

Writers in the Sky Newsletter

Yvonne Perry

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Whether you are a published author or a writer-wanna-be, this e-zine is for you. Here, you will find articles about all types of writing, publishing, and book marketing; plus we feature articles written by our readers. Our goal is to connect the writing and publishing community through networking that benefits both. Brought to you by Write On! Creative Writing Services.

AUTHOR'S Corner by Yvonne Perry

My life has been filled with crazy fun and adventure lately! Now that WRITERS IN THE SKY, my podcast about writing, networking, publishing and marketing, is in full swing I stay pretty busy recording interviews and creating marketing blurbs to promote my guests. In December we have four fabulous guests from publicist Maryglenn McCombs to public speaker and writer Zach Everson to award-winning writer Mary Buckner and palm reader/author Myrna Lou Goldbaum. See a description of all the terrific shows coming in December at <http://www.yvonneperry.net/WritersintheSkyPodcast.htm>. While you're there be sure to [subscribe to the RSS feed](#) so you'll get a reminder email whenever I upload a new show. You won't want to miss my show with Peter Bowerman, the author of the award-winning Well-Fed Writer titles on January 5, 2007. If you are interested in being a guest on my podcast let me know by email: writer@yvonneperry.net. A review copy of your book, your bio, your website and any other material would be appreciated when applying to be a guest. By the way, we have over 480 subscribers to the podcast and 620 to this newsletter, and new people are finding us every day. Not bad for a newsletter that started seven months ago and a podcast that started in October. I'm glad YOU are part of our gang!

I took Suzanne Lieurance's 40-article challenge with a group of writers last month and ended up way too busy trying to keep the pace without letting my clients down. Each member of the group has until the end of the year to write 40 articles on any topic. The articles I have written are available at http://ezinearticles.com/?expert=Yvonne_Perry. You may copy and paste my articles to provide content-rich material for your website or blog. Please leave a comment or rating for my articles when you visit the site.

I hope your holidays include safe and happy times with friends and family. Share laughs and hugs and remember to be thankful for the blessings we all enjoy.



Yvonne Perry is a freelance writer and the owner of Write On! Creative Writing Services. She is a graduate of American Institute of Holistic Theology where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Metaphysics. She began her full-time writing career in 2003 and has since written more than twenty books.

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DECEMBER 2006

Book Publicist Maryglenn McCombs has been working in the book publishing industry for over 10 years. During that time she has been involved with literally hundreds of books. She has served as a guest lecturer for publishing workshops, conferences and events, including serving as a panelist for the Southern Festival of Books. She is a member of the Publishers Association of the South (PAS) and Publishers Marketing Association (PMA). She will be sharing ways a publicist can help authors get the most out of their book sales and marketing efforts. <http://www.maryglenn.com/>

JANUARY 2007

Award-Winning Author Peter Bowerman will be coming to Writers in the Sky January 5, 2007. Peter is the author of the Well-Fed Writer and TFWW: Back For Seconds on the field of lucrative commercial freelancing, self-publishing and marketing www.wellfedwriter.com. We will be discussing his newly released book The Well-Fed Self-Publisher: How to Turn One Book Into a Full-Time Living. For full details and FREE report, visit www.wellfedsp.com. Subscribe to THE WELL-FED E-PUB, the critically acclaimed FREE monthly ezine and companion to The Well-Fed Writer series: www.wellfedwriter.com/ezine.shtml.

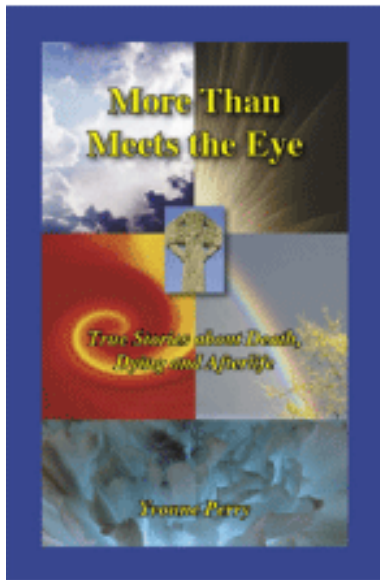
FEBRUARY 2007

Pam Lontos has worked extensively in the radio industry; from salesperson to Vice President of Sales for Disney's Shamrock Broadcasting. She was a professional speaker for 20 years and is a long-time member of the National Speakers Association (where she has earned the CSP designation). Her full-time occupation now is as head of PR/PR. Her ability to get publicity for herself is legendary and now she is getting the same kind of publicity results for her clients. PR/PR Pulse is a free e-zine provided by PR/PR. Your complimentary issue will give you tips to get the print, radio, TV and Internet publicity that you and your business deserve! www.prpr.net

Plus, there are many more guests to be featured (a new show each Friday) on Writers in the Sky so be sure to subscribe to the RSS Feed at <http://feeds.feedburner.com/WritersInTheSky> so you don't miss a show.

ARE YOU AFRAID OF DYING? Do You Need Comfort After the Loss a Loved One? Here's hope!

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE: True Stories about Death, Dying and Afterlife was authored by Yvonne Perry for people who are facing challenges presented by bereavement. In the book you will find:



- Information to alleviate the fear of death
 - Comfort for caregivers, friends and family of a person who is near the end of life, or has recently passed
 - Understanding for those who have had a near-death experience and lived to tell about it
 - Insight from Dr. Aaron Milstone, Medical Director of Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Lung Transplant Program about why physicians are ill-equipped to deal with death and are unable to comfort dying patients or their families
 - Why people sense the presence of their loved ones near them during the funeral, graveside ceremony and in the days following
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- Reasons we should address end of life issues with family members.
 - Understanding emotions regarding sorrow, grief, loss and guilt
 - How to tell if death is about to occur for a critically ill patient and how to assist a loved one in gently departing
 - Dealing with the emotional devastation of a loved one's suicide and signs that indicate someone may be suicidal
 - Discussion about euthanasia

There's also a legal copy of a Living Will, also known as an Advanced Health Care Directive included in the book and on Yvonne's website www.yvonneperry.net/books.htm where you may read more or purchase the book.

www.yvonneperry.net/books.htm

Five Sure-Fire Ways to Finding Your Passion!

by Taryn Simpson

In order to find your passion, it will take dedication on your part to question, evaluate yourself and dig deep within yourself to find what will fulfill you.

How do I get Started?

First thing to ask yourself, is what am I looking for? Change in careers? Find a new hobby? sense of purpose or financial freedom? Determine what resonates with you.

Set Aside Time for Yourself:

Even if you can only devote 15 minutes a day to this project, then do it. Make sure that you have complete alone time. If you need to leave the house and go to a park or library, then do it.

Make a List:

Make a list about yourself. ***What are your Likes? Dislikes? What would you like to learn? What are your Strengths and Weaknesses.*** Once you have made the Strengths and Weaknesses list, ask friends, family, co-workers, neighbors and anyone else who knows you well to make the same list about YOU. This will help clarify the list and add objectivity to your skills and talent. ***What do you like about your job? What do you dislike about your job?*** Do you want to make a job change or develop a new interest or hobby?

If you are looking for a Job Change: What type of person are you? Analytical? a People Person? do you want to change fields or stay in the same profession? If you want to change fields, try interning with professionals already established to gain experience.

Looking to be Self-Employed? Look at your Strengths List and evaluate what you would enjoy. If you are a people person, try being a Personal Assistant, Personal Shopper, a Consultant, Sales Rep or HR Recruiter.

Are you analytical? Try accounting, computer programming, Research and Development etc.

Looking to make a difference in someone's life? Try mentoring a child, participating in adult literacy programs, volunteering time at the animal shelter.

Looking for a Hobby? Try sketching, take a cooking class, write a novel, learn a new language, take crafting lessons. Anything new!

By opening yourself up to these new experiences, you will find out more about your likes and dislikes and what will make you feel self fulfilled. Try it, it works!

Taryn Simpson is a published author and freelance writer with over 15 years of HR experience. Ms. Simpson owns her own writing company, Simpson - E Publishing which offers clients ghostwriting of novels/articles, web content, brochures, newsletters, press releases and more. Sign up to receive her free

newsletter for writer's tips and news on her website <http://www.Simpson-EPublishing.com> To learn more about this writer, feel free to visit her online presskit: <http://www.TarynSimpson.com>. Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Taryn_Simpson

23 MISTAKES FIRST TIME AUTHORS MAKE (How to Avoid Them)

By Barbara Joe-Williams

As a first time self-published author, you want to avoid making as many costly mistakes as possible. Based on research and over two years of publishing experience, I'd like to share some of the mistakes that I've made and show you how to avoid making them. Please proceed with caution.

- 1) Publishing books with unattractive covers and spending too much money on them.** Hire someone to design an attractive front book cover. Or you can save money by developing the book cover drafts yourself. Simply download royalty-free pictures and add your own text.
- 2) They print their book in large quantities because it's the most economical value.** With print-on-demand (POD) printers, you no longer have to print large quantities of books to receive a good return on your investment. You can print as few or as many as you need at one time.
- 3) They pay large amounts for website development and maintenance.** Find a web hosting company, download a template, upload your book information, and maintain the site yourself for a low monthly or yearly fee. Most of these companies provide 24/7 customer support.
- 4) They work without an action plan or any means of accountability.** Writing may be your passion, but publishing is a business. Therefore, you have to develop a business plan to follow and show accountability for your funds.
- 5) Not testing their cover design or the titles before publishing.** The key to avoiding this mistake is developing more than one book cover draft and testing them on potential buyers. You can also develop more than one title and test them too.
- 6) They wait until the book is published before they start marketing it.** Start marketing your book the first day that you start writing it. Tell everyone that you know and/or meet about your new project.
- 7) Pricing the book too high or too low based on the market.** Be sure to research the price of other books on the market that are similar to yours and price your book accordingly.
- 8) Not identifying their target market for the publication.** The first rule of publishing is to know your target market and how to reach them. Where do they live and shop? How will they learn about your book?

- 9) Not pre-selling copies of their book or taking pre-orders.** You can set-up your website to take credit cards and start taking pre-orders months before the book is ever printed.
- 10) They rely solely on one marketing model to sell their book.** Develop several marketing strategies before your book is published. Communicate with other authors to find out what has and hasn't worked for them.
- 11) Writing books they think people should read instead of what the market demands.** The publishing business is also a matter of supply and demand. You may enjoy writing fiction, but a non-fiction project that serves a desire or need, will be more profitable.
- 12) Paying for expensive advertising, marketing/promotional ideas.** Marketing doesn't have to be an expensive venture. Look for strategies that will provide you with free publicity such as library workshops and radio interviews.
- 13) They write the book without developing a timeline for completion.** Once you start writing your book, set some realistic goals for completing it and stick to it. Don't let down your target market after you've announced the book to them.
- 14) Not having a reader's or audience database.** You can start developing a reader's database as soon as you start working on your book by contacting local book club members and attending library events.
- 15) Not being open to the editing or revising process.** Find an editor that you feel comfortable with and trust. This will make it easier to accept criticism and make recommended revisions.
- 16) They miss deadlines for writing and publishing.** It's very important to the success of your writing career that you meet the realistic deadlines that you've already set. Once you set a book release date, readers will be expecting the book at that time.
- 17) They don't read enough from the competition.** Make sure you know what the competition has to offer and be able to explain how your book is different. You want your project to stand out from every other book on your chosen subject.
- 18) They waste time trying to make the copy perfect the first time.** Focus on completing the manuscript and getting it to the editor instead of trying to make sure that it's perfect. You'll have plenty of time to go back and make revisions later.
- 19) Not being able to verbalize the content of your book in a concise manner.** You should be able to summarize your entire manuscript in a few sentences upon request. Most readers want to know what the heart of the book is about in one-minute or less.
- 20) They don't join writer's group or read writer's magazines, or attend conferences.** Joining a writer's group is a way to learn from other authors or aspiring authors. Reading Writer's Digest each month will provide you with valuable information and attending conferences will give you an opportunity to meet major publishers and agents.

21) They rely solely on bookstores to sell their books to make a profit. According to the Publisher's Marketing Association, approximately 52 percent of published books are not sold in bookstores. This means that you must find more creative ways of selling your product.

22) They concentrate too much on sales and not enough on publicity. Of course, your publishing goal is to make money, but some events should just be about publicity and then the money will follow.

23) They don't reinvest money back into their book business. This is a valuable lesson to learn. If you spend all your profits on personal expenses, it's impossible to keep producing books to keep your business growing.

About the Author:

Barbara Joe-Williams is a freelance author and an independent publisher living in Tallahassee, Florida. She has written three romance novels and a non-fiction e-book titled "A Writer's Guide to Self-Publishing & Marketing." As the sole owner of Amani Publishing, she has published non-fiction books for other aspiring authors. In addition, she has composed an anthology featuring eighteen multicultural authors to be released in February 2007 titled "How I Met My Sweetheart." For more information about this author/publisher, please visit her website.

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The Key Ingredient to Marketing Your Book: Enthusiasm

by Nicky Pitman

To some of you this may sound like some rah-rah, Pollyanna-esque piece of marketing fluff, but the bottom line is enthusiasm is the fuel for self-promotion. Without it, your self-promoting vehicle (that would be you) will find itself sitting in the driveway, possibly looking pretty, but going nowhere.

Most people like to be around enthusiastic people. There are people whoever, who don't. No matter how excited, passionate, and open-hearted you are, there's always one (or two, or three) who will not join in your delight. However, I have learned that you can't let these people burst your bubble.

Even those that seem less than excited to talk with you and hear about your book, are often carefully listening, and if they respond at a later time then your enthusiasm was not for naught.

At Book Expo America this last spring, we (the DPP staff) had an opportunity to speak with a great many authors. Many had rented booths to promote their books and many simply walked

around from booth to booth touting their book(s) to the myriad of publishers and agents.

For the most part, their enthusiasm was contagious as well. Those authors who spoke passionately about their book(s) made a lasting impression on each of us. Some used gimmicks (and please, think of “gimmick” in a positive context here, as I know it can conjure up negative reactions) and some simply talked about their book.

One children’s book had a Western theme to it and was being heralded about the Expo floor by the author and her friends dressed in 19th century Western wear, passing out “sheriff badges” with the name of the book inscribed on them.

A family-run small publishing company had a booth on our row, and they used all kinds of marketing paraphernalia: really big book bags in a bright color that matched the color in their company’s name – those were the hit of the Expo! Everyone was walking around with one of their bags! They also had some amazing marketing paraphernalia to get the word out about their newest book, written by the father and one of the daughters.

The main thing about the two cases mentioned above (the family-owned publishing company and the children’s author), was that they were all so gung-ho - excited to talk about their book and engage...with everybody!

The motivational speaker and author, Zig Ziglar once said: “For every sale you miss because you’re too enthusiastic, you will miss a hundred because you’re not enthusiastic enough.”

For many of us, self-promotion is a loathsome thing. How do you put yourself out there without coming across as boastful or grandiose? How do you “plug” yourself and your book without being pushy or even obnoxious? The answer, I believe, is genuine enthusiasm.

Let’s be honest – not everything about marketing is enjoyable. However, approaching marketing with enthusiasm, is going to bring about far better results than not.

E = MC².

In other words: Enthusiasm equals Marketing Conductivity Multiplied!

Call it Nicky’s Theory of Marketivity, if you will (and if you won’t, then call it something else). But use it!

You can think about this theory in a couple of different ways:

1) Think of yourself as the conductor of your very own marketing orchestra: you decide what instruments (marketing tools) are going to play when - which ones will lead, which ones will follow; which ones are going to be featured and which ones will take a backseat; which ones will play the ongoing rhythm, while others may be jazzing it up – improvising. Add a tuba-full of enthusiasm. Or...

2) Think of yourself as a conduit for marketing – through you: what you say, how you act, who you reach out to, where you go, what you're willing to do will determine how much exposure and sales come your way. Pave your path with gusto and zest.

3) Mix these two up: Conduct your conduit! Use one, two, or all the marketing tools in your arsenal and put yourself in contact with, and places where, you can get the most possible exposure. Add mirthful fervor to each and every step.

There are actually more ways to approach your marketing – but as long as you add enthusiasm you will always wind up with $E = MC^2$. Theory that it may be, I've seen it put to practice time and time again, and proved the theory true. As Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote: "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

Nicky Pitman is the PR/Marketing director for DigitalPulp Publishing (www.digitalpulppublishing.com), an eBook publishing and distribution company. She is also a writer and creativity coach. She can be reached at nicpit@digitalpulppublishing.com.

How to Engage Your Audience in Ways Members Won't Forget

by Sybil McLain

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Just like our audiences, we've been there, sitting through yet another mind-numbing presentation. Far from a front row seat for a speech given by Oprah or Bono, the most anticipated words are often, "and in conclusion."

The good news is it doesn't have to be that way. By incorporating a few simple public speaking guidelines into your next presentation, you can raise the bar and have your audience wanting more.

You may wonder how it's possible to make your content more interesting if it's your job to deliver the news on next year's complicated benefits or the latest changes in immigration law. It's easier than you might think. Start by asking yourself, "Who's my audience and what do I want them to remember?"

Be honest with yourself: If you quizzed your audience immediately after a speaking engagement, would members remember anything you just told them? Now, think about what makes you remember your favorite speakers. Most likely, it's not pie charts or bar graphs.

Here are a few easy rules that will help you select the right content to bring more energy and excitement into your next speech while ensuring you have your audience's attention:

- Use anecdotes to anchor your presentation. After you've considered your audience, find the right story to illustrate your point. Remember how your parents read great stories to you or shared stories about relatives from one generation to the next? When a story is told with energy, passion and excitement, people are eager to hear what happens in the end. Illustrating your key point with a story virtually guarantees your audience will remember and pass along your message.
- Here's a great example from the corporate world: An executive wanted the employees at his company - his audience - to remember that customer service was the company's No. 1 priority.
- He shared a story about a mailroom delivery person named Quincy, who helped a co-worker find a functioning color copier after hers broke down so that she could complete a job on time.
- Everyone in the company now calls this the "Quincy story." Follow this executive's lead and find your Quincy. Audiences want to hear about people like Quincy.
- Keep complex data limited to a handout. The perfect place for details and complex data is in a handout. From the back of the room, nobody can read that tiny type projected on a PowerPoint slide anyway.
- Incorporate props. A visual aid doesn't have to be a slide. It can be an interesting prop. Is there a magazine that's covered the topic? Hold it up when you refer to it. Is there a new product to promote? Bring it with you.
- Take time to rehearse. Excellent speakers care enough about the audience to rehearse and they understand visual materials are only there to support their performance. By the way, your next audience called me and wants you to promise you will never, ever read a slide to them again.
- Include appropriate humor. This doesn't mean telling jokes. It means adding impromptu comments at the beginning that engage the audience and weaving humor into your remarks.
- Incorporate audience interaction. This tells members you care enough to know who they are and what they care about. It also has the added advantage of helping you settle your nerves and loosen up.
- Save time for the Q&A. Think of the question-and-answer session as a second presentation. Take time to rehearse for it and get to it fairly quickly. Chances are this is what your audience will remember most.

Author and developmental psychologist Howard Gardner said it best: "Stories help individuals think about and feel who they are, where they come from and where they are headed. It constitutes the single most powerful weapon in the leader's arsenal."

Take a cue from Gardner. Load your arsenal with stories and these techniques and your next presentation might just be the most talked about part of your next meeting or conference.

Sybil McLain is vice president for the Midwest for Spaeth Communications Inc., a training and consulting firm

An Introduction to Short Story Writing

by Tom James

Welcome! I hope many of you find this article a pleasant introduction into the world of short story writing. Below we'll explain some of the key elements you need to focus on while writing to produce a piece that is interesting and engages your readers. Happy learning!

What do you envision when you hear the words "short story"? Perhaps the first thing that strikes you is that it's 'short'. But a short story can come in all sizes; there is no definitive length that will determine the point where your short will suddenly turn into a novel. So what are the basics of writing a short story, and how do you know if yours is getting too big?

The key word here is "Focus". A short story is centralised around a main theme or message that the author is trying to convey through the words. Short stories are not really designed to encompass a world of minute detail within the limited span of its pages, so every word really must count. When writing a piece like this, you must consider: What is the underlying point of this story? What emotions does it hope to stir in its readers? With those questions in mind, a good first step would be to start scribbling down your ideas. Let's make an example.

Let us say we want to write a short story about a boy and his dog. First I need to ask myself, "What would the point of this story be?" So let's think. I want the reader to empathise with the boy's childlike love of the dog. Perhaps they themselves will think back to their own childhood with fond memories of the family pet. I want them to ultimately feel happy reading this story, and become emotionally attached to the boy (and the dog, too). Perhaps a running theme through the piece would be the trusting innocence of childhood.

So, I now have some ideas on the basic themes I want to follow. This is the most important part out of the way. Now let's focus on the characters. I want two main characters in my story: the boy and the dog. A good tip here is to try to have as few characters in your story as possible, as they will need to be fleshed out and have a real importance to your story, otherwise you will spend too much time on them and the story will unnecessarily drag. Think of your characters' personalities, their temperament, what makes them happy or sad. Try a little exaggeration with this, but don't go overboard. The purpose is just to make important elements of the story stand out like signposts, directing your readers to a particular conclusion.

Take more notes as you think through it. Here's what I have so far. My first character, the boy, is a bright young chap, full of youthful joy. He is active, energetic, and loves to play with his dog. The dog is a young collie; she too has the energy of a pup, and loves the attention she receives from the boy. She would happily follow him anywhere he went, and the two have a penchant for exploring and getting up to mischief.

The actual plot is one of the least important aspects of the story, as strange as it may sound. But that is not to say it isn't important at all. A good plot will consolidate all the different things

you've brainstormed and give life to your characters, making it absolutely essential to have. Now, the plot of a short story can be hard to keep small. You might be enjoying yourself so much that you keep adding to it! But if you can, try to avoid this. Remember I mentioned "Focus" earlier? This is where it comes into play. The plot should ideally be focused on a pivotal event in the life of your characters, an event that has meaning to them. This will also lend purpose to the story, and the underlying message or point you are trying to get across along with it. Also imagine you are your character in that event; what are you feeling? What lessons are you learning from this situation? What will be your characters' greatest memories from this? Think carefully about these questions, and then put emphasis on the answers as you write.

Give it a go. The tips I've given should get you started, but there is always more to learn. My last piece of advice: know how to lay out the beginning, middle, and end of your writing, so that your plot flows smoothly and has a valid conclusion. If you're unsure about this, there are many resources online that can teach you. Happy storytelling!

-- Tom James

<http://writersheaven.com/>

To Write Or Not To Write: Searching For A Compelling Reason That Clears The Conscience

by Zubli Zainordin

In writing and publishing, always at the outset there is a guideline. In this context, a guideline is a straight line drawn to serve as an agreement between the writer and the publisher. Whatever shall be the outcome in the future, both parties may later recall and refer to the agreement set in the guideline. This is one of the purposes of a guideline.

Yes...the guideline can be considered as a turn on or a turn off, by both the writer and the publisher. When the guideline has been set, the writer has the freedom to choose whether to write or not to write. That is his or her right. The choice of course depends on the reason and then followed by the act to incline, recline, or decline. On a similar ground, the publisher has the freedom to choose whether to publish or not to publish. That is his or her right. The choice of course depends on the reason to accept, shelve, or reject.

Normally a guideline spells out at an early stage, exactly what is the result intended to be at a later stage. The guideline specifies the picture as in, begin with the end in mind. The details include the aspects, the components, the contents, the dimensions, the elements, the factors, the features, the format, the parameter, the rules, and the space. Based on these details, the writer and the publisher then are able to see the same picture as the end result.

So should there be a guideline in the first place?

Should there be no guideline at the outset, and the writer is given freedom and flexibility to write,

the publisher shall see exceptional written materials. However, the attitude of come what may, can include the submission of mediocre types of written materials. So a guideline should be mention in the beginning so that between the writer and the publisher there is a commonsense rather than nonsense in terms of the value of the final publication.

Should there be a guideline at the start, and the writer is imposed with limitations and stringencies to write, the publisher shall see written materials that are exceptional yet pleasing to his or her heart. However, the attitude you shall write this way, may not extend nor expand the writer's ability to explore the subject or topic, where the sky is not the limit. So a guideline may provide a range between the possibilities and the impossibilities, so much so that the writer and the publisher, ultimately achieves a win-win shared advantage.

Allow me to relate my story. When I received an email from Yvonne Perry, inviting article submissions for this newsletter, there it is clearly stated the 12 points guideline. At first glance, I was asking myself whether to write or not to write. Whatever is my decision, and whatever I shall choose after that, to me there must be a reason. So I search deep within...at the very center of my being, and then I remembered what F. Scott Fitzgerald once said, you don't write because you want to say something, you write because you've got something to say. In addition, coming back to her email, I read just below the guidelines, Yvonne Perry cleverly wrote, I look forward to hearing from you, so much so You are now hearing from me because I look forward too. Thus this is one of the articles published, and you are now reading it, out of the many articles that either were not submitted or were not selected, in accordance to the guidelines provided by Yvonne Perry to ensure Writer in the Sky is flying high.

Zubli Zainordin, is a bibliophile and an author. More info at: <http://www.zublizainordin.cjb.net/>. He has written articles since 1973, and most recently he wrote, 7 Qualities of Exceptional Book Authors.

Using Gender-Sensitive Language

by J.J. Murphy

I'm comfortable using terms like flight attendant or fire fighter when I'm referring to an individual who performs that job. I typically struggle with pronoun use.

This is an interesting area of writing technique, because the strategies for applying gender-sensitive language are still being worked out.

Here are some of the choices I am comfortable making when using this gender-sensitive language:

1. If you have a choice, skip the pronoun. I find *him/her*, *(s)he*, and even *they* can be clumsy when I am referring to both male and female subjects. The sentence, *Everyone who attends the event has to submit a writing sample*, is easier to write than *Everyone who attends the event has to submit his/her writing sample*.

2. Use *you*, instead of *his/her*. The sentence, *You should report the results to your team leader*, is easier to read than *Every member should report his/her results to his/her team leader*.

3. When stuck with pronouns, create an imaginary person. I got this tip from Robert Bly, who suggests you create a named character if your only option is to use him/her. Read the following two sentences: *1. If our client Jake Jones makes a list before he shops, he's likely to save money. 2. If a shopper makes a list before he/she shops, (s)he is likely to save money.* You can really hear the difference when you read these out loud.

4. Practice using gender neutral nouns. Here is a short list:

- *Executive* instead of *Businessman or Businesswoman*
- *Humanity* instead of *Mankind*
- *Individual* instead of *Man*
- *Chair or Chairperson* instead of *Chairman*
- *Police officer* instead of *Policeman*
- *Representative or Legislator* instead of *Congressman*

5. Read your work out loud. Pay attention to the number of words that end in *man* or *men*. Can you find a more accurate word? Consider using *synthetic* or *artificial*, instead of *man-made*. If you've written: *Executives and their wives ...*, consider changing to: *Executives and their guests ... or Executives and their spouses ...* for more gender-neutral content. Words like *secretary* and *nurse* often have an implied gender. The context of your work will determine whether it makes sense for you to substitute *executive assistant* or *support staff*.

6. Limit the use of male and female. Referring to a human being as a male or a female, sounds like a police report to my ear. When referring to plants, animals, fish or insects, I will use *male* or *female*. But when I am referring to human beings, I will use *boy, girl, adolescent, teenager, man, woman*, or a combination, like *adolescent boy* or *twenty-something woman*.

My writing goal is to communicate a clear message to my readers and to elicit a response. Removing potential offenders, like gender-biased language is one effective way to keep your reader on message.

JJ Murphy is a freelance writer who helps a variety of companies, small businesses and individuals to express their awareness and dedication to developing sustainable technology and to preserve our natural resources. She provides articles for natural magazines, hiking publications, simple living publications in print and online. She also writes curricula to help public schools home schooling groups, private schools, wilderness camps, adult learning groups, continuing education programs and others stretch and expand their students' knowledge.

She holds a Master of Arts degree from the William Allen White School of Journalism at the University of Kansas and a B.A. degree in English and Anthropology from the University of Connecticut. Her client list includes writers, business consultants, motivational speakers,

psychologists, financial planners, educators, and politicians.

Visit her website www.WriterByNature.com .

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Differentiation. It's about being original; breaking free from the competition; leading, not following. I can help you forge a path away from the crowd, away from the noise, and closer to your customer.

How Will You Be Different?

Along with the perfectly picked and placed words that make up the timeless writings that emerge as a cherished book—something we keep by our bed, travel with far and wide or relax with as we curl up in front of a cozy fire—a good book layout is important to an author. Especially self-published authors who don't have the talented staff of a major publishing house offering design options.

My job as a graphic designer is to give your book visual life and interest that will add “character” (look and feel) and catch the eye of a passing patron and spark intrigue that will make them pick it up and open the first page, never wanting to set it down. There's an art to giving your carefully chosen words a look and feel that helps them portray hope, emotion or intrigue.

Book Layout

A slight size change, font style or placement on the page can make all the difference in bringing a powerful personality to your fascinating book. Paragraphs need to be the right length so they don't seem overbearing—not too long, not too short—but cleverly balanced and readable to everyone not just elite readers. I've seen some books so jumbled and disorganized it would make a man quiver at the mere thought of trying to read them.

There are many ways a graphic designer can help you increase your book sales. There is of course advertising in the form of a flyer, poster, or a magazine ad. You could put together a package or marketing kit for your book, which may include a CD, an ad, a book marker, a coupon for your next book and so on. You may need invitations to your book signing sure to be in your near future. You might market yourself using only your name, but a personal logo to brand your product is much more effective and professional looking. You may need business cards and letterhead designed to enhance your branding image. Are you sending out a newsletter to your database? Let me design the newsletter and send it to your customers “spam-free” through a permission-based email program. Why not convert your printed book into an e-book you can sell on your website? What? You don't have a Web site? Every writer needs a website and I can custom build one that best serves your needs. These are only some of the countless options you have when you bring in a graphic designer.

From designing your book cover, to laying out the inside pages, to having the perfect index created, there is no end to what I can do for you. I'm looking forward to helping you give your

book a fantastic visual life! You are welcome to e-mail me with any questions or comments at, leedesign@leedesign.org. Also, please take a look at my web site at, leedesign.org.

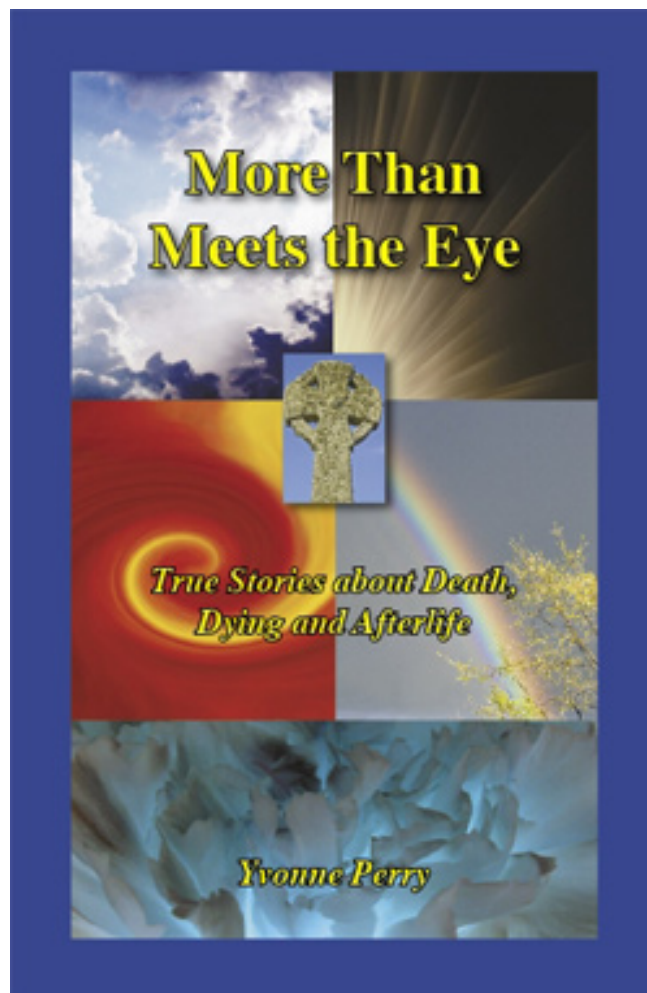
Cordially,

Jessica Dockter

Graphic Designer for Write On! Creative Writing Services Team

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If you have signed up for this newsletter and did not receive my eBook **More Than Meets the Eye**, please let me know that you would like it emailed to you (writer@yvonneperry.net).

More Than Meets the Eye: True Stories about Death, Dying and Afterlife Authored by Yvonne Perry

Including a commentary by Dr. Aaron Milstone of Vanderbilt University Medical Center, *More Than Meets the Eye: True Stories About Death, Dying and Afterlife* covers many aspects of the dying and grieving process. Perry uses true stories to look squarely in the face of euthanasia, suicide, near-death experience, post-mortem processes, hospice care, assisting the passing of a loved one, spirit visits from deceased loved ones and other topics people are somewhat reluctant to talk about. The book offers non-religious information and insight to assist people in finding peace about the mysterious process of transitioning back to God/Source. A legal document that may be used as a living will is included in the appendix.

Read more at www.yvonneperry.net/books.htm or purchase the paperback at Amazon.com.
(<http://tinyurl.com/9g3do>)

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Add your announcement or brag about your writing accomplishment. Tell us about your book or business. Share information and ideas or send articles or advertorial for the next issue to writer@yvonneperry.net. Remember, you may post a comment on my blog <http://yvonneperry.typepad.com/ghostwriters/> anytime. There are some announcements from our readers this month:

The Lieurance Group, a co-op for freelance writers and graphics designers is actively seeking additional members for the group. There are no dues or fees to belong to the co-op. Members simply market their services and products collectively. Visit The Lieurance Group at <http://www.lieurancegroup.blogspot.com> to find out more about the co-op and learn how to submit your resume, and writing samples, or portfolio for review. And don't forget to sign up for their mailing

list.

Authors Access is a joint project of Loving Healing Press and ReaderViews. Each week, starting November 2, insightful interviews from people around the world who can help you get your work published, and if already published, noticed! The show will be broadcast live at 8PM (EDT) every Thursday evening. Go to www.authorsaccess.com to see a line-up for November and December. Be sure to sign up to be reminded of the broadcast. If you miss a segment or want to listen to it again, you will be able to hear the interview through the archives.

- Monthly Book Giveaway - Each month Reader Views, in partnership with publishers and authors, are having a book giveaway. <http://www.readerviews.com/ContestBookGiveaway.html>

- Annual Literary Awards 2006 - The annual literary awards were established to honor writers who self-published or had their books published by a small press or independent book publisher. This year we are accepting books in four categories, two in fiction and two in nonfiction. <http://www.readerviews.com/Awards.html>

- Annual Literary Contest 2006 - The annual literary contest, in collaboration with Loving Healing Press, was established to honor writers who have written a short story that would qualify for publishing. <http://www.readerviews.com/Contests.html>

Whether you are facilitating a Q&A about your book, talking about your company/business or speaking with a client on the phone, it is important to be able to communicate clearly and concisely. **Toastmasters** can help you improve your speaking and leadership skills in a non-threatening environment. To learn more or find a club near you see www.toastmasters.org.

Check out this link to **Global Talk Radio** and listen to Valerie Connelly's show, **Calling All Authors**. She has some great interviews and tips on writing and publishing. <http://www.globaltalkradio.com/shows/callingallauthors/>. Additionally, if you are looking for a great book publisher, check out Nightengale Press at www.nightengalepress.com.

Valerie Connelly also has a new blog where you will find interesting and useful information about writing, publishing, and marketing books. As an author, a publisher, a talk show host, a printmaker, a painter, a musician and an educator, Valerie has learned and experienced enough to fill two or three lifetimes. She will be sharing this knowledge and experience over the next several months, in detail, for your benefit and growth. Valerie will be a guest on Writers in the Sky podcast in early December to speak about her new children's book, Arthur the Christmas Elf.

Back of the Room, the online store that specializes in self-published and small press books. We appreciate the challenge you face when you decide to self-publish. Join the ranks of professional

speakers, consultants, experts in various fields, and authors like yourself, and list your books, audio programs, and video products on www.BackOfTheRoom.com.

Once again, Reader Views is expanding into new realms with our exciting new endeavor, [Inside Scoop Live](#). This fantastic addition brings live interviews to the reading audience, so you may hear the personal thoughts of authors regarding their books. Just a few weeks since its inception, Inside Scoop Live already has 14 interviews archived and more scheduled every day.

Join in and listen to the most fascinating discussions with "cream-of-crop" writers, hosted by a relatively new member of the Reader Views team, Gayle Campbell. Inside Scoop Live, in partnership with [Internet Voices Radio](#), offers the voice to be heard and you provide the ear to listen! ~ Juanita Watson, Assistant Editor



Just in time for the busy holiday season, Nightengale Press is proud to announce the launch of the ARTHUR, THE CHRISTMAS ELF website at www.arthurthecrismaself.com.

As the blizzard of the century buries the countryside in wind-blown snow and brings life to a standstill on Christmas Eve, Arthur finds the last two Endangered Children and offers them a chance to learn what Christmas is really all about. Snowflake, Arthur's reindeer, flies through the night, delivering Arthur and his magic to two these especially troubled kids. Timothy Anderson and Angie Smith live on opposite sides of town, but their lives are drawn together by accident when the blizzard puts everyone they love in danger. Can Arthur show them what to do to save Christmas? Will they rise to the challenge? Will this Christmas be one to remember, or one everyone will want to forget?

Arthur, the Christmas Elf brings children a new, action-packed Christmas story to enjoy along with a fun activity section which shows kids how to make Christmas gifts from everyday items. Parents, teachers and children of all ages will get hours of time together while making their own unique presents from the craft section in the back of the book.

Make your own version of the illustrated patterns and guides so your presents will be a reflection of you. No two presents will ever be the same. **LEARN TO MAKE COLLAGES, PILLOWS, RAGDOLLS, PUPPETS, COOKIES, PUZZLES, WOOD BLOCK TOWNS, AND A NECKLACE** but make them all in your own way using the patterns and illustrated

instructions as a guide.

We look forward to your visit and hope you'll start a new family tradition this year. Read ARTHUR, THE CHRISTMAS ELF with your children and grandchildren. Make the presents. Make it an old-fashioned Christmas this year.

Valerie Connelly

publisher@nightengalepress.biz

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BLOG SITE: www.valerieconnelly.com

CALLING ALL AUTHORS

www.globaltalkradio.com/shows/callingallauthors

Not to be missed, The Fallen is a modern-day Aesop's Fable:

Some stories are older than time. So are some people. The Fallen takes the reader on a journey into the human soul. Choice and consequence are explored as the characters come to understand the origin of their spirits. This is an erotic adventure that allows each reader to consider an important choice while enjoying a spellbinding story.

From the author of Card Shark, The Fallen has the same deep character development for which Gigi Miner is known, allowing the reader to feel as if they know the individuals contained within the pages. For more information, visit <http://www.lulu.com/content/491768>.

This week Linda Woods had the delightful experience of interviewing two psychic mediums who have formed a bond with the nature kingdom. Christian von Lahr and Christopher Valentine have written a book about fairies, elves, gnomes and leprechauns (well, actually they say it was channeled by the nature spirits themselves). To learn more about the nature spirits visit <http://www.thegnomesdepot.com>. Linda met the human authors recently at the Galactic Expo in Nashville, TN and attended their seminar with some skepticism. She was surprised to learn that two of her best friends had experienced visions of these tiny creatures in their homes or gardens. "Have I been under a rock all my life? How come I can't see them?" Linda questioned. "Well, maybe I can!" And Perhaps You Can Too! And Why Would You Want To See Them? Find out why in the audio interview at www.linda-woods.typepad.com/windowstowellness.

This newsletter relies on subscribers like you to send in articles, tips and resources. Therefore, the more subscribers we have, the more information we have to share and the more your message gets in front of others. Tell your writing and publishing colleagues about Writers in the Sky Newsletter or forward it to others you know who may be interested.

Writers in the Sky Podcast



In our Podcast you will receive information about the craft and business of writing. We offer interviews with authors and writers, as well as news about books, publishing and marketing.

Occasionally, a teleclass may be longer, but most of the classes are recorded in 15-minute segments which may be downloaded to your computer, iPod or mp3 player and used as an educational tool for busy people on the go.

New shows weekly! Check the schedule at <http://www.yvonneperry.net/WritersintheSkyPodcast.htm>. If you would like to be a guest on this show, let Yvonne know!

Word of Month

Having an extensive vocabulary is important to writers. In each issue of Writers in the Sky, I will introduce and define a word that we use don't often use. This word this month is:

Trencherman (trench-er-man)

A person who is devoted to eating and drinking to excess. A hearty eater; One who frequents another's table.

Example sentence:

During the holidays, we take on the character of a trencherman!

Poetry Corner: A Place for Poets to Share

A New Dish by Cherie Burbach

My words call out to me
like Thanksgiving leftovers
in the kitchen
late at night
nudging me awake
begging me
to mix them up
put them in a pretty dish
and devour them.

They ask me
to taste them
feel them in my mouth
smell their goodness
wrap my tongue around
their flavor.

They tell me
to enjoy them
now, in the moment,
before another year passes
and I'll have different words
to prepare
in a new dish.

Cherie Burbach is the author of two books of poetry, [The Difference Now](#), and [A New Dish](#), as well as [At the Coffee Shop](#), a humorous look at the world of Internet dating. Cherie works as a consultant for [PersonalsTrainer](#) in which she helps online daters write great profiles that catch attention. Watch for her new novel, [FOR THOSE WHO KNEW ZACH](#), coming soon. For more information, please visit her website at www.thedifferencenow.com.

HOLIDAYS

Having toiled for almost eleven months
Our families deserve an opportunity to gather
Lighten up, laugh, and lose some of our
Inhibitions in order to slow down and celebrate these
Days that are established for the purpose of
Appreciating each other, our blessings and the
Years that we have been allowed together
So take the time while we have the time... Cheers!

Creative

Called to convert the
Regular and ordinary into the
Exceptional and the
Artistic
Taking little or nothing and
Inventing new and stimulating ideas that bring
Value and motivate us to enjoy the
Exploration of life

Writing

“What a novel plot”
“Read on, it gets even better”
“Interesting, extremely interesting”
“This is the most amazing story”
“I just can’t put it down”
“Not the way I thought it would end”
“Gosh, I can’t wait for the next book”

Ken is a native Middle Tennessean, growing up in Nashville. A graduate of MTSU and resident of Murfreesboro, Ken has been a distribution manager for over 25 years. An avid reader of novels as well as business articles and books, he has admired writers and their work for years and desires to experience the joy of creating literary work of his own.

Book With A View: A Place to Showcase Your Book

The Fine Print of Self-Publishing - Book Review

The Fine Print of Self-Publishing by Mark Levine examines and discusses the most common contracts and services that authors must understand before signing any agreement with a publisher. Based on the author's experience during the nine years that he worked as a corporate, entertainment and intellectual property attorney, Mark breaks down common contracts into a language the rest of us can understand.

According to the author, the trend in the publishing world is that authors "are increasingly pursuing self-publishing as a viable alternative to traditional publishing". What to look for when seeking a self-publishing company for your book, knowing when publishers are charging more money for less service and what high priced books could actually mean are all discussed in this writer's reference book.

The first few pages get right into the nitty-gritty with royalty negotiations, editing services, copyrights, attaining ISBN numbers and UPC codes, wholesalers and contract clauses. Later he teaches readers to recognize and understand common contract terms, warranties, general provisions and miscellaneous sections of a contract.

This book consists solely of the author's personal opinion and advice on the top forty-eight self-publishing companies. He rates each of these companies according to how author-friendly their contracts are, the amount of customer support that is offered to authors and whether the company accepts book returns from bookstores.

Chapter 6 lists examples of outstanding self-publishing companies and explains why they are rated so high. Most of the fourteen companies in this category shared excellent commitment to both their products and services.

Chapter 7 lists "Pretty Good Self-publishing Companies", meaning the eight publishers listed here show at least one flaw, but are still worthy of consideration.

Chapter 8 lists about fifteen publishers who are "just okay", meaning they are considered to be less than average, but are not the worst publishers an author could choose.

Chapter 9 lists "Publishers to Avoid". While the author's intent is not to ruin businesses, he warns authors to reconsider using the eleven publishers he lists in this chapter. Here he lists companies who pad their portion of the books by charging higher prices for either retailers or authors, and others with similarly poor policies.

I do have to say I disagree with at least one aspect that Mark considers to be negative. Mark feels that if a company has a PO Box address rather than a physical one, it should be totally avoided. While I am aware that this can be a sign of a risky situation, many areas – including our own – do not have mail delivery and if you want mail, you must get a PO Box. In fact, our business has a PO Box. That is not our fault – it is just the options available to us. In fact it is quite common. So

in this regard, I have to disagree with Mark's criteria.

Another point he made regarding contract clauses regarding visual mediums (Television or Movie), I personally feel can fall in a somewhat grey area. Some publishers charge extra for negotiation and handling legalities and so forth, and Mark feels this extra charge is unnecessary. We were not aware of this potential downfall, but then the three books we have written are not destined for this medium - and as such, this area of the contract doesn't really apply to our book's genres. However authors of fiction and perhaps other genres that may appeal to visual mediums will certainly want to pay particular attention to this clause.

Mark Levine has written several scholarly pieces and two other self-published books – *I Will Faithfully Execute* and *Saturn Return*, prior to this more recent release. Holding dual majors in political science and journalism, he has also earned a law degree from the Georgetown University. His latest book, *The Fine Print of Self-Publishing*, was released in September of 2006.

These 218 pages are packed with valuable information for authors, and I will certainly keep my copy of the book on our writer's reference shelf.

Author: Mark Levine

Publisher: Bridgeway Books

ISBN: 1-933538-56-3

~ Book Reviewer: Lillian Brummet, Co-author of Trash talk - a guide for anyone concerned about their impact on the environment - & author of: Towards Understanding - a collection of poetry.
(<http://www.sunshinecable.com/~drumit>)

Read this if you are looking for "Mr. Right." - Book Reviewed by Kelli Glesige

Read this if you are looking for "Mr. Right.", February 8, 2006

Reviewer: Reader Views "www.readerviews.com" (Austin, Texas) Reviewed by Kelli Glesige for Reader Views (2/06)

Many of us have the impression that meeting people over the internet is very dangerous and should be avoided at all costs. Most of us would never tell someone looking for a date to search for one through an online dating website. However, Cherie Burbach may just change your mind about e-dating if you follow her advice and take the precautions she shares.

If you've tried dating through the traditional means and have found no success, maybe you should look at things in a new perspective. Cherie Burbach found herself to be 36 years old and single with a career she found satisfying. Something was missing however, because she really hoped for a husband and family someday. She finally decided to give e-dating a try and ultimately found the man she is currently happily married to. In her book, Cherie also tells us of her experiences, both

good and bad, and offers her views on how to make the whole e-dating process safe, fun and successful.

Most of us probably feel that dating in and of itself is not for the faint of heart, so e-dating can be an even scarier proposition. If you are still hoping to meet that special someone, it is important to be a complete person all on your own first. Time spent alone will help you to know what you really want so that when you meet someone, you will have a good idea if they are "Mr. Right", not just Mr. Right "for now". You will only be wasting time if you don't know what you are looking for.

Before reading "At the Coffee Shop," all my feelings about internet dating were negative. However, after reading the book, if I were in the situation of wanting to find a lasting relationship with someone and I had tried other means of dating without success, I would give internet dating a try.

Internet dating has the distinct advantage in that everyone at the site is looking to meet someone. There is much more control because you choose who you want to see, what time of day or night you want to look for a compatible profile, if you want to e-date just a little or more often, and you can take a break or even stop whenever you want. Cherie stresses that you NEVER give your address or name for safety sake, and if you ever feel uncomfortable online, block someone out and move on, especially if someone can't take a hint or just "creeps" you out.

"At the Coffee Shop" got its name because Cherie feels a coffee shop is the perfect setting to initially meet someone to see if you might be interested in seeing the person again. A coffee shop is a public place which is a MUST.

It is convenient and comfortable for both people, there is no pressure to carry things further with the uncertainty of whether or not to buy dinner, and it is easy to get up and leave if things aren't going well or stay and talk if you hit it off with this person. Limiting the initial meeting to one hour beforehand is a suggestion to help make the meeting more successful.

Although Ms. Burbach feels that internet dating is the easiest and most reliable way to meet people you will click with, she also states that any relationship involving interaction will take work to make it successful. You will meet nice guys, but just like in real life, you will also meet some goofs. "Internet dating is not for lonely freaks that can't find a date-it's for anyone that has yet to find the right person." If you are still looking to meet "Mr. Right," I would suggest reading this book!

*Cherie Burbach is the author of two books of poetry, *The Difference Now*, and *A New Dish*, as well as *At the Coffee Shop*, a humorous look at the world of Internet dating. Cherie works as a consultant for *PersonalsTrainer* in which she helps online daters write great profiles that catch attention. Watch for her new novel, *FOR THOSE WHO KNEW ZACH*, coming soon. For more information, please visit her website at www.thedifferencenow.com.*

Past Issues of Writers in the Sky Newsletter

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- Limit articles to 750 words or less.
- The piece must be about the craft or business of writing and publishing.
- Include a short bio with your submission so I may give proper credit.
- Use Times New Roman 11 point font.
- MS Word docs are okay, but txt files are preferred.
- Promotion of your own material is accepted if it is written in an advertorial (article) style.
- No colored text box (jpg, bmp, etc.) ads. The article must be content rich.
- Book reviews are accepted as long as they highlight the book and its author in a positive manner.
- Poetry is accepted. I will publish three short works (less than 25 lines) in each issue. Do not double space between lines.
- Announcements of upcoming events, personal accomplishments, special offers, etc. are accepted. Try to keep these less than 250 words.
- Each submitting writer retains the copyright to his or her own piece of literature and may use it elsewhere.
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