

Plotting Success

Established 2006 @ Village Voices & Eclectic Art Emporium

January 2024 Newsletter

With the New Year, we are solidifying our focus and enriching the experience. We are now a **Writing Center for the Central Gulf Coast Writers**. We have a network of authors, journalists, and writing specialists to help writers on their journey.

Writing Coaches, Ghost Writers, Editors, Manuscript Evaluators, Legacy Journal assistance—both video or written. We also offer numerous book marketing tips and writing advice.

Every Friday evening, two local authors are invited to speak of their journey and provide a short reading of their work to admit the audience to the flavor of their Voice. These Tall Tales & Short Stories writing salons are free for all visitors. They are filmed and the recordings will be available to the authors as soon as they are posted to Youtube.

We are also going to ask a bit more of ALL LOCAL Writers this year. As many published writers are aware, Book Reviews are extremely important to online sales. Amazon does not allow associates of the Author to publish reviews due to past bad acts by a few “mean,” defamatory players. This prevents our closest fans and readers from posting reviews.

Each month I plan to mention two to five published books by local authors and I want YOU to write book reviews for the mentioned books. Most will be on Kindle Unlimited and cost \$2.99 or less if they are not. IF you felt the book did not deserve a rating of 4 or 5 stars, please don't review the book on Amazon. Reviews posted with 3 stars or less are considered negative by the algorithms. You may message me with a poor review and I will pass it on to the author so they can revise if possible. I have contacts with over 500 Florida writers. If only 20% of you write a short review and post on Amazon, that is 100 reviews. Most of us struggle to get our readers to write reviews; let's BE the Reviewers. We can do this together.

Any questions? Contact me @ DGOULD497@gmail.com.

The January meeting schedules for Plotting Success Writer's Critique groups are included at the top of the **Groups** page where you will also find numerous other local group's schedules and specialties. Many are free, some have an annual fee, some a weekly fee, but most are affordable.

Plotting Success has in-person meetings as we believe the interaction provides the best results. We meet the same times and location as we have since 2006.

First & Third Thursdays at 6pm and First & Third Saturdays at 4pm.

@Village Voices, 1010 10th Avenue West, Bradenton FL 34205

As always, if you wish to stop receiving our monthly newsletter, email me in a **separate** email at DGould497@gmail.com and let me know. If you do it as a reply, the request often gets buried in the multiple responses of auto responders or spam.

Writers & aspiring writers: if you don't "fit" with the first writing group you visit, check out others. They are an enormous help to aspiring writers as well as published authors, providing not only feedback, but up-to-date information on all the new technology and opportunities in the industry.

Some hold critiques, some have speakers, and some have workshops. A few are genre specific, a few do poetry, some are fiction only, others cover both fiction and nonfiction. The area has screenwriters, video groups, children's lit—the Culture Coast area is host to dozens of groups.

Information on Contests, Conferences, Classes, Events, Services and much more are included to help you hone your craft. Please feel free to share any information about upcoming writing events with other writers. If you learn of any other local writing venues, please let me know

DGould497@gmail.com

Dona Lee

Plotting Success Newsletter—editor

Plotting Success—Author Services, Coaching, editing, formatting, Indie publishing

Village Voices—a Florida authored book gallery and Fantasy Art Emporium

Culture Coast Writers—Marketing Local Authors

DNA Video llc—Book Covers, Book Trailers, Video shorts

Writer's Brunch

Food, Fun, & Friends

December 17th, 2023 @ 11:00 am

We organize a monthly writer's brunch on the third Sunday of the month to enjoy the company of others with a common interest in writing while we relax, mingle, network, and dine at various local restaurants. (Holiday Sundays are adjusted).

Our Writer's Brunch is open to any and all writers and aspiring writers. Nothing to join, we meet at local restaurants to share camaraderie, confidence, inspiration and information. Enjoy anything from a glass of water to a full course meal—separate checks.

Bring your Significant Other if you like. If you are thinking of joining us, please shoot me a short email so I can try to get a large enough area (from 6 to 20 usually). DGould497@gmail.com

This month we return to Salt & Pepper for Brunch. All writers in the area are welcome to join us. Bring your S.O. We converse with fellow writers and keep up on the current writing trends while discovering the Tastes of Bradenton Brunches..



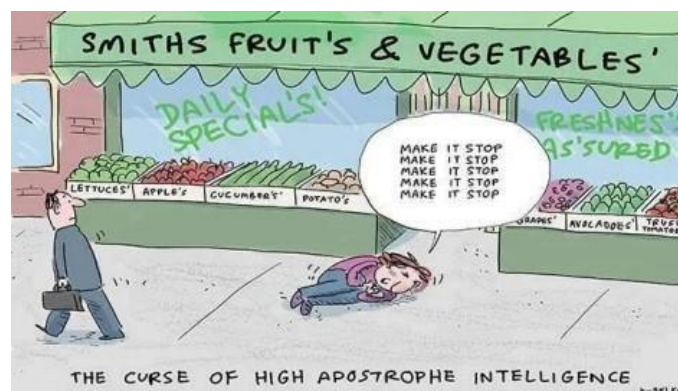
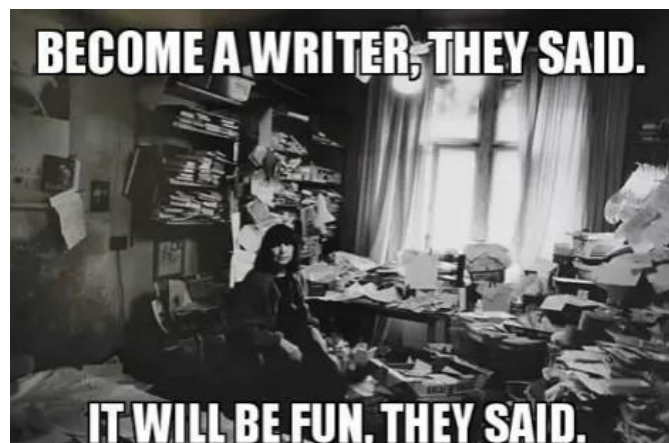
December at Pier 22.

Humor

A moment to make fun of our passion for writing:

Hyphenated
Non-hyphenated
The Irony

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# Writing Groups

## Plotting Success Writers

Formerly Florida Writer's Association Manatee

**Critique group**, bring four to six copies of up to ten pages double-spaced.

(Performance Copy on 301 charges 4 Cents a copy)

Fiction & Nonfiction, shorts, articles, novellas, memoirs, & novels –no poetry

Meetings are scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 6 pm every month and the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday at 4 pm each month. (Some Holiday exceptions occur.) You can pick and choose which meetings are convenient for you—attend all four or none at all. Come to listen, learn, and advise, or come to have your work critiqued. Currently there are no dues or fees to attend.

**January 2024** meetings:

Thursday January 4<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm and Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm

Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm and Saturday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm:

All meetings are held at

**Village Voices & Eclectic Art Emporium,**

1010 10<sup>th</sup> Ave West, Bradenton FL 34205: phone 941-748-6865

We ask all attendees be vaccinated/boosted for meetings, masks are suggested for anyone at risk. We are following CDC recommendations for prevention of spread of respiratory diseases.

For more information call Dona Lee at 748-6865 or email [Dgould497@gmail.com](mailto:Dgould497@gmail.com)

## **OTHER VOICES—OTHER ROOMS**

Other Local Writing Groups:

### **Florida Writers Association, Sarasota Branch**

#### **Verified**

FWA Sarasota meets in person, two evenings each month: on the FIRST and THIRD Wednesday in the training room of the Nokomis Volunteer Fire Department, located at the corner of US41 and Pavonia Road.

Pavonia Road is the street that has the flashing emergency lights on US 41 south of Matthews-Currie Ford. Pavonia is about a quarter mile south of Albee Road.

Folks start gathering around 6:00 pm. An open group welcomes writers of all genres. Meeting format includes discussion, readings, and critique. Information about the group can be found on their blog at [fwasarasota.blogspot.com](http://fwasarasota.blogspot.com).

Two group leaders: Rod DiGruttolo who hosts the meetings and Ernie Ovitz who hosts the meetings when Rod is absent and deals with the FWA administrative work.

A half hour of socializing is encouraged for attendees arriving at 6:00. The regular meetings begin promptly at 6:30 and last until about 9:00. January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30pm and January 17<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

For questions you may email Ernie Ovitz at [egovitz@gmail.com](mailto:egovitz@gmail.com)

### **Manatee County Library Memoir Group**

#### **Verified**

A Memoir writing group meets at the

Braden River Library

4915 53rd Avenue East

Bradenton, FL 34203-4198

SR 70 the fourth Tuesday from 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm. There is no fee.

Join other memoir writers working on personal stories. Led by Ed Sandbach, participants contribute stories and provide a friendly supportive working team.

For adults; limited to 10 registrants. Must Register online at:

<https://manateelibrary.libcal.com/event/8569086>

Call 941 727-6079 for more information.

## **ABC - Artisans of Books**

### **Verified**



### **Marketing, PR, and Sales group**

ABC dissolved in April. Brenda has run the organization for a dozen years and needed to pass the baton, but none were willing to pick it up. She is still helping writers and authors with formatting both picture books and text books, audio books, and e-books.

For more information Contact Brenda Spalding: [spaldingauthor@gmail.com](mailto:spaldingauthor@gmail.com)

## **Dream Center Writers**

### **Verified**

Dream Center Writers led by Bob Marvin has found online Zoom helps them conserve paper and ink and the group has decided to remain online only. They do still meet for lunch afterward. They meet every Monday morning at 11 a.m.

To join the group, please go to the website

[www.dreamcenterwriters.wordpress.com](http://www.dreamcenterwriters.wordpress.com) and fill out the form to contact them

Email: [barthuitema@gmail.com](mailto:barthuitema@gmail.com) or [dreamcenterwriters@gmail.com](mailto:dreamcenterwriters@gmail.com) for information on signing in to the meetings and how they operate

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## **Poetry**

### **Verified**

2022 RINGLING CAFÉ MUSEUM POETS are a group of published and emerging poets who meet on the first Wednesday of each month from 10-12 at the Ringling Museum Café located above the gift shop. They gather to encourage and gently critique each other's poetry.

For more details, please contact their moderator, Gail Ghai:  
gghai.poetics@outlook.com or call: 941-524-4411.

## **A Writer's Group in Lakewood Ranch**

### **Scribe Tribe**

### **Verified**

Please contact first. I have heard they are only meeting once a month during the summer.

Currently meeting on Zoom the First and Third Saturday at 10:30 am to 1:00 pm  
For any info: Email: [Achaddha@aol.com](mailto:Achaddha@aol.com) or call 630 802 1422

LWR Scribe Tribe recently featured in an article by Eric Snider of LWR Life Magazine, meets on Zoom twice a month and in person for a casual breakfast on the last Saturday of the month



A writers group! It will be fun! Exercise the mind and develop the cranial muscle. Enjoy the "Smorgasbord for the mind" a potluck that all participants bring. This is the place for camaraderie and exchange of ideas. This offers an opportunity for honing your skills, as a writer. If you can pick up a pen you can write! So give yourself a chance to expand your horizons.

Experienced writers, please join, help others learn the skills you have acquired.

###

## Gulf Coast Sisters in Crime Verified



### **Setting Up and Maintaining an Effective Series Bible**

The Florida Gulf Coast Chapter of Sisters in Crime is pleased to announce the featured speaker at the January 6, 2024 chapter meeting will be Trish Long from Blossoming Pages Author Services.

**Date:** 10:30 AM Business Meeting; 11:30 AM Presentation

Location: Via Zoom <https://sistersincrim-org.zoom.us/j/92024856842>

**Description:** In this presentation, Trish Long will share the templates she uses, snippets from a completed project, and timesaving tips for setting up an effective, user-friendly series bible that will help you keep track of salient details and avoid consistency errors throughout your series.

**Bio:** Trish Long started Blossoming Pages Author Services in July of 2020. Since reading her first Nancy Drew book in fourth grade, she's been a devoted fan of mysteries and crime fiction. Although she's worked on a wide variety of genres, she's spent most of her time since 2020 working for authors of cozy mysteries, suspense thrillers, and more recently, legal thrillers. In addition to proofreading and editing, she creates and maintains detailed series bibles that are organized and easy to use.

"Having a well-developed series bible is like having a personal research assistant on call 24/7." – Trish Long

FLGC SinC Florida Gulf Coast Sisters in Crime  
Questions? Contact Founder Wendy Dingwall for more information.  
[www.wendydingwall.com](http://www.wendydingwall.com) [wendyldwriter@comcast.net](mailto:wendyldwriter@comcast.net)

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Writers on the Air



ATTENTION: Open Mic . . .

Off air at this time. If anyone is able to take over the administration, please contact: Linda Schell, Lschell2@verizon.net, 941-223-1262.

Our Screen Writing Groups took a heavy hit during COVID

Manasota Films Group

Verified

**Facebook Group Network Only at this time.
1600+ local members with interests in all aspects of video production.**

The group is no longer holding monthly meetings but the Facebook page is still a great place to catch posts for film positions of every persuasion. Hoping it can be revived when Covid is under control and local video ramps back up. The Facebook group is comprised of local film/video members for networking with others who are interested in creating films—shorts, documentaries, series, even feature films as well as viewing each other's completed work. Writers, Actors, Actresses, Film Crew, Extras, Directors, Producers, Set Designers, Make-up pros, Costume designers, and anyone else with a desire to be part of our growing film industry is welcome. To join just go to Facebook and search Manasota Films. Request to join and Mark Troy, the founder, will sign you up. It is **free** and currently there are around 1600 members.

Quite a few members have won awards at film festivals and one member created a feature film that is true genius. When you get the chance, don't miss "Catching Junior Tate" produced locally by Karl & Rhonda Wilson. It is available on Youtube and will give you an idea of just how professional our local talent is.

Screen Writer's Circle

Verified

Anyone feel qualified to take over a Screenwriters Critique/Readings/Speakers group? The Sarasota Screenwriters are no longer meeting. They attempted Zoom readings for a while during Covid, but the writers stopped submitting. Laurie Stoner moved to Atlanta and has been unable to find a qualified screenwriter/coach to volunteer and take over the group. The Facebook group is still semi-active. So—if you are an experienced screenwriter or teacher of same, and are willing to help aspiring screenwriters, please contact Ms. Stoner to apply as a leader at mlstoner52@gmail.com

New Florida Cinema

Verified

New Florida Cinema produced their annual Single Take Challenge Winners in October 2021.

John Lagerholm, the president, is currently busy and took a needed break. It's a 501c3 and John is expected to resurrect the movie nights at LWR cinemas when they have the time and COVID is no longer affecting the Indie Movie scene so deeply. Cross your fingers and if you know John ask him if we will see a resurgence of the video scene in the near future.

Sarasota Area Playwrights

Verified

<https://www.sarasotaplaywrights.com/become-a-member>

The Sarasota Area Playwrights Society aims to provide opportunities for local playwrights to have their plays read, discussed, critiqued and, thereby, improved.

SAPS was founded in 2007 by George Loukides. SAPS has grown from a small group of actors and playwrights to 70+ members. Through weekly workshops, monthly meetings and public readings our playwrights are inspired to write and make their plays better. Our members have won local and nationwide contests and have had their plays performed throughout the United States.

Screen writers must apply for membership and follow the Rules. Meetings are held the first and third Thursdays of the month, either in-person or Zoom, check their schedule online. The group has readings scheduled, one of the few remaining screenwriting groups in the area. .

Screen Writing Group

Still Unverified, Likely dead

SARASOTA'S SCREENWRITERS, STORYTELLERS AND CREATIVES

Screenwriting group, also covers storytelling.

Richard Keehn, an award winning screenwriter as well as the producer on the upcoming *Screenplay Show* by Rick Ramage invites you to his writing group no matter your skill level. Just bring your imagination, curiosity and discipline.

For More Information Contact Richard at richard@thescreenplayshow.com

The Sarasota Creative Writers **Verified**

Tuesdays @ 6:30 PM
Sarasota Alliance Church
7221 Bee Ridge Rd
Sarasota, FL

Tuesday, September 5th, 2023 and Tuesday, September 19th. All meetings start at 6:30 PM.
Meets every 2 weeks on Tuesday
Directions: Just East of 75 on the left side of Bee Ridge. Meeting room in building behind main Church building.

Please do **not** bring work with graphic sex, violence, or heavy usage of gratuitous profanity.

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The Manatee Writers Group

Meets Wednesday nights electronically on Zoom and live at Heritage Village West Clubhouse, 4100 66th St. Cir. W., Bradenton.
The Zoom link is: <https://tinyurl.com/mwgzoom>.

MWG has a Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/manateewriters>.

Members are primarily fiction and memoir writers, though we do have a few poets. The meetings are critique sessions where group members take turns offering suggestions on how to improve individual works.

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Florida Writers Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit formed to promote literacy, as well as enhancing the writing skills of children, youth, and adults is stretching out for members and volunteers across the state. Their volunteers and partners have already started to make a difference by visiting elementary schools for reading days, sponsoring poetry contests, donating books to under-privileged schools, and contributing funds to middle school contests. They have a new chairman, Tom Schwartz, who is working on fundraising including bringing in a nationally known bestselling author for the October Celebrity Workshop. They are establishing \$500.00 scholarships for students enrolled in a Florida College writing program. Please go to their website for more information: <https://floridawritersfoundation.net/>

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Announcements from our fellow writers

Tell other local writers about your upcoming book announcements and marketing! Local Writers/Readers may announce information about their writing—books for sale, blogs to read, websites to see, workshops you are holding or attending, speaking engagements, book trailers to watch, even requests for Facebook likes. So if you have something to announce or advertise, contact me for inclusion in the following month: DGould497@gmail.com

TALL TALES & SHORT STORIES —A Literary ~~Salon~~ Party.

Gather together authors and fans of the written word, every Friday evening at 6pm to mix and mingle with two of our local authors. The weeks are now themed and each week we will have two authors with works relevant to the theme. If you are interested in being a featured speaker, contact me. New Voices are always welcome: 941-748-6865 leave a voice message or email me DGould497@gmail.com

Authors discuss their writing journey for about fifteen or twenty minutes and then provide a short, reading from their book, or a short story affiliated with the book. After both author's presentation there is a question and answer discussion. All done in a comfortable setting with an intimate audience of eight to ten fans of your genre. The talks are recorded and will be going to a Youtube station in early fall. When completed and online, links are provided to the authors to use on their websites. It is a fun and informative party with the hope of selling a few tomes afterward.

The Themes for January the weekly themes will be:

January 5th: New Beginnings/Fresh Start

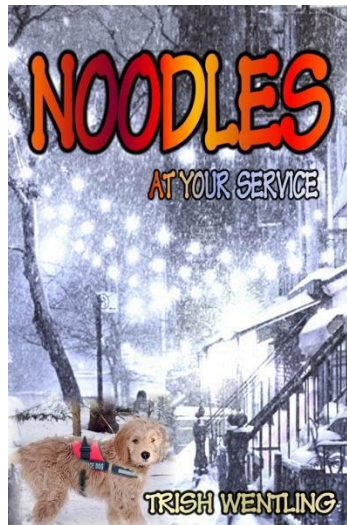
January 12th How To's

January 19th Resolutions & Promises Broken

January 26th Comedy

If you have applicable themes, please contact me and we will see about featuring you. (Dona Lee 941 748-6865—I screen calls-leave a message).

Congratulations to **Trish Wentling** on the book launch of her chapter book, *Noodles At Your Service*, the first in a Middle-grade series told by our heroic service dog. Noodles tells tales of his early life, his stretch at an Animal Shelter, his unusual training, and the purposeful and interesting life he leads assisting his disabled soldier.



This delightful romp of Noodle’s trials and tribulations told from his perspective as he grows from puppy to service dog is an uplifting story for all ages as it introduces how service dogs are trained for their forever homes.

The book is now available on Amazon in Paperback or e-Book.

<https://amzn.to/3GmCYoK>

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**Michelle Knudson** advised The FloridaWritersCon2023 was fabulous. Great classes, spectacular food. At the Royal Palm Literary Awards our own **David Pearce** won the Gold for his Novella, *A Cinematographer’s Conscience* and **Bill Griffith** won the Bronze for his Young Adult Science Fiction Novel, *The Infected*.

Michelle Knudson also won publication of her short story, “An Old, Cold Secret,” in the Secrets Collection.

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And a note from **Andrew Parker**:

Hello Everyone,

If anyone is interested in reading my recently published second episode of *Jesus Loves Me This I Know* in Kindle Vella, go to <http://www.amazon.com/kindle-vella>. It's a fun-filled family story about two gifted teens who share their discomfort as they grow up among Evangelicals who love to scream.

Andrew

[Jesus Loves Me This I Know](#)



Jesus Loves Me This I Know
| **Kindle Vella**

Teenage girl fights Evangelical
Christianity.

Kate Levinson announces the release of *Abreaction in Atlanta: Essays & Other Freudian Amusements: (Dancing with My Analyst)*

More than seven years in the writing, Kathryn Levison shares her enlightening adventures at the 2016 annual convention of Division 39, the psychoanalytical section of the American Psychological Association.

This collection of entertaining essays is the first full-length work from the writer you've come to love as Queen of Kindle Short Reads.

"An abreaction is a paradigm shift with an emotional twist. Like everything else psychoanalytically confusing and often insulting, Freud made up this word for the same reason as oral fixation and transference neurosis: He needed his medical colleagues to take him seriously and not lock **him** up with his head in an iron cage in the basement at Bedlam chained next to a handful of the hysterical-symptom women Freud tried to rescue from their leech-laden bloodletting clutches."

Free on Kindle Unlimited, \$2.99 e-book.

https://www.amazon.com/Abreaction-Atlanta-Freudian-Amusements-Dancing-ebook/dp/BoCKV6Q3MH?ref=ast_author_mpb

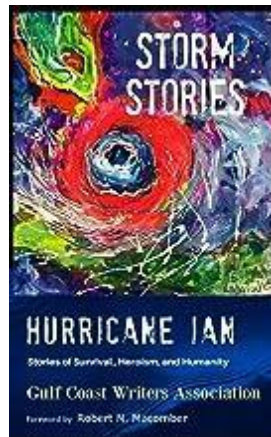
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**Capers Jones**, CTO Namcook Analytics, announced the publication of a new book on AI with nearly 300 AI-generated illustrations included. Capers has been helping the Florida Authors and Publishers Association working to protect human authors from artificial intelligence.

AI can raise revenues for authors and publishers. It is easy to generate movies from novels and a movie version could be offered to readers on a subscription basis. Novels could be expanded with new materials so instead of just selling books, publishers and authors could have recurring incomes by offering annual updates.

The cost of paper books will increase whenever they include full-color AI-generated illustrations. Selling e-books for full color readers will be the new standard.

Congratulations to Joan Voyles on the launch of *Storm Stories: Hurricane Ian*. Her short story “My Hurricane Ian Adventure” was chosen by Gulf Coast Writers Association for inclusion in their Hurricane Ian Stories of Survival, Heroism, and Humanity.

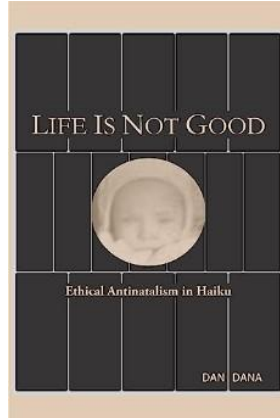


Eighty victims of Hurricane Ian, whose lives changed the day the monster storm hit the southwest coast of Florida, tell their stories of survival, loss, heroism, humanity, and resilience. These first-person, true accounts of the most disastrous hurricane to hit Florida in eighty-seven years are heartfelt, sad, harrowing, uplifting, and sometimes even funny.

The book can be purchased on Amazon or free for Kindle Unlimited:  
<https://amzn.to/45R6Z3K>

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Life is NOT Good by **Dan Dana** makes a compelling case that the future of humanity would be better served by limiting procreation



Just Released, 4.9 Stars, Controversial

<https://amzn.to/3YldCIX>

A natural extension of secular humanism, Dr. Dana draws from settled science the recognition that, across geologic time, the total weight of suffering in the world far exceeds the pleasures enjoyed by the privileged few.

Using his signature “haiku quintet” poetic form, he artfully leads the reader to this inescapable ethical conclusion. Finally, he offers high-empathy readers practical ways to implement this compassionate worldview, which may initially appear remotely abstract.

The nullified occupants of the future would thank us if they could. Advocates of human rights will discover here a powerful arrow in their quiver for opposing the anti-humanistic forces that maintain today’s unsustainable population growth.

His other books can be found here: <http://dandana.us/index.html>



Congratulations!

RELEASED!! M. S. Spencer's *The Wishing Tree: Love, Lies, and Spies on Chincoteague Island*

[The Wishing Tree: Love, Lies, and Spies on Chincoteague Island](#), from the Wild Rose Press, is 368 pages of fabulous cozy murder mystery and romantic suspense.

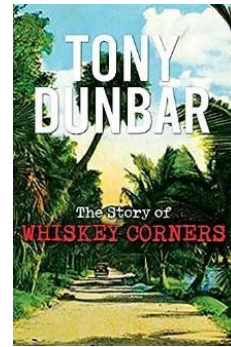
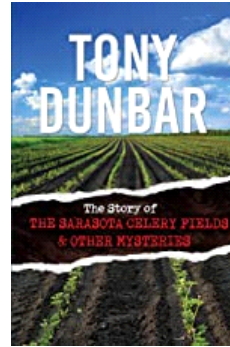
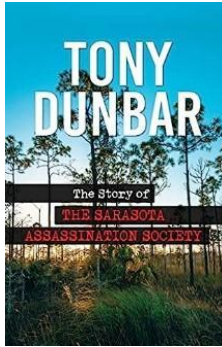
Will the wind whip her token from the Wishing Tree and make her wish come true?

Addison Steele dreams of the day her husband—lost at sea—returns to her. Instead, she meets Nick Savage, whose every word may be a lie. She is soon embroiled in mystery, all related to the top-secret science station at Wallops Island, Virginia.

After a Belarusian scientist at Wallops is murdered, the questions multiply. Was it because he caught the person stealing classified documents or because he wanted to defect? Is Nick the spy—or is it his brother? How can she trust the man who is slowly claiming her heart when his story keeps shifting?

[The Wishing Tree](#) is available in ebook and print-on-demand at all fine on-line stores, including iTunes, Barnes & Noble, and Amazon. Here are

the buy links: [Books2Read](#) ,[Amazon](#) ,[Barnes and Noble](#) ,[Bookbub](#)
,[Goodreads](#)



First there was **ONE**. Then there were **TWO**

Now there are **THREE!**

The Story of WHISKEY CORNERS

The first book, *The Story of the Sarasota Assassination Society*, takes place in the late 1880's. Young Gawain is tasked with the dangerous job of bringing to justice a homicidal fugitive who has just murdered Sarasota's first postmaster. In the process, Gawain exposes the secret "society" responsible for the crime.

In the second, *The Story of the Sarasota Celery Fields & Other Mysteries*, Gawain, now calling himself Gabe, has risen to be City Marshal of fast-growing Sarasota in the boom years of the 1920's – dealing with bootleggers, the changes brought by the incredibly wealthy Bertha Palmer, the treatment of convict labor in the turpentine camps, and the murder of three-time mayor Harry Higel.

In *The Story of Whiskey Corners*, set in the beginning of the Great Depression, Gabe has retired as a lawman. He works security for the Ringling Brothers Circus and does detective work on the side. In the process, he solves the murder of the "Coquettes on 24th Street" while grappling with the gambling and booze mobs that invaded the Gulf Coast, the "Red Scares" in Tampa and the Ku Klux Klan. He also reclaims Clarinda, his wife, who had found that Sarasota had become, quite frankly, "too bourgeois."

You can order the paperbacks or Kindle versions from Amazon at: And from Barnes and Noble by Googling "[Tony Dunbar Barnes and Noble](http://blindpasspublications.com)" You may also buy the paperback from your bookstore or directly from Blind Pass Publications, LLC. +

<http://blindpasspublications.com>

Author Services

Many of us, myself included, have side gigs providing services to other writers.

Over the years, some of you have advised that you offer particular writing services, from editing, to cover creation, audio books to picture books, as well as a number of other services. This page provides local assistance for other local writers. Please remember that we are helping— not taking advantage of—our fellow writers. We all face enough scams and shams in our industry. I don't want the newsletter to be a part of that.

To submit your services to this page, please write up a three line blurb stating what services you offer and a price per hour, per page, or per job, depending on how you charge your fees, and of course, your contact information. Then email me at DGould497@gmail.com, with Author Services in the subject line.

My newsletter, so I will go first.

Dona Lee: Editor, Coach, assist with Indie Publishing for E-books and Print on Demand, assist authors with digital book marketing.

\$40.per hour, or quote. Publishing is charged per book length.

Contact: DGould497@gmail.com or call 941-748-6865

Al Musitano: Cover Designs for POD, front & back custom covers starting at \$150.00. includes assistance with uploading to KDP. Editing, \$30.00 an hour. Contact: eye2eye@inbox.com or call/text 941-896-0031.

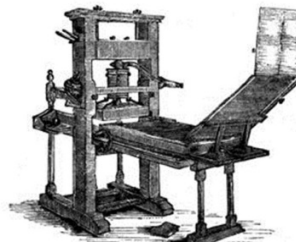
Andrew Parker: editor, ghostwriter, writing coach, or cover designer. Act now while I'm cheap before I become rich and famous. Contact me at andycp1999@yahoo.com .

Gina Rogers: Audio book narration including help with production. Gina will also speak to any local writers groups with her discussion "How to Bring Your Print or Ebook to Audio" Including Where to Begin, Steps to Finding the Perfect Narrator, How to Work with a Narrator, Which Platform is Right for Me, etc..." Quotes based on the project length and scope. Contact: www.ginarogersvo.com/audiobooks

Caper Jones: is available to Speak to local writing groups or those who might be interested in a journey through the history of publishing. He does do Zoom engagements and can be contacted at capers.jones3@gmail.com to schedule a talk.

A Short History of Printing and Publishing

Capers Jones July 10, 2022 Version 3.0



Do YOU have a service that you provide for authors? Let me know.
DGould497@gmail.com

Contests

Please let me know of any upcoming writing contests from legitimate sources, especially if they are Florida based. Here's what I found for now.

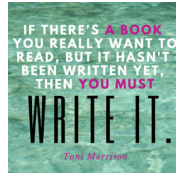
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I found a curated contest site that I thought might interest those of you honing your skills. <https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/>

Check out Reedsy, they have numerous contests from around the world. Even though they are curated by Reedsy, be careful not to spend a lot of money on contest entries. Any time you are researching contests, check the prizes. Publishing packages are not a good prize, they are a marketing ploy. How many average entries do they receive? Look for reviews and read a few—good and bad.

More below

# The Florida Book Awards



The Florida Book Awards, established in 2006, is an annual awards program that recognizes, honors, and celebrates the literature by Florida authors and books about Florida published in the previous year.

Authors must be Florida residents, except in the Florida nonfiction, cooking, and visual arts categories, where the subject matter must focus on Florida.

The awards program is coordinated by the Florida State University Libraries, with the involvement of other library, literary, and cultural organizations, including the State Library and Archives of Florida, Florida Library Association, Florida Humanities, Florida Center for the Book, Midtown Reader, and the Word of South festival.

The call for submissions of eligible books is announced in the summer and concludes in early January. By early March, medalists will be announced in each of the 11 categories. Traditionally, awards are presented to all award winners at a banquet in Tallahassee in April.

For more information please go to: <https://www.floridabookawards.org/>

Florida Book Award winners are promoted in a variety of ways, including participation in conference and book festival panels. Winning books and their authors are featured in the Summer issue of FORUM, the statewide magazine of the Florida Humanities. Visit the FORUM website to learn more about the authors and to buy the award-winning books. Historical interviews with The Florida Book Award winners that were featured on "The Florida Channel" are linked and archived on this website.

Florida Book Award-winning books are on permanent display in the library at the Governor's Mansion in Tallahassee, and in an exhibit case on the third floor of Florida State University's Strozier Library.

There are two more Awards groups I wish to share with you. Many of the writing contests online and in magazines are shams, a way for the host to make a lot of money with little output. I try to ensure the contests I share are not shams. The best way to tell the difference is: Has anyone ever heard of it? Is it respected in your genre? What organizations are they affiliated with?

Two large contests that are a bit pricey and have overwhelming competition are Writer's Digest Contests and the IPPY's. I personally know a few winners from Writer's Digest and the awards are great promotional tools, because they are Respected as professionals and Internationally known.

For Writer's Digest, check out their monthly and annual contests:

<https://www.writersdigest.com/>

## Independent Publisher Book Awards

The Independent Publisher Book Awards, also known as the IPPY Awards, are a set of annual book awards for independently published titles. They are the longest-running unaffiliated contest open exclusively to independent presses.

<https://www.ippyawards.com/>

### ABOUT THE AWARDS

Conducted annually, the Independent Publisher Book Awards honor the year's best independently published titles from around the world. The awards are intended to bring increased recognition to the thousands of exemplary independent, university, and self-published books released each year.

The "IPPY" Awards were conceived as a broad-based, unaffiliated awards program open to all members of the independent publishing industry, and are open to authors and publishers worldwide who produce books written in English and appropriate for the North American market.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Amy Shamroe, Awards Director**

Phone: 1-800-644-0133 x1000

Email: amys [at] jenkinsgroupinc.com

# **Writing Conferences**

# **Marketing Opportunities**

Coming Soon

Please let me know of any opportunities for writers that you come across—Fiction or Nonfiction, I'll post legitimate opportunities.



## Of Writing Interest

Here's a new opportunity from **Florida Writers Association**

Interested in Joining the FWA Board of Directors?

Founded in 2001, the Florida Writers Association (FWA) is a nonprofit 501(c)(6) serving writers of all genres and all levels. We embrace the diversity of our membership from across the State of Florida, the nation, and the globe, celebrating our differences, united by our shared love for the written and spoken word.

Currently, FWA is looking to expand our Board of Directors.

Volunteers with experience in digital marketing, web administration, organizational growth and development, finance, governance, or event planning are a plus.

The FWA Board of Directors oversees all association programs, including membership, contests, conferences, writers groups, and marketing.

FWA members can access the application by following this link:

<https://fwa.memberclicks.net/board-application#!/>

Help the FWA soar to new heights by sharing this email with your group. Questions may be directed to me at [anissen@floridawriters.org](mailto:anissen@floridawriters.org).

# Paid Publishing Opportunity

Unverified

Authors accepted for publication are paid. Thank you so much.

- The first issue of *Today & Yesterday*, an online international literary journal published by Laughing Fire Press, is available at [todayandyesterday.co](http://todayandyesterday.co). (.co NOT .com)
- Featured in this issue are short stories, poems, a memoir, and an author interview from contributors either living in or from the US, Germany, Nigeria, Turkey, the Philippines, and Iran.
- Laughing Fire Press invites [submissions](#) for the next issue of the journal. Short stories, poems, essays, interviews, memoirs, and photographs that examine contemporary or historical socially-relevant subject matter are desired. Areas of interest include the arts, politics, popular culture, economics, science and technology, human rights, psychology, philosophy, and the environment.

Jed Lewis

Publisher and Editor-In-Chief

Laughing Fire Press

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

[www.facebook.com/LaughingFirePress](https://www.facebook.com/LaughingFirePress)

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Unverified

Local author and publisher E. P. "Ned" Burke is hosting a Web site, **Sarasota Authors Showcase**, Sarasota.Authors.Showcase@gmail.com, on which local authors can post info about their books. The service is free. Send bio information along with the title of your book (s) and the book's URL sales page address on Amazon.com or another location to authorepburke@gmail.com.

Burke also invites submissions and free subscriptions to his online magazines: www.theperspiringwriter.com and www.yesterdaysmagazette.com. See guidelines on site.

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Writing Tips

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No matter how many times we learn about these pesky three-letter words, it always slips my mind when I need it. So for those who still lay on the floor or lie their head on the pillow...

### Word Choices: Lay vs. Lie

Imagine your friends are over for a movie night, and they've brought a tray of brownies to share. You take the platter from them — but do you tell them you're going to "lie" it down or "lay" it down? And will you all "lie" down to watch the movie, or "lay" down? It's an age-old question: What is the actual difference between "lay" and "lie"? When *do* you use one over the other?

#### Why are "lay" and "lie" confusing?

To clarify: We're not talking about the kind of lie you might tell when you call out of work or don't finish your homework on time. We're talking only about the setting/reclining meaning of the verb.

"Lay" and "lie" are often confused because both words are about people or objects positioned horizontally on a surface. But they are used to refer to different scenarios.

It can be quite simple — if you're in the present tense. The past tense is when things really get confusing, since the past tense of "lie" is "lay" (sorry). But don't worry, we'll give you a few easy tips to help you along.

#### When to use "lay" vs. "lie"

"Lay" is a transitive verb. Transitive means that you have an object that is being acted upon. So "lay" means to set down or place something — an object — in a horizontal position. Here's an example in the present tense: "I *lay* the book on the nightstand." In this instance, the book is the object that is having something done to it.

"Lie" is an intransitive verb, meaning the object doesn't need something else to put it down. Instead, the person or subject is doing the action. "Lie" means to stay at rest in a horizontal position, or to recline. An example of "lie" in present tense would be, "I feel the wind as I *lie* in my backyard on the grass." In this example, the person is performing the action rather than having the action done to them.

So, in the present tense, the simplest way to determine which word to use is by looking at what is actually being reclined. If the reclining object is inanimate and/or requires someone to put it down, use "lay." If the object is self-sufficient, such as a person, use "lie." Quick memory tip: Only a person can lie on a bed and tell a lie.

### **"Lay" and "lie" in other tenses**

Here's a chart to help you understand how the two are used in different tenses.

| <i>verb</i> | <i>present tense</i> | <i>past tense</i> | <i>past participle</i> | <i>present participle</i> |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| lay         | lay                  | laid              | laid                   | laying                    |
| lie         | lie                  | lay               | lain                   | lying                     |

Let's tackle the past tense of each, since that's where there's the most opportunity to pick the wrong word.

**I \_\_\_\_\_ my clothes out last night before I went to bed.**

Which one is it — "lay" or "lie"? Here's how to tell: Is something happening *to* an object? Yep! The clothes are being set out. That tells us that we need the verb "lay," past tense "laid."

**I *laid* my clothes out last night before I went to bed.**

Now, what about the past tense of "lie"?

**I heard a noise coming from the basement as I \_\_\_\_\_ on the sofa watching a horror movie.**

In this example, there is not a specific action being performed upon an object. Rather, the speaker (the subject) is doing the action. This means we need the past tense of "lie," which (confusingly) is "lay."

**I heard a noise coming from the basement as I *lay* on the sofa watching a horror movie.**

My Second Writing Tip this month helps you determine the reading level needed to read your books. This is ESPECIALLY helpful with Children's & Young Adult books. However, if you are writing genre fiction, keep in mind that the average comprehension level is Eighth Grade.

## **How Do You Measure Readability?**

When writing, you want to make sure your writing is readable, or easily understood, clear and legible for targeted readers. But how do you measure that? Sure, you could read a few sentences and say, "It seems readable to me, I guess," but there are actually tools out there you can use to put a number to the readability of your writing.

My tool of preference is in Microsoft Word. The major readability statistics are Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level. For the Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level statistics to come up in the "Spelling & Grammar" review of your content you will need to enable those statistics. To do this select "File" then "Options" next go to the "Proofing" tab and check the box that says "Show readability statistics."

Flesch-Kincaid scores are readability tests designed to show how easy or difficult a text is to read. This score is given in two different ways. First is the "Flesch Reading Ease" and the other is "Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level".

The Reading Ease number is from 0 to 100. With a score of 90 to 100 your writing could be understood by an average 11-year old and a score of 60 to 70 could be understood by average 13 to 15-year olds. A score of zero to 30 means your writing could be understood by a university graduate. The higher the score the easier the writing is to read and comprehend.

To give you an idea of where some major publications fall in this range Reader's Digest has a Flesch Reading Ease around 65, Time magazine has a score of 52 and the Harvard Law Review falls somewhere in the low 30s.

The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level applies a reading grade level to your writing. New York Times articles have a tenth-grade reading level and romance novels have about a fifth-grade reading level. A sixth-grade student could understand content with a Flesch Reading Ease of 60 to 70.

Now what? So you know how to measure readability, but how do you improve the readability scores of your writing? It ultimately comes down to

what you're writing about. Content about astrophysics is going to be more complex and have a higher reading level than some other subjects so always keep in mind the subject of your writing.

A great starting point is to ask, "Would someone new to this subject understand what I'm saying?" You need a balance with readability. You don't want to write your content too industry-specific, but you also do not want to write for a five-year old because then your writing might lack professionalism.

To improve Flesch-Kincaid scores, try getting your message across in as few words as possible. Sentences should err on the shorter side as well. When it comes to paragraph lengths, shorter is better here also. Shorter paragraphs make reading seem to go by more quickly and are less intimidating to readers. Our final tip is to pick out complex words and replace them with shorter, simpler synonyms.

So why does this all matter again? Making sure that your content is readable to your users is important when it comes to holding your reader's attention and making them want to read your material. When we write blog articles for SEO purposes, it is all about user experience. The better experience a user has on your site, the more it will help your website's performance in the search engines. By keeping your articles clear, concise and easy to follow you can ensure that readers will understand your products and services. So whether you are writing an article for your company blog or creating new content for your website readability is an important factor for Google. Great content is not considered great until it is read and understood!

For reference, this article has a reading ease score of 62.5 and a grade level of 8.7, which fits in with our recommendation. Try to keep your reading ease score between 30 and 60 and your grade level around eighth grade.

That's all for this month. Hope you enjoyed it.

Dona Lee  
"Plotting Success"

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