



Whether you are a published author or a writer-wanna-be, this e-zine is for you. Here, you will find articles, announcements, book reviews, poetry, and information about the craft and business of writing, publishing and book marketing written by our readers. Our goal is to connect the writing and publishing community through networking that benefits both. Please forward this e-zine to anyone you know who might enjoy its contents.

**AUTHOR’S CORNER by Yvonne Perry**

I’m pleased to welcome new WITS team member, Sarah Moore. She will be in charge of creating résumés and business docs for our clients. To help introduce her, we are offering all WITS readers a special rate. From May 1 through May 31, our résumé services are being discounted from \$175 to \$150 for up to two pages of dynamic copy and a cover letter. If you are thinking of a career change and need an updated résumé or C.V. for your job search, let us help you make a good first impression. Sarah will also be serving as a host for our podcast. She will be interviewing author Amy Martin about her book *Living to Tell About It, A Pursuit of Normalcy*. Amy’s book was written with assistance from Taryn Simpson; editing was provided by Barbara Milbourn. You could say this was a true team effort!

With warmer weather coming, I thought you might enjoy taking a book outdoors to read. Therefore, we have quite a few book reviews this month. Some of them were written by our team members for the clients we worked with this month. It’s always good to help authors get to the next point. Sharing their books with our readers is one way we do this.

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## Evaluate the Profit Power of Your Next Book Title

By Roger C. Parker

Titles are more than just words that appear on the front covers of books. Titles can create “brands” that not only help sell your book, but can change your life by pre-selling future books and positioning you as the obvious expert in your field, opening the doors to endless follow-up marketing opportunities.

I love titles, and I love talking about them and writing about them at my *Published & Profitable* website--[www.publishedandprofitable.com](http://www.publishedandprofitable.com)—and in my blogs. The right title is crucial to a nonfiction book’s success—and the author’s future success.

Unfortunately, titles are often taken for granted. Worse, titles are rarely tested. As a result, a lot of helpful and well-written books are doomed to obscurity, while lesser books with better titles continue to sell, year after year.

### Change and Nonfiction Book Success

As described in several of the articles, audios, case studies, and videos at *Published & Profitable*, there are ten key characteristics of effective titles—and books that enjoy perennial sales success typically incorporate many of the characteristics.

Change is one of the most important characteristics. The need for change is one of the major differences between fiction and nonfiction books. Whereas fiction books are purchased for pleasure, nonfiction books are purchased to achieve change. The desired change can be to solve a problem or to achieve a goal. Either way, it’s the reader’s *desire for change* that triggers the book’s sale, and everything that follows for the author. The implications of the need for titles that promise change involve *clarity*, *specificity*, and *urgency*.

- **Clarity.** The more obvious the change that the book offers, the more readers will be motivated to buy the book. Clarity involves simplicity; successful titles need no explanation, their promised benefits are obvious at a glance.
- **Specificity.** Details communicate credibility; details help titles target the intended market and can position a book apart from existing books on the topic.
- **Urgency.** Specificity can also trigger urgency, encouraging readers to buy the book right now, rather than putting off the purchase until “later.”

- **Powerful titles make change obvious.** Consider benefit and change-oriented titles like: Brent Sampson's *Sell Your Book on Amazon*, Frank Bettger's classic *How I Raised Myself from Failure to Success in Selling*, or my first best-seller, *Looking Good in Print: A Guide to Basic Design for Desktop Publishing*. In each case, there's no ambiguity about what the book's about, or the benefits that readers will enjoy.

### Example: Case Study in Title Testing

One of my favorite books has always been Carl Sewell and Paul B. Brown's *Customers for Life: How To Turn That One-Time Buyer Into a Lifetime Customer*. Isn't that a great title? The benefit is obvious.

However, as co-author Paul B. Brown revealed in an exclusive *Published & Profitable* interview, *that wasn't the book's original title!* The book's original title, one that the co-authors and the book's editor liked, was completely different. The only people who didn't like the title were members of a focus group composed of business book buyers who were given an advance copy of the book. They loved the contents, but wouldn't have purchased the book with the original title. Several members of the focus group not only suggested the title be changed, they actually suggested the "customers for life" concept!

Today, of course, with the Internet, it's easier than ever to test your book's title before it's too late. There are numerous low-cost techniques authors can use to ensure that their enthusiasm for their book's title is shared with prospective readers.

### To Learn More about Titles

To learn more about the twelve characteristics of choosing the right title for your book, visit [www.publishedandprofitable.com](http://www.publishedandprofitable.com) and download my free *Write Your Way to Success* report describing a 4-step action plan. You'll also get weekly tips and newsletters about planning, writing, promoting, and profiting from your book.

By signing up for my newsletter, you'll also be invited to free teleseminars and webinars held throughout the year. Listen on the phone and watch how titles are chosen and topics researched on the screen of your computer in real time!

*Roger C. Parker is the 32-Million Dollar Author. He's written 38 books that have sold over 1.6 million copies around the world. He created his Published & Profitable membership site, to share what he's learned about writing and publishing—and to help new authors avoid some of the mistakes he's made, and seen others make. Published and Profitable contains hundreds of articles, audios, assessments, case studies, interviews, templates, videos, and worksheets to help members plan, write, promote, and profit from a nonfiction book.*



## WITS Podcast Schedule May 2008

### May 2 John Tobin



Barbara Milbourn will be interviewing John Tobin—the Executive Director of the Energy LITERACY Project, Inc. This program is attempting to address the public perception of the energy industry by promoting balanced educational and informational programs based on the interlocking nature of energy in all of its forms. Topics include conservation and energy efficiency, the role energy plays in fueling the economy, and the impact our choices have on the environment. Mr. Tobin is the

author of *Confessions of an Energy Price Forecaster - A 12-Step Program to Enlightenment* published by Outskirts Press, 2008, Denver, Colorado.

## May 9 Roger Parker



Yvonne Perry will interview best-selling nonfiction author Roger Parker. His interest is in helping other authors plan, write, promote, and profit from a published book. In our interview, Roger will discuss the *10 Characteristics of Effective Nonfiction Titles*. His Website, Published & Profitable,

([www.publishedandprofitable.com](http://www.publishedandprofitable.com))

contains audios, checklists, reports, case studies, interviews, videos, and tools to help beat writer's block and get started. Be sure to read Roger's article in this issue of WITS Newsletter to learn how to evaluate the profit power of your next book title.

Listening to Writers in the Sky Podcast on a computer is easy.

Just click this link:

<http://yvonneperry.blogspot.com> and go to my blog.

On the right sidebar there is a list of archived shows. Click on the interview you would like to hear and it will open a post that has a link to open the audio file.

## May 16 Tim Stewart

Retired US Army Captain, Tim Stewart, is the author of *Positive Force* <http://timstewart.npauthors.com/>. *Positive Force* is a fictional story involving a red-headed nurse, a red-headed stranger (ghost), a police detective, and some lovable teenagers who find themselves involved in gangs. It comes complete with a constitution that can be applied to help young people focus their energies on positive action vs. negative influences. Join Yvonne Perry, the developmental editor who assisted Tim with his book, as she interviews him about the story, his work with youth, and his publishing and marketing experience with Nightengale Press.



## May 23 Amy Martin



Sarah Moore, our newest WITS team member and podcast host, will be interviewing author Amy Martin about her book *Living to Tell About It, A Pursuit of Normalcy*. Amy is an entrepreneur, author, philanthropist, wife, mother and quite literally, a survivor. Her memoir details her harrowing medical illnesses (Graves disease to colon cancer) and automobile accident that would require her to re-learn motor and speech skills—all before the age of 20. Her fight to return herself to “normalcy” is one that is both inspirational and unforgettable. To purchase Amy Martin's memoir, please visit [www.lulu.com/content/2193894](http://www.lulu.com/content/2193894) or at <https://stores.lulu.com/AmyMartin>. To view her book trailer created by Taryn Simpson please go to <http://youtube.com/watch?v=icJTWmtpWDL>.

## May 30 Christina Hamlett

Christina Hamlett is the author of *Movie Girl*—a book in the new fiction series just released by [Outskirts Press](http://Outskirts Press). The book is targeted to teens and tweens. Christina has written 25 books, 125 plays and musicals for young people, and 5 optioned feature films. She is also a professional script consultant for the movie industry, as well as a ghostwriter for [The Penn Group](http://The Penn Group) in Manhattan. Join Yvonne and Christina as these two ghostwriters share their stories.



## Thirteen Rules for Publicizing Your Book

by Mark David Gerson

1) There are no rules. What worked for your last book may not work on this one. What worked for your friend's book may not work for yours. Publicity is an art not a science. Feel out what works and go with it. If something doesn't seem to be working, let it go.

2) Your publisher won't do it for you. With few exceptions, your publisher (unless *you're* the publisher) won't provide a lot of marketing support — unless you're famous enough not to need marketing support. So if you want people to know about your book, it's up to you to tell them.

3) If you're self-publishing, don't skimp on your book cover. Your book cover is your most important promotional tool. Unless you have experience in the field, don't design it yourself. Have it designed by a professional book-cover designer (not by a graphic artist with no cover-design experience) and put the image on all your promotional material.

3a) Everyone has a fridge. Fridge magnets that show off your book cover are great promotional tools. They're even better than bookmarks because everyone in the household gets to see them. They're available inexpensively from [www.vistaprint.com](http://www.vistaprint.com).

3b) You have to wear something.....So you might as well be a walking billboard and wear a t-shirt or sweatshirt that shows off your book cover. For t-shirts, go to [www.vistaprint.com](http://www.vistaprint.com); for sweatshirts, [www.cafepress.com](http://www.cafepress.com)

4) Abandon all expectations. Sometimes your efforts will produce the desired results. Sometimes, they won't. Don't stress about it or beat yourself up. Just move on to your next idea.

5) Everyone loves an author. A recent survey says that 82% of Americans want to write a book someday. The fact that you have — and that you have a book with your name on the cover — buys you a lot of credibility with a lot of people, some of whom will buy your book simply because they've met the author.

6) New Mexico loves its authors. How easy do you think it would be, as an unknown New Yorker, to get your self-published book into a Borders in Manhattan? Many New Mexico bookstores, including the chains, are eager to support regional writers and are happy to set up signings and events for you. Don't be shy about approaching a store's manager or books/inventory manager. Remember, though, that you still have to promote your book and your event. Just because your book is on the shelf doesn't mean it will sell. Just because you have an event doesn't mean people will show up.

6a) Having a book-signing? Be focused and approachable. Just because you're sitting at a book-signing table doesn't mean people will come up to talk to you...or buy your book. Don't read or do other work at your table. Discourage friends and family from hanging around your table. Don't gossip with your fellow authors if you're doing a group signing. You're there to engage readers and sell books. Be friendly. Be focused. Be engaging. Be approachable. If someone doesn't buy a book, have a card or flyer for them to take away with them.

7) Don't be shy. Let anyone and everyone know that you've written a book. Share your passion for your subject. Sell yourself and your book to anyone who will listen. But don't be obnoxious about it. Always carry promotional material — business cards, fridge magnets, postcards, flyers — and hand it out liberally. Always have copies with you to sell...and sell them.

8) Everybody loves a winner. If writing a book buys you credibility, writing an award-winning book buys you even more. Enter contests and competitions. When you win or place, let *everyone* know and be sure to issue a press release.

9) Get testimonials. Encourage *everyone* who reads your book to send you their comments and to post reviews on Amazon. Even if you can't get reviews in the media, comments from satisfied readers can go on flyers and on your Website.

10) Don't forget the Internet. Get a Website. Start a blog. Join social networks like MySpace. Let the world know you're an author. Particularly on social networks, let people get to know you first as a person. They're more likely to buy your book if they like you. They're more likely to ignore you if they think you're just connecting with them to hustle your book. There is also an increasing number social networks geared specifically to authors and book marketing. They're great for ideas, less so for selling books. (Check out

my MySpace profile page at [www.myspace.com/mdg888](http://www.myspace.com/mdg888), my Websites at [www.markdavidgerson.com](http://www.markdavidgerson.com) and [www.lightlinesmedia.com](http://www.lightlinesmedia.com), and my blog at [www.markdavidgerson.blogspot.com](http://www.markdavidgerson.blogspot.com).)

11) Stay in touch with your readers. Collect e-mail addresses from your readers and stay connected with a newsletter that offers them real value, one they'll want to forward to friends and family.

12) Publicity is about freebies. There are many ways to get into the media that won't cost you a thing. Events listings are the most obvious. When you write book reviews or articles for newsletters (including *Sage*) and trade magazines, you'll get a short bio where you can include information about your book. If you're a college graduate, contact your alumni magazine. Mine has a regular spread that features new books and CDs by graduates. Contact your hometown paper. It may be thrilled to feature a story about a now-published native son or daughter.

12a) A publicist could be your best friend. Just because you can write doesn't mean you can write a press release. Just because there are 1001 ways to market your book doesn't mean you have the time or expertise to do them all. Even though I have a PR background, I chose to work with a publicist.

13) There are no rules. Read these ideas as well as those in books like Dan Poynter's *Self-Publishing Manual* and John Kremer's *1001 Ways to Market Your Book*, then find your own way, your own rhythm. Hone your intuitive senses to know what feels right and what doesn't, what will likely bear fruit and what won't. And then get out there and let the world know you've got the book it's been waiting for!

*Mark David Gerson is publicist-in-chief for his two books, The MoonQuest and The Voice of the Muse: Answering the Call to Write, as well as for his 2-CD set of guided meditations for writers, The Voice of the Muse Companion. To learn more about Mark David and to sign up for his free newsletter, visit his Website at [www.markdavidgerson.com](http://www.markdavidgerson.com).*

## Speaking Out Against Amazon's Recent Policy

by Valerie Connelly

Some of you have been keeping track of the latest Amazon attempt to monopolize the digital printing market. Here is what I think about this:

This is an absurd—dare I say, monopolistic thought! This apparently applies primarily to the "self-published" authors in the author mills like Author House, Xlibris, etc... and I am certain that Lightning Source is all lawyered up on this one. Interesting how greedy Amazon is, isn't it? And Booksurge has the Worst quality in the industry. I have dealt with BookSurge (before LSI had color books) and they have no concern at all for the author or the publisher. I will never go there to make books.

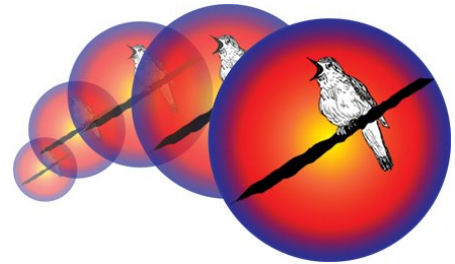
The whole thing is going to be very interesting to watch as it unfolds. Most of the Nightengale Press sales are not on Amazon anyway, and because we are so well distributed at B&N, and others etc...this is not really any kind of threat to us. Also, I see that our books are all still up on Amazon. No need to worry about this at this time. Nightengale Press is not leaving Lightning Source for anything. By the way --- can you just imagine Ingram's response to this --- since LSI in part of Ingram! Whew!

Today, I received this from Publisher's Marketing Hotline, Terry Nathan, Director of PMA, the Independent Book Publishers Association. PMA has clout and is the best organization for the small and medium-sized publishers like Nightengale Press. I have been a member since 2003. Here is what they have put out:

**Subject: PMA Speaking Out Against Amazon's Recent Policy**

Dear Valerie,

Many of you may have been following the recent news regarding Amazon.com's new policy aimed at publishers who use print-on-demand technology to sell directly on Amazon.com. A statement of their policy may be found on the Amazon Website <http://phx.corporate->



[ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=176060&p=irol-printondemand](http://ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=176060&p=irol-printondemand). To express our concern at what we feel could be a significant financial hardship for small and independent publishers, your association is releasing the following statement to the media:

PMA, The Independent Book Publishers Association, representing more than 4,000 independent publishers, is speaking out against Amazon's recent policy aimed at publishers who use print-on-demand technology to sell directly on amazon.com. The company has directed that publishers either must print their books on demand exclusively at Amazon's subsidiary printer for fulfillment of orders placed with Amazon or incur additional cost to print elsewhere and maintain inventory with the online retailer.

"This policy imposes a significant financial burden on tens of thousands of small and independent publishers who can least afford it," points out Executive Director Terry Nathan. "Without the opportunity to benefit from competitive pricing, small publishers risk at best an expensive and needless overhaul of their manufacturing process, and at worst, the loss of their livelihood.

"On behalf of all the small and independent publishers whose businesses are in jeopardy, we urge Amazon to reconsider its position," continues Nathan. "Over the years, Jeff Bezos and his company have given small and independent publishers a level playing field to compete with the largest of companies. Suddenly, this magnificent playing field has been converted into a 'members only' club, to the detriment of those very publishers who have contributed to Amazon's success. We will continue to monitor developments in the weeks ahead."

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Let me say this again: I believe Amazon is way out of bounds on this, and I will stand firm against this kind of move. I do not see books being removed any time soon, and I would only see the B&N people gearing up to take on even more volume than they already do. Also, it is a good time for all of you to work at bringing your fans and your market plans to your own Websites and the Nightengale Press bookstore. We'll all keep watching this, but honestly, it is going to be a long time before they can contact and try to strong-arm the more than 4,500 publishers whose books are printed at Lightning Source.

Valerie Connelly

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Phone 847-810-8498

Publisher's URL: [www.nightengalepress.com](http://www.nightengalepress.com)



**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](mailto:writer@yvonneperry.net). Here are some announcements from our readers this month:**

Author Solutions, Inc., the creators of Wordclay, just launched another free service I think your readers and listeners would be interested in. It's called AuthorTree, and it's a free Website creation service. It's available for any author to use, regardless of their publisher. The service allows authors to

add a variety of features to their Website, including author biographies, detailed book information, book reviews, excerpts, a calendar of author events, ordering capabilities, a link-sharing tool and a blog. For more information and to start building your author Website, visit <http://www.authortree.com>.

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### **\$1,000 for the First Chapter of a Novel? Now That's a Writing Contest!**

The third annual Writing Show First-Chapter-of-a-Novel Contest is awarding \$1000 for the best first chapter of an unpublished novel. We're also offering four other cash prizes and ten 750-word critiques. Early deadline May 20, 2008; late deadline June 20, 2008. Winners announced on October 1, 2008. Full rules, instructions for entering, and more detail can be found on The Writing Show Website at <http://writingshow.com/contests/2008/2008callforentries.html>.

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The Morning Nudge is sent each morning to subscribers of Suzanne Lieurance's list. Her words to inspire are to motivate you to get a little writing done each day. To become a subscriber, email Suzanne at [suzannelieurance@hotmail.com](mailto:suzannelieurance@hotmail.com) or visit her Web site: <http://www.workingwriterscoach.com>.

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Elizabeth "Bo" Drury is a writer of short stories and has one completed book length story ready to submit to an agent or publisher. She wrote a column for a small town newspaper for several years before trying her hand at fiction. Her work can be seen on Authors Den and Long Story Short, an e-zine publisher. Elizabeth recommends:

*OUR GOLDEN YEARS* For those of you who are approaching the golden era of your life and for those of us who have already made it, congratulations. So many have not been as fortunate as we have been. We've survived the tender years of growing up, adolescence, first loves, losses and disappointments, wars, weddings, children, and now retirement. Some have been successful, others have just skimmed by, but here we are equal in our needs, and we all have them. What to do now that we have made it thus far? How to cope with problems we face in declining years? A gentleman writer I came in contact with recently has a collection of books he has written, filled with truth, humor, and facts that removes the sharp edges from the reality of our shared dilemma. Three books: *Senior Moments*, *More Senior Moments*, and *Years of a Million Dreams* by David W. Silva are well worth reading; you get so much for so little. Available from Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

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### **Free Phone Seminar on the Power of Ebooks**

Only a few short years ago, E-Books were irrelevant. Today, E-Books have become an extremely powerful tool for test marketing a book, generating revenue, building up an e-mail list, producing leads for your business, starting a small business, generating greater profits and expanding your reach.

As a special gift to my subscribers and friends, I have persuaded David Riklan, the founder of SelfGrowth.com and e-book marketing genius, to offer an exclusive free TeleSeminar on "The Power of E-Books and E-Book Marketing." To sign up for this no-cost TeleSeminar, go to <http://www.1shoppingcart.com/app/?Clk=2350226>

David has developed an astonishing strategy using E-Books to help him generate massive revenue, increase traffic to his website and help build up an enormous email list of over 950,000 subscribers! In one 24-hour campaign, he generated \$108,142 in revenue from E-Book sales alone. He has used this same E-Book strategy to help make his website the #1-ranked Self Improvement website on the Internet. SelfGrowth.com now gets over 900,000 visitors a month.

In addition to the \$108,142 he earned, he has used free E-Books to generate many thousands of qualified subscribers and even used his first E-Book to test market his successful print book. Best of all... he created an informative useful E-Book from scratch in less than one week! Sound enticing? During this informative free TeleSeminar, he'll teach you how you can do the exact same thing -- and more!

Whether you are an author, a small business owner, or have a great book in your heart, an effective E-Book strategy is necessary to skyrocket you to success in 2008! He only has room for 100 of my subscribers and friends to attend this exclusive seminar, so sign up fast while space is still available.

To sign up now, go to <http://www.1shoppingcart.com/app/?Clk=2350226>

E-mail Carol Denbow: [CarolDenbow@gmail.com](mailto:CarolDenbow@gmail.com)

Website <http://www.BooksByDenbow.Weebly.com>

Free monthly e-zine [A Book Inside](#) Book reviews on request, query first

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Yvonne Perry will be leading a workshop for the Tennessee Writers Alliance 3rd Annual Writer's Conference. She will present two, 1.5-hour workshops on ***Book Promotion in the Digital Age: Online Book Marketing.***

Other experts include: Bill Brown, Author, Vanderbilt Professor (poetry); Gloria Ballard, Author, Journalist for the Tennessean (creative non-fiction); Lantz Powell, Author, Owner/Agent of Literary Agency for Southern Authors; (What Agents Want) Tamara Baxter, Author, ETSU Professor (Manuscript Critique); Tracy Crudup, Author (Romance genre); Jimmy Carl Harris, Author, Professor Southeastern Louisiana University (Write Risky-Fiction).

The 2008 conference will be held at Battleground Academy in Franklin, TN June 6th (1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and June 7th (9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) To register for the conference, go to <http://www.tn-writers.org/Workshops.asp>.

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### **The Future of the Book: Traditions of Today Meet the Technology of Tomorrow**

Bookhitch is close to releasing its community book. This book is the creative result of the bookhitch Community Book Project. It represents a unique concept whereby many different authors wrote the plot line and our community voted how the story would progress. This book embodies inventive collaboration and the future of the publishing industry, containing technological advances throughout.

Every Book includes RFID Tags, QRCode Technology, and is printed using state-of-the-art equipment using environmentally friendly techniques and paper. It is not only distinct in its features and overall concept, but it represents a worthwhile cause: all of the profits from the sale of each book are being donated to educational organizations.

We have just launched our sneak peek page, where you can take a look at the current cover design and find more information about QRCode technology and RFID tags. Visit <http://www.bookhitch.com/sneakpeek.asp> for more information.

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**Are you having problems getting along with your Mother-in-Law?** Then, Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> is a special day for you. It's a few days before Mother's Day, it's author Sally Shield's birthday, it's the only day you can get over \$2000 in Free Bonus Gifts when you purchase her terrific book on how to get along with the other woman in your husband's life — his mom.

In *The Daughter-in-Law Rules: 101 Surefire Ways to Manage (and Make Friends with) Your Mother-in-Law!* you will learn:

**The 7 Essential Things** every wife needs to know in order to ensure a lifetime of wedded bliss.....and the most common mistakes that daughters-in-laws make (and how to correct them!)

**The Magical Methods** of handling the decorum of housekeeping when Mom comes to stay.....and **The 7 Urgent Undertakings** to put into practice at her house!

**How to Survive Holiday Time** (and other can't-get-out-of family visits) with your mother-in-law... and the 3 Simple Strategies that will abolish all arguments with your husband in regards to his mother— **Forever!**

**5 Indispensable Insider Tips** for what to expect when you (and your MIL) are expecting ..... and Tried and True Techniques for Having the **Happiest MIL on the block!**

Small but Significant Tidbits to Attend to When you have a Toddler...

**BIG TIP:** the Simple 4-Step Process that ANY daughter-in-Law can use to immediately eliminate 90% of all future D.I.L.Z. (daughter-in-law Zings!)

How to create a personalized set of rules customized for your very own MIL!

The point of *The Daughter-in-Law Rules* is to help you stay one step ahead of your mother-in-law. It won't be easy at first. When the going gets tough, remember, you are younger and hipper than she is, but most importantly, you have her son! You'll notice that as you start to apply these calculatingly friendly defenses you will no longer be looking for her approval.

Help Sally reach the #1 position on Amazon.com and help yourself or someone else who needs the humorous advice in *The Daughter-in-Law Rules*. See the list of freebies at <http://thedilrules.com/specialoffer/>. (Fifteen percent of the proceeds of this book will go to the charity Much Love—an amazing non-profit, no-kill organization dedicated to reducing overpopulation, abuse and neglect of domestic animals.)

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Many people set out to create a freelance writing career for themselves. Yet, somewhere along the way they get discouraged and give up. They give up because they can't stay focused and they don't know the correct steps to take to create the career they're longing for. Also, they have no idea of what they should be doing and when they should be doing it.

If you're ready to learn how to stay focused, ready to learn what you need to do in order to build the writing career of your dreams, and ready to learn when you should take each step to create this career, here is the help you need. My new *Working Writer's Summer Bootcamp* will lead you step by step, through three months of intensive training to create the writing career of your dreams.

Only ten writers will be accepted into this program. These ten writers will work together closely over the summer. They will participate in weekly 55-minute group coaching teleclasses and in weekly manuscript critique teleclasses. They will start building a freelance writing career right away!

Register for *Working Writer's Summer Bootcamp* before all ten spaces are filled. Sign up [Here Today!](#) Boot camp starts Monday, June 2, 2008. Email Suzanne Lieurance: [suzannelieurance@hotmail.com](mailto:suzannelieurance@hotmail.com) or visit her on the Web: <http://www.workingwriterscoach.com>.

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### **Online book publicity workshop June 2-27, 2008, helps authors build buzz.**

Got a book coming out you want to promote? Has your publisher's publicist moved on to other projects? Do you have a book in stores that you know deserves more media attention than it's getting? Do you need to know more about book promotion for your next book proposal? You need "Book Publicity 101: How to Build Book Buzz," a dynamic online course taught by a veteran publicist and author.

Offered June 2-27, 2008, the class is taught in a forum format, with lessons and homework assignments posted online in a private, password-protected forum. The highly-interactive course covers:

- How to create a book publicity blueprint you'll be excited about
- The single secret most authors don't know about generating ongoing media exposure
- The most effective and cost-efficient publicity tactics
- How to generate buzz online using virtual book tours and other techniques
- Radio and TV producer hot buttons
- How to bring an energizing new level of creativity to your publicity efforts

Students receive instructional materials and resources and complete weekly assignments that help them discover how easy it is to create book buzz. Student interaction on the forum offers fresh perspectives and new ideas for all participants while one-on-one instructor guidance and input takes your work to the next level. A free-for-all Q&A corner lets students get answers to questions not covered in the course materials, making this a highly-personalized learning experience for nonfiction and fiction authors.

The class is taught by Sandra Beckwith, a recovering award-winning publicist; publisher of the free e-zine Build Book Buzz; and author of three books, including two on publicity topics.

Registration is \$179 and limited to 20 students. Send course inquiries to Beckwith at [sb@buildbookbuzz.com](mailto:sb@buildbookbuzz.com) or register at <http://www.buildbookbuzz.com/workshops/book-publicity.htm>.

## The Writing Life: How to Overcome Writer's Block

by JJ Murphy



What do you do when the muse abandons you? How do you cope with the blank page? Writers, like all artists, get stuck from time to time. Here are a few techniques that will help you negotiate past the obstacles in your writing path:

**1. What's the problem?** If you can identify the source of your anxiety, you will have a better chance of finding the right solution. You may be attempting to write in a new genre, shape your piece for a new audience, rewrite a piece because you have learned new information, or have ambivalent feelings about your subject matter.

**2. Ask questions.** If you are dealing with new material or a new editor, you may need to ask questions about the most important

information for your readers. You may need to copy or transcribe interview notes, re-read the work of experts or find a mentor. If you know why you are writing the piece and can envision your reader's expectations, you narrow the focus of what may have appeared to be a broad topic.

**3. Seek out examples of successful writing.** If you are attempting an essay, a short story or brochure content, read well-written essays, short stories, or brochures. What makes you keep reading? Try making an outline to see how the piece is organized. Plagiarism is never acceptable, but some writers transcribe or copy pieces to develop a more visceral sense of the rhythm, pace, tone or other elements that distinguish a compelling written work from an ordinary piece.

**4. Invite your muse to join you.** Sometimes you need to switch from computer screen to colored index cards or from keyboard to markers. Scramble your sentences, play a word game, write a nonsense piece, change from third person to first person - do whatever it takes for you to feel like writing is fun. For me, taking a long hike with my notebook and pen often gets me unstuck. A sentence or concept suddenly "snaps into place" when I move and breathe rhythmically.

**5. Pace yourself.** A brainstorming or freewriting session is often an effective way to capture your passion. Get everything written, then let the piece rest. Return at a later date and read what you have written, noting the most compelling ideas or language. Some writers stop writing mid-sentence to give them a place to start after taking a break. Unless you are under an extreme deadline, let time pass between each draft. You need time to shape and organize your ideas.

**6. Set mini-goals or deadlines.** If you have a well-run critique group, test your draft before submitting it to an editor, client or instructor. Do your readers follow your arguments? Are you able to add or delete information to help shape your writing? Give yourself time to draft, edit, rewrite and revise from the time you accept the assignment until the time you have to submit the work.

**7. Change is constant.** If you write regularly, you will get stuck sometimes and you will flow effortlessly sometimes. Accepting that writing is a process, like breathing and eating. No two days will be the same. Sameness leads to boredom. If you are bored, your readers will be bored. You don't need to cave in or give up when you get stuck, you just need an accessible Plan B, Plan C or other way to get past the obstacle.

**8. Checks and balances.** Are you reaching your goals? Have your goals changed? Keep a log of your typical day. Do your actions carry you toward your goals or are they distractions? Which writers typify success to you? How do they use their time? Are you willing to make changes in your day/week/month to reach your goals?

Writers are compelled to write. Noticing stale writing or mistakes gives you a chance to think outside the box. Sometimes the only real block is how you think. Instead of telling yourself that you're worthless, give yourself a pat on the back for noticing what is not working and let yourself try again.

*JJ Murphy is a nature writer, blogging hiker, locavore curriculum creator and tree-hugger currently based in Harriman, NY. Visit <http://www.writerbynature.com> for more information on JJ's writing services and her favorite places for gear and supplies.*

## Can you Pounce on a Breaking News Event?

By Scott Lorenz

Can you pounce on a breaking news event? Not everybody can, but if your subject has breaking news potential then you'd better be ready to take advantage of it.

One such opportunity presented itself to Westwind Communications on February 19, 2008 when Fidel Castro announced his resignation. One of my author clients has a gorgeous coffee table photo book on CUBA and has made 40 plus quasi illegal trips to the island nation. He's an American citizen and expert on CUBA. (CUBA, 120 pgs., \$65, Corazon Press, Ann Arbor, MI, ISBN 0-9768349-0-1)

Having pitched this book and his story to all major media from Good Morning America and Nightline to Syndicated Radio, all of the big media outlets said - I'm not exaggerating - "Sure we'll cover it... when Fidel dies."

So, like vultures circling above, we've been waiting for every slip, fall, missed parade, or bad medical report about Fidel so we could jump on the opportunity. It finally came at 5:30am on the morning of February 19, 2008 with the announcement of Fidel's resignation. That was almost as good as the dictator passing on... less drama but still worth covering since it announced a change in power of the United States' long time nemesis of 50 years.

So, I dusted off the release about Fidel's death that had been sitting in wait for two years, changed the headline to reflect his resignation, and a few other items and out it went to my carefully maintained and targeted list of media contacts and put it on the wire by 6 a.m. while everyone else was still sleeping.

The result was outstanding. CBS Radio immediately saw the release, set up an interview that ran in Detroit all day and night. Then, National Public Radio set up an in-studio interview as did WJR and WCSX radio. Print media got into the act with interviews in The Ann Arbor News, Detroit News, Observer & Eccentric and Oakland Press. We even got interest, but unfortunately no story since the book was not newly released, from the Wall Street Journal.

Then, one of Amazon's Top Ten reviewers asked for a review copy, which, by itself could create a ground swell of book sales. (thousands have already read his review) A travel writer from MSNBC wanted to get Kenny's expert advice on traveling to CUBA and wrote up a nice story. Then four weeks later that same writer, Christopher Elliott, published a variation of the piece for the Tribune Media Service which was then picked up by such notable publications as the Seattle Times. The best news? The media inquires are still coming in. Interestingly enough, three producers and reporters called me after they got to their office and found out that Fidel had resigned, needed a Cuba expert, did a Google search and found my press release on top of the Google News section. I love technology!

This whole operation was a success because I constantly monitor the news and set Google Alerts to watch for key news items. And, of course, I had the release ready to go. Everything was thought out, my client was ready for two years. The gun was loaded, cocked, and ready to fire.

And you know another upside of this? I can still use a version of my original "Fidel's Death...." release later! Don't think bad things about me, somebody somewhere might have your obituary already written too!

When should you send out a press release? My acid test is that if it's newsworthy and if it's timely and useful to the reader, send it. It's that simple.

There are many factors to weigh when considering the need to send out a press release. As a publicist I have sent thousands of releases over the years and while there are no hard and fast rules, the most important factor is that you've got to make sure it's newsworthy and useful to the reader. Anything else and it's just a waste of time for the members of the media.

So what press release do you have in your hip pocket? Are you ready when breaking news hits?

*Scott Lorenz is President of Westwind Communications, a public relations and marketing firm with a special knack for working with individuals and entrepreneurs to help them get all the publicity they deserve and more. Lorenz has handled public relations and marketing for numerous authors, doctors, lawyers, inventors and entrepreneurs. As a book marketing expert, Lorenz is called upon by top execs and bestselling authors to promote their books. Learn more about Westwind Communications' book marketing approach at <http://www.book-marketing-expert.com> or contact Lorenz at [scottlorenz@westwindcos.com](mailto:scottlorenz@westwindcos.com) or by phone at 734-667-2090.*

## May Poems



### Mother's Poem

My Daddy taught me soccer,  
How to kick a ball.  
Mama took my picture  
And hung it on the wall.

Daddy gave me truth,  
And I'm glad he did,  
But mama took my hand  
And helped me to be a kid.

She's my mother, She's my friend,  
Defender of my cause.  
When I was little,  
She was my Santa Claus.

Everything she taught me  
Taught me to be a man.  
Now that I am grown up,  
I am her biggest fan.

My teenager years were tough,  
I had nowhere to turn.  
Like the Energizer Bunny,  
I had energy to burn.

But, while those years were tough,  
I somehow made it through,  
But it never would have happened Mom,  
If there wasn't you

Cause you're my mother, you're my friend,  
Defender of my cause.  
When I was little,  
You were my Santa Claus.

Everything you taught me  
Taught me to be a man.  
Now that I am grown up,  
I am your biggest fan.

With high school behind me,  
I set off to find my dreams,  
The college life with glowing,  
But it is never like it seems.

Like Dorothy said before me,  
And, now I know it's true,  
There is no place like home, Mom,  
And I learned that from you,

Cause you're my mother, you're my friend,

Defender of my cause.  
When I was little,  
You were my Santa Claus.

Everything you taught me  
Taught me to be a man.  
Now that I am grown up,  
I am your biggest fan.

Now, on my wedding day,  
as we dance this dance.  
I have one thing to say,  
While I have the chance.

Thank you, Mom for everything  
You did, and did not do.  
I love my wife. I will love my kids.  
And forever, I'll Love You.

*Tim Stewart is the author of Positive Force (<http://timstewart.npauthors.com/>) –a book to help keep kids out of gangs. He will be Yvonne Perry's guest on Writers in the Sky Podcast on May 16.*

## Hearts Aflutter

Young love tends to make me smile;  
Hearts aflutter  
Giddy laughter  
Sweet surprises of amazement,  
First time blushing flushing cheeks.

Optimism running rampant  
Common sense a distant glen where  
Foggish mist obscures all vision  
Save the light in lover's eyes.

And who's to say where love may lead?  
Who is seer of mystic power  
Adept with craft of bold prediction?  
Can one know what is unknown?

Time reveals the hidden treasures  
Buried deep beneath the stone.  
Lovers with their hearts aflutter  
Need not face the search alone.

*Dennis Martin has written 13 plays –several of which have been presented as staged readings in the Baltimore Playwright's Festival. Dennis has written over 800 poems and self-published a book of poems titled "Love and Passions" available at [www.iuniverse.com](http://www.iuniverse.com) and major online bookstores as well as six other poetry collections and 3 novels available at [www.lulu.com/dsmartin](http://www.lulu.com/dsmartin). Read more about Dennis at <http://www.iwritesome.com> or blog with him at <http://iwritesome.blogspot.com>.*

## Rain

Rain Is Pouring Consciousness  
A Flowing Awareness  
From The Stream  
Of Infinity

Wind Dances In Circles  
Bending Matter  
And Reshaping Thought  
In A Circle  
Of Space

A Storm Releases  
Captured Energy  
Clearing A Channel  
Of Connection  
For  
Disconnected Emotions  
And  
Impulses

Clouds Carry Remembering  
In Colors Of White  
Sprinkled With Gray  
To Announce Freedom  
In Diversity  
Peace In Unity  
Love In Forgiveness  
And Self  
In Multiplicity

*Hal Manogue, From the 2009 Collection Of Short Sleeves A Book For Friends. [www.shortsleeves.net](http://www.shortsleeves.net) and <http://halmanogue.blogspot.com/>*

## **War And Peace**

Sky dark and furious, clouds  
dueling with swords of lightening ,  
rain rushes down anxious to escape.

Fury spent the sky quiets,  
gently cries as it falls.

Flowers and trees look  
up with bruised heads,

forgiving, they soak the  
rain into their hearts.

Dark clouds part as a rainbow appears  
in the sky, beautiful to the eye.

The clouds have  
made their peace.

No sound except the soft  
pitter, patter of the rain.

*Gail Livesay is 57 years old and lives in Berea, Kentucky with her husband, Wayne. They have two children, Michael and Lisa and have been blessed with two granddaughters, Marina and Hannah. Gail writes poetry, fiction, plays and is currently revising her autobiography about growing up with bipolar disorder which was neither recognized and/or diagnosed.*

## **Always the Road**

By Jan Bossing © Joelton, TN 2008

Those eyes in my mirror, not looking too good, my old sweetheart died.  
His boy called to tell me; I closed those eyes and cried.

I walked to the closet, I opened the door.  
I wrapped myself up, in a shirt that he wore.

I always meant to call him, to get together one more time.  
Find out what happened in his life; tell him about mine.

But I waited too long, and I waited too late.  
Now there's no number to call; nothing left to say.

So I cry for our beauty; I cry for our youth.  
I cry for our searches, for meaning and truth.

And the longer I live, the more I know.  
It was never the arrival; it was always just the road.

The coming, the going; the work, the play.  
The living every night; the loving every day.  
The taking, the giving; the loving, the living.

Oh, babe, don't fade.  
Please stay, one more day.

The longer I live, the more I know.  
It was never the arrival; it was always just the road.  
Always just the road, just the road.

## **How To Unearth Buried Treasures**

by Michael Levy

Every person on earth has a story to tell that illuminates a treasure chest of experiences. Money should not be the reason to write, for if a person wants to earn a little money by becoming a self published author, then they need to start out with a lot of money.

It is very doubtful most writers will make any money by publishing their own books. However, if they wait for perfection or a large publishing house to accept them ... hell may have to freeze over first.

"It does not matter how slowly you go ... so long as you do not stop." - Confucius

Some people believe they have the talent to become famous authors and, no doubt, they are legends in their own minds. But having talent and being a good writer does not mean you will find success as an author. It just means you are a good writer. Many badly written books become best sellers, whilst many wonderful works go unnoticed. Nobody said we live in a fair world.

"The maker of a sentence launches out into the infinite and builds a road into Chaos and Old Night, and is followed by those who hear him with something of ... Wild, Creative Delight." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

There are other folks who say they could never become authors because they have not perfected their style yet. Some say they have nothing to write about. Well, everybody has something to share with the world even if it is how they continue to fail. In fact, negativity seems to be more acceptable to the public than positivity. Books that make the public cry, dramatize life, or scare them seem to be the ones on the bestseller list more often.

"Not knowing when the dawn will come... I open every door." - Emily Dickinson

The first thing new self-published authors have to realize is they will most likely be rejected by the media and general public unless they can afford the services of a reputable publicist. And there are many non-reputable scam merchant publicists out in the publishing world waiting for the next starry-eyed sucker to come along. Many pitfalls await a new author and unscrupulous predators await around every corner. They all seem very friendly, but if they are buttering you up ... be careful you are not the roast of the day. You can also take advantage of a "pay-for-placement publicist" and for only \$3,000 you can have your name mentioned in a top magazine and they will even quote you as an expert. (Only recommended for those authors with a driving ego and deep pockets.)

"I passionately hate the idea of being with it... I think an artist has always to be out of step with his time." - Orson Welles

Never, ever go into debt to sell books. The self-publishing world is filled with many people who will eagerly take your money and promise you great exposure. Most times you will lose your money and feel very disappointed. So the second thing to realize is ... do not have any expectations of making the big time. Just publish your book for the fun of it. If you can find someone to help you as a partner with no money up front, who will share the profits they make for you, then that is the best solution of all. When your book does sell a million copies then it will be a very pleasant, welcome surprise. It will be a bonus ... for you only set out to enjoy the journey. The reality that you generated fame and fortune along the way is just the icing on the cake ... it is not the cake itself.

"The mind is not a vessel to be filled ... but a fire to be ignited." - Plutarch

Now that you have heard all the good news, how are you going to actually publish your book?

- Are you going to get a good copy and format editor? (Recommended for first timers and for veteran writers.)
- Are you going to get a good traditional printer ? (Only recommended for people with deep pockets, for large print runs are required.)
- Are you going to get a publicist? (Even deeper pockets needed.)
- Are you going to get a literary agent? (Good ones are very selective.)
- Are you going to publish an e-book and sell it through the Internet?
- Are you going to use a print-on-demand publisher? (Recommended for most folks with little money to spare and can be combined with an e-book.) Do a search on the Internet and find the best on-demand publisher who is fair and genuinely wants to help you succeed.

"I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world." --Mother Teresa

Publishing your own book can be a very enjoyable experience, or it can become a tortuous, depressing event. It will all depend on how you set up your mind's prospects for success. With 70,000, or

is it 700,000 (what does one more naught matter) new books published each year, the chances of becoming rich and famous are slim. But to die with your book still inside you is to have wasted your life on earth.

"All that is gold does not glitter ... not all those who wander are lost." --J.R.R. Tolkien

Once you have published your book, you are a success. No matter what your friends and family may say, you have published and they have not. No matter what negativity the media communicates, they are just doing their job and you are still a published author. They, on the other hand, probably are not. Remember what Moliere said: "Writing is like prostitution. First you do it for the love, and then for a few close friends, and then for the money."

There are some great Websites that help authors find their niche market. If you write to the owners of the site, they will be delighted to help you find the correct highway to travel on shaping your dreams into a reality.

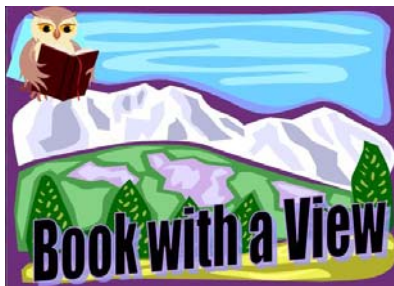
"Happiness is when what you think ... what you say and what you do are in harmony." – Gandhi

Publish your book, enjoy the experience, and know you are successful by your actions and deeds ... not by other people's opinions. Now, set up a Website to sell your book. Submit your link to other Websites and search engines. Be persistent in all your endeavors. Be patient in all your pursuits. Be joyful in your approach to prosperity. And most important of all... be helpful to others.

"If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams... and endeavors to live the life he has imagined... he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours." - Henry David Thoreau

*International radio host Michael Levy, is the author of eight inspirational books including the financial/inspirational book, Invest With A Genius. Michael's poetry and essays now grace many Websites, newspapers, journals and magazines throughout the world. He is a prominent speaker on health maintenance, stress eradication, wealth development, authentic happiness and inspirational poetry. Michael Levy Professional Optimist, PO BOX 7, 3032 East Commercial Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33308 USA. Website: <http://www.pointoflife.com/>. Email: [mikmikl@aol.com](mailto:mikmikl@aol.com)*

## May Book Reviews



Book Title: *Living to Tell About It, A Pursuit of Normalcy*  
Author: Amy Y. Martin  
ISBN Number: 978-1-4357-1449-6  
Publisher: LuLu.com  
Genre and Target Market: memoir; women; personal medical issues  
Publication Date: 2008  
Book Length in Pages: 149  
Reviewer: [Sarah Moore](#)

When young men and women leave for college, they anticipate the newfound freedoms and responsibilities that will come with life away from home. Like all teenagers, Amy Martin likely felt invincible as she prepared to take on the world. However, in her first endeavor as an author, Mrs. Martin shares with her readers an amazing series of health crises that took her down roads she never could have anticipated. Her story is one of strength and survival, and her determination to live a normal life leaves each reader as her personal cheerleader.

Amy Martin's first medical nightmare started at the age of nineteen when she experienced a stroke upon exiting the pool on her college campus. As she writes in the first chapter, "I came up to the surface and experienced an excruciating pain above my right eye ... Little did I know this would be the beginning of a long journey." As Mrs. Martin shares with the readers, she was an athlete who appeared the picture of health. Who thinks of a teenager as being prone to a stroke while swimming laps in the pool? This striking scenario of the first chapter automatically reminds the reader that nothing in life can be taken for granted.

*Living to Tell About It* goes on to explain Amy Martin's struggles with a partial and later a full colectomy, a resulting MRSA infection, head trauma from a severe car accident followed by intensive and lengthy physical therapy, Graves' disease, gallbladder surgery and the death of her mother. Amy's story unfolds in a chronological fashion, meeting the readers during her freshman year at North Carolina State and bringing us to her current life nearly twenty years later as wife and mother of two sons.

While brief explanations of the diseases are given and resources are provided for those who wish to learn more about each condition, details about Graves' disease or colon cancer is not the focus of the book. I do not believe the author ever intended to thoroughly inform us of the specifics surrounding each medical crisis that she experienced, as a much longer book would have been needed to do each episode justice!

Instead, the most compelling aspect of Martin's book is the sense the reader gets of her unending battles to keep her body and mind healthy. As each page is turned, Martin experiences a new, unexplainable symptom or prepares for another surgery. She makes us feel the exhaustive repetition with which each new hurdle was met and conquered. As I progressed through each chapter, I kept reminding myself, "This is all actually happening to one person!" Just when you think you will get a chance to take a deep breath and enjoy a sense of normalcy with Mrs. Martin, another episode knocks you out of complacency.

I am drawn to how relatable Amy Martin becomes through the course of her memoir. Through all of the compelling problems of surgeries gone awry and life-threatening infections, Mrs. Martin uses ordinary details to help us feel connected to her extraordinary life. The sports store where she met her high school boyfriend, the time she played hooky from physical therapy to enjoy some chocolate and a soap opera, the songs played at her wedding—all of these moments could be written by us or the people we love.

Amy Martin has a casual, storytelling style with her writing that makes her approachable to the reader. We are introduced to her parents, her boyfriends and eventual husband and the healthcare workers who were integral players in her recovery. She takes the time to proudly share the military service of her father and grandfather and still feels an amazing bond to a therapist with whom she has had no contact in years. Through Mrs. Martin's emphasis on the other people in her life, she reminds us that relationships are tested and strengthened when tragedy strikes. None of these illnesses is faced in a vacuum.

The first offering by Amy Martin, *Living to Tell About It, A Pursuit of Normalcy* is an amazing story of faith, family and survival. By getting to know Amy, I am now drawn to learn more about the various conditions she has endured through her life. It is obvious that the author has a passion for the care and well-being of others, and has offered her story as testimony to others who may be feeling despondent over their own life situations. As she tells us, she will never return to "normal" but she spends each day working towards the general sense of normalcy. With the many trials she has faced in this process, I am certain that Amy Martin has more powerful stories to share through her writing in the future.

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**Title:** Fire Your Financial Planner

**Author:** Ron Firmin

**ISBN:** 978-1-4327-1695-0

**Publisher:** Outskirts Press

**Paperback Pages:** 125

Price/Currency: U.S. \$19.95

**Reviewer:** [Yvonne Perry](#)

Boomer or Busted?

If you are one of those fortunate souls born in the fifties or sixties, you are precisely who Ron Firmin has written his new book, *Fire Your Financial Planner* for. Many of us were never taught financial management for everyday life, let alone having the foresight to prepare for the future. “Baby boomers were taught that they should get an education, acquire a job, and make money. We weren’t taught that we must set aside time to manage that money.” Now, Baby boomers are faced with the dilemma or realization that they may have not prepared themselves adequately for retirement. What actions can this generation of consumers take to prevent future financial uncertainty? Ron Firmin has some answers.

Firmin presents the story of his life from humble beginnings to multimillionaire. He built successful companies in several industries and has managed a mortgage banking operation. Currently, Ron Firmin is a financial planning consultant and in-demand speaker, who resides with his wife in Tennessee. Along the way, he describes real life situations where lessons are sometimes learned the hard way. Throughout the book, Firmin conveys the wisdom gained from parents, family and associates and how to correlate those teachings with sound financial advice. He proposes twenty-one lessons including “Any job worth doing is worth doing well,” “Form useful habits,” “The stock market is a two-edged sword,” “Buy land,” “Learn the Rule of 72,” “Never give up the quest for knowledge and understanding” and many others that will help ensure your future prosperity.

The Employee Benefit Research Institute, based in Washington DC determined 32 percent of workers above the age of fifty-five have less than \$25,000 saved. The author reminds us that it is never too late to start over. We, as consumers are responsible for our PRA, (personal retirement account), and we must take charge of our finances and do whatever is deemed necessary to fulfill our goals. Firmin states we must educate ourselves to understand the investment opportunities available, the need to diversify, the risk and rewards associated with the stock market, and mutual funds and form a strategy and a plan for success.

Firmin presents up-to-date information on new ways to utilize the stock market, references multiple Websites for accessing information, provides charts for personal financial use, and teaches how to use and understand amortization tables, and introduces The Rule of 72. The book describes all types of mortgages in detail, offers a list for supplemental reading, and gives resources to assist with financial planning.

Whether you’re a first time financial info seeker, a novice investor, or a prosperous financial guru, *Fire Your Financial Planner* has something for you.

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**Title:** Hidden Laws: Ultimate Tools for Divine Co-creation

**Author:** Ulla Jacobs

**ISBN:** 1412082145

**Publisher:** Trafford

*Hidden Laws: Ultimate Tools for Divine Co-creation* offers spiritual principles for self-empowerment as old as time. In ancient times, mystery schools offered this knowledge to only a few. *Hidden Laws* examines the existence of five cosmic laws. These laws can be used to our advantage by being aware of their power and understanding the impact they can have upon daily interactions. The Hidden Laws are:

The Law of One Vibration: Existence of 'One' power that provides a connection of all living things with the universe. We are all connected to each other by this force.

The Law of Cause and Effect: What goes around comes around. You get what you give. This law is the karma creator.

The Law of Attraction: How to use this law in order to attract anything and everything into your life.

The Law of Free Will: The freedom to make choices, taking charge of your destiny.

The Law of Creation: Creating reality via the thought process and language used, on a daily basis. Are your thoughts and speech sabotaging your life? Are you creating a discordant energy flow?

The Law of Transition: About death, this law governs the transition process as the soul leaves the body and goes home. It explores the support and guidance we receive from spirit guides.

Each of the Hidden Laws is presented and explained in simple terms. Examples are shown to indicate the way each law impacts the lives of various people.

A brief history of the author's personal journey is outlined in the opening chapter "The Struggle Back To Health." This journey led Ulla on a spirit quest which, in turn, led to the discovery of the Hidden Laws and the existence of life-after-death.

The information presented can be used to effectively take charge of many aspects of daily life.

The potential for empowerment exists by using these tools of divine co-creation.

The author invites you to explore these cosmic laws that were recognized by only a few in ancient times when they were taught in special mystery schools. Examine the principles offered by Hidden Laws in order to understand their powerful impact. These are the laws of the universe that govern all of life.

Ulla's bio is available at: [www.hiddenlaws.com/about](http://www.hiddenlaws.com/about). The link to purchase the book is:

[www.hiddenlaws.com/buy-hidden-laws](http://www.hiddenlaws.com/buy-hidden-laws). You can also read excerpts of the book at:

<http://www.hiddenlaws.com/about-hidden-laws>

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**Title:** Finish Line

**Author:** James Ross

Did you ever wonder how to deal with the mischievous actions of an adolescent boy? As a parent, have you ever thought of what it might take to get your point of view across? How could any of that relate to the wonderful game of golf?

Follow the journey of two teenage boys, Justin Ventimiglia and Keith Pucchio, after they get caught committing a petty act of vandalism on one of the first days of their summer vacation. Experience what happens after their misstep lands them at Prairie Winds Golf Course on the east side of St. Louis.

Can the professional staff at the course mold the character of the boys? What on earth can a growing cast of golfing misfits show the lads? How will the characters deal with the deadly cancer disease? What role does a single-parent household play in all of this? Could a dysfunctional family situation solve the dilemma?

Enjoy the special relationship between a pseudo-Big Brother and an impressionable child in an enjoyable, heartwarming story about life and death. What can the old-timers that hang around the clubhouse teach the young boys? How will the kids react? And where do the lessons from the game of golf fit into all of this?

*Finish Line* is due to be published in late May 2008 from Xlibris. It is the second novel by **James Ross** set on Prairie Winds Golf Course. Feel free to visit his Website at <http://www.authorjamesross.com> for more information.

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**Book Title:** *Money and Manifesting*

**Author:** Dyan Garris

**ISBN Number:** 978-0977614066

**Publisher:** Journeymakers

**Where available for purchase:** <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0977614069> and [www.voiceoftheangels.com](http://www.voiceoftheangels.com)

**Reviewer:** Tamara Ignatieva - <http://www.theangellistener.com>

"I have finished the book. It is amazing, As I said it shifts the energy, it makes one think, and it has very definite energy in it, which starts to work as soon as you open the book and start to read.... This is amazing, as usually, most of the books do just one thing, and this one is doing the complex of the things. Another thing, which struck me, and gave an extra cleanse to the third eye is your suggestion of centering, I mean the scenery of this...Being in this ball of Light, sitting on the throne there...That is just amazing, it feels so safe there, so secure, and so very, very right.

During the day, I went to make my chakra balancing meditation as I always do, but now, without forcing myself whatsoever, I just saw with the third eye the yantras from the book...It was an amazing experience. The yantras in the book are just amazing, as they are not only beautiful to see, but they appear to be extremely powerful, and I have experienced myself, that they have immediate and powerful effect on the chakras by themselves. Just watching them is healing on itself, and if you find the time to actually do the meditation as outlined in the book, their power is even much more."

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**Title:** Book Promo 101 - Learn the Basics of Book Promotion

**Author:** Nikki Leigh

**ISBN:** 978-1594314698

**Publisher:** Write Words, Inc:

[www.amazon.com/Book-Promo-101-basics-Promotion/dp/1594314691](http://www.amazon.com/Book-Promo-101-basics-Promotion/dp/1594314691)

and [www.nikkileigh.com/books\\_4\\_sale.htm](http://www.nikkileigh.com/books_4_sale.htm)

In *Book Promo 101* of her *Basics of Book Promotion Series*, Nikki Leigh has done it again, she's written a book that is invaluable. Not only is the book instructive with a surplus of useful information, it's an attitude-changing, goal-oriented dissertation on advertising, promotion and publicity. Authors, especially 'newbie' ones, could use *all* of the suggestions made in the book, which include *how-to*, *why-to* and *where-to*. At the same time, Ms. Leigh allows the readers options to choose what suits a particular person's way of working. My hat is off to Ms. Leigh for the very beginning of what promises to be an extraordinary series--something much needed in the book industry and one I'll use again and again.

Dorice Nelson, author of: *Clan Gunn: Gerek; Lost Son of Ireland; Saratoga Summer: 1863*

[www.DoriceNelson.com](http://www.DoriceNelson.com)

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**Title:** Ethnic Presidency

**Author:** Earl Ofari Hutchinson

**ISBN:** 978-1881032250

**Publisher:** Middle Passage Press

**Available for purchase:** <http://www.amazon.com/Ethnic-Presidency-Decides-White-House/dp/1881032256> and [www.ethnicpresidency.com](http://www.ethnicpresidency.com)

**Reviewer:** Nikki Leigh - [www.nikkileigh.com](http://www.nikkileigh.com)

I've never really kept track of the political process. I have my own opinions, but I never really understood the process of primaries, caucuses and so on. So, I had never noticed how various ethnic groups vote in specific ways. After reading *The Latino Challenge* and *The Ethnic Presidency* I have learned so much about the electoral process and the deeper ways that the issues affect various ethnic groups.

*The Ethnic Presidency* delves into the democratic and republican parties, the various candidates and the parts they are playing or have played in the primary process. It gives a large number of examples from past elections which show techniques that have brought in votes from all ethnic groups.

In the introduction to the book, Earl Hutchinson explains why this topic involves more than the fact that there is a woman and a black man running for president this year. That makes the 2008 election more unusual, but throughout the years the same elements and principals have come into play in many elections and that even applies to the elections when two white men were running for president.

For anyone of any ethnic background, any age or any gender who wants to learn more about how race, gender and ethnic background play a big part in the election process - this is a must read. This year, more than any other, race, gender and ethnicity will have a major impact on the presidential election.

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**Title:** *Island Life* (Five Star First Edition Mystery)

**Author:** Michael W. Sherer

Five Star Publishing (2008)

**ISBN** 9781594146336

**Reviewer** Danielle Feliciano for Reader Views (4/08)

In "Island Life," we are drawn into the world of Jack Holm, suddenly single father to his two children after his wife suddenly goes missing. Jack's relationship with Mary was on the rocks before her disappearance and with her job as a flight attendant, he does not report her missing for a few days. This puts the story in motion as the police arrest Jack for Mary's murder, Children's Services takes his children and begins their own investigation, Jack's mother-in-law files for custody, and Jack realizes he has no one to rely on but himself to solve the mystery of what happened to his wife before he and his children become the next victims.

Interspersed with the narration are snippets of conversations between Jack and his therapist. These conversations give great depth to the story as they are the only times you are truly in Jack's head. In his day-to-day life, he is going through the motions, just doing his best to hold on for the sake of his kids. With his therapist, however, Jack truly lets go of pretending and opens up like he does to nobody else. These interludes give "Island Life" a voice of originality that you don't see often in this genre.

There is nothing perfect about Jack and that makes it all the more wondrous that you find yourself rooting for him. He admits to affairs, has ignored the problems in his marriage, and does things that many parents would never think of (dragging his children to Las Vegas while he goes after the killer). It is exactly these imperfections that make him so real. He is tortured, he makes no excuses for the choices he has made, and while he makes a few questionable parenting decisions, he truly believes those decisions are what is best for his children.

"Island Life" was truly gripping. I read it in one day, as I kept finding myself lost within the books. It does fall apart a bit towards the end, where it feels as though the author tries too hard to attain action and thrills rather than staying at the same pace as the rest of the book. Sherer quickly redeems himself, however, and leaves the reader feeling satisfied.

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*The Four Little Children: A Likely Story*

Larry Michalove

iUniverse (2005)

ISBN 9780595347995

Reviewed by *Mathew Feliciano* (age 8) for Reader Views (3/08)

The story "The Four Little Children" is about four siblings named Lisa, David, Stacy and Karen. They go on wild adventures with their imaginary friend Ramor. Ramor takes the children on the coolest adventures ever!!

Ramor was going to take care of the children since their father was at war. Every day he takes the children on a new adventure. The first adventure was over the Pacific Ocean and into a secret cave where they found a pirate ship. All of the pirates were trying to find somewhere to bury their treasure. After the pirates buried their treasure, they went to a hidden city beyond the cave and all of the pirate children ran to greet Lisa, David, Stacy, and Karen. Some of the other adventures the children went on were being in the circus, going to the North Pole and learning how to drive a dog-lead sled, and riding on a polar bear.

Reading this book was like doing all of the things the children did right along with them. It was easy to imagine myself being there and having the same experience and doing the same thing. "The Four Little Children" was a lot of fun to read and was like being in another world.

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## How Not to Write a Newsletter

by Russell A Vassallo

One of the reasons my former editor/publisher is no longer with me is that she asked me to do something I felt repugnant. She "suggested" I frame my newsletter to hype up the buying public by intimating that my books were selling in the thousands. The truth be known my first book, *Tears and Tales*, is in its third printing but we've probably only sold six or seven hundred books.

I've been a lot of things in my life including a lawyer, but one lesson I learned from my dad and that was that my word was my bond. I'm not saying I never stretched the truth or took a point of view as a lawyer. But I am saying that I am not starting a writing career by telling outright lies in my newsletter. I keep my letters pert, informative, and truthful. I tell about the animals Virginia and I have rescued and we talk of our awards because we are proud of them. But I don't build a case that our books are selling like hotcakes.

Yes, we have some good sales and to some very prestigious retailers, but the quantity has been small, re-orders few and orders for our other books non-existent. Don't assume that because a retailer purchases twenty of your books it's going to purchase your second book. Doesn't work that way . . . especially if your first book isn't selling like John Grisham or Stephen King. And don't assume that lying to the buyer in a newsletter is going to create an aura of interest because it may just work the other way. What I am saying simply is: be yourself. If people like you in everyday life, they'll like what you write about and what you do every day. Like the time my cat set his tail on fire and I had to douse it with a very fine wine.

Want a sample of my newsletter? I'd love to email one to you, BUT, I write my stuff on a non-internet computer. Why? I am technologically challenged so my wife will not let me use hers. So, if you want a copy of my newsletter you'll have to furnish me with a snail mail address and I send you a complimentary copy of our last newsletter. Contact Krazy Duck Productions, Box 105, Danville, KY 40423 or email [Russ@crazyduck.com](mailto:Russ@crazyduck.com).



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