

The Authority

Connecticut Authors & Publishers Association—Since 1994

Connecticut's Source for
Writing, Publishing &
Marketing Information

Volume 30 Issue 2 <https://ctauthorsandpublishers.com> February 2023

Feb 18 Virtual CAPA Meeting (10:30 am ET)

Jim Alkon will present the
Realities of Book Marketing for Authors

Jim, as a lifetime marketing/business development executive has the background to give us sound advice. As Editorial Director of BookTrib.com, a Meryl Moss Media company that helps get books in front of readers with a variety of unique, effective programs, Jim speaks with authors every day, helps them set realistic goals, and provides them with tools and ideas that will better position them to increase awareness. He is

hoping to share some of those strategies with you — realistic, affordable concepts that you can start using tomorrow. So often, Indie and self-published authors pour their hearts and souls into the creative process



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Meet the February Member of the Month—

Jackson Kuhl

By Patti Brooks

It was a great experience to talk to Jackson Kuhl about all his writing ventures and publishing successes. How many writers do you know of that are published in puzzle magazines as well as the Journal of the American Revolution *and* spent ten years writing for children's magazines, *and* wrote a column on dinosaurs? Oh and did I mention he also was a memoir ghost writer?

In 1995 Jackson moved to Connecticut from where he grew up on the New Jersey shore and wrote for a puzzle magazine. He now lives in Fairfield with his wife and sons and strives to write a thousand words a day although he doesn't come down too hard on himself on those days he reaches only five hundred.

Jackson learned from Hemmingway advice that successful writers stop writing for the day at a spot where they know what comes next. That philosophy makes it so a writer can't wait to get back to work the next morning.



To date Jackson has 34 short-fiction bylines and over 165 nonfiction bylines. It's especially noteworthy

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January 2023 SW CAPA Report

By Joe Keeney

Thirteen members attended the SWCAPA meeting held on January 9th. Brian Jud sponsored and moderated the Zoom meeting.



Author Sharon Duckett gave a practical talk on her topic, *How to Bring Your Memoir to Life*. She talked about adding what is overlooked: making the era in which you lived real by using characters, experiences and historical events.

Sharon is the author of, *No Rules: A Memoir*, for which she received ten book awards. Recently, she completed a thriller, *The Shutdown List*, a novel about climate change, corruption, and betrayal.

Sharon, winner of the Next Generation Indie book award for Memoir – Historical Category, is a former programmer, IT consultant, project manager and deputy director in state government.

Do Distributors Charge Too Much For Their Services?

Eric Kampmann

Given the explosive growth of independent publishing within the trade publishing community over the past ten years, the role of “distributors” has become ever more crucial. Still, the fairest answer to the question “Do these services cost too much?” is, “it depends.” I personally believe that the charges for distribution services should be transparent and predictable.

By transparent, I mean that “hidden” charges should be minimized. Publishers should carefully scrutinize

the contract, looking for extra charges for a variety of activities that might escalate their real costs. There are other issues such as return reserves, storage of books, returns processing fees, catalog charges and other miscellaneous items that need to be looked at and properly negotiated before you might sign a contract. It is better to get these issues cleared up and laid aside early rather than experience regret later on.

By predictable, I mean that the contract should have a single percentage somewhere between 20-30% of net sales, depending on the annual sales volume of the publisher. If you are paying much above 30%, then you should look into the reasons why. If you are a publisher with substantial annual sales of \$2,000,000 or more, then you will probably find that you have a certain level of negotiating power with your distributor.

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 brianjudcomcast.net.

Send submissions for the **Meet-A-Member** column to Joe Keeney at jkeeney9267spamarrest.com or Barbara Meredith dbmeredith@charter.net

ARTICLES ARE DUE BY THE 28TH OF THE MONTH

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Meet A Member

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that these totals include reprints which indicates his writing appeal to a range of magazines/readers.

Jackson's work can be found in *Electric Literature*, *Journal of the American Revolution*, *National Geographic News*, *the New York Post*, and other publications. Closer to home, he has contributed to local outlets such as *Connecticut Magazine*, *Fairfield County Weekly*, *Fairfield Minuteman*, and *The Stamford Advocate*.

When not working on those thousand words, Jackson enjoys weight lifting, hiking and canoeing along the Connecticut shore.

Jackson is probably most proud of his two novels and his third coming out in 2025.

His first novel, *Samuel Smedley, Connecticut Privateer* is the carefully-researched account of true-life American Revolutionary war hero, Samuel Smedley, who captained the waters off the Atlantic coast terrorizing British merchants and war vessels alike. It has been highly recommended for content and style.

In 2020, *A Season of Whispers* was published. It is a slim but delightful tale of terror set in transcendentalist New England. In the summer of 1844, Tom Lyman flees to Bonaventure, a transcendentalist farming cooperative tucked away in eastern Connecticut, to hide from his past.

With Jackson Kuhl's background and the vast array of his writing credits, one can't help but wonder where his talent will next take him.

Artisanal Prose

"The Art of Seeing"

By Adele Annesi



A chill winter morning brings a dusting of snow like ashes, a blush across the clouds, a roseate tinge to the bare branches of the maples, as if the world has come into being for the first time, in a long time.

These days are often lived in a fog of activity, a blur. Yet, the writer, as continually aspiring artist, is called not only to look but to see. What is the difference, and why does it make a difference?

Looking is the beginning of seeing, but only the beginning, the precursor, the prelude, as if looking were more concerned with the pragmatic than the soul, the heart.

Seeing takes in — the sting of winter, the dusting of snow on cartops and rooftops, the glow of sunrise — and transforms it into experience. This taking in enables the writer to experience. And experience, when inspired, can become aesthetic, can become art. Without experience, there is insufficient influence on the depths of the creative being.

During a recent meeting with a colleague on the privileges and perils of writing and publication, it quickly became clear we agreed. We don't sell our wares. We offer our art to the world, however large or small, as a child offers a drawing that can speak more than words of the realities of life.

At the close of the meeting, my colleague and I agreed that despite the woes of bringing a book into today's world, we will still do read-

ings, seek reviews, attend festivals, speak at gatherings. But we will do these things not in the consumptive manner of today but with the mind and heart of the continual apprentice of the artists' guilds that produced the master crafters and masterworks still esteemed after the passing of time.

In *Unless It Moves the Human Heart: The Craft and Art of Writing*, author and teacher Roger Rosenblatt noted, "For your writing to be great...it must be useful to the world. And for that to happen you must form an opinion of the world. And for that to happen you need to observe the world, closely and steadily, with a mind open to change. And for that to happen you have to live in the world, and not pretend that it is someone else's world you are writing about."

Rosenblatt's challenge to the writer, the artist, is to not only love and care for the world, broken as it is, but to love the world because the world is worth loving.

And for this to happen the writer must not only look but see, not only see but experience, even if experience brings pain, for, "Nothing you write will matter unless it moves the human heart..." [Rosenblatt, att. A.D. Hope]

Application:

Go to a place that enables you to see — a window, park bench, lakeside log, backyard.

Stop. Look. Wait.

Stopping means taking time.

Looking means opening the eyes and the heart. Waiting means allowing what is taken in to become experience.

Adele Annesi is an award-winning author, editor and teacher. For questions on writing, email a.annesi@sbcglobal.net Adele's new novel is *What She Takes Away* (Bordighera Press, 2023).

Are Your Book Marketing Emails Getting Read?

By Brian Feinblum

We all send emails that seem to go nowhere. No response from the intended recipient. No acknowledgment of its receipt. No error message of a wrong address. We just send off messages into the ether. Where do they go?



It's like asking: "What happens when you die?"

The answer of: "Nothing and who knows?" seems applicable to both questions.

Rather than wonder if you'll ever get a response or if they received your email in the first place, simply ask yourself: "What can I do to get people to open, read, and respond favorably to my email?" That's the bottom line here. The rest doesn't matter.

Here are some best practices to ensure your email arrives to your destined location -- and that its recipient plucks it out of a crowded inbox and actually is moved enough by it to respond and to do so favorably:

Duh, make sure you have the correct email address. Also, try to track down any other working email addresses for that person. Hit them all. Avoid SPAM filters by tying two things: Do not send attachments and don't put words in your subject line that cause problems. Avoid curse words, "free," or using the recipient's name in the subject line. If you don't receive a response within three to seven business days, send another email out with a dif-

ferent subject line. Maybe they missed it or forgot to respond. Perhaps they were traveling, sick, or very busy. A reminder email to nudge them is fine.

Most people won't open an email if: they don't recognize the sender, they recognize and don't care for them, believe it's spam or hoaxes, or the subject line simply doesn't interest them.

If they start to skim your email, keep it short, use bullet points, short paragraphs, and a strong opening sentence.

Give people the chance to opt out of your emails. You hate to see them go, but who needs to email people who don't want your stuff? Understand that some people are morons. They live to tell others that they don't want your email or that they don't trust you, even though you did nothing but show love. I've offered people free information and services and they act like I called their mothers a name.

The key to email is the following:

Use it in conjunction with other methods. Sometimes it takes a text, a phone call, a fax, a mailed letter, direct a tweet, or an in-person visit to reach someone.

Don't expect much. Email is a tool. These tools are not always what's needed to fix a specific problem.

Make great offers, be polite, and if you can use humor well, you may just get people to respond favorably.

Always follow the CAN-SPAM Act from the Federal Trade Commission

Lastly, emails are a numbers game. The more you send the more that get through, and the more that get through get read. The more read, the more responded to.

"Always give more than they expect to get."

Nelson Boswell

"Believe the unexpected to create business karma."

Deb Duncan

"No one ever attains success by simply doing what is required of him."

Charles Kendall Adams

"Stop complaining! Differentiate yourself from your competition. Don't be a duck. Be an eagle. Ducks quack and complain. Eagles soar above the crowd."

Dr. Wayne Dyer, Best-Selling Author

"You see things; and you say 'why?' But I can dream things that never were; and I say 'why not?'"

George Bernard Shaw

"We do not remember days; we remember moments."

Cesar Pavese

Marketing Tip

By Guy Achtezn

Have fun when you brainstorm. During a creative session, a team of engineers got into a really wacky mood and made fun of their project. Their comments were off the wall. The meeting was a great success many new ideas were generated. The next week everybody was in a serious mood and no new ideas were generated. The moral is that having a little fun can stimulate your creative juices. What wacky things can you do for your book? When selling your children's book through supermarkets, could you change the cover to make it look more like a cereal box?

Book and Author Publicity: How to "Book" Authors in the Media

By Andrew Blum

Every author wants their book to sell. But what they sometimes don't understand is it takes a village after publication for that to happen -- PR, social media and marketing working in unison.



Times have changed with e-books, Kindle, Amazon.com, pressure on publishers, and more self-published authors. Despite this, thousands of new books arrive annually so competition for readers and media is tougher than ever.

To keep up, PR tactics and strategies have had to change. Over time we went from no Internet and no online news to an avalanche of social media sites and podcasts as media targets for books.

So now we have print, the web, broadcast, (TV, online video, radio, online radio and podcasts) social media, book reviews, quotes in news and features, op-eds/bylined pieces, speaking events, and even streaming and virtual coverage. The bottom line: book PR and media placements are supposed to help sell books.

So, How Do You "Book" With the Media?

These days, short of a celebrity author or a best seller like Prince Harry's "Spare," just the book itself and targeting all available news outlets often aren't enough. You still need news hooks – whether it's Ukraine, Jan. 6, Elon Musk, President Biden, or COVID, or a local angle. The client is either the publisher or author but PR here means pitching the book as the focus. And in book PR, the author must be able to "get" and understand the media to succeed. Media training is helpful here.

COVID changed things in book PR with remote work and less media in actual offices to mail books to, but you can still have two key PR chances – galleys and the final book. Once the book is out, you have that second PR bite at the apple.

Yet everyone who does PR can't just one day say they do book publicity; it's a specialty. Some agencies specialize in it and some do other PR and list book publicity as a service provided. My advice: pick one who specializes in book publicity.

Tips for Book and Author Publicity

- Have a PR team member assigned to focus just on social media for the book and the author.
- Make sure the client is media trained and understands that the PR campaign combines pitching the book and news hooks.
- Make sure the book and the author have a web site to help promote the book.
- Keep changing the PR pitch as often as needed to keep up with new news hooks and developments.
- Remember Yogi Berra – "It ain't over 'til it's over." Sometimes it takes a long time to land a media hit for a book and for it to appear. It took me months to get a book on Real Time with Maher but it was worth the wait.

So, the next time you see a book review, an author on TV or a podcast, or a book at the top of the best-seller list, you can bet a book publicist had something to do with it.

Andrew Blum has done PR for about 40 books, and is a PR consultant, media trainer and principal of CT-based AJB Communications. He has also directed PR for professional services and financial services firms, NGOs, agencies, crisis situations, and other clients. As a PR executive, and formerly a journalist, he has been involved on both sides of the media aisle in some of the most media intensive crises of the past 25 years. Contact him at ajbcomms@gmail.com or follow him on Twitter: [@ajbcomms](https://twitter.com/ajbcomms)

Andrew will be the speaker at the April 15 CAPA meeting on this topic

Writing Tip

By John Long

There is no "right" length for a paragraph, but a reader is daunted by a sold page of text.

CAPA Members Celebrating Success

Peter Marzano said, "Recently I was asked to give a PowerPoint presentation in the Monsignor Farrell High School (Staten Island, NY) library. The Chairwoman of the English Department invited me to make the presentation to an AP English class of 30 senior students. The title of the presentation is "On Writing."

First I will give the students a brief review of my career, leading up to my retirement, and the night I had the dream which became the outline for my first book, "Litany of Sorrows." Then I take them through what I had to learn to write a book, to find and use an editor (Rita Reali), to seek Beta readers, to appreciate what they had to say (good criticism !!!) and to make the suggested changes (especially extracting many historical details from the story ... which I then made a separate chapter in the book and on my website), and the journey to get ISBN numbers, create a cover, find a printer (IngramSpark) and become self-published.

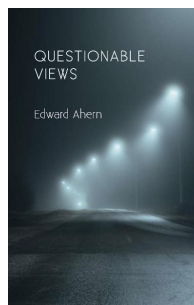
My presentation then suggests many of the considerations students need to make in developing a story such as the words they chose, and the flow of the story. I end by encouraging the students to feel comfortable with day dreaming. I have a slide on Howard Gardenr's Multiple Intelligences (a focus of mine when I completed my thesis for my master's degree), how writing develops verbal and linguistic skills, and interpersonal relationship skills. I throw in a point . . . that the use of devices steals time from relaxing and imagining ideas.

Of special note, I remain in contact with a former teacher of mine, Jim Marini. Jim is an active 83-year-old living with his wife in Stamford, CT. Jim ('Brother Marini' at the time) was a bright, young, and strict Irish Christian Brother who taught me Spanish at Farrell. Jim subsequently left, married and has two children. He taught at Stamford Catholic High School for many years before retiring.

Our age difference is only 11 years. Jim and I spoke two days ago. I mentioned my presentation and he plans to travel from Stamford to Staten Island to see my presentation at Farrell where he first taught me back in 1964. I was 14 years old at the time and he was my 25-year-old teacher."

According to Bill McGee: "On Friday, February 3rd, I read from and discussed my novel *Half The Child* in a talk at the Norwalk Public Library in Norwalk, CT. Here's the link to the novel's website, in case anyone wants to know more about *Half The Child*: www.HalfTheChild.com

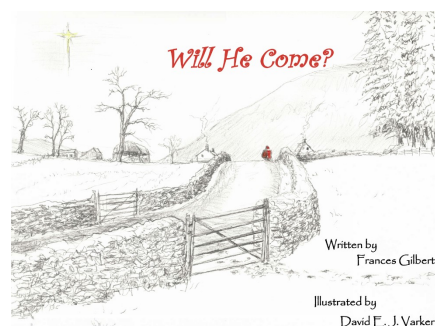
Here's Ed Ahern's next poetry chapbook, due out in May, available now for preorder at: [Questionable Views by Edward Ahern](http://QuestionableViews.com) – [Finishing Line Press](http://FinishingLinePress.com)



Gevera Bert Piedmont was interviewed on a local TV station. <https://youtu.be/7vVSrOMV1ws> about being a local author and creative person. I talked about my books, what inspired them, and the oracle decks I've designed. The

series is called *Making It Artisan Stories* and airs on the Wallingford community channel and YouTube. My website is www.GeveraBertPiedmont.com

Gillian Collings said, "*My Christmas* is a poignant family story ... a little boy on a lonely Scottish farm in the Highlands worries that Father Christmas will forget him ... getting some good reviews ... a read aloud for all ages.



February 18 Speaker Continued from Page 1

and are thrilled to have a book come out the other end. But they have neglected the marketing element – everything from setting aside adequate funding to deciding what is essential to determining whether to do it on their own to sorting through a plethora of marketing and promotional programs.

This session will help authors set realistic expectations, match budgets, and provide some ideas of options and opportunities that might help them get a marketing lift.

The link to attend the meeting is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6762224705>

SW CAPA Virtual Meeting, Feb 13

Experiences of a Real Ghostwriter

From her experiences, Tanya Detrik will share how she became a ghostwriter, how the type of clients and books differ, her challenges and fee structure when creating a project quote, and the complexities and rewards involved in ghostwriting.

Tanya's ghostwriting projects include, *Who Do you Need to Meet* (a business book about networking) and *He, She, Me* (a memoir of a transgender's life transition). She is currently working on a third. Tanya's first book, *Waking Up with Nora*, is a memoir of transformation during the first two years of grandmothering her very special needs granddaughter. Proceeds from the book go to helping special needs children. Her second book, *This is Grief – When breathing*

hurts, love songs suck, and good days come with guilt, is a unique, graphically presented collection of her experiences after the sudden death of her husband. All books are available on Amazon.com.

She can be reached (on the Web) at <http://tanyadetrik.com> and email at tanya@tanyadetrik.com

The meeting begins at 6:30 pm ET and the link to it is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6762224705>

SE CAPA Virtual Meeting, Feb 13

How Far Do You Want To Take Your Book?

Start 2023 Off With A Clear Plan To Get You There, by Nancy Butler

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”.

Our CAPA meetings have given a lot of great information. This meeting will help you pull it all together in a plan that makes sense for you.

Nancy has been very successfully self-employed for over 40 years. She is currently an international speaker, an award-winning author of three books, a national business coach and for 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2023, a Delegate to The United Nations for The Commission on the Status of Women.

Nancy will facilitate the meeting to help you have a clearer plan going forward. Bring your ideas and questions to share regarding what has worked and the challenges you are having.

You will leave with the beginning of your own business plan for 2023 and what you need to finish on your own after the meeting.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings for the Three CAPA Chapters (All members may attend all three meetings per month)

CAPA CENTRAL (Avon)

(These virtual meetings run from 10:30—11:30 am)

To be a speaker or for more info contact BrianJudbookapss.org)

February 18: *The Realities of Book Marketing*, by Jim Alkon

March 18: *How to Get and Work with An Agent*, by Dennis Schleicher

April 15: *Media Training Tips for Publishers and Authors*, by Andrew Blum



CAPA SOUTHEAST (Groton)

(These virtual meetings begin at 6:30 pm. For more info: [Patti Brooks, pattipattibrooksbooks.com](mailto:pattipattibrooksbooks.com))

February 13: Planning for 2023 by Nancy Butler

March 20: Speaker and topic to be announced

April 17: Speaker and topic to be announced



CAPA SOUTHWEST (Shelton)

(The virtual meetings run from 6:30 —7:30 pm. Watch them live and ask questions of the speakers.

For more info contact Joe Keeney, jkeeney9267spamarrest.com)

February 13: Experiences of a Real Ghostwriter, By Tanya Detrik

March 13: Speaker and topic to be announced

April 10: Speaker and topic to be announced



CAPA's Co-op Connection

Some of these recur weekly. Check their websites for dates and more information. If you would like to join the CAPA Board to help coordinate these events with other CAPA members please contact BrianJudcomcast.net

2/17	UNCASVILLE	Southeastern CT Home Show 42nd
2/25	BRISTOL	Bristol Home & Business Expo 36th
4/14	HARWINTON	Vintage Market Days
4/23	STAMFORD	Bridal and Wedding Expo
6/4	HARTFORD	Connecticut Bridal & Wedding Expo
6/4	WESTBROOK	Spring Arts & Crafts Fair 34th
8/5	TONINGTON	Stonington Village Fair 71st
9/7/	HEBRON	Artisan & Craft Show @ Hebron Harvest Fair
9/8	BETHLEHEM	Bethlehem Fair
10/7	WETHERSFIELD	Old Wethersfield Arts & Crafts Fair
10/29	HARTFORD	Connecticut Bridal & Wedding Expo

Marketing Tip

By Judith Briles



Treat Authorship and Publishing as a Business

Are you in this for “something to do,” or are you serious about being a success? Be clear on what it takes to break even—just how many books do you have to sell to cover your initial expenses? Do you have a plan? Success in authoring rarely happens overnight. It takes time and patience along with the plan. It’s your choice; you choose.

Tip: Publishing has a cost to it: the investment includes your time, your energy, and yes, your money. Start by getting educated. Hang out with authors who “are doing it” and identify who the top influencers are in publishing.

I’m not talking about the one-book wonder who is the current buzz or self-proclaimed guru. I’m talking about those who have some roots; have been at the game for years; experienced the roller coaster of ups and downs. In other words, they are seasoned and can talk the walk because they have really walked the talk. Follow their blogs, join their communities and make comments.



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