

The Free Lancer

November 2010

The Newsletter of the Seattle Free Lances Professional Writers Association
since 1921

November Program

Author Marketing and the New Media

Please join us Tuesday, November 2nd for a presentation and panel discussion on author marketing in the age of new media marketing. SFL welcomes **Gail DiRe** and **Diane Duthweiler**, from the Northwest-based literary media agency Xétera Media Services.

Gail and Diane specialize in helping authors and artists bring their work to the attention of Western Washington audiences and media. Xétera Media Services (and Book It! Northwest— www.bookitnorthwest.com/) provides public relations, media connections, logistics, event and schedule management and personal assistance for authors and publishers.

Gail DiRe, owner of the company since 1989, acts as

liaison for national publishing houses and PR firms, working with local, national and international authors, politicians, and celebrities.

Diane Duthweiler began her career as a television anchor woman and reporter and then moved on to writing and producing at two Seattle television stations. In recent years she has freelanced for all the major television news networks, as well as History Channel, Inside Edition and Entertainment Tonight.



Gail DiRe



Diane Duthweiler

Don't miss this exciting evening as our guests and industry experts share their knowledge and expertise regarding the importance of author marketing in today's publishing environment

Upcoming Speakers:

- December 7: **Ray Pfortner**, photographer and writer
- January 4: **The Interfaith Amigos**, *New York Times* Best-Selling authors
- February 1: **SFL Annual Critique Night** with Special Guest Alice Orr

Wanted!

Are you interested in contributing to the Seattle Free Lances newsletter? We need volunteers to write the past speaker profile each month. If you have news and want to share your success with the SFL membership in the newsletter!, e-mail the editor at theseattlefreelances@gmail.com.

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The President's Corner

The Pulse of Publishing

By Jennifer McCord

September and October always is the time of year for the regional bookseller's conventions. The attendees include authors, publishers, booksellers, librarians and other industry people. I remember the first Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association show I attended in Oregon. I went with another bookseller friend and a literary agent in an old car that pattered along. We longed to get to the show before the catalogs ran out. These shows were the happening place to be as we could meet authors, pick up publisher catalogs, find galleys (early advance reading copies) of upcoming books and get book bags and posters. It was an important time to gather information for and about books, authors and the industry.

As a bookseller I could learn about what books were going to be published in the upcoming months. The knowledge that I learned from the catalogs and the publishing reps helped me sell books to readers and I became a better bookseller and industry professional. It was also a chance to talk with other booksellers about the bookselling life, publishing industry and to hear stories about favorite books. Of course, this was before the Internet, author and publisher web-sites, online newsletters, reviews and more.

I have just returned from this year's Pacific Northwest Regional Bookseller show in Portland, Oregon. However, I realize that much has changed. I still go to meet and talk with booksellers,

librarians, publishers, and of course to hear authors talk about their books. But the information that I used to look for at the show is now at my fingertips via computer. I still enjoy every minute of looking at books and book covers from the past, present and future. I want to hear what authors have to say about their latest book or whether this is the first or tenth book they have published.

It is always a worthwhile convention because it offers a chance to take a pulse of the industry. It is still a great opportunity to talk with others about the business and even just to hear stories about favorite books and authors. It offers a prospect to network with people who work in the book trade from author, agent, bookseller, librarian, publisher and other professionals.

This year's show was cheerful and upbeat. It was encouraging to hear the authors, booksellers and publishers all talking about their resilience in these turbulent and changing times in our business.

I left the show with enthusiasm and energy to keep working in this rapidly evolving environment. Authors always have a vital role in our culture. They write about and share ideas and stories that give readers enjoyment, meaning and information as our world continues to shift and re-shape. Regardless of the changing nature of the bookselling and publishing world, SFL's motto—"Words Matter"—continues to ring true.

See you at the next meeting!



October Program

An Evening of Expert Advice from Alice Orr

By Leslie A. Engel

Alice Orr's October presentation, "Main Character Momentum: How to Create a Protagonist with Agent-Editor Appeal" focused on creating a main character for your story that will attract the attention of agents, editors, and hopefully a wide readership. Orr emphasized that there are two fundamental ingredients in creating this appeal—writing the right main character for your story and choosing the strongest motivation for the main character to move your story.

Orr pointed out that her information is geared towards commercial fiction and then explained the main reasons why most commercially successful stories have a single main character. She said that it will give your story marketability, give the story focus which will in turn give the story greater impact, and reader interest. Orr then emphasized that "the first readers that you must concern yourself with are the agents and editors in the print marketplace. "They are still the kingpins in the [print] publishing world."

Writing the Right Main Character

Orr explained there are many facets to consider when writing the right character for your story to make it marketable and attract readers (including agents and editors). "Publishers in commercial fiction are looking for books that sell, it is very obvious, but sometimes it's one of those obvious things that we just let slip pass, a book that sells appeals to readers...a book that sells well has wide reader appeal." A main character that has "wide reader appeal" is a character that the reader can identify with, and is

called "the empathetic protagonist." Orr emphasized the right character is admirable and decent. The right character has clear goals and desires and the reader understands what those are right from the beginning. The right character is likable so the reader cares about what happens to him. The character isn't stupid and doesn't do stupid things, except one time and that is for the purpose of the plot, where the character is pushed right to the edge of a specific situation. Orr warns, "Never sacrifice character for plot and never sacrifice plot for character." The character doesn't realize what is happening at the time and doesn't realize the struggle he has ahead of him or how formidable the forces are that are against him, it surprises him. But then he rises to the occasion and opposes the forces. This is not a superhero character and he or she is not looking for trouble. The right character is vulnerable like us and we can identify with him. Most importantly, the right character will emotionally involve the reader. "This will hook the reader ... the more the reader cares the more solidly the hook will be set." Your job as a writer is to create a character that your reader cares about, not just a little, but immensely.

Choose the Strongest Motivation

To make your character empathetic, give them a strong motivation to move your story. There are many motivations, love, self-preservation, honor, to name a few. You have to choose the strongest motivation for your protagonist in your story that will

produce the most conflict so they can respond dramatically to the situation. Strong motivation is crucial because it is what makes your character believable. "Most manuscripts are rejected because of weak protagonist motivation." A novel needs power, intensity, and drama, which all begin with strong protagonist motivation. "The intensity of this motivation makes your story powerful and dramatic." What your protagonist wants is significant and worthwhile and the consequences for himself and others will be dire if not achieved. The more characters affected, the more captivating the story will be for readers. When he decides to act, that is when the story begins. To do this the character will have to have a strong personality, and in turn, it will give your story power, drama, and intensity. "To do this you have to become your character and most important--feel what your character is feeling and make the character come alive for you as the writer." To help you do this, Orr suggested using a worksheet from her seminar: where you essentially become your character by answering basic and in depth questions in first person about the main character in your story.

Orr concluded by encouraging SFL members and sharing a few of her secrets which included: set realistic goals, stay future focused and forget the fads, rely on the basics, adapt skills but don't abandon them, and above all else, "follow my mantra, and do it anyway."

Alice Orr's website: www.aliceorrseminars.net

Alice Orr's blog: <http://publishingcanmakesense.blogspot.com>

Don't Make an E-Book Mistake

by Mark W. Hennon

The e-Book market is extremely complex. None of the big e-Book manufacturers tell you that their books will not play on other e-Book machines. So the e-Books you buy from Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Sony have to stay on the e-Book machine with which you bought them.

The result: You accumulate a library of e-Books, but they're "locked in" to that e-Book's company. You won't be able to switch those e-Books to a different brand of e-Book reader. Nor will you be able to get much money for them.

Over time, your e-Book investment will probably be many times the cost of your e-Book machine -- so it's very important to start with the right machine.

This month's column compares the Sony Reader with the Amazon Kindle. A year ago, they were the undisputed e-Book champions. Amazon and Sony have recently ramped up their hardware and software to excel in different ways.

Sony Reads Beautifully

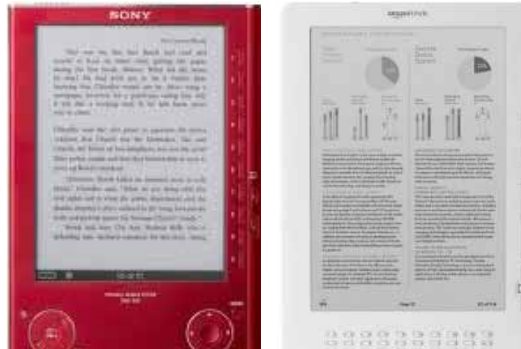
Because of Sony's lack of advertising and reluctance to compete on price, I went into the Sony Store prepared to dismiss the Sony Reader as a has-been, a dinosaur, a relic.

I could not have been more wrong.

Sony's basic Reader, the Pocket edition, is a sleek, solid, intuitive device that pretty much rocks the house. Its touch screen makes it effortless to see and choose what you want to do. It's easy to read and turn pages, and is especially good at viewing PDF files, which it can split into columns for easy viewing -- taking you from the bottom of one column to the top of the next with

a swipe of your finger instead of having to scroll around.

Sony's three-machine lineup is clearly for the long-term reader -- with options for larger screens and more features.



Kindle is Easy to Use and Buy

The Kindle's screen is as easy to read as the Sony's. Both have E-Ink Pearl technology and anti-glare screens that look similar to paper and can be read in sunlight.

Kindle has no touch screen, which makes it more awkward to enter commands. On the other hand, it has a small keyboard, which is great if you have small fingers.

The Kindle also has built-in Wi-Fi and its bigger brother has 3G connectivity to the Amazon e-Book store, whereas only the top Sony model has Wi-Fi and 3G.

So it's simpler to buy e-Books with the Kindle, and easy to read them.

Free My e-Books!

Here in Seattle we can borrow free e-Books from both the Seattle Public Library and the King County Library System. You don't have to go to the library, just download them online. There's never a late fee and you don't have to take the e-Books back, because they simply disable themselves after three weeks.

But we can't read them on the

Kindle.

As we go to press, the Seattle Public Library has e-Books for nine of the top-ten bestsellers on The New York Times fiction list. However, they're all in ePub format, which

Amazon's Kindle does not read.

It's one thing for a manufacturer to protect its own e-Books. It's quite another to block library books.

That's not just an inconvenience, it's a deal-breaker. Everybody else handles ePub format -- so it must be that Amazon just wants you to buy its books.

Sony Reader by a Knockout

Trusting my future e-Book library to a company that prevents me from reading books for free seems pretty stupid. Show me how I'm wrong about that and I might change my mind, but for now, the Sony Reader beats the Kindle hands-down because the Reader supports free library e-Books.

Yes, the Reader costs \$40 more initially than the Kindle, but Sony has been including \$50 in e-Book store credit with Reader purchases to more than wipe out that difference. And you'll save hundreds of dollars in free library e-Books.

Also, you can create your own discounts before you buy any e-Book reader by placing holds on as many printed books as you want at the library, and putting \$10 a book aside for an eventual e-Book reader purchase. Or put the same money aside when you read library e-Books on your computer. More about that next month.

Next Month: The Final Choice: Which is Best for You?

Shop Talk & Updates

■ Dues are Due

Annual membership fees (\$35) are due. Dues may be paid in person at the check-in desk at the monthly dinner meeting in November, or mailed to our president, **Jennifer McCord**, **3700 NE 178th St, Lake Forest Park, WA 98155-5433**. Thank you for your continued support!

■ Member News

- It is with deep sadness that we report the passing of former SFL president **Susan Ashton**. Funeral will be held Friday, October 29th, at 11:00 am PST at St. John Vianney Parish in Kirkland.
- **Jan Park** sold two articles recently. One was an article in *Mother Earth News* about how to make a casserole carrier. The other article was a piece in *Northwest Prime Time* about a college serenade.
- **Bruce Taylor's**, "Mr. Magic Realism," a collection of previously published and new work will be released from Eraserhead Press and have its official launch party at BizarroCon in Portland, Oregon in early November. *Stormworld*, a novella, by Bruce with co-author Brian Herbert, is awaiting cover art but should be released sometime in mid- to late October.
- **Carol Wissmann** had an article on security systems appear in the *Sequim Gazette*. She is also offering her "Profiting from Periodicals" workshop November 13 at Peninsula College.

■ Welcome, New Members!

- **Q Lindsey Barrett** teaches fiction and creative non-fiction writing workshops both locally (WOTS Conference, Edmonds Community College, Whidbey Conference) and nationally (VCFA, SDSU Conference). She served as

three-time fiction contest judge, then chair of the Novel category of PNWC's writing contest, is a reader for the Howard Frank Moshier Short Fiction Prize and the Katherine Patterson Prize for YA & Children's Writing, and a submission reader for the literary journal *Hunger Mountain*. A graduate of the two-year Fiction Writing Program at the University of Washington, she received her MFA in fiction from Vermont College. A short story writer and novelist, her work has appeared in a variety of regional and national journals and magazines. Her Short Story "Fissures" will be in *Drunken Boat's* winter issue.

- **Abigail Carter** wrote *The Alchemy of Loss: A Young Widow's Transformation* as a form of catharsis after her husband's death in the World Trade Center on September 11th, 2001. *Toronto's Globe and Mail* calls it "Eloquent and honest. . . Reading it is like sitting at your own kitchen table listening to Abigail Carter's story, a story that is unnerving, uplifting and occasionally humorous. . . remarkable." The book was also listed as one of *The Globe's* top 100 books of 2008. Her work has appeared in *SELF* magazine, *Reader's Digest Canada*, *MSN.com* and *MORE.com*.
- **Dr. Wilda V. Heard**, or "Dr. Wilda," has a J.D. from Yale Law School and a doctorate in education leadership from Seattle University. She is a volunteer at Legal Voice, formerly the Northwest Women's Law Center. Dr. Wilda writes about schools, education reform, and the effect the culture has on education, children, and families. At present she is working on the inspirational book, *Think Small, Not Small-Minded*, and a murder mystery, *Ivan Strikes, Again*.
- **Chiara Wood** is a storyteller with years of shamanic training, Chiara draws on her ability to encourage the people she works and

interacts with to remember, believe, and exalt in their best selves, convinced that this is how we change and heal the stories of our lives. Her genuine and powerful stories come from her deep appreciation of love and life. Wood is a new voice on the literary scene separating her story writing into two diverse and seemingly distinct genres: one grounded in healing and transformational change, the other embracing delight and pleasure. Wood is currently writing a blog that is about navigating, coping and living well through the transformational changes we/the world is experiencing. Follow her blog at: www.hereinthe253.wordpress.com

■ Conferences & Events

- **Seattle7Writers Holiday Book Signing will take place on Saturday, November 20th, 2010** (3-6 pm) at the Phinney Neighborhood Center (6532 Phinney Ave North). There will be readings by various authors as well as a book signing. An independent bookstore, Santoro's has graciously agreed to donate 10% of the proceeds to the Writers in the Schools program. Authors include Kathleen Alcala, Kit Bakke, Erica Bauermeister, Sean Boudoin, Carol Cassella, Randy Sue Coburn, Bob Dugoni, Elizabeth George, Maria Dahvana Headley, Stephanie Kallos, Erik Larsen, Jim Lynch, Kevin O'Brien, Suzanne Selfors, Jennie Shortridge, Garth Stein and Susan Wiggs.
- **Write on the Sound**, presented by the Edmonds Arts Commission, reports another successful year. Natalie Goldberg's keynote address inspired the gathering. She reminded us to quiet our 'monkey-minds' and to continue to do daily writing practice. Thank you to everyone from SFL who participated and supported the 2010 25th annual WOTS conference.



Newsletter

Deadline for the October newsletter is noon, **November 10th.**

Send articles and news items to the editor at TheSeattleFreeLances@gmail.com.

Submission guidelines:

All submitted items must include the author's name and contact information. Anonymous submissions are not accepted. Every effort will be made to include all member submissions; however, publication is on a space available basis and is not guaranteed.

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Seattle Free Lances

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This Month's General Meeting

Note: Because the Elks Club has increased our dinner costs, beginning with the October dinner meeting, the cost for dinner will increase to \$20.

- **When:**
Tuesday, November 2, 2010
- **Where:**
Lake City Elks Club
(directions )
- **Time:**
Social Hour 5:15 p.m.,
Dinner 6:00 p.m.
- **Entrée:**
Buffet, Salad, and Dessert
- **Cost:**
\$20, members and guests
Please make checks payable to the Elks Club
- **RSVP: Friday, October 29th, to Roberta Trahan at (206) 491-0147 or TheSeattleFreeLances@gmail.com**

ADVANCE RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

Please be sure to make your reservations by the posted deadline so that we can give the caterer an accurate count. Last minute cancellations and no-shows are a hardship and result in a penalty charged to SFL. We are required to guarantee our reservations to the caterer and will be billed for any reserved meals that are not used. You will be expected to reimburse SFL for the full cost of your meal if you make a reservation and do not attend.

Directions to the Elks Club 14540 Bothell Way NE, Seattle

- **From North:** I-5 to NE 145th Exit. Turn left, cross overpass and continue about a mile to Lake City Way. Cross LCW before turning left into the Elks Club parking lot.
- **From South:** I-5 expressway to NE 145th, turn right and proceed about 1 mile to Lake City Way. Cross LCW before turning left into the Elks Club parking lot.. Cross LCW before turning left into the Elks Club parking lot.



Next Month's Meeting: *Tuesday, December 7th*