



Spring Issue 2015

For Escapees Writers  
Published or Not



## Tips From Jaimie

~Jaimie Hall Bruzenak~

**Sci-fi or Fantasy Fan?** Get your creative juices flowing and get published!

**Stories wanted!** *The Body Movers* series by Stephanie Bond, the *St. Helena Vineyards* series by Marina Adair, and ABNA winner Rysa Walker's *The Chronos Files* series are now open and accepting your fan fiction. [Share your story today.](#)

**Great Writing Gig Or A Scam? 10 Red Flags!** Melissa Rudy in *Writer's Weekly eZine* gives you ways to identify a scam if you are looking for paying freelance writing assignments.

Some are common sense or apply to other things on the Internet. It may keep you from making a costly mistake—costly in that you don't get paid or paid an unfair amount for your work. [Read the article here.](#)

**Free resource** for people wanting to make money with their writing. [AllIndieWriters.com](#)



## Get Ready...Set...Go!

We are fortunate to have a new columnist, Ellen Behrens, joining us. She is former fiction editor of *Mid-American Review* and the recipient of an *Ohio Arts Council Individual Artist Fellowship*. She and her husband have been living the full-time RV lifestyle since 2009. Ellen's column, entitled **Fiction Tips From Ellen**, adds to our growing list of writers sharing their talents with us.

If you are an experienced writer and would like to contribute tips in the *Memoirs, Poetry, or Biographies* categories, please send me an eMail.

## The New Forum @ RVillage

Join our new **Group** forum at [RVillage.com](#). Sign up for free. Then, click *Search*, enter **Penwheels** in the field. Click **Join Group**.

## Newsletter Archive

The **new** location for accessing any past Penwheels newsletter from 2009 to the current issue:

<http://Penwheels.MovingOnWithMargo.com>



## In This Issue

- ~ Tips From Jaimie
- ~ Get Ready, Set, Go!
- ~ Moving On With Margo
- ~ Sales Update from PW
- ~ Writing Gigs
- ~ Writing Contest & Awards
- ~ Fiction Tips From Ellen
- ~ Part Two - Critique Groups
- ~ Park of the Sierras
- ~ Free eBooks
- ~ Convert Any Book to Kindle
- ~ How I Discovered Workcamp
- ~ Membership Corner
- ~ News From the Publishing Industry



- ~ *Editor:* Margo Armstrong  
Margo@TheMaxwellGroup.net
- ~ *Web Moderator:*  
Margo Armstrong
- ~ *Membership:* Joanne Alexakis  
joalexakis@earthlink.net
- ~ *Staff Assistant:* Joe Lacey  
josephlacey12@reagan.com
- ~ *Historian:* Doris Hutchins  
valentinedh@gci.net

*Penwheels* is a private group of Escapees members who enjoy writing and discussing the writing adventure. To be a member of this group, first join the Escapees RV Club. Next, contact the *Membership Coordinator, Joanne Alexakis*, to submit your request for membership to the *Penwheels* group. The *Penwheels* is a free digital newsletter published quarterly to all members



## Ready to Publish?

### Do Your Research

Before starting this journey into the eBook world, visit the Internet sites where you plan to market or publish your book. Find topics similar to your project and study its presentation on the website. Write down the positive tips for later use.

Read all the fine print in the "Publishing Guide" section. Download and save the formatting guides, sales documents, and tips. After perusing all this information, a publishing plan begins to form.

More importantly, research and compare the royalty commitments, when the sales are paid, and in what form they are paid. In other words, do not rush blindly into a publishing venue without knowing the rules.

If you choose to let the eBook be published by others, saving you the labor and frustration of converting it to the eReader format, your legal rights to use the eBook conversion on another platform may be compromised. Yes, it frees you to just write more books, but at what cost.

Your right to sell or distribute your converted eBook from these publishers is limited. It must be rewritten, a different cover designed, and probably a few other changes need to be made before offering the book to another venue.

It might be wiser to hire an editor, format converter and cover designer, if necessary. The eBook then belongs to you, the publisher, to sell anywhere in the world. Just a thought!

When you see how easy it is to self-publish, all doubts dissolve.

## Choose a Topic, Then Choose a Title

If there is a book burning in your soul and/or churning in your mind, you already know the topic. Choosing the right title may be more difficult.

Titles in the eBook market are particularly important because you cannot peruse the book before purchasing. Ebook websites are designed to give you a short blurb (like the back jacket of a bound book) but you cannot actually flip through the pages to get a sense of the topic.

If you are writing how-to or self-help topics, ensure that the title goes to the heart of the subject. That bit of common sense really applies to all genres.

### Make an Outline

It is just like being back in school. English 101 trains you to make an outline first, then fill in the content. This moves the writing process along quickly, or maybe just moves it along, depending on your mood.

Working without an outline is an invitation to writer's block. You can work on your content in any free moment. To take the best advantage of these moments, I keep a small notepad in my pocket. Some of my most creative ideas happen when I am doing something else.

Keep in mind that your book is going to be distributed internationally. Eliminate any contractions (don't, won't, I'll, you're, you'll, etc.) that are not necessary for the content. Confusion is the common complaint that readers share. Best practice is not to put any blocks in the flow of the plot.

#### A Little Reality...Sales Update From Publishers Weekly

Ebooks lost a little bit of sales ground in the third quarter of 2014, according to data from the latest survey of book-buying behavior from Nielsen Books & Consumers.

Ebooks accounted for 21% of unit sales for the year to date through September 30, down from 23% in the January-through-June period. After the first six months of the year, paperbacks represented 42% of units sold; after a slight increase in sales during the third quarter, their share rose to 43%. The hardcover segment's share of purchases held even at 25%.

The mystery and romance categories had the largest shares of eBook units, at 32% and 36%, respectively, but in both genres paperbacks still accounted for the highest percentage of units sold. In mystery, paperbacks accounted for 37% of purchases; the paperback format took 52% of romance purchases.

The Nielsen data also show that eBooks lost some of the ground they gained in the young adult category in the first half of 2014, when e-books were 30% of unit sales.

## Writing Gigs

### Freelancewritinggigs.com



Some examples of the positions offered on this job board.

- \* American Writers – Urgent (Telecommute)
- \* Expert Home Improvement Writer (Telecommute)
- \* Freelance Writer – Office Ninjas (Remote)
- \* Freelance Telecommute Writers
- \* Freelance Writers (Telecommute)
- \* Writers for Bornrich.com
- \* Article Writers (Australia)
- \* Writer with Health and Fitness Background
- \* Professional Career/Job Writer
- \* Creative Web Content Writer (Remote)
- \* Content Writers/SEO/Social Media

There are many writer's resources on this site. Read this excellent article, [Free Plagiarism Checkers](#), for links to this type of resource.

## Writer's Monthly Review Magazine

### Open to Submissions

Writers may submit nonfiction articles about writing, book reviews, how-to's and market reviews to *The Writer's Monthly Review Magazine*, a new publication based out of Logansport, La., that focuses on writing. The periodical also features writer's assignments, contests and other activities in which writers can participate.

"The Writer's Monthly Review Magazine is a place where new writers can read articles and learn from the mistakes of others; get encouragement, inspiration, motivation and feedback from other writers," says Editor/Publisher Marcella Simmons. "Our readers are those who enjoy reading about writing to learn."

For details: [writersmonthlyreview.com](http://writersmonthlyreview.com).



## Writing Contests & Awards

### Freelancewriting.com



This site offers interesting writing contests for poets, screenwriters, and creative writers.

#### Tiferet Writing Contest - \$1,500 in Prizes, \$15 Fee

Tiferet, a journal of spiritual literature and art, is accepting submissions. \$1,500 will be awarded in prizes: \$500 for the best poetry submission, \$500 for the best short story (fiction), \$500 for the best essay

#### The Eludia Award - \$1,000 Prize, \$30 Fee

Hidden River Publishing announces the opening of the fourth Eludia Award, for a first book-length unpublished novel or collection of stories. **The prize is open to women writers age 40 and older.** The winning manuscript will be published on our imprint, Sowilo Press, and receive \$1,000 .

#### 4th Annual Kindle Book Awards - \$350 Cash, Fee \$29

Sponsored by *The Kindle Book Review & Digital Book Today*. Seven winners in seven (7) categories including appropriate sub-genres (Mystery/Thriller, Romance, Literary Fiction, Sci-Fi/Fantasy, YA, Horror/Suspense, Non-fiction) each receive \$350 in cash.

### Poets & Writers Magazine PW.org

Fourth Genre

*Steinberg Essay Prize* \$1,000, Fee \$20

The Word Works

*Washington Poetry Prize* \$1,500, Fee \$25

Glimmer Train Press

*Short Story Award* \$1,500, Fee \$15

Tupelo Press

*Kundiman Poetry Prize* \$1,000, Fee \$28

New Ohio Review

*Prizes in Poetry & Fiction* \$1,500, Fee \$20

Florida Review

*Editors Awards Three Prizes* \$1,000, Fee \$15

[PW.org](http://PW.org) has many listings of writing contests, grants and awards. Entry fees range from \$0 - \$35



## Characters: It's Elementary, My Dear!

I love the TV show, "Elementary." Not only is it a creative re-con-

struction of the classic Sherlock Holmes mysteries, but the new relationship possibilities between Holmes and (now Joan) Watson add a dynamic tension to the series.

The crimes are interesting, but the characters of Holmes and Watson drive the show.

When Sir Arthur Conan Doyle created Sherlock Holmes, he never expected his character would live on hundreds of years later, or that Holmes would be re-invented, re-used and adapted over time.

We can't all expect to create a character as enduring as Sherlock Holmes, but we can strive to make our characters as memorable as we can. Here are some suggestions:

- \* Eccentric habits (think of Sheldon on "Big Bang Theory" knocking on Penny's door three times)
- \* Unique perspectives on the world around them (think of Agent Gibbs' numbered rules in the TV show "NCIS")
- \* A flaw or two (to humanize someone who might otherwise seem perfect, like Sherlock's cocaine use)
- \* A distinct way of expressing him- or herself in dialogue (think of how Ziva David, in "NCIS," never used contractions, a natural result of learning English as a second language)

Keep clear notes about your character, so you won't give her a Cape Cod style house on Primrose Lane in Chapter 2 only to mention their ranch house on County Road 16 in Chapter 17. Astute readers pick up on everything.

Don't forget to make your secondary characters interesting. Barney Fife might have not have been the star of the "Andy Griffith Show," but even now the character is as recognizable as Andy.

All of your characters should have names diverse enough to easily distinguish them—I recently read a book featuring Karen, Sharon, Shirley, Linda, and Barbara. Ikes! I quickly had them all tangled up in my head and that kept me from completely losing myself in the story. With the exception of characters who make speedy entrances and exits, every character should be drawn well enough for readers to "see" them. After all, "seeing" is believing, right?

## Part Two: Critique Groups

In the 2014 Winter Newsletter—Part One of *Starting a Writing Group*—we covered creative groups—writers who get together informally to write in short spurts during the session, using a prompt to get started, then sharing what they've written for fun and enjoyment. Despite the good-natured give-and-take in those sessions, they offer real value: a chance to let loose the pen and see what happens.

I can tell you from personal experience about their benefits: after many years of self-analysis and critique, I was nearly frozen before I started any new writing project—would anybody like it? Was I picking the right words?

Creative, free-writing groups gave me the crutches and cast I needed to get my creative juices back on track so I could write what I wanted, how I wanted it.

But to publish... that's another thing. We can't publish our drafts (even the most prolific, best-selling authors revise), which means we have to get critical at some point if we want the world beyond our writing group to read - and enjoy - what we've scribbled.

A critique group can do that, but it has to operate very differently from the creative group.

Because of that, it's not a good idea to mix the two unless you have a format for your meetings that clearly separates them: let's do some fun writing, then we'll get down to business. Or: let's critique first, then finish with a creative writing exercise that's just for giggles.

Otherwise you risk critiquing a piece of writing that was only meant to be for fun, or being too kind to something that needs a firmer hand.

## Purpose of Critique Groups

There's only one reason to convene a critique group: because writers want honest yet constructive feedback on their work. Writers who only want praise should be told they would do better to show their work to spouses and friends, rather than attend a critique group.

Often writers want to publish and know they need more eyes and minds on their manuscripts before the article, essay, poem, story, novel, memoir or other piece of writing will be ready for readers.

Some writers might want the group to help them improve their skills, and publication isn't a goal for them. It's important in the first meeting to find out what the individual members want from the group so everyone can respond appropriately.

As new members come into the group, find out from them what their goal is. And don't be upset if someone just wants to help critique without offering their own writing for response —you might have the gift of an excellent editor in your midst.

Do beware of the risk of the "blind leading the blind." If members in the group are hoping to share insights into publishing but no one has been down that road before, you should consider inviting published authors or editors to the group as guests to fill any gaps.

Researching online might help, but a lot of misinformation soars through cyberspace, so you should figure out how you're going to verify what you're finding online.

## Structure

Most critique groups have a system of determining who will "offer up" a manuscript for feedback and how it will be delivered. This varies, depending on the group —decide what will work best for yours.

Regardless of the method, the writer should alert the group as to what they need: will they want feedback on the general flow of the story? The organization of the article? Or do they want a complete critique—everything from organization and general flow to sentence structure and punctuation?

Is the writer submitting a draft or something more polished? If it's a draft, then those giving feedback need to understand the manuscript won't be error-free, and finding those boo-boos might not be the point of the feedback.

I can't stress how important it is to establish how your group handles this, and how essential it is that the group abide by the process you decide to follow. Nothing makes your group deteriorate faster than ignoring what your fellow members want from you just because you think they need something else.

Some groups e-mail manuscripts (or post them online via a closed forum) to each other at some point prior to the in-person meeting, and it's everyone's responsibility to have the manuscript read and comments prepared before the group meets to make things most efficient. In my experience, this is the best option.

If every member prints a copy of the manuscript, makes notes on the copy, and delivers those copies to the writer during the in-person session, the writer has the benefit of referring to those notes later, as well as getting immediate comments during the in-person session. It's more work, to be sure, but it's also most beneficial for the writer—and that's what the group is all about, right? In some groups, writers come with a copy of their work and read it to the group; members then comment and respond.

I'm not a fan of this method because this isn't a "listen and respond" group, it's a writing group. How can you provide any real help without seeing the actual manuscript? The only exception I can think of for reading a manuscript for feedback is poetry: reading can give the poet and listeners a feel for the rhythm of the language. Even then, the poet should provide a printed copy so everyone can see the poem on paper.



## Rules for a Writing Critique Group

Unlike the creative group, which has just a few rules, a critique group must be more structured and disciplined - just as writing itself must be structured and disciplined.

You might have more rules to suggest, but here are a few essentials:

*When giving feedback:*

1. Start with the positive. Every piece of writing has at least one thing you appreciated—a scene that captivated you, a description that made something come alive for you, a character or piece of dialogue that made you laugh, an idea in an article you would have never thought of - so focus on that to start with.
2. Over time, help your fellow group members see what they consistently do well and you'll bolster their confidence in that area.
3. Be honest, but be kind. You don't have to be brutal when you tell someone the truth. If you don't deliver your feedback with compassion for the writer's struggle to get it right, then you'll only alienate that writer—and possibly lose that group member.
4. Try to separate the writer from his/her writing. You can only deliver honest feedback if you can be objective.
5. Keep your comments focused on the problem, not solutions: "Near the end of the story, when John suddenly drew that gun, I was surprised because I didn't know he had a gun and nothing about him suggested he would know how to use one." Don't say, "You should tell us John has a gun and target practices—right here on page three is the perfect place to do that."
6. Be specific. If you never felt rooted in a story, let the writer know the setting wasn't clear to you, or the sensory detail didn't bring the setting to life for you.
7. Offer suggestions ONLY if the writer wants them. Usually it's best if the writer decides what to do to iron out any flaws because it's their work, not yours. If you're burning to tell the writer what to do, then ASK FIRST if they'd like

suggestions on what to do, and don't be offended if the writer says, "No thanks, I know what I need to do."

8. Encourage the writer. Even if the group and writer have determined this piece needs to go in the recycle bin, find something to bring the discussion back to the positive.
9. If you see something that can be salvaged in the piece, speak up. "Have you thought about taking this point in your article and developing it independently?" or "This character, though, has real possibilities. Have you thought about dropping him/her into another story?"
10. Remember that everyone is learning. Even the most experienced writers will tell you they're still learning the craft. Grant everyone the patience you'd want from them.

*When submitting work to the group:*

1. Tell the group the status of the manuscript: draft or nearly done?
2. Tell the group what you need from them. Do you want them to see if it's coherent? Well-paced? If the punctuation is correct? If you prefer to get their general reaction without revealing where you think it's weak, that's okay. But if it's a draft and you don't need them to correct all of your commas yet, tell them that so they won't waste their time on something you don't yet need.
3. Try not to get defensive. It's natural to jump to the defense of something close to you when you feel it's under attack, but if you try to fend off every comment, you won't benefit from the feedback you're getting. Take deep breaths. Let the other members of the group talk. Hear them out. They just might be onto something.
4. Ask questions. If you're truly unclear about something someone said, probe for more detail from them.
5. If they've made a broad statement (for example, "This scene just didn't work for me,"), ask for specifics: What about the scene was weak—was the setting unclear? Or maybe the dialogue didn't seem realistic? Could you be a bit more specific?"
6. Thank the group. You've given feedback, so you know how much time it takes for someone to thoughtfully read and comment on a piece of writing. Let them know how much you appreciate their taking the time and providing their input.

This isn't an exhaustive list - many more variations of such groups exist, and other rules have been adopted among them. Your group will likely shift and adjust, dropping some rules and taking on others as needed.

Agree on the group's purpose, its basic rules, then abide by them, and the group will bring you satisfaction and fulfillment—and friendship!

And on the forum: Have you been in a writing group? What worked for you? Tell us about your experiences on the Penwheels forum at RVillage.com.

**Ellen Behrens** is listed in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in American Women*, and *Who's Who in Education*.

Ellen Behrens' short stories, articles, essays, and reviews have been widely published. Her published books include the novel *None But the Dead and Dying* and the short story collection *Road Tales: Short Stories About Full-Time RVing*.

Her newest novel, *Pea Body*, is the first in a series featuring characters Walt and Betty Rollin, full-time RVers who solve mysteries as they travel the country.

Go to [www.ellenbooks.com](http://www.ellenbooks.com) for descriptions of her books and links to her blog, or e-mail her directly at [ellenbehr@aol.com](mailto:ellenbehr@aol.com)—she loves hearing from fellow RVers and writers!

## Park of the Sierras Welcomes Penwheelers

When you come to *SKP Park of the Sierras*, please visit the Writers Group which meets on Mondays at 1:30 in the library. The usual format is to briefly share something about what's happening in our lives, to read a short piece that we've written over the past week from the prompts given the previous week (or anything else or nothing at all) and then to write a short piece from prompts and read them.

To me, Park Sierra is the most beautiful RV park in the Escapees network. It's nestled among the black oaks and red manzanitas decorating the rocky slopes of the Sierra foothills, and it's only a twenty-five mile drive from the park to the south gate of Yosemite.

The RV sites are designed, not in typical cookie cutter fashion, but rather respecting the contours of the rolling landscape. You will see squirrels, acorn woodpeckers and Gambel's quail. If you're lucky you'll spot a deer, a hawk, a bobcat or a coyote. Maybe you'll want to take a hike in the undeveloped "back forty" across Coarsegold Creek. And there are lots of social activities in which visitors are always welcome to participate.

Take advantage of the special one-time deal for Escapees in 2015: stay four nights and get an additional three nights free. Call ahead for reservations and mention the promotion when you check in.

**Terry Hager**, SKP #48315, [terryahager@gmail.com](mailto:terryahager@gmail.com)

## Free eBooks

Always on the lookout for free eBooks? Try these four sites that have truly free books, no strings attached. For more information, click [here](#).

- \* **Project Gutenberg** ([gutenberg.org](http://gutenberg.org)) is one of the longest-running resources for free eBooks in many formats, and it currently has over 46,000 free books to choose from.
- \* **Archive.org** has set itself the goal of backing up the internet and all content everywhere, so it has a few more titles than that ... by about 6 million or so.
- \* The **Online Book Page** at the University of Pennsylvania is an index of some 2 million eBooks that can be found online.
- \* **Library eBooks**: Thanks to Amazon's close integration with **OverDrive**, you can check out library eBooks and load them on to your Kindle.

## Convert Any Book To Kindle

Use Amazon's [Kindle Personal Documents Service](#) to convert other file types to your Kindle. Read the details carefully to avoid any fees during the transaction.

This free service converts the eBook to Kindle format and adds it to your account. It does not work with DRMed files.

Use the eMail address associated with your account to eMail documents which Amazon converts into eBooks for you. To avoid fees, use your Internet connection to send and receive these files.

There is no fee as long as you do not use Whispernet from your Kindle or to your Kindle. Amazon attempts to deliver the document via Wi-Fi. If Whispernet is the only option, it generates a fee of \$.15 per MB domestic.

### To set your personal documents charge limit:

- \* Go to *Manage Your Content and Devices*, and then select the **Settings** tab.
- \* Select *Edit Whispernet Delivery* => **Options**.  
**Tip:** The option to edit your Whispernet delivery options only appears if you have a Whispernet-ready device registered to your account.
- \* Enter your preferred charge limit (per document), and then click **Update**.

File Types Accepted: Doc, Docx, HTML, Text, JPEG, GIF, PNG, BMP, PDF.



## How I Discovered Workamping

by Mary Klinger, Penwheels Member

While on a voluntary layoff in 2003, my husband and I bought a 1984 Fleetwood Southwind along with a tow dolly. I was an RVing novice but my husband had some experience camping in a truck camper and a fifth wheel. We had no experience as workampers or even really understood the concept.

This was a wonderful whirlwind trip. We saw Rocky Mountain National Park, the Grand Tetons, Yellowstone, and several other stays in Montana while we toured Great Falls. On the way home we stopped by Glacier National Park, Mount Rushmore and the Badlands National Park. We were on the move!

We had no clue that we might stay at places longer to explore and actually get immersed in the landscape and surroundings. We had a fabulous time. This trip came to a close because my sister from New Jersey was coming to Oklahoma for a visit; so the RV trips were put on hold for a while.

On the move again, we decided to go to Red River, New Mexico. At an RV park there, the owner/manager told us if we wanted to stay the summer we could work in the office.

Hmm, this sounded somewhat interesting, but we were pretty busy sightseeing. One of the guys who worked in the office also drove jeeps and took people on tours of the mountain. He said he loved it there.

We stayed a couple of nights in the forest at Elephant Rock Campground, west of Red River, New Mexico. There I actually met a bona fide campground host and found out what a campground host does.

She was a Registered Nurse and said she had burned out at her nursing career. She explained that she and her husband brought their fifth wheel here and took care of this campground and a few others.

She said it consisted of cleaning the campsites, fire pits, supplying the outdoor facilities with toilet paper and collecting money. This was all she had to do to live in a wonderful setting for the season. To me this sounded very interesting.

Now, that doesn't mean I knew much about workamping, but a seed had been planted. I decided that it would be a great thing to do when I got older and retired.

We still had a lot of traveling to do. We returned home and planned a trip back East. This trip was to see my sister in New Jersey, visit Skowhegan, Maine, my husband's birthplace and then go to the American Dietetics Association Convention in San Antonio, Texas then home.

Another whirlwind tour, we were gone about a month. Then I got a real job in January of 2004, and it was back to regular work.

As we learned more about the RV lifestyle I started getting RV books to read. One book that I read was Jamie Hall Bruzenek—*Support Your RV lifestyle: An Insider's Guide to Working on the Road*. This whetted my appetite.

Finally in 2011, my husband and I went to the Workamper Rendezvous in Heber Springs, Arkansas and learned all about workamping. It was great!

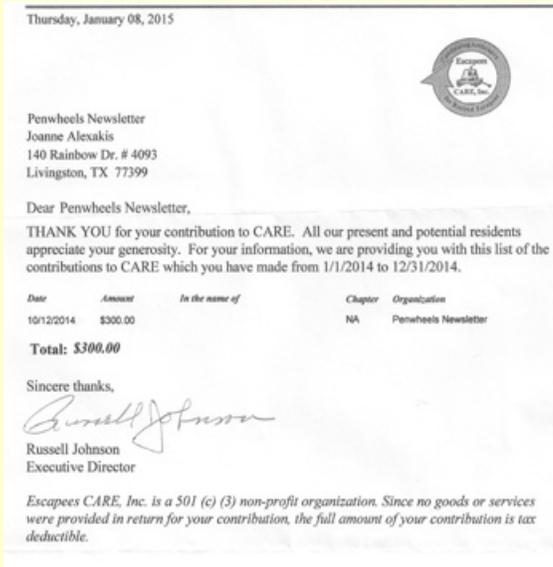
Now in 2015 we secured a volunteer position at Farragut State Park in Idaho as museum hosts. We are so excited. Our workamping position begins in May, 2015 on Lake Pend O' Reille, the fifth deepest lake in the US, a former Navy training base.

This is our experiment into the workamping lifestyle. This is our chance to see how we like sitting in one location for the duration of the summer months and how we interact with the touring public. This is something we looked forward to for several years! Yippee!



## Membership Corner

### Receipt of CARE Donation



### Financial Statement for 2014

#### PENWHEELS BoF

#### Financial statement for 2014

Balance January 1, 2014 \$470.63

Income Jan 1 - Dec 31 \$60.00

Expenses Jan 1 - Dec 31 (\$165.08)

(photocopying newsletters, postage,  
membership refund)

CARE donation (Oct.11) (\$300.00)

---

Balance December 31, 2014 \$65.55

Number of members on Jan. 1, 2014 = 49

Number of members on Dec. 31, 2014 = 39

Submitted by Joanne Alexakis, SKP #19367

Penwheels BoF membership coordinator

Submitted - January 1, 2015



## News From the Publishing Industry

### Permuted Press Abruptly Changes Author Contract

Long considered by some to be a shifty operation, Permuted Press has survived and even thrived in the self-pub boom by being able to offer at least one thing that is still difficult for self-published authors: getting books into physical book stores (in the US, at least).

Alas, that is no longer true. Over the past few days multiple authors have reports that Permuted Press has abruptly changed the contract they signed with authors. Permuted is dropping the print edition for most of the books they have in the pipeline, and they're also pushing publication dates back by 5 months or more. The two worst problems were the "exclusivity" clause which stated that authors were not even allowed to TALK to anyone else about other projects outside of the ones they were contracted for. The authors had to give this press first refusal on EVERY project that they were even considering going forward.

Read the rest of the story [HERE](#).

### Kindle Scout Program

Authors can submit their full manuscripts of 50,000 words or more (including cover art, various metadata items, and an author photo), about 5,000 words of which are posted on the Kindle Scout website for a 30-day "campaign." Readers can then browse books and nominate their favorites. If a manuscript they voted for gets published, they receive a free eBook.

- \* Amazon provides no editing, copy editing, proofreading, or cover art/illustration. The book is published exactly as submitted by you.
- \* Submissions are exclusive for 45 days from the date you submit your manuscript. No shopping your book elsewhere during that time.
- \* Submitted manuscripts must meet content and eligibility guidelines. Currently, only Romance, Mystery and Thriller, and SF/Fantasy are eligible.

[Editor's Note: If the promise of Kindle marketing sounds interesting, it is not actually a promise.

"Kindle Press books are enrolled and earn royalties for participation in the Kindle Owners' Lending Library and Kindle Unlimited as well as be eligible for targeted eMail campaigns and promotions." "Eligible" means that your book qualifies, but not guarantees promotion.]

If you're not selected for publication, you must request removal of your work from the Kindle Scout site. Otherwise, your campaign page will remain online.

By submitting, you agree in advance to the terms of the Kindle Press publishing agreement. These terms are not negotiable. So before you submit, be sure you're comfortable with them. However, if your book does not make the cut, the agreement is null and void.

As you would with any program, read all the documentation carefully. List the pros and cons for your specific book, then make a decision.

For a good overview of the pros and cons of this program, visit [VictoriaStrauss.com](http://VictoriaStrauss.com).

Vist [The Digital Reader](#) for an excellent discussion on the Hot List and an insight into Crowd Funding done the Kindle way.

## The Hottest (and Coldest) Book Categories of 2014

The self-help and graphic novels categories had the fastest growth in print book unit sales among adult segments in 2014, posting gains of 15% and 13%, respectively, compared to the previous year.

Graphic novels was one of only two adult fiction categories that had an increase in print unit sales last year, with westerns the second. Sales of print fiction titles were hurt more than adult nonfiction was by the growth in e-book sales. In nonfiction, eight categories had a drop in units last year, and eight had an increase.

Following self-help, religion/bibles and biography/autobiography/memoir both posted unit increases of 12% in 2014.

Read the rest of the story: [Publishers Weekly](#)



## 2014 Book Trends

There were a number of huge changes in 2014. Youth books are running the bestseller list, and video game books took everyone by surprise. What this is showing is that today's readers are younger than usual, and they are expecting books that cater to their sensibilities.

Surprisingly enough, many of these books also appeal to adults. While there were also some surprising downturns, it's too early to say if most of them (like cooking and non-fiction) are really doomed.

These trends are telling of what new readers want, but do not let it discourage you if you have a book in one of the currently unpopular genres. You could always make the next bestseller that revitalizes a genre.

Read the rest of the story: [AmyHarrop.com](http://AmyHarrop.com)

The highest-ranking self-published author on the August New York Times chart is Colleen Hoover, whose eBook, *Slammed*, comes in at eighth place, ahead of eBooks by established bestsellers James Patterson and Karin Slaughter. Hoover, who self-published *Slammed* seven months ago and has just signed a traditional book deal with Simon & Schuster, also has her second novel, *Point of Retreat*, in 18th place on the NYT chart.

"We knew this day was coming. Self-published eBook authors are landing on the New York Times bestseller list in a big way [and] lightning struck multiple times this week," said Mark Coker, founder of Smashwords – which worked with all four of the authors to publish or distribute their eBooks—on his blog.

"It's a big deal to see a single Smashwords author on the New York Times Bestseller list, let alone four in one week. A year ago, it was unheard of. A year from now, it'll be more commonplace."

Read the rest of the story: [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com)

