

# *Plotting Success*

Established 2006 @ Village Voices & Eclectic Art Emporium

## July 2024 Newsletter

With the New Year, Plotting Success solidified our focus on providing a central point for all things writing. We are a **Writing Center for Central Florida 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.

We are asking 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.

In June, two published books by local authors in our group had the books on sale for 99 cents for two days. I hope most of you purchased them on sale and are reading or scanning them in order to write 4 or 5 star book reviews on Amazon.

Contact me to request your book be placed on the review list. Most books will be on Kindle Unlimited or cost \$.99 if you don't have KU. We will be doing these book reviews every month. Please contribute to make this a marketing success for our community.

IF you feel the book does 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? Want to get on the list to be reviewed?

Contact me @ [DGOULD497@gmail.com](mailto:DGOULD497@gmail.com) Subject Line: **Book Review**.

The March 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 writing 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:DGould497@gmail.com) Subject Line: **Please Remove**, and let me know.

Writers & aspiring writers: if you do not “fit” with the first writing group you visit, check out others. They are an enormous help to all writers, at every level, 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. Some are In-Person, others are Zoom. A few are genre specific, a few do poetry, some are fiction only, other groups 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 later in the newsletter 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](mailto: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**

July 21<sup>st</sup> 2024

We host 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, while discovering the Tastes of Bradenton Brunches.

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 12 usually). [DGould497@gmail.com](mailto:DGould497@gmail.com)

The Toasted Yolk is still not open in Bradenton. Maybe next month?  
This month we will be returning to our original brunch spot, Pier 22.



**Last month at First Watch Bradenton**

Pier 22 is located on the Manatee River, 1200 1st Ave W, Bradenton.  
(941) 748-8087 [pier22.com](http://pier22.com) for menu information.

In the summer we sit inside, just ask the hostess for the Writers Group and she will show you the table. If you are new to the brunches, please be sure to advise me you are planning to come so I can advise the reservationist.

## Humor

**A moment to make fun of our passion for writing:**

What do you call an immaterial fantasy writer? A non-fungible Tolkien.

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Why are writers always cold? They're surrounded by drafts.

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I'm writing a book about reverse psychology. Please don't buy it.

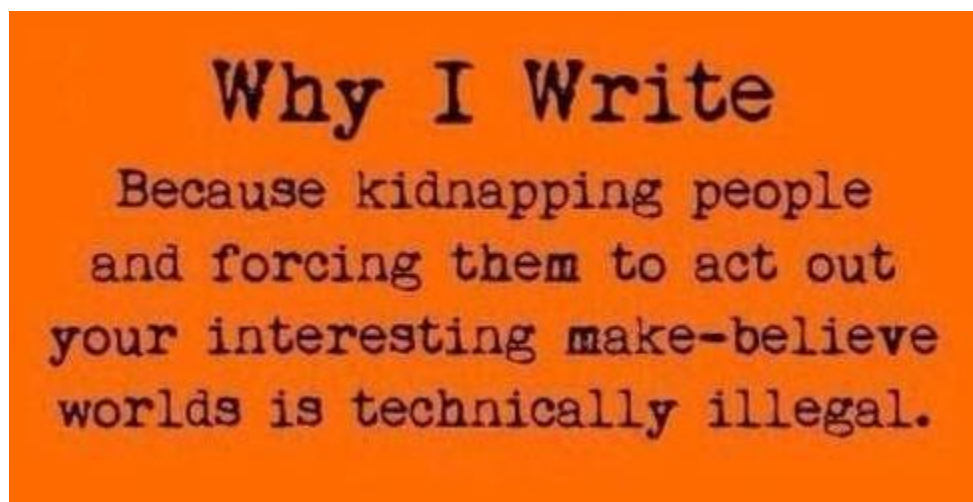
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My son asked me for something hard to write on. I don't know why he got so mad, sand is pretty hard to write on.

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I accidentally glued myself to a novel that I just finished writing. Well, that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

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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> Thursdays 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, July 4<sup>th</sup> for example.) 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.

**July 2024** meetings: No meeting on July 4<sup>th</sup> Independence Day.

Saturday, July 6<sup>th</sup> at 4pm

Thursday July 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm and Saturday July 20<sup>th</sup> at 4pm

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. July 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30pm and July 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

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 2023. 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 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 11a.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**

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 summers.

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

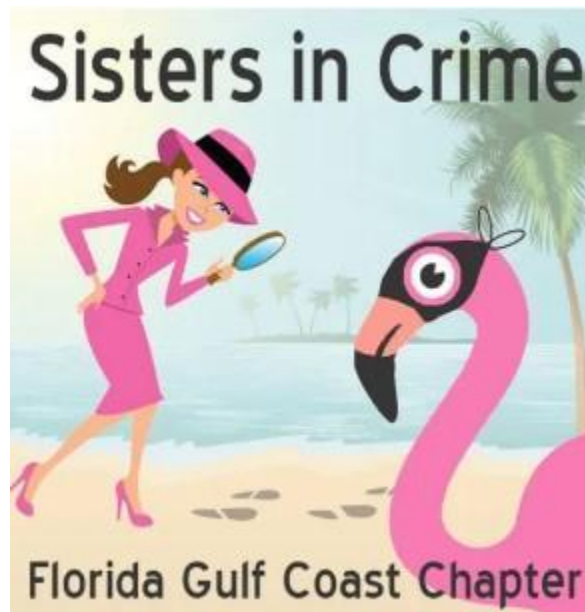


A writers group! It will be fun! Exercise the mind and develop the cranial muscle. Enjoy the "Smorgasbord for the mind" a potluck that all participants bring. This is the place for camaraderie and exchange of ideas. This offers an opportunity for honing your skills, as a writer. If you can pick up a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



There is no meeting scheduled for July.

We are a chapter of Sisters in Crime, an international organization of authors and fans of crime fiction and mystery books. Our members live on Florida's Gulf Coast.

To learn more about membership, email: [FLGulfCoastSinC@gmail.com](mailto:FLGulfCoastSinC@gmail.com).

Our Membership Chair will be in touch.

To share news or to subscribe to our digital newsletter, email: [Cheryl.Hollon@gmail.com](mailto:Cheryl.Hollon@gmail.com).

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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](mailto:Lschell2@verizon.net), 941-223-1262.

## **Sarasota Screenwriters**

It is with a sad heart that I recently learned of the loss of one of our writing leaders. Mary Laurissa (Laurie) Stoner. Laurie was a leader in the Sarasota filmmaking and screenwriting communities. She was the leader of the Screenwriters Circle and worked closely with Manasota Films actors for script table readings. She moved to Atlanta last year and the group was unable to find a strong replacement.

Her obituary information is linked here: <https://bit.ly/3xcr4Fs>

I learned of her passing when attempting to contact her due to finally finding a great producer/scriptwriter to start up a new Screenwriting group.

Daniel Hime, a film producer from LA, is starting a production company. He's currently developing an indie feature script he hopes to produce locally. If you have any film industry skills, behind or in front of the cameras, please contact him. He is creating a film contact list and plans to put things together this fall.

Daniel studied screenwriting and cinematography in California, worked on several motion pictures, shot many videos and founded an ad agency there before moving to Florida.

He has written, produced and directed industrial videos as well as worked on or consulted on a variety of productions locally.

If you are interested email him: [himedia@yahoo.com](mailto:himedia@yahoo.com) . Subject line should indicate your film industry focus.

## **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.

## **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.

## **The Sarasota Creative Writers** **Verified**

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

Tuesday, July 9<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>. 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.

Chairman, Tom Schwartz, 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/> ~ ~ ~



## 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

**Village Voices** is now open Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from noon till 4pm. If you have not been to our “Only Florida Authors” book gallery, drop in and see the multitude of books and novels by dozens of local writers.



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David Pearce announced the upcoming launch of the first novel in his Green Charisma Sci-fi series, *The Holooid Hero*, launches on July 4.

[https://www.amazon.com/Holooid-Hero-Green-Charisma-Chronicles-ebook/dp/BoD4JT3PX6/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=1VCWCJGCK2U7X&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.MHF5gyVgpnkl1Td1wjp-9z1oDUxjp-OzceGSsbsSXzs.WPM4lGHRZd8LboORyCQ9fySoBJTOdqZKahpE89dFqOs&dib\\_tag=se&keywords=holooid+hero&qid=1716515975&srefix=holooid+hero%2Caps%2C119&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Holooid-Hero-Green-Charisma-Chronicles-ebook/dp/BoD4JT3PX6/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1VCWCJGCK2U7X&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.MHF5gyVgpnkl1Td1wjp-9z1oDUxjp-OzceGSsbsSXzs.WPM4lGHRZd8LboORyCQ9fySoBJTOdqZKahpE89dFqOs&dib_tag=se&keywords=holooid+hero&qid=1716515975&srefix=holooid+hero%2Caps%2C119&sr=8-1)

Free copies available now for advance copy review readers.

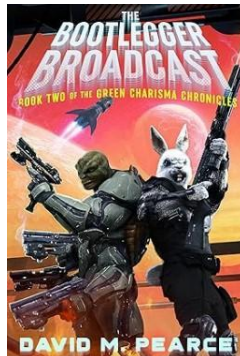
<https://dl.bookfunnel.com/1h3bjowmup>

The Green Charisma Chronicles trilogy has three release dates. The eBook and paperback will be released on the same day. Right now, only the eBooks are available for pre-order. I am still looking for ARC readers if anyone is interested in a free copy of the eBooks.

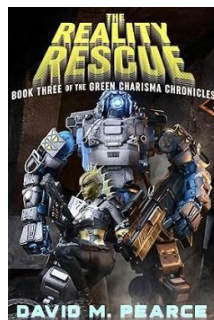
June 28 - The Holovid Hero: <https://amzn.to/45QDtwi>



August 4 - The Bootlegger Broadcast: <https://amzn.to/4cFN0bA>



August 28 - The Reality Rescue: <https://amzn.to/3zkiiX0>



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All of Sarasota author Dan Dana's eBooks will be free on July 1 only:  
<https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/BooMYZYPWI/allbooks>  
Download all on July 1, read/rate/review at your leisure."

REMINDER: Please review these free books

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Helaine Mario launched her newest book, ECHOES ON THE WIND, on Tuesday June 4th.

ECHOES ON THE WIND is the 4th book in her award-winning Classical Music Suspense Series, following The Lost Concerto, Dark Rhapsody and Shadow Music (these last 3 published by Oceanview).



In 1943 war-torn France, a young woman on the Night Train to Paris has a chance meeting with two very different men who will change her life

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Al Musitano ran across an interesting little website those with a "literary" sense of humor may enjoy.

[Why don't "tough" and "dough" rhyme? - Arika Okrent \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

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Capers Jones has an exciting announcement. In August he will be the keynote speaker in *Beijing* at an Artificial Intelligence Conference. His subject is explaining how to illustrate books and articles using artificial intelligence.

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John Chaplick advised his new book, *A Dragon at the Gates*, will be out in August.

On July 13<sup>th</sup> he has a book signing event at St. Patrick Church, 4518 S Manhattan Ave, Tampa. He's published six other books; I'm displaying one each month till we are caught up.

This second one, *December of the Dark Sun*: <https://amzn.to/3RadUQq>



Mild-mannered Duncan Evans discovers a devastating World War II secret in his bookstore basement in rural England. A secret that would change history as he eludes assassins hired to ensure it was never exposed. *December of the Dark Sun* fills a long-existing information gap relating to the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor

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From the Desk of Andrew Parker:

He's still working on his episodic story of two high school asexuals toiling at a romance.

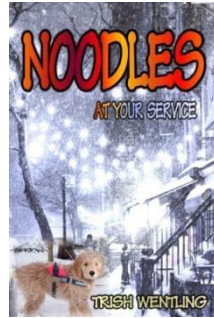
Andrew Parker, [andyc1999@yahoo.com](mailto:andyc1999@yahoo.com)

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Michael Schafer announced that he has finally overcome the obstacles KDP threw in his publishing path and has released the Large Print edition of *Two Shots to the Chest*. <https://amzn.to/4bjEzlu>



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 eBook.

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

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## Author Services

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

This page provides local assistance for 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](mailto: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 job. Publishing is charged per book length.

Contact: [DGould497@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:eye2eye@inbox.com) or call/text 941-896-0031.

**Andrew Parker:** mentored by Bill Carrigan (one of the best editors in the business) offering a free service--editing your writing project's first and last page. First page, is there an inciting incident? Last Page, did you resolve the goal? And did you leave your main characters in transition to higher growth?

This is a free service. I'll just be doing it for the fun of it. But tell me what you most want help with on those pages, and I'll edit accordingly. Contact me at [andycp1999@yahoo.com](mailto:andycp1999@yahoo.com) .

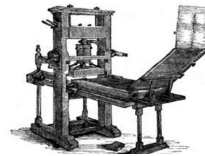


**Sylwia OK** 941 224-0550 Professional Photographs for your covers, websites, and more. Highly recommended by Jo Ann Glim, email her for more information: [JoAnnGlim.author@gmail.com](mailto:JoAnnGlim.author@gmail.com)

**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](http://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 Zoom engagements and can be contacted at [capers.jones3@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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.

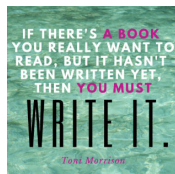
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I found a curated contest site that I thought might interest those of you honing your skills. <https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/>

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**

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## **Writing Conferences**

Nothing scheduled this month

RPLA has opened Reservations and Early Bird pricing for the October FWA State Conference.

# **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**

# 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](mailto: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](mailto:authorepburke@gmail.com).

Burke also invites submissions and free subscriptions to his online magazines: [www.theperspiringwriter.com](http://www.theperspiringwriter.com) and [www.yesterdaysmagazette.com](http://www.yesterdaysmagazette.com). See guidelines on site.

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# Writing Tips

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## The Weird Writing Rule Nobody Teaches You

You just know it when you see it



by Malky McEwan



Our brains are magnificently quirky.

Describe what you see in the above image.

There is no trick to this. Most of you will have said something like ‘a small yellow car.’

Yet if English is your first language and someone were to describe it to you as *a yellow small car*, your ears would tell you that, despite being correct, it sounds wrong. You instinctively know we say it the other way around.

**Size comes before color.**

This isn’t a grammar rule I learned in English class. My teacher never told me what order adjectives need to be in. It is something that has naturally worked its way into my subconscious knowledge.

If I add another adjective to this set, I sense more rules. It’s a *small yellow metal car*. There’s no problem with that. The order dictates that the material it is made from has to come last.

It would be unusual if I described it as a *metal yellow small car* because that sounds peculiar. If I add my opinion, I could say it looks like a ‘cute’ car and I would have no problem knowing where to put it:

*It’s a cute small yellow metal car.*

However, should I put those in any other order it would sound like unconventional gibberish. *Feel free to try it.*

Isn’t that weird? We have the same words describing the same car and changing the order makes it intrinsically unnatural.

You may already know the rules regarding adjectives. Here is the order I obey:

**Opinion, size, age, shape, color, origin, material, purpose, noun.**

I could describe my car as:

*It’s a cute small old rounded yellow Volkswagen metal toy car.*

Why does this matter? This probably won’t make sense if you are a non-native English speaker.

The French would say, *C’est une jolie petite vieille voiture jouet en métal Volkswagen jaune arrondie* — *This is a pretty small old car toy in metal Volkswagen yellow rounded.* Language matters.

There are other schools of thought on this order.

**Quantity, quality, size, shape, age, color, nationality, material, noun.**

Which would make my car:

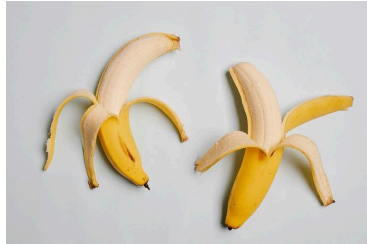
*One nice small rounded old yellow German metal car.*

I’m not convinced. Swapping age and shape doesn’t feel right to me and there is no place for ‘toy’.

Another I found on the [font of all knowledge](#) suggested this order:

1. **Determiner**— a, an, the, both, either, some, many, my, your, our etc.
2. **Opinion**— good, bad, great, terrible, pretty, silly, lovely, beautiful, etc.
3. **Size**— huge, big, large, tiny, enormous, little, tall, long, gigantic etc.
4. **Shape**— flat, round, square, triangular, rectangular, etc.

5. **Age**— young, old, new, ancient, antique, six-year-old, youthful,
6. **Color**— red, black, bright, faded, shining, yellow, orange, etc.
7. **Origin**— French, American, Canadian, Mexican, Greek, Swiss,
8. **Material**— plastic, metal, silver, gold, wooden, paper, etc.
9. **Purpose**— writing, rolling, sleeping, roasting, running, etc.



So the description of the above image would read:

*Two lovely average-sized bent ripe yellow-skinned shop-bought organic eating bananas.*

This misses out on their physical quality —**half-peeled**. So where does *Half-Peeled* sit on that list? The more adjectives you have, the greater the debate.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, half-peeled is a physical quality, which should come between size and shape. Would it also fit between opinion and size or between material and purpose, but nowhere else?

The acid test is surely to pick one and decide if it goes before or after, which is easier to determine.

### **Why do we have to put adjectives in a specific order?**

I can't say for sure, but there are a few theories. The closer an adjective is to its noun, the more important it is for describing the noun.

Calling it a yellow car is more specific than saying it is rusty, but that raises the question of importance — if it's rustier than it is yellow, which should go first?

Knowing the importance of whether it is a *new* car or a *toy* car would depend on the circumstances — do you need it as a getaway car or as the token race car for playing a game of Monopoly?

### **Who's afraid of the big bad wolf?**

Ooh!

Why doesn't this conform to the adjective rule? According to all those lists you read above, this should be *Who's afraid of the **bad big** wolf?* Yet, it isn't right; it isn't what we are used to.

If you thought things were complicated enough, here comes the I-A-O rule or 'ablaut reduplication.'

For two or three words, the vowels should follow the order of I, A, O.

For example, splish splash splosh.

The I-A-O rule is another of those illogical quirks of the English language. It's not a recognized rule, it's something we subconsciously apply.

You tell me what is wrong with these examples: toe tac tic, song-sing, Kong King, clop-clip, chat-chit, patter-pitter.

Ablaut reduplication involves repeating a word for emphasis or pairing it with a similar-sounding or similarly-spelt word. It links words that have internal vowel alternations.

There you go, bish bash bosh. It's always worth considering when writing congeries.

Do you need to use commas between adjectives?

I had them in my first draft, then took them out.

When you have multiple adjectives in a sentence, some need commas and some don't. There's a method to this one. If two or more adjectives are in the same category, stick a comma between them.

- I love sweet, tasty bananas.

Adjectives from different categories don't have commas between them.

- My small yellow toy car has gone missing.

Caveat: you never put a comma between the last adjective and the noun it describes or between a determiner and an adjective at the beginning of a phrase.

- My yellow car.
- Two delicious bananas.

The order of adjectives is one of those quirks of the English language that is worth following if you aren't sure.

If it doesn't feel right, change it and if it still doesn't work we can say, Two lovely bananas, ripe and yellow, ready-peeled for eating.

Malky McEwan, Medium

As long as we continue the Book Reviews, I will keep the “How To Write A Book Review For Amazon” article at the end of the newsletters after the sign off.

That’s all for this month. Hope you enjoyed it and learned information to help you with your Plotting Success.

Dona Lee  
“Plotting Success”

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### Writing a Review for Amazon &/or Good Reads for our local writers

I am hoping to work with all of you, published or planning to be published reviewing our fellow Plotting Success author's books and in return being reviewed by our fellow authors. Amazon rankings (which affect sales) are weighed heavily on reviews, yet we all find it difficult to get people to leave reviews.

I have asked that you all review two books per month by our fellow Plotting Success writers. The 2 books we review will be dropped in a price promotion to 99 cents for 2 days. For any struggling writers who can’t afford it, contact me and I will ask the authors to “gift” you a copy to review. This 2-day promotion helps kick off sales rankings to Amazon readers, but our purpose is to read the book and leave a short review to increase the promoted authors’ Review rankings which are more important than daily sales.

**IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN E-BOOK, contact me. You are missing a HUGE opportunity for sales and reviews.**

### Now, on to the **Tips on Writing Amazon Reviews.**

Write in first person. This is YOUR review. You want to focus on why they should read the book. What did you like about it? If it isn’t your genre, did you still find it interesting? For those who have been to a writer’s critique group, we critique work outside our preferred genre all the time. It



opens us up to new adventures. As writers we can look and see if the elements are working—the characters are authentic, people we can visualize and like or hate, we know if the story arc is working or if we are all hoping something...anything...happens. We all know (At least I hope we do) that there needs to be a resolution to the goal set at the beginning of the novel. In a nonfiction book, there needs to be a summary conclusion.

When rating the books our group is focusing on, please do not rate a book lower than 4 stars. If it is poorly written or not deserving of a four or five star rating, please mail the review to me and I will forward it to the author so they can attempt to improve their work. The purpose of these reviews is to help our fellow authors (and ourselves when our turn for review arises), not ruin them.

A Review is NOT a book report. Don't summarize the story.

You will need a "Title" for your Review. Don't use the title of the book for your Review Title. Using an emotion the book gave you works well for the Review \

Title: "Unputdownable" "Disturbing" "Totally Relatable" "Wild Imagination" "Magical"

Be clear and specific about what you liked.

If it is nonfiction, did it provide relevant information? Was it interesting? Who would it appeal to the most? Is it clear? Did you learn anything? Were facts provided with evidence sources? Was it well researched?

If it is fiction or a memoir: Were the characters people you would enjoy hanging out with? Are the characters fully dimensional? Is the dialogue realistic? Is the "Inciting Incident" in the first chapter? Is the protagonist or the primary antagonist in the first chapter? Is there a Resolution at the end that dealt with the protagonists goal or quest? Is the pace maintained throughout the book? Did it feel formulaic? Would you read more by the author?

Each month when doing the obligatory review—remember it is important to help other writers if you want the favor returned—keep it short.

I am putting a couple examples below of Four and Five star reviews on Amazon that work well.

ROMANCE: “From the beginning chapter, I was drawn into this book and it continued to do so throughout the book. It is well written. The characters are well developed. Anyone who enjoys a good love story and suspense will appreciate this book. I can't wait to read another book by this author.”

THRILLER: “This is definitely one of the best Alex Cross books, if not the best. You begin guessing as to what could possibly cause a person to kill entire families in such a horrible disgusting way. The twists and turns in this novel create more guesses that you instinctively know are incorrect. The second story line involving Bree creates a diversion from Alex, Samuel, and the FBI and even more guessing. The finale leaves one wanting more. Superb story lines.”

MAIN STREAM—LITERARY: “This novel is beautiful. The writing is done at a very high level. As others have pointed out, the book switches perspectives often, going from Oskar's POV to letters to his grandparents'. I've read that some found this confusing, but I was never confused at all. I found it very easy to follow.”

You can rate the book four or five stars and still discuss things you might not like about the book in the review section. Be honest, but not brutal—unless it is well deserved. Hopefully we can keep the brutality in-house.

If any of the books I ask you to review over the coming months are abominations, please let me know. There are many I have not read. I don't have the time to read all the books published by local writers.

###Good Luck###