



# The Authority

Connecticut Authors & Publishers Association—Since 1994

Connecticut's Source for  
Writing, Publishing &  
Marketing Information

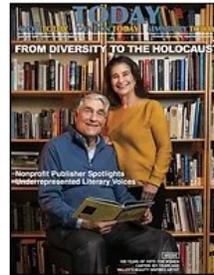
Volume 27 Issue 11 [www.aboutcapa.com](http://www.aboutcapa.com)

November 2020

## APSS Central Virtual Speaker on November 21 -- Robert Mandel

**Robert Mandel of Mandel Vilar Press, Simsbury, CT will talk about "How to Connect and Work with a Publisher for Maximum Success" including these topics:**

- How do you find the right publisher
- What are the things writers tell editors in their cover letter that immediately turns them off
- What can you say to make an editor interested in you as a writer
- What should an initial book proposal contain
- What you can learn from rejections



*Continued on page 6*

## Meet November Member Christina Birkic

By Barbara Meredith

Christina Birkic began her literary career starting in high school as an editor for her high school magazine. Continued her literary studies attending McGraw Hill's training program in New York, edited books for McGraw Hill's Art Book Division. Cristina edited non-fiction at G.P. Putnam's, wrote for magazines and newspapers in Connecticut and Rhode Island, and was editor-in-chief of Fairfield County's *Profiles* magazine.

Christina is working on a mystery novel which she says is harder than she thought it would be. She takes her manuscript from old Lyme to Florida finds too many reasons not to finish the manuscript.

As you have read Cristina has a perfect resume for writing novels, she just wants a little

nudge and some guidance in structure in redefining the characters to finish her manuscript. Cristina is reaching out to our CAPA Family for this guidance, anyone wishing to advise Cristina will be greatly appreciated.



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## SW CAPA Report By Joe Keeney

The SWCAPA meeting held on October 12th had 12 members in attendance.



Members enjoyed author Karen Warfield's talk about organizing your thoughts, story line and characters before beginning to write. Karen calls it the catalyst (motivating factor) that makes it easier to put pen to paper.

She also pointed to observation, noticing quirks and mannerisms of people you know. How interweaving these quirks in your writing can make a story more compelling and believable.

Karen is the author of *White Gloves*, which her reviewers call a page-turner.

## When is a 4 is better than a 5 in an online review?

"If you're selling a product, which would you prefer: a glowing five-star review or a moderately positive four-star one? It turns out that the four-star review can sometimes be more persuasive. What matters most is whether the review deviates from the crowd. Daniella Kupor, assistant professor of marketing at Boston University's Questrom School of Business, gave volunteers a chance to buy a product with a slew of five-star reviews. Participants were shown the most recent review, which in some cases was another five-star write-up, and in others was a more moderate rating of four out of five. The moderate review persuaded 19% more people to buy. "We found that when people saw the four-star review, they thought that the reviewer was more thoughtful and that the reviewer's

evaluation was more accurate," says Prof. Kupor. As a result, they were more interested in trying the product." *Wall Street Journal*. October 26, p R6

## Media Tip

A producer looks for story ideas, tries to find good interviews and pictures, then puts together a segment on the air. I have to think of the viewer first. It's not my job to sell books, but to make interesting television. If a book helps me get interesting television, that's good.

Rita Thompson, Field Producer for *CNBC*, *CBS News* and *Chronicle*

## Article Submission

*The Authority* welcomes articles written by members. Here are our guidelines.

**Topics may cover any aspect of writing, publishing and marketing.** Your personal slant on this is of interest to all of us and welcome.

Articles should be no longer than 400 words. If the article is longer, the editors reserve the right to reduce the size or divide it into sections that would be run in successive issues.

All articles will be edited. Submit single spaced with no built-in formatting. Submit articles to Brian Jud at [brianjud@comcast.net](mailto:brianjud@comcast.net).

Send submissions for the **Meet-A-Member** column to Joe Keeney at [jkeeney9267@spamarrest.com](mailto:jkeeney9267@spamarrest.com) or Barbara Meredith [dbmeredith@charter.net](mailto:dbmeredith@charter.net)

**ARTICLES ARE DUE BY THE 28TH OF THE MONTH**

## CAPA Board of Directors

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## How to Write an Article

By Jeff Davidson MBA, CMC

Writing an effective, thought-provoking article requires paying close attention to established guidelines plus injecting a healthy dose of individual creativity. This article will cover five basic areas used by many writing professionals, including: prewriting, freewriting, preparing the first draft, revising and editing.



### 1) Prewriting

Prewriting is the stage where an idea or topic is hatched. Your topic may come in a flash or be the result of oscillation between various topics. In any case, prewriting requires time. If you attempt to jump into a topic without giving it careful thought, you're liable to convey to your readers just that - you didn't think very much about the topic.

After exploring possible topics, choose an aspect, an angle, a slice that you can manage. Then, ask yourself questions about the topic. What are the key issues? What angle has not been explored? How do those affected feel about the situation? The more questions you can generate, the better. The questions help you to better focus your efforts. During prewriting, read and talk about your topic to others. Be a sponge for your topic.

By now, a basic question will emerge that enables you to identify a key issue. Ask yourself the question, "What is this like?" For

*Continued on page 4*

## How Far Do You Want to Take Your Book?

By Nancy D. Butler, CFP®,  
CDFA®, CLTC®  
[www.aboveallem.org](http://www.aboveallem.org)

How successful your book will be, has a lot to do with the time, money and effort you are willing to put into "getting it out there".



The place to start is to determine your definition of success regarding your book. For you, is success how many books you sell? Is it how much money you make? Is it to get your book in the hands of as many people as possible regardless of what you make? Or, are you doing this for fun?

Some people need the sales from their book to live on. Others are doing it for fun. And still others feel they have an important message and want as many people as possible to receive it. Knowing what is important to you and what your goals are for your book will help guide you towards what you need to do to have the success you are looking for.

Unless you are doing this for fun, you will need a written business plan outlining exactly what you will do, when you will do it and the money required to implement your plan. Your business plan is your guide and "road map" for how you will achieve the success you are looking for. Your plan should cover at least the next five years. It must be specific and have a time line for when each part of the plan will be completed.

Here is a brief outline of the information you will need to include in your plan.

### Your definition of success

Articulate what you want to accomplish with your book, what the end result needs to be for you to achieve your definition of success, as noted above.

### What product(s) or services do you offer

Do you have one book to sell? Do you have multiple books on this topic? Are you available as a speaker on the topic of your book? What else do you offer? Try to think out of the box. For example, if your book is about a rescue animal, do you sell or include a stuffed animal that looks like that animal?

### Description of your target market

The more specific you are, the better. Who is your book best suited for? Who will be most apt to buy your book? Where will you find these people, companies or organizations?

### Your short-term and long-term marketing plan should include the following:

- How much time will you need to commit each week to the successful marketing of your book?
- What is your plan for how you will reach your target market?
- Will you use social media? If so, how?
- What have you done so far that has worked? What have you done so far that has not worked?
- Who or what is your competition?
- What marketing options do you need help with?
- Will you obtain the training and do the work yourself?
- Will you hire someone to do the work for you?

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## Why Successful Kids Need to Know and Understand Their Emotions

By Linda M. Mitchell

Have you ever seen a child throwing a tantrum? It's not a pretty sight, and it's usually embarrassing for the parents. Experts say tantrums are a way young children express

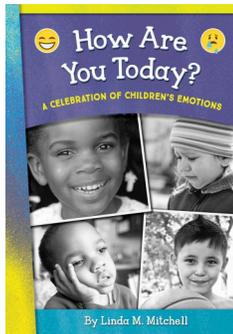
frustration. The child can't communicate their needs so they have a meltdown.

Sometimes children don't have the words to express what they are feeling. Those emotion words are a hot topic in education. It's called Social and Emotional learning or SEL.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is another name for the concept of having children understand and name their emotions. Many state legislatures are mandating that SEL be incorporated into school curricula.

What does SEL look like? And why is it needed? SEL is helping a child learn his own feelings and understand the feelings of others. Many educators call these "soft skills" that help children empathize and get along with others. For example, you may see SEL charts in pre-K and elementary classrooms. These are charts that have emojis of happy, sad, tired, angry or excited faces. The teacher may ask the child to show how she is feeling by putting the emoji next to her name.

Research shows that one of the greatest predictors of children's success in school is their social and emotional health. When children are taught to "use their words" and understand



their emotions, the Michigan State University Extension believes they:

- Perform better academically
- Form stronger relationships with their peers and adults
- Have fewer behavioral problems
- Handle their own negative emotions better
- Lead happier, healthier and less stressful lives

The health connection is a big concern for The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It believes that teaching children the skill of how to name and talk about their emotions is one of the best strategies to prevent adverse childhood experiences or ACES from having lasting negative health effects on children into adulthood. The CDC says giving children the tools to express their emotions helps to reduce toxic stress that might eventually lead to heart conditions, depression and drug abuse.

In the book *How Are You Today? A Celebration of Children's Emotions*, child development professionals, parents, teachers and social workers will see a wide range of emotions that are matched with a name. The book has over thirty photographs of children showing emotions from A to Z. Each emotion is followed by an interactive question to help children discuss their own feelings. For instance, a page shows an image of a happy child with the text "I'm feeling Happy. *What makes you happy?*" Emojis are also included to add a bit of fun and familiarity to the emotions. The vocabulary list defines the emotion, but the discussion guide helps children further explore their own thoughts and ideas about the emotions. Children everywhere will relate to the emotions in this book. What a fun tool for kids that will help them become successful, healthy, articulate human beings!

## How to Write an Article

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example, if you've decided to write about the effects of worldwide competition on opening your own athletic shoe manufacturing plant, "What is it like?" could be: "like a ECHHS football player being dropped into the middle of a college bowl game." If a phrase or sentence captures the central focus of your topic, use it, play with it.

### 2) Freewriting

What is freewriting? It is plunging in and writing to capture your thoughts thus far. By writing rapidly without worrying about organization or content, you can easily generate or capture additional thoughts about your topic and help to establish or refine your thesis statement. A well chosen thesis statement energizes and focuses your entire article, and makes the reader's job easier. Freewriting also aids you in finding your tone. Will you be witty or serious? Conservative or bold? Accusative or nurturing? Whatever you choose, the tone in your thesis statement and body of the article should match.

### 3) Preparing the First Draft

Organize or list the points you developed during prewriting and freewriting. How will you present them: chronologically? Or in a cause and effect order, ascending or descending order, or some other method? Next, make an outline of your points, keeping the reader's interest, education and possible feelings about the topic in mind.

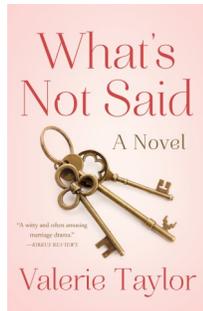
### 4) Revising

Although you may wish to avoid revising, don't. You must reexamine "the big picture" and carefully re-

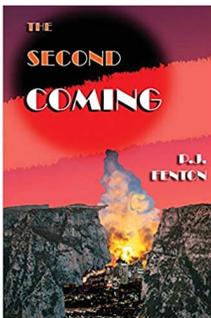
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## CAPA Members Celebrating Success

*What's Not Said* by Valerie Taylor (published September 2020) was chosen as one of the Top 3 Best Fiction Books in 2020 for Canadian Book Clubs. The winner will be announced December 30, 2020.



Lisa Barlow - The star of Bravo's TV hit, "The Real Housewives of Salt Lake City." Lisa is the definition of a serial entrepreneur. Across multiple industries and platforms. Born in New York, Lisa Barlow has been living in Utah for over 20 years. As the owner of LUXE marketing company and various businesses including VIDA tequila, she considers herself "Mormon 2.0" as she is not one to adhere to all of the traditional and strict Latter-day Saints rules. Lisa attended BYU. Married to her husband John with two children in Utah. Dennis Schleicher, Lisa's Agent at Talcott Notch Literary Services, is currently shopping Lisa's memoir: *Jewish by Heritage Mormon is my Choice*. Before the production of season two. A publisher would need to provide a ghostwriter who would appear during filming in Salt Lake City, Utah.



PJ Fenton said, "Recently I self-published the final part of my *City of Nis* trilogy: *The Second Coming* (<https://amzn.to/3oAiTu4>). I'm also in the final editing parts of another book with Roberta that I hope to get an agent for and bring to a publisher."

Astrologer Elaine Kuzmeskus will be a guest on The Paranormal View Saturday, November 14, 2020, 8:00-10:00 p.m. EST. According to the author of *Soul Cycles*, 2021 will be a year of technical innovation with Saturn and Jupiter in Aquarius and a reset for the United States as our country goes into a Pluto return. Get ready for a new world of trade, travel, and spiritual pursuits. To learn more about the stars over America in 2021, tune into <http://theparanormalview.com/tag/podcast/>

Liz Delton is celebrating the release of her seventh novel, *The Alchemyst's Mirror*, a steampunk fantasy novel which has been hailed "a mix of Indiana Jones and Sherlock Holmes, but with two sisters leading the story," and "A fun, pistol-wielding, fantasy adventure." Petra and Maisie Everturn just want to run their family's tea shop, but when their explorer brother goes missing while looking for an alchemical artifact, none of them are safe.

Liz is also releasing a novella on November 10th, called *The Clockwork Ice Dragon: A Steampunk Christmas Novella*. Also in the steampunk genre, this novella is about amateur inventor Aurelia Sundon, and her attempt to gain entry to the exclusive guild of inventors—but when a former love comes back into her life with an invention of his own to enter into the contest, everything Aurelia dreams of is put at risk when his invention goes haywire. Find out more at [LizDelton.com](http://LizDelton.com)



## How Far Do You Want to Take Your Book?

(Continued from Page Three)

- What will training or assistance cost?

### Financial plan / Budget

- How are you determining the proper pricing of your book?
- How much money will you need to get started?
- How much money will you need to commit to marketing each year thereafter?
- List specifically how much is needed and what the money will be spent on.

This is only a very brief overview. There is a lot more to include in a successful business plan. Start here and you will be on your way to greater success.

## Mandel Vilar Press Continued from page 1

Mandel Vilar Press (MVP) serves as a conduit of multicultural exchange and its availability plays a vital role in maintaining a healthy and vibrant democracy by bringing underrepresented and diverse literature of the Americas to a larger English-speaking readership.

The nonprofit publishing arm of Americas for Conservation & the Arts, MVP is one of only a handful of publishers dedicated to connecting the literature of the Americas. We unite the works of the best writers of Central and South America with the leading ethnic and minority writers of North America. MVP publishes the best books and translations on the environment, conservation, culture, history, memoir, fiction, science, and politics. Publishing between four to eight titles in fiction and nonfiction each year, MVP focuses on works that are extraordinary and influential - destined to become the classics of tomorrow.

MVP is committed to launching new groundbreaking national libraries of conservation, literature, and culture for each country of the Americas beginning with Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and Puerto Rico as well as thematic series on Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and American and World Jewish Literatures. By bringing underrepresented literature to a

larger English speaking readership, MVP serves as a conduit of multicultural exchange and a crucial channel for majoritizing minority literature and peoples.

Mandel Vilar Press brings together the talents of two experienced editors, Robert Mandel, and Irene Vilar. For two decades their collaboration resulted in the publication of important books and translations on Latin American, Latino, Jewish, and African American literature, art, politics, and culture. Together they created and launched two major Latin American book series, The Americas— at the University of Wisconsin Press between 2000 and 2006 and again later at Texas Tech University Press from 2008 to 2014. In concert with their focus on minority literature, Mandel and Vilar also published many notable books in Jewish studies and African American studies. Their longstanding collaboration now continues with the establishment of Mandel Vilar Press, the publishing arm of the nonprofit organization, Americas for Conservation & the Arts.

Contact Robert at Mandel Vilar Press, 19 Oxford Court, Simsbury, CT 06070, (806) 790 4731, [info@mvpres.org](mailto:info@mvpres.org) or [robert@mandelvilar.org](mailto:robert@mandelvilar.org)

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“You don’t write because you want to say something. You write because you have something to say.”

F. Scott Fitzgerald

## How to Write an Article Continued from Page 4

fine, tighten, and improve your work. Have you established and maintained a tone? Should you reassess or reconsider any of your points?

### 5) Editing

Every sentence must be vital, focused, balanced, and economical. Vary sentence lengths. Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Use active verbs. Remember, your readers have work to do; help them all you can. Check each sentence carefully. If useful, read them aloud. Tie all loose ends. Eliminate jargon and unclear words. Trim the fat; if a word or phrase can be eliminated, it probably should be.

After extensive editing, read your article again! Catch any last glitches. Ensure that your final copy adheres to established rules of grammar and style. Then relax and send it in.

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## Michael Jordan on Failure

“I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times I’ve been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

Give selling to non-bookstore buyers a shot. You might even score a few points in the process.

## SE CAPA: A Visit with Jeremy Schraffenberger of the North American Review



By Elizabeth Saede

The North American Review (NAR) started in Boston, MA in 1815 following the war of 1812 which makes it the oldest literary magazine in the United States. Current editor and published poetry author, Jeremy Schraffenberger, shared a condensed history of the magazine and its recent re-branding with our CAPA SE group. New color illustrations and saddle-stitch binding boost the magazine's collectible quality. Focusing on forward to reach new readers without losing valued traditions is working for the magazine and may work to energize authors. NAR continues to celebrate the American experience with an increasingly diverse range of literature and voices. Jeremy said the magazine seeks submissions of

"any kind of good writing" through Submittable.com which provides free accounts to writers but charges a small fee to submit content.

NorthAmericanReview.org publishes fiction, non-fiction, poetry, art, short stories, essays, and other relevant voices separate from those included in the magazine. NAR has been headquartered at the public University of Iowa for 50 years and receives 10,000 previously unpublished submissions per year. Writing contests multiply the number of writers seeking acclaim and readership in the venerable publication. All submissions are reviewed by one of four faculty editors and content is used to train future editors.

Multiple CAPA SE members create memorable stories utilizing historical facts to attract contemporary readers and Jeremy expressed pleasure with the historical interest within our group. He curates his own social media consumption to preserve time for family, exercise and reading. Literary journals such

as North American Review are available through subscription or from local libraries. Reading great quality writing tends to fire up one's own creative juices and Mark Twain famously said, "A person who won't read has no advantage over one who can't read." Our own Tish Rabe cheerfully encourages, "Keep reading and writing." Jeremy may be reached at: SchraffJ@uni.edu.

### Marketing Tip By Guy Achtzehn

An old adage tells us that a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. But what if that step were in the wrong direction? The traveler would waste unnecessary time, energy and money going the wrong way. If you took a wrong step in 2020, plan your book-marketing actions for 2021 to get back on the right path, going in the right direction. As C. S. Lewis said, "You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending."

## Schedule of Upcoming Meetings (Until the meeting sites reopen, these will all be virtual meetings. Links will be sent prior to each meeting.)

### CAPA CENTRAL (Avon)

(Until the Senior Center reopens these will be virtual meetings. Watch them live and ask questions of the speaker. For more info contact [BrianJud@bookapss.org](mailto:BrianJud@bookapss.org))

November 21: Robert Mandel: Mandel Vilar Press, How to find/work with a publisher

December 19: Carol McManus: Using Social Media for Networking and Book Sales

January 16: Sharon Castlen: Marketing Books in a Covid World



### CAPA SOUTHEAST (Groton)

(Until the meeting site reopens these will all be virtual meetings. Watch them live and ask questions of the speaker. For more info contact [Jimmy Bennett, jimmyb5559@gmail.com](mailto:jimmyb5559@gmail.com))

November 16: *Fail Your Way to Success: The Power of Saying "Yes"* By Elizabeth Saede

December 21: Speaker and topic to be announced

January 18: Speaker and topic to be announced



### CAPA SOUTHWEST (Shelton)

(Until the Library reopen these will all be virtual meetings. Watch them live and ask questions of the speaker. For more info contact [Joe Keeney, jkeeney9267@spamarrest.com](mailto:jkeeney9267@spamarrest.com))

November 9: William Shoemaker: Building a Book from Scratch

December 14: Speaker and topic to be announced

January 11: Speaker and topic to be announced



## CAPA's Co-op Connection

Save money as you market your books by sharing the cost of events with other CAPA members. Want to participate in one of these sales opportunities with other CAPA members? Log on to the CAPA social network (<http://authorsandpublishersct.ning.com/>).

### Check with an event to see if it has been postponed or canceled

#### December

5	Fairfield	Scandinavian Club Annual Holiday Fair
5	Milford	Christmas Fair
5	Shelton	Holiday Craft Festival
6	Naugatuck	Arts & Crafts Show

#### January

10	Stamford	Bridal and Wedding Expo
23-24	Hartford	Hartford Home Show



CAPA  
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Avon, CT 06001-0715

## Free Virtual Meetings In November

Brian Jud conducts **free consultations every Tuesday (3:30 – 4:30 pm ET) and Friday (Noon – 1:00 pm ET)**. He will answer your questions about non-bookstore marketing, and book marketing in general. Check [www.bookapss.org](http://www.bookapss.org) for the links

**November 9: (6:30 – 7:30 pm, ET):** *Building a Book from Scratch*, by William Shoemaker. He will talk about the skillful use of questions to build chapters and hold a reader's interest. Bill has written 100 scientific articles and book chapters; his new book is currently with a publisher. <https://zoom.us/j/3671572517>

**November 16 (6:30 - 7:30 pm ET):** Join us on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/3671572517> to hear Author/ Editor: Elizabeth Saede talk about *Fail Your Way to Success: The Power of Saying "Yes"* Elizabeth is the author of *Lobster Summer*, Content Coordinator for "Mystic Neighbors" magazine, a print and digital freelance writer, and Marketing Manager for best-selling children's author Tish Rabe. Five years ago, she was doing none of these things but is steadily progressing toward full-time writing income while enjoying life in Stonington, CT. She will share simple tips to:

- Write a good press release
- Secure TV and radio interviews
- Leverage free book publicity
- Swap writing services for fun opportunities
- Maintain an effective social media presence
- And More!

**November 21 (10:30 am – 11:30 am ET):** Robert Mandel at Mandel Vilar Press. <https://zoom.us/j/3671572517> (See page one for more information.)