

The Free Lancer

December 2010

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

December Program

“A Marriage Made in Heaven” with Ray Pfortner

According to Ray, few marriages are made in heaven—but the union of a freelance writer and a freelance visual artist is definitely one of them. Join us Tuesday, December 7, and explore why. Come prepared to discuss the value of working locally, consider possible new projects, and bring your questions for the other half!

Ray Pfortner has worked in photography for over 20 years – as an educator, a stock photography agent, a photographer’s representative, a photo editor, a book editor, a consultant, and a photographer.

His photography focuses on nature and environmental issues. The North American Nature Photography Association presented him with

its 2006 Recognition Award and 2006 Russ Kinne Grant as well as its 2003 Fellow Award.

Ray teaches photography and the business of art for arts centers and community colleges around Puget Sound. In 2008 he was awarded the coveted Margin of Excellence Award by Bellevue College. In 2007-2008 he served as the Director of Education at Seattle’s Photographic Center Northwest, where he has taught the certificate business practices class.

His primary interest is in empowering new talent. Ray will present an overview of his career and tips on how to create a sustainable career in the arts. See you at the next dinner meeting!



Plein Air Photographers, Fort Casey, Whidbey Island, WA. ©2009. Ray Pfortner. Used with permission

Upcoming Speakers:

- 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.

In this Issue

2 President’s Corner:
A Few of My Favorite Things

3 Npv. Program Recap: Five Tips to Promote You and Your Book

4 For E-Books Nook Rocks, Reader Rolls

5 Shop Talk & Updates

6 This Month’s Meeting Notice

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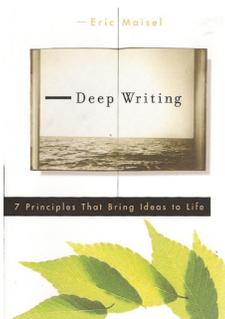
The President's Corner

A Few of My Favorite Things

By Jennifer McCord

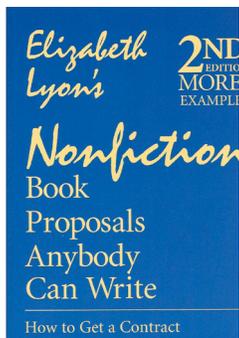
It is the time of year that I wonder just where has the year gone with only a month left. I think back on the books that I have read and the ones yet stacked in my office, bedroom and living room with the promise that I will get to them soon. As I sorted through the book stacks, I thought of the days of selling books during the holiday season. It brought to mind books that if I did not have them on my shelf, I would wish a friend or family member would buy them for me as a Christmas or holiday gift. Here are some of the books that I have read and continue to re-read. They are about writing or the writing life.

Write From The Heart, Unleashing the Power of Creativity by Hal Zina Bennett. A wonderful book on the creative process for writers—whether you are a seasoned writer or just beginning.



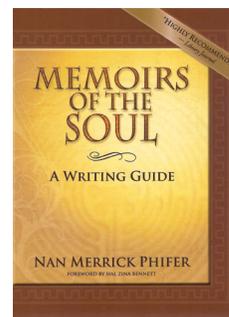
Deep Writing by Eric Maisel, PhD. This book offers seven principles that break through mental roadblocks so that the writer can write with passion and purpose.

The Forest For The Trees, An Editor's Advice for Writers by Betsy Lerner. The subtitle says it all.



Nonfiction Book Proposals Anybody Can Write by Elizabeth Lyon. A Pacific Northwest writing instructor provides information and insight into nonfiction book proposals—a classic book.

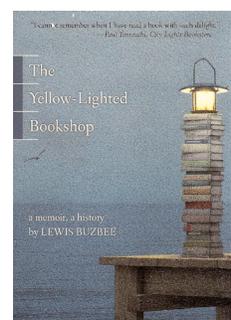
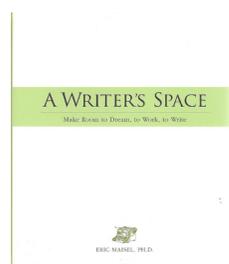
Memoirs Of The Soul, A Writing Guide by Nan Merrick Phifer. A wonderful workbook that will help a writer who is writing a memoir. with easy to follow with tips and suggestions.



Techniques Of Fiction Writing: Measure and Madness by Leon Surmelian. Written in 1968 about the many aspects of fiction --character, plot, scene, first and third person—including technique and control of language.

Self-Editing For Fiction Writers, How To Edit Yourself Into Print by Renn Browne and Dave King. Library Journal comments "Superb Tutorial for anyone wanting to learn from pros how to polish fiction writing with panache."

A Writer's Space by Eric Maisel, PhD. This book helps you define the creative process including the mental and physical space to produce and create your best work.



The Yellow Lighted Bookshop by Lewis Buzbee. The author provides a guided tour of the book business from the ancients to today. A book lover's book.

Happy Holidays, see you in 2011.

November Speaker

Five Tips to Promote You and Your Book from Northwest Experts

by Leslie A. Engel

Our November speakers were Gail DiRe and Diane Duthweiler from the Northwest based literary media agency, Xétera Media Services and it's publicity division, Book It! Northwest. Experts in Northwest book promotion and media, Gail and Diane presented five indispensable tips for promoting your book and also shared many success stories from their years in the business.

1. Content and Clarity

"Our number one point is: what is your book about, not why should I read it." To prove why this is such an important concept, Diane began to read from a book that she picked up from PNBA (Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association) free book table. She read on and on, the front cover, the back cover, the book sleeve that the book was packaged in, and then finally the first page. Hidden at the bottom of the page was the one line that told the reader what the book was about. "Finally, finally, you find out what this book is about. This book was at PNBA a couple of weeks ago, and there was a free table with readers, booksellers, book buyers—this book was left on the table, nobody picked it up, they could not give this book away despite the fancy packaging."

2. Your Pitch

"Know who your audience is," Gail explained. "It is like when you are in a bookstore, you are not interested in every book. It is the same idea, know who you should be pitching to, know who your audience is." She emphasized that part of this

concept is to also know your angle or hook. "We help find the author's hook and we pitch that to the media to entice them to pick up the story. For example, we have a client who is a mystery writer and it's hard to find media for mystery writers. He wrote a book where he had a member of the Supreme Court in his story, so it just happened that the actual Supreme Court was vetting for a Supreme Court seat at the same time. It was relevant, timely and compelling. Show what value you bring to them [media] rather than just saying I wrote this new story and I think you'll like it, it has to be relevant to them."

3. How to Pitch to the Media

"Don't be paralyzed by the media," Diane emphasized. "The appearance of your press kit is important, but don't worry about it too much—sometimes we find authors worrying so much about it that it stops them from creating one. In all my years as a journalist, never once did we say, we'd love to cover this, but the format of this press release is wrong so we're not going to write it."

There is no special trick to pitching to the media, it is just persistence. Research media outlets and then choose the monthly magazines, local newspapers, radio and television programs you want to pitch to. Plan to pitch your event to the media about three months ahead of time and pitch at least three times to each outlet.

4. Something Extra

"What you do with your pitch [is important], but you have to have

something extra." Gail emphasized. There are tricks you can do that will attract attention and press. One trick you can do to keep abreast of the press is to set up a Goggle alert for the topic of your book, that way if you receive an alert, you can send out your book information in a timely manner. Another trick is to sign up for HARO (<http://www.helpareporter.com/>). HARO is a community of reporters from local and national outlets that email in and solicit experts for topics for stories they are covering. For example, if you sign up with HARO that you are a boat expert and you wrote a book about boats, a reporter who needs a boat expert to include in their story about boats might contact you to include you and your book in their story. In other words, use real life events to attract attention to your book. "Think about that something extra, because it is that something extra that will get you the attention."

5. Just Do It

"Sometimes the hardest step is just getting out there and doing it." Be consistent and build from the bottom up. Don't expect to be on Oprah, build a buzz in your own community at first. Do everything you have to do to keep your name and topic out there, blog, twitter, submit to newsletters and community newspapers, and volunteer to speak at book clubs and charity events. Once you do decide to tackle this last step, clear your calendar, have your cell phone on 24 hours a day, and respond quickly to inquiries when they approach you.

Third in a three-part series

For E-Books, Nook rocks, Reader rolls

by Mark W. Hennon

Sony Reader versus Barnes & Noble Nook you can't go wrong with either of these e-Book readers. If you go on price, it's the Nook, and you get the most books available. If you go on bundled extras, it's the Reader, and you get a stylus for taking notes and marking up the books.

Either way, you get a very capable, versatile machine that's easy on the eye, and works for borrowing public library books.

Why I'd get a Nook

I'd get the basic Nook for \$150 because I don't need a lot of extras and because it's made by bookstore people who believe it's vital to their business survival. Also because I can take the Nook to any of hundreds of stores for help or repairs. And for the future, if I buy a bunch of Nook e-Books, I can possibly switch to another brand of machine and hack my e-Books to work on it. *Oops, wait a minute — I wouldn't do anything illegal, though. Not me.*

Still, I like the Reader

I love the portability of the Sony Reader, Pocket Edition, which even fits the inside pocket of a suit jacket — and yet seems the sturdiest e-Book reader of all (the latest version, PRS-350SC, not the 300). But the Readers are almost the least of Sony's product lines, relegated to a small shelf in the back of a flashy retail store front-loaded with computers, flat-screen TVs, and sound equipment. Not as important to Sony as the Nook is to Barnes & Noble.

Also, Sony's technological prowess actually counts against it for me: Sony's e-Book format encryption

has never been broken—at least not publicly—so I probably couldn't hack and transfer any e-Books I buy from them to another brand's machine.

Both have unique appeal

I like the Sony's landscape viewing mode (in addition to regular portrait view) and its touch-screen command system makes it very easy to learn without reading the manual. What? Read the manual?

The Nook people try harder. Their machine comes with a simple, illustrated, one-sheet Quick Start Guide with a phone number for customer support on the first page. Gotta love that. Plus they have Nook helpers in each store at a dedicated Nook counter you can just walk up to. And you can read in-store e-Books for free for an hour a day. The Nook also attaches directly to wireless internet, while the Pocket Reader has to go through your computer.

If you will never want to borrow free e-Books from your local library, the Kindle is an easy machine with which to purchase and read e-Books. If you own an iPad, you can probably afford a separate reader, but the iPad will do OK for short reads.

Free is still the cheapest

You don't have to buy anything to read e-Books. Your current desktop or laptop computer will work just fine as a basic e-Book reader. The programs are free, and work for borrowing library books as well as for major online book vendors. You can get many free books and sample chapters from smaller online publishers.

You can also read on your cellphone, but that seems like an invitation to eye problems.

To download free computer programs, Google "Nook free ereader" or "Sony free ereader" or search Amazon for "Kindle for Mac" or "Kindle for Windows." Apple's iTunes App Store has programs for iPhones and iPads, and if you want to ruin your eyes, your cellphone provider has programs for reading teeny, tiny type.

New developments, my best-buy As we go to press, Barnes & Noble has announced the November 19th launch of a WiFi color touch-screen Nook for \$250, with email and internet (and a back-lit screen). Certainly the other brands will respond, but probably not in time for the Christmas rush.

Also at deadline time, Buy.com carries two refurbished Nooks, the \$200 3G model for \$120 (my best-buy pick) and the \$150 WiFi unit for \$99 — both shipped free.

Printed books are drop-proof

One thing for sure: By this time next year, prices will be lower and the hardware more impressive.

Meanwhile, hardcovers and paperbacks are still glare-free, battery-free, won't shatter when you drop them or fry their circuits in water, and remain the easiest to read, lend, donate, and buy used for a couple of bucks.

Happy Holidays to You!

Mark Hennon is a writer and editor who's currently working on a science-fiction trilogy and fixing Mac and Windows computers. His email is macfixers@gmail.com; phone is 206-567-3877 or 425-825-9244.

Shop Talk & Updates

■ Got News?

Share your success with the SFL membership in the newsletter! Send your news to the editor at theseattlefreelances@gmail.com.

■ Member News

- **Claire Gebben** traveled for a month in the Rhineland Palatinate as part of her research on her novel about her great-greatgrandfather, a German immigrant blacksmith to Cleveland, Ohio in the mid-19th century. To read stories (and view pictures) of her travels visit www.clairegebben.com. To check out her blacksmithing adventures, scroll back to posts in mid-June.
- **Teresa Verde** has an article in *Living Aboard* magazine, called "A Heron Comes to Visit" in the Nov/Dec issue. Teresa was also published in the on-line classical music magazine, *Music & Vision*, on October 27th with an essay about opera called "A Rich Resource."
- If you have a copy of the June 2004 issue of the newsletter, please call **Jan Park** at 206-524-6573.

■ Welcome, New Members!

- **Clint Kelly** has published 10 novels and is a communications specialist for Seattle Pacific University. He is program coordinator for the annual Northwest Christian Writers Renewal and deeply in love with his lovely bride, Cheryl.
- **Cheryll Kelly** (acting treasurer/bookkeeper) is a tax pro for H&R Block, owner of Action Business

Services, and a proud mother and grandmother. She has kept her husband, Clint, out of jail for 39 years and is the inspiration for many of his most memorable female protagonists.

■ Special Member Benefits for SFL Members Only!

- **Mark Hennon**, *MacFixers.com*, offers \$35 off any Mac or Windows computer service, available for every Free Lances member, once every membership year. Call 206/567-3877 or 425/825-9244, or email macfixers@gmail.com.
- New SFL member, **Jae Macallan**, from Yoyo String Media is offering a special rate to design your book trailer. Whether you are published or trying to get published, a book trailer can be a great tool to help a work get noticed. Contact Jae at stoneflyfilms.com, Yoyostingmedia@gmail.com, or (206) 683 - 3847

Memorials and Tributes

A tribute can show appreciation, congratulations or admiration. In fact, in any situation where you might think of sending a greeting card, you can send an SFL tribute. Our newsletter will list the tributes that were sent in the previous month.

Donations should be sent to our president, Jennifer McCord, 3700 NE 178th St, Lake Forest Park, WA 98155-5433. Be sure to include the address of the person who is to receive acknowledgement.

■ In Memoriam

- From Goldie Silverman in memory of Susan Ashton.

PNBA Opportunity for Authors

It's time to start thinking about the January 2011 edition of PNBA's *Northwest New Title Preview*. If you have a title you think will be a hit with Northwest booksellers, this is a great, inexpensive way to give it more *oomph*.

How it works: *Northwest New Title Preview* helps you target your distribution of free review copies of forthcoming books, ARCs, or galleys directly to bookstore buyers in the Northwest. For \$125, PNBA will include your book in an online listing of new and regional titles with jacket art, a blurb, and a linked email address of the contact person at your company for bookseller requests. We send booksellers the listings, and they e-mail you to request the books.

Take a look! Our current *Northwest New Title Preview* is available at www.pnba.org/ntpaug10.htm

The deadline for materials is Friday January 7, 2011.

The titles will become active on the site on January 21, 2011.

An order form is available at: www.pnba.org/images/NWNTPform.pdf

Print out the form and fax it in with your credit card number or check. Book details and jacket photo should be emailed to Larry West in the format specified on the form.

This program has proved to be very successful and it is the perfect way to make sure your book gets directly into the hands of retail bookstore buyers in the Northwest.



Newsletter

Deadline for the January newsletter is noon, **December 10thS.**

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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TheSeattleFreeLances@gmail.com.

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, December 7, 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
- **RSVP: Friday, December 3rd, 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, January 4th*