.

You prefer the status quo—what's known. When you think of publishing, you feel overwhelmed and then you quickly stop thinking about it and go back to writing for yourself.

That's okay. However, if you're reading this article, you are probably thinking a little harder about becoming a published author. And you can—just take one step at a time. I suggest starting by studying the publishing industry, your options and the consequences of your decisions. Learn what your responsibilities as a published author are. Ease into this competitive business: Research good books on the subject, attend publishing conferences, hang out at online forums where published authors discuss their issues and experiences and join publishing organizations.

You're too ill, crippled or tired to write. I know writers who accomplish their writing goals even though they are bedridden. In fact, I wrote most of my first book, *Hint's For the Backyard Rider* (A.S. Barnes, 1978), while in bed recovering for several months from a back injury. I wrote in longhand and I could sometimes sit up long enough to use a small manual typewriter positioned next to me on the bed.

A friend of mine has been confined to bed for years after an accident and she just completed the first in a series of children's books. I receive e-mail from people with disabling ailments fairly frequently, and who are writing, nonetheless.

You're embarrassed about your lack of writing skill. A successful author is often a naturally talented writer. Many novelists are excellent storytellers. A prolific author of nonfiction can generally write with clarity. He has good organizational skills. Most writers know where their strengths and weaknesses are, but sometimes it's hard for someone to evaluate his or her writing abilities. How do you know when what you write is good or not? Get feedback from avid readers in your genre. Study books like the one you are writing. Take a good writing class. Hire an editor or writing coach. Hang out at online forums where writers are talking about writing. Subscribe to writing-related newsletters and magazines. Practice, practice, practice.

There should be no excuse for not writing if writing is what you really want to do. I challenge you to examine the list of reasons that keep you from writing. Study your current priorities. If you really want to write, change those things that keep you from this dream and make 2007 the year that you become an author.

Patricia Fry is the author of 25 books including *The Right Way to Write, Publish and Sell Your Book* (Matilija Press, 2006). She is also the president of SPAWN (Small Publishers, Artists and Writers Network). www.spawn.org. Purchase Patricia's book at www.matilijapress.com/rightway.html. Visit her informative blog regularly: www.matilijapress.com/publishingblog

Sol Stein Offers Benefits to SCWA Members

Sol Stein, continued from page 1:

free for two months to SCWA members).

Since Mr. Stein's writing accomplishments have garnered international acclaim, this is a great opportunity for us. Please honor his time and generosity by sending him pertinent, clearly worded questions (preferably no more than one or two per week). He will work his responses into his schedule at the earliest possible time, and give each question an in-depth answer.

Since this special free offer is only open to SCWA members, before registering please e-mail info@firstaidforwriters.com and put **SCWA Free 60-Day Offer** in the subject line. This will help their Web master coordinate our complimentary, temporary access, so that SCWA members receive the bonus time Mr. Stein has so kindly allotted.

Warmly,

Lynnette Baum

VP Programming

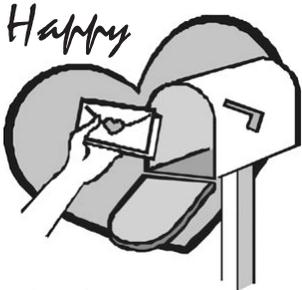


**February Meeting:
Saturday
February 17, 2006**

ANTOINETTE KURITZ

From Book to Bestseller!

(See inside to learn more about Antoinette Kuritz)

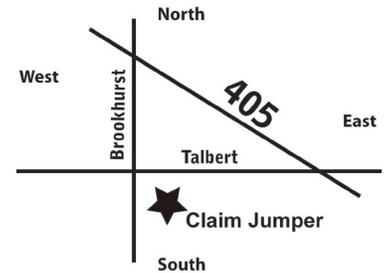


Valentine's Day!

LOCATION: Claim Jumper Restaurant

Banquet Room Entrance, rear of building
1805 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, CA
Restaurant telephone: (714) 963-6711

Registration & Networking:	9:30 a.m.
Meeting & Program:	10:00 a.m.
Lunch:	11:30 a.m.
Afternoon Program:	12:15 p.m..



WALK-INS & GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME — \$25 AT DOOR

MEMBERS WHO DO NOT RSVP PAY \$25 AT DOOR

MEMBERS WHO DO RSVP PAY \$20

RSVP before Feb. 10:

Carolyn Kimme Smith, Treasurer, 630 Harbor Island Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660
Check must accompany reservations. Make checks payable to SCWA.

After Feb. 10:

Carolyn Kimme Smith, Treasurer, (949) 675-4244

BE SURE TO RSVP WHENEVER POSSIBLE! . . . Or register online at www.ocwriter.com/meetings.html

Southern California Writers Association

Writers News

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