

SUMMER 2023



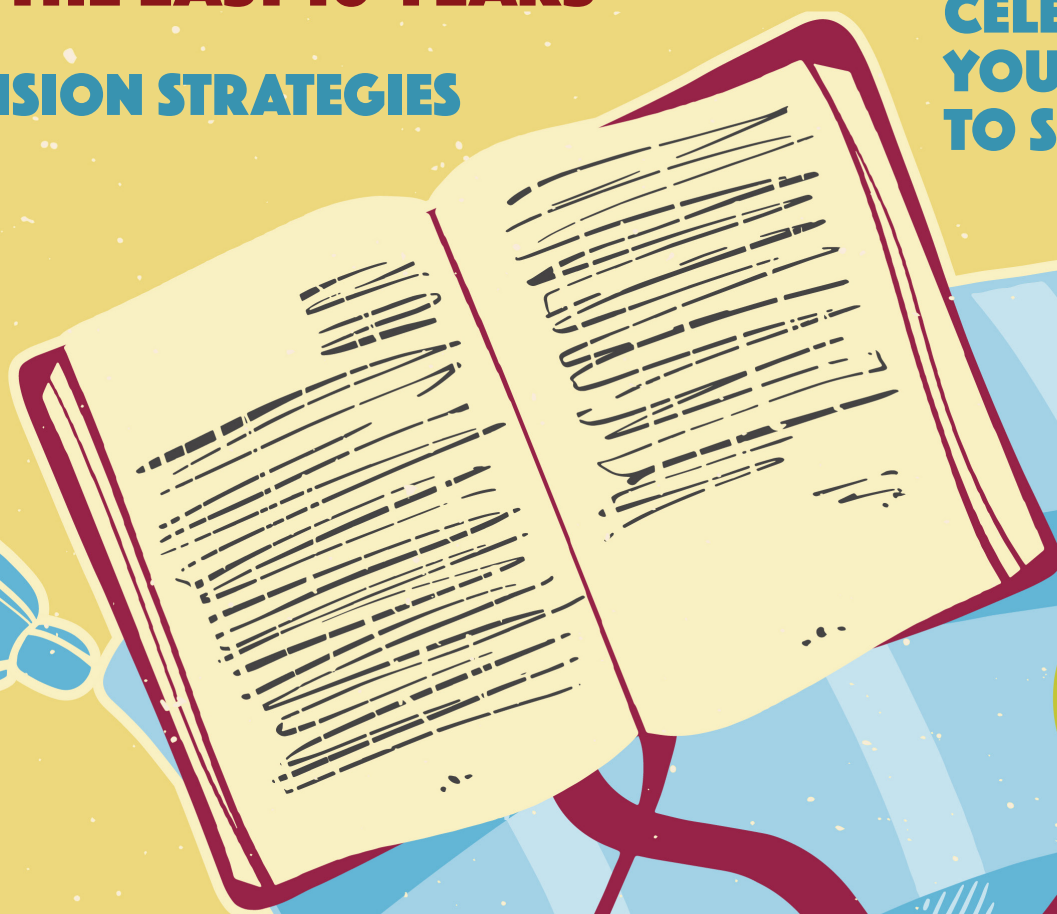
The Quarterly Magazine of the Women's Fiction Writers Association

WRITEON!

**TOP 10 BOOKS OF
THE LAST 10 YEARS**

REVISION STRATEGIES

**GUIDING
SCRIBE:
CELEBRATE
YOUR WAY
TO SUCCESS**



**NEW COLUMN:
THE BOOK BIZ**

**AUTHOR
INTERVIEW:
JOANI ELLIOT**

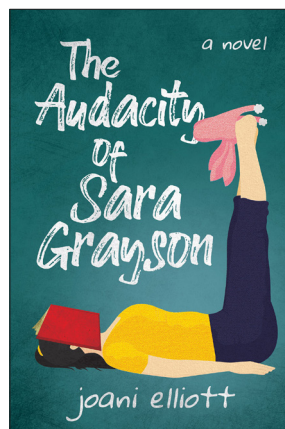
SUMMER 2023

CONTENTS

10 years

FEATURES

- 6** Spotlight on Diversity and Inclusion
by Ella Shawn
- 8** Make the Most of the
WFWA Conference
- 9** Meet WFWA's Executive Director/
Women's Fiction Day
- 10** When Your Manuscript Gets Drafty
by Savannah Gilbo
- 11** Top 10 Books of the Last 10 Years
by Brooke Williams
- 16** Author Newsletters
by Sharon Ritchey
- 18** Interview: Joani Elliot
by Sharon Ritchey



COLUMNS

Guiding Scribe: Celebrate Your
Way to Success by Camille Pagán

12

The Book Biz: 7 Book Marketing
Trends Worth Your Time in 2023
by Mary Helen Sheriff

14

Volunteer Spotlight:
Tara Baisden by Sharon Ritchey

20

DEPARTMENTS

President's Letter

4

Letter from the Editor

5

Member Releases

7

Final Thought

21



Check out our calendar of events, workshops, and webinar information on our website.

ABOUT THE WFWA

We began this organization in 2013 with the idea to create a safe, nurturing place for writers of women's fiction. The publishing industry is morphing—with new opportunities and, as yet, unknown futures. The founders of the Women's Fiction Writers Association wanted somewhere to amass and disseminate information to and about our chosen genre.

Defining women's fiction has proven as subjective as the types of books we read. For that reason, our guiding statement is broad and comprehensive: Stories that are driven by the main character's emotional journey. Our stories may have romance. Or they may not. They could be contemporary. Or historical. But what binds us together is the focus on a main character's emotional journey.



facebook.com/WFWritersAssociation



twitter.com/WF_Writers



instagram.com/womensfictionwriters/

Join the closed WFWA Facebook group by sending an email to:
membership@womensfictionwriters.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stephanie Claypool
Vice President, Finance/Treasurer

Jacki Kelly
President

Sophie Krich-Brinton
Director of Technology

Kristi Leonard
Vice President, Programs

Maggie Marr
WFWA Legal Counsel

Janet Rundquist
Secretary

Micki Morency
Vice President of
Diversity and Inclusion

Kori Kobzina
Vice President,
Communications

Jami Sheets
Vice President Events

Wendi Rossi
Membership Director

Camille Pagán
Guiding Scribe

THE WFWA FOUNDING TEAM

Orly Konig
www.orkonig.com

Kerry Lonsdale
www.kerrylonsdale.com

Laura Drake
www.lauradrakebooks.com

Linda Avellar
www.lindaavellar.com

Marilyn Brant
www.marilynbrant.com

Maggie Marr
www.maggiemarr.com

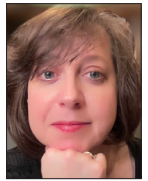


WriteOn! is published quarterly by the
Women's Fiction Writers Association
www.womensfictionwriters.org

STAFF

SHARON RITCHEY Executive Editor

Sharon is WFWA's former Vice President of Communications and creator of Women's Fiction Day. She is a 30-year communications professional now following her magazine passion with WriteOn! and writing fiction. She lives in Northern Virginia.



SHERI TAYLOR-EMERY Art Director

Sheri is an art director who longs to be a novelist. She loves seeing her kids grow into amazing adults, volunteering at a dog rescue, and playing tennis. She lives with her husband in Atlanta.



BROOKE WILLIAMS Staff Writer

Brooke is an office manager, novelist, and devoted consumer of tacos and books. Her short story, *Another Time*, was published in The Orange Writer's Group Anthology. She lives in Ohio with her husband and four children.



JEN CRAVEN Copy Editor

Jen works as a professional copywriter for various brands and companies. Her contemporary women's fiction/suspense debut *Best Years of Your Life* was released in August 2022.



LORRAINE NORWOOD Proofreader

Lorraine is a writer and certified book coach. Her debut work *The Solitary Sparrow* is a dual timeline novel set in the 14th and 20th centuries. It will be published in 2023. She is at work on the sequel.



KATHI JENKINS Proofreader

Kathi is a former environmental engineer now focusing on her debut novel. She loves empowering women, spending time outside, and engaging in inappropriate humor.



CAMILLE PAGÁN Guiding Scribe

Camille is the #1 Amazon Charts bestselling author of 10 books, a journalist, master certified coach for authors, and the founder of Even Better Co. She is the WFWA Guiding Scribe through 2023.



IF YOU LIKE WHAT YOU'VE READ ...

Send us a letter! We'd love to hear your feedback and reactions on the stories and features. Email them to writeon@womensfictionwriters.org. Submitted letters are considered for publication and may be edited for clarity or space.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Let's Celebrate Our Accomplishments

Writing is often a solitary pursuit, requiring immense focus, dedication, and imagination. As a result, it's challenging to stay motivated, especially when the words don't seem to flow as easily as we'd like or that ideal agent or publisher is not as enamored with our work as we had hoped.

There are any number of reasons to be disappointed with our writing careers. Most of us have been there at one time or another. Yet, despite the challenges, writing is a passion many of us share, and no amount of hurdles will keep us from sitting at our computers and staying on the course.

As we go through our writing careers, it's easy to become fixated on the negative aspects of our circumstances. We often focus on what we don't have or what isn't going well—the call that doesn't come, the list we didn't make, the sales markers we didn't achieve—rather than taking the time to appreciate the good things happening around us. But maintaining a positive outlook is crucial for our emotional and mental well-being.

Whether we write for personal fulfillment or professional reasons, the act of putting pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) is a powerful form of expression that allows us to share our thoughts, ideas, and stories with the world or just for our gratification. Despite the challenges that come with the writing process, there is always something that brings us joy. Perhaps it's the completion of a challenging chapter or the creation of a particularly memorable character. Maybe it's simply the satisfaction of putting our thoughts into words or overcoming a period of writer's block or a struggle with a personal matter. Always look for ways to stay motivated and inspired.

Staying positive can take many forms, from a quiet moment of reflection to a raucous party with friends, family or other writers. Regardless of the challenges, there is always something to make us smile or bring us joy—every day, some small victories that remind us why we love this craft so much.

Celebrating the challenges of writing is a powerful mindset shift that can help develop writing and personal growth, build resilience, and help you find joy in the writing process. So, the next time a challenge comes knocking, take a moment to celebrate it and recognize that it's an opportunity to learn and grow. By doing so, you'll become a more skilled and fulfilled writer.



WHETHER WE WRITE FOR PERSONAL FULFILLMENT OR PROFESSIONAL REASONS, THE ACT OF PUTTING PEN TO PAPER (OR FINGERS TO KEYBOARD) IS A POWERFUL FORM OF EXPRESSION THAT ALLOWS US TO SHARE OUR THOUGHTS, IDEAS, AND STORIES WITH THE WORLD OR JUST FOR OUR GRATIFICATION.

Jackie



We Grow Together

When spring hits my part of the country, I watch the sky like an aviator seeking days of sunshine—not for travel, but planting. Every year, I line up packets of seeds and dream of long, thin French beans, sunshine-warm tomatoes, and prickly pickling cucumbers. I’m always impatient for the weather and the long growing cycles. Putting together WriteOn! is a lot like planting. We begin with a seasonal editorial meeting and plant the articles with writers and the various WFWA working committees. Each issue is a full harvest.

You will be well-nourished this issue with writing guidance and inspiration. Then, just as the first garden tomatoes pull heavy on their stalks, WFWA will celebrate Women’s Fiction Day with a week of activities starting the week of June 4. Later, as the greater harvest begins, I hope to connect with hundreds of members in Chicago for the 10th Anniversary celebration.

Thank you to all our contributors and the master gardening (editorial) staff who make this magazine flourish in all seasons.

WELCOME TO “SPOTLIGHT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION”
THE D&I COMMITTEE INVITES OUR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP TO SHARE STORIES THAT IMPACT
THEM IN THE AREA OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION. WE WANT TO HEAR ALL VOICES.
PLEASE SEND YOUR SUBMISSION TO DI@WOMENSFIXIONWRITERS.ORG

Give Me Therapy, Give Me Peace

By Ella Shawn

As the publishing industry is a microcosm of society, it holds to the same standards rooted in the systemic practice of institutionalized racism and the belief in white supremacy. Black women's fiction writers face a unique set of challenges in this industry. They are often subjected to misogynoir, where they are seen as representative of all Black women, which brings with it its own set of intersectional oppressive edicts. Beyond these practices, their unique voices, ways of storytelling, and experiences don't fit the mold of the standard white default.

For these and many subtler reasons, some Black women's fiction writers could benefit from therapy and life coaching to address some of the trauma, stress, imposter syndrome, hostile work environments, and pressures of attaining life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I challenge any women's fiction writer who does not identify as Black, to take a short walk in the shoes of a successfully published Black woman writer. Sink down into the nebulous uncertainty she must feel each time she receives a rejection letter. Forced to ask the two questions most dreaded, but undeniably necessary: *Is it because I'm Black? Are my characters not Black enough or too Black to be relatable?* What must it do to a creative person whose very personhood is the biggest barrier to success?

Professional writing organizations could provide safe spaces for Black women writers to navigate these challenges, allowing them to connect with one another, and receive guidance and tools to combat and overcome some of these pressing issues. It's important that Black women writers recognize the value in seeking support and not feel ashamed or stigmatized for doing so.

Therapy can be a powerful tool for Black women writers to process the stress and trauma they experience in their personal and professional lives. Cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based stress reduction, and trauma-focused therapy are some of the modalities that can be particularly helpful. Life coaching can help Black women writers set achievable goals, develop strategies for overcoming obstacles, and cultivate a positive mindset.



Resources and Additional Reading Materials

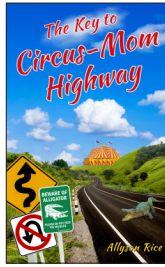
This list of resources and other reading materials does not exhaust what is available; however, I wanted to share a few different takeaways for readers to get them started on their journey to awareness and healing. It's okay not to be okay. As I always say, "Be kindest to yourself first, always, and in all ways."

- [You Belong in the Room — Exploring Impostor Syndrome from a Black Perspective](#)
- [Stress and coping in interracial contexts: The influence of race-based rejection sensitivity and cross-group friendship in daily experiences of health](#)
- [Black Female Therapist](#)
- [Therapy for Black Girls](#)

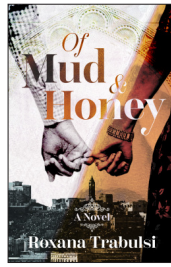


Ella Shawn is a published author, host and unlicensed therapist of the Black Writer Therapy podcast which debuts June 8. She is also a member of WFWA Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Interested in joining the DI Committee? Contact DI@womensfictionwriters.org.

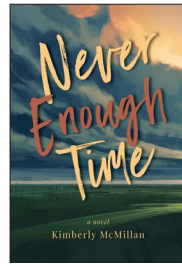
MEMBER RELEASES



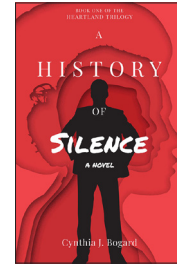
ALLYSON RICE
The Key to Circus-Mom Highway
1/2/2023



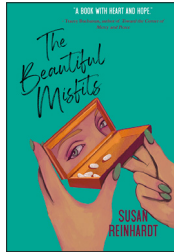
ROXANA TRABULSI
Of Mud and Honey
1/10/2023



KIMBERLY MCMILLAN
Never Enough Time
1/17/2023



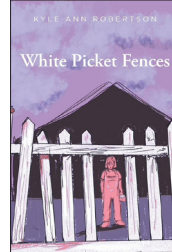
CYNTHIA BOGARD
A History of Silence
3/7/2023



SUSAN REINHARDT
The Beautiful Misfits
3/7/2023



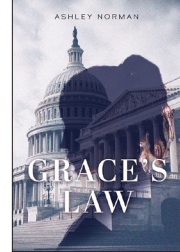
AMANDA SPEIGHTS
Love's Arrival
3/8/2023



KYLE ANN ROBERTSON
White Picket Fences
3/15/2023



ANNETTE LYON
Just One More
3/21/2023



ASHLEY NORMAN
Grace's Law
3/28/2023



D. LIEBHART
House on Fire
3/31/2023



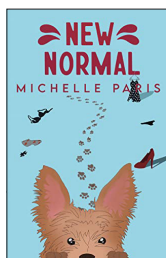
JANET GARBET
The French Lover's Wife
4/11/2023



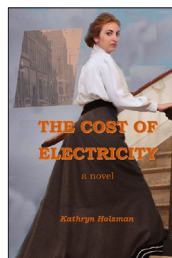
GABI COATSWORTH
A Beginner's Guide to Starting Over
4/23/2023



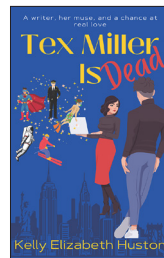
LAURA DRAKE
Amazing Gracie
4/25/2023



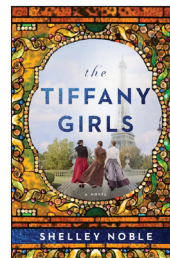
MICHELLE PARIS
New Normal
5/2/2023



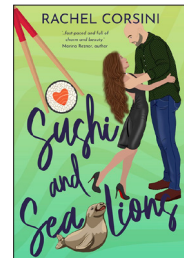
KATHRYN HOLZMAN
The Cost of Electricity
5/2/2023



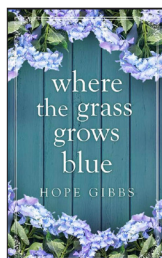
KELLY ELIZABETH HUSTON
Tex Miller is Dead
5/9/2023



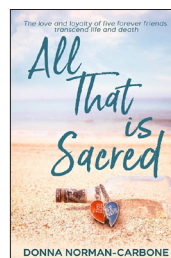
SHELLEY NOBLE
The Tiffany Girls
5/9/2023



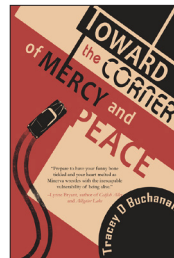
RACHEL CORSINI
Sushi and Sea Lions
5/16/2023



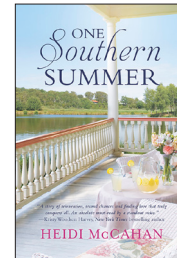
HOPE GIBBS
Where the Grass Grows Blue
5/16/2023



DONNA NORMAN-CARBONE
All That is Sacred
6/6/2023



TRACEY BUCHANAN
Toward the Corner of Mercy and Peace
6/20/2023



HEIDI MCCAHAN
One Southern Summer
6/27/2023

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF WFWA'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

By Rosemary Twomey

Writing can be a solitary pursuit, but it doesn't have to be. Attending in-person events is an excellent way to connect with other writers, gain knowledge and inspiration, and learn about the publishing industry.

For some, attending a writing conference is both an exciting and nerve-wracking experience. On the one hand, you're surrounded by people who share your passion for writing and can offer valuable insights and advice. On the other hand, it can be intimidating to approach strangers and make meaningful connections. But fear not! With a little preparation and a positive attitude, you can navigate the conference scene like a pro and leave with a network of fellow writers who can support you on your writing journey.

Keep reading to explore some of the benefits of attending WFWA's writing conference, along with tips for making the most of your experience.

DON'T BE SCARED TO STRIKE UP A CONVERSATION

WFWA members are a friendly bunch. Still, meeting new people can be awkward. Here are some ice-breaker questions you can use to get to know other writers at the conference:

■ **How long have you been a member of the WFWA?** It's great to meet long-standing members, as well as newbies.

■ **What are you currently working on?** Maybe you'll discover someone's writing that is similar to yours. Perhaps you'll connect with someone who's chosen the same publishing path.

■ **Which session are you most excited about?** Use this as a way to deepen discussion on what you find the most challenging part of the writing/publishing process.

■ **What are you currently reading?** A great way to learn about new people and discover great books!

■ **Where are you from?** We have members from all over the country (and beyond!). Maybe you'll meet someone not far from where you live.

PLAN WHICH SESSIONS AND MASTERCLASSES YOU WANT TO ATTEND IN ADVANCE

Writing conferences offer a wealth of knowledge and inspiration through speaker sessions, panel discussions, and masterclasses. Take advantage of these opportunities to learn from experienced writers and industry professionals. You can gain insights into the craft of writing, learn about different genres and styles, and discover new techniques and approaches.

Planning ahead is important to make sure you attend speaker sessions and masterclasses that are



most relevant to you (and to be sure they don't fill up!). Whether you are at the beginning of crafting your first manuscript or marketing your third novel, there's something for everyone.

Check out the schedule for the WFWA 10th Anniversary Conference [here](#).

PREPARE YOUR QUESTIONS

With so many literary professionals in one place, the conference is a great time to ask your burning questions about the publishing industry and different paths to success. Take advantage of the wealth of knowledge—not just from the agents in attendance, but from your fellow writers. No question is too silly—chances are if you're wondering, someone else is too!

NETWORK WITH LITERARY AGENTS

Writing conferences can be an excellent way to connect with literary agents. Check the conference schedule to reserve a pitch spot. Attend speaker sessions and workshops where agents are present, and don't be afraid to ask questions and introduce yourself. A simple hello can go a long way. Sign up for query critiques or book pitches to get feedback on your work and potentially connect with an agent. However, be sure not to come on too strong and always remain professional with agents. No one wants to feel uncomfortable. Reserve your pitches to the designated sessions—agents are also there to have a good time and don't want to be bombarded.

Take advantage of opportunities to connect with other writers, gain craft knowledge, learn about the publishing industry, and network with literary agents by attending this year's conference. With the right mindset and a willingness to learn, you can make the most of your experience and take your career to the next level. We hope to see you in September!

MEET PAMELA NOWAK, WFWA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As WFWA membership has grown and our workshops, programs, scholarships, and now our in-person events have expanded, the board identified the need for a dedicated manager to help steer our growth. After a lengthy candidate search, we decided Pamela Nowak is our perfect fit.

WriteOn! sat down with her to talk all things Pamela, writing, and WFWA.

“Becoming involved in a writer’s organization changed my life,” says Pamela Nowak, WFWA’s new Executive Director.

How’s that for an opening hook?

Pamela is the author of six novels, two historical women’s fiction and four historical romances set in the American West. She is a past president of the Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers with a background in teaching and historic preservation.

But all that aside, Pamela understands the writing heart of WFWA. Though you wouldn’t know from speaking with her, she describes herself as shy. She’s candid about how her life changed in 2007—the year she published her first book and her husband died. Seeking a way forward, she joined a writing community and became an active volunteer.

“I discovered my identity as a writer. Volunteering put me in contact with other writers, people who are like me,” she says.

Pamela is like many of us and understands the ups and downs of publishing. She spent years writing her first book, *Chances* and published it with a small press. When the press closed, she went indie for her subsequent books. Her latest novel, *Necessary Deceptions* was released in 2022.

Pamela joined WFWA in 2018 needing a women’s fiction critique group and was immediately impressed with the organization’s resources. As COVID shut everything down, our virtual platform welcomed more people and supported the community. She’s excited about her new role within our organization, and how our online community and technology platforms position us for the future.



PAMELA UNDERSTANDS THE WRITING HEART OF WFWA. ... SHE’S CANDID ABOUT HOW HER LIFE CHANGED IN 2007—THE YEAR SHE PUBLISHED HER FIRST BOOK AND HER HUSBAND DIED.

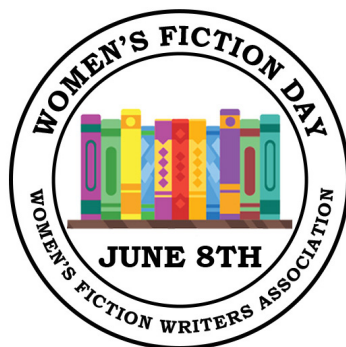
WOMEN’S FICTION DAY: CELEBRATE BEING A HUMAN CREATOR

By Paulette Stout

Women’s Fiction Day (WFD) is the one time of year when WFWA can strut our stuff and share with the world what makes our genre special. But at its core, Women’s Fiction Day is a celebration of all of you: our talented writers. With a flooding of news stories about AI-powered content, it’s never been more important to form authentic, human connections with our readers.

Luckily, our crackerjack Women’s Fiction Day team has assembled an easy-to-use toolkit of resources to make engaging on social media quick, easy, and worthwhile. Yes, some of us are more comfortable posting on social media than others. That’s why partnering with someone farther down the social media path can exercise essential book marketing muscles that you can use throughout your career.

To get started, pop over to the Women’s Fiction Day toolkit



WWW.WOMENSFICIONWRITERS.ORG

(located on the WFWA website) and use the social post text, images, logos, and hashtags as a starting point for your own activity. One step better, use the resources as inspiration to collaborate with fellow authors:

- Schedule joint in-person appearances or tabling

- Promote fellow authors at your own book clubs
- Swap Q&As in your newsletters
- Try joint promotions or book bundles
- Go live on social media

If the introvert in you cowers at the thought of posting on social media, know there are lots of ways to engage without sharing personal information, or even any images of yourself. Remember: being a creative means sharing your ideas with the world. Promoting your work on social media simply gives readers a reminder to check out your work. And tapping into the fun of Women’s Fiction Day gives you a compelling reason to start.

Paulette Stout writes contemporary women’s fiction and proudly serves on the Women’s Fiction Day Committee. Find her award-winning books on her website: pauletestout.com.

WHEN YOUR MANUSCRIPT GETS DRAFTY

By Savannah Gilbo

You have a finished draft. Now what? Should you dive right into revisions? Should you work with beta readers? Should you start querying? As a developmental editor and book coach, these are some of the most common questions I get asked, so I wanted to share my answers with you in this month's issue.

Before you dive into executing the advice I'm going to offer, I want you to do two things: CELEBRATE (after all, finishing a first draft is no small task, and you did it—congratulations!)! And then take a break from your story. That's right, step away. Give yourself at least one to two weeks to get some distance from your plot and characters so you can come back to your story with fresh eyes.

Once you're ready to dive back in after your break, do a "hands-off" read-through to get a sense of what you're working with before you tackle revisions. Take notes as you read, but don't edit. It's important to experience your story as a reader would—and it's important to stay out of the weeds so you can get a big-picture sense of what's working, what's not working, and where you need to make changes.

From there, break down your revisions into multiple drafts or passes. With each draft or pass, take on a different layer of your story so that you can focus your attention so you can strengthen your story creatively, efficiently, and productively.

HERE ARE FOUR RECOMMENDED REVISION STAGES IN ORDER:

■ **STORY LEVEL:** Focus on the big picture elements of your story like plot, character development, worldbuilding, theme, point of view, etc. This pass is NOT about word choice, dialogue, or any of the smaller details!

■ **SCENE LEVEL:** Drill down one layer deeper and focus on each one of your scenes. This pass is NOT about sentence structure, word choice, syntax, or anything else like that. You'll still want to focus on the big-picture story elements, just at the scene level.

■ **PAGE LEVEL:** Focus on your line-by-line writing so that you can tighten up your scenes as much as possible. Look for repetitive words, too many adverbs, purple prose, passive voice, or sections where you've over-described things. Don't make big-picture changes at this point.

■ **SENTENCE LEVEL:** Tighten your sentences. Correct spelling and grammar mistakes, and make sure your style/voice is consistent. You should not make big-picture changes to the scene or story level at this point.



You'll want to spend MOST of your time in the first two phases—assessing what you already have in your draft, problem-solving, and executing the fixes. If you struggle to see your draft objectively, or if you don't know how to shape your draft into a story that works, this would be a great time to reach out to a developmental editor or book coach who can help you solidify your next steps.

Unfortunately, there's no one-size-fits-all answer for how many drafts you need before your manuscript is done. Writers who outline (and pressure test their outline) before they write tend to require fewer major revisions, which results in fewer drafts. Writers who prefer to discover their stories as they write usually spend more time revising because they're figuring out their story (and what works) as they go.

At the end of the day, writing requires revising. There's no way around it. However, when you have a clear understanding of how to best tackle your revisions, the editing process can feel rewarding and fun. Plus, think of it this way: With each pass, you get closer to finalizing your book and sharing your story with the world. So have some fun and keep going. You're closer to finishing than you think!



Savannah Gilbo is a developmental editor and book coach who's passionate about helping fiction authors write, edit, and publish stories that work. She's also the host of the top-ranked *Fiction Writing Made Easy* podcast, where she provides simple, actionable, and step-by-step strategies that writers can implement in their work right away. Get in touch at www.savannahgilbo.com

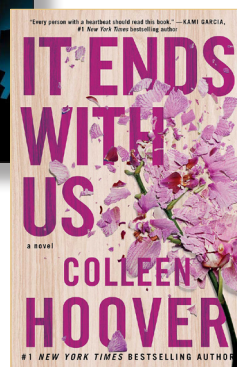
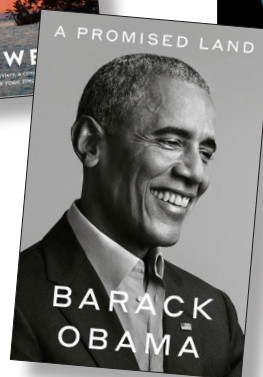
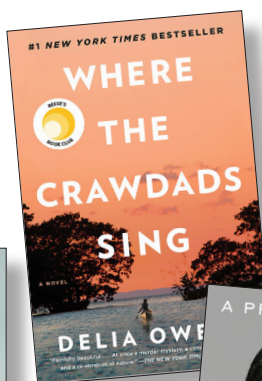
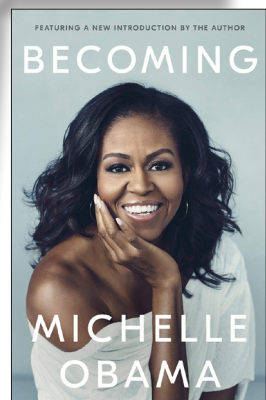
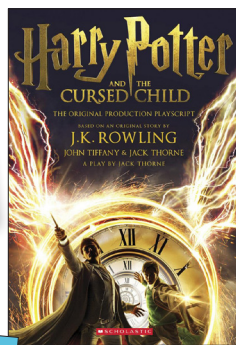
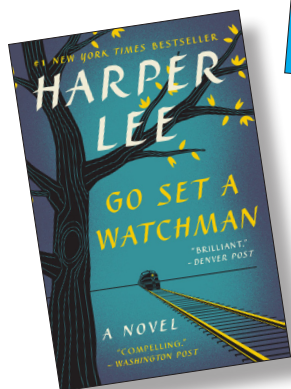
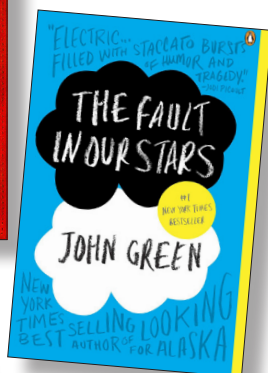
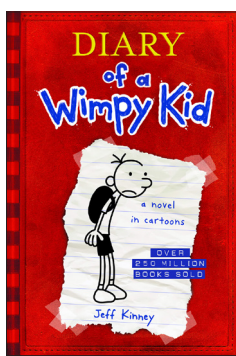
TOP 10 BOOKS OF THE LAST 10 YEARS

By Brooke Williams

In celebration of WFWA's 10th anniversary, *WriteOn!* decided to take a look back at the last decade of bestselling books. After poring over ten years' worth of listicles, top twenty charts, and trend analyses, I've come to a single conclusion, one that can be discouraging or heartening for us authors depending on your disposition: anything is possible. From a global pandemic, to a national reckoning with racial injustice, to the rise of a social media influence like BookTok, there's simply no predicting what forces will sway readers from one year to the next. And even if your book isn't a blockbuster the year it's published, it could have a renaissance later in life. In fact, backlist titles did better than frontlist titles just last year.

So, which titles have readers been clamoring for the most over the past ten years? The top-selling book in 2013 was the eighth installment of the middle grade *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series by Jeff Kinney. In 2014, the young adult book *A Fault in Our Stars* by John Green topped the charts after a film adaptation was released to critical acclaim. *Go Set a Watchman* by Harper Lee was the top seller in 2015, published for the first time more than fifty years after it was written. A script for the play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (parts 1 & 2) sold 4.5 million copies in 2016, making it the top seller for the year. Another film adaptation moved a book to the top of the charts in 2017: *Wonder*, a middle grade novel by R.J. Palacio. In 2018, *Becoming* by Michelle Obama topped the charts, followed by *Where the Crawdads Sing* in 2019 whose author, Delia Owens was publishing her debut novel at age 69. Barack Obama's *Promised Land* was the top seller in 2020, and another middle grade title, the tenth book in the *Dog Man* graphic novel series by Dav Pilkey, took the cake in 2021. Finally, last year, Colleen Hoover not only took the top spot with *It Ends with Us*, but her other books took the second, third, fifth, eighth, ninth, eighteenth, and twenty-fourth spots as well.

Among the top twenty-five bestseller lists referenced for the past ten years, there's such a wide variety of genres and authors. The list represents the hope that no matter what story you decide to tell, you can find your audience. Writing toward a trend or in hopes of wide appeal is clearly a crap shoot, but writing from the heart is worthwhile whether you find one reader or millions. Here's to ten more years of books, the authors who pour their hearts into them, and the readers who love them—and of course, ten more years of WFWA!





CELEBRATE YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS

Don't save your cheers for publication day. Here's why celebrating every step of the writing journey is so important—and how to do just that.

Here at the Pagán house, we usually have a bottle of sparkling wine on hand. Why? Because I make a point to celebrate the milestones in my writing career—and I don't just mean when I publish a new book. I often raise a glass when my agent loves my pitch, or after I finish a tough revision—or even an easy one. I celebrate when I start writing a new book, too, because I know that the only way to finish is to begin.

Admittedly, I don't always sip champagne to mark an occasion. Instead, I'll share my news with a fellow coach or writer, go on a long walk with my dog, or log off email for a day or two so I can recharge. For me, celebration means taking some action that acknowledges I've done the work and showed up for my dreams.

Celebration is more important than you may realize. As I mentioned, it's a way to acknowledge your efforts—which is essential for building the belief that you can and are accomplishing your goals. According to Whitney Johnson, author of *Smart Growth*, it's also “an important opportunity to cement the lessons learned on the path to achievement.”

Even knowing this, so many of us cheer on our fellow writers—yet struggle to celebrate ourselves, or even let others celebrate us. Here are three common reasons writers avoid celebration, and how to move past each one.

"IT'S NOT THAT BIG OF A DEAL."

I hear this from colleagues and coaching clients all the time. The subtext of this statement is, "I need to accomplish something *major* in order to feel worthy of celebration." Please take a second to read this twice: you don't need to be better, more accomplished, or anything other than yourself right now to be celebrated. You are already worthy.

The trouble with waiting for "major" events or "I'll do it when" thinking is that unless you address the underlying issue—that you don't believe you or your accomplishments are enough yet—you will either (consciously or subconsciously) continue to raise the bar on what's celebration-worthy. Each time you reach a new height, you will quickly normalize it and move past it. Don't believe me? I've coached authors who've made millions from their writing and still don't feel like they've "made it."

Clearing this mental hurdle requires practice. First, you must commit to thinking about yourself on purpose. If you're not sure where to start, try some version of "I am already enough." Belief is built through repetition, so think and write your new thought regularly. Second, make a point to celebrate so-called smaller wins. Yes, it'll be uncomfortable at first. Remind yourself that celebrating every stage affirms that you're already a success—which will motivate you to keep taking actions that help you succeed.

"I DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT MYSELF."

Listen, I get it. So many writers, myself included, are fairly introverted. Crowing about what we've accomplished is at odds with that trait. But here's the thing: celebrating yourself doesn't necessarily mean telling everyone everything you pull off. Celebration can be just for you and/or those closest to you.

Even so, it's worth it to work on your ability to celebrate with others. Instead of regarding good news as boasting or bragging, view it as sharing your writing journey. This simple shift may prompt you to describe your experience in a more inclusive and/or inspiring way—which should take some of the 'ick' factor out of it. No, not everyone will be thrilled by your celebration, of course, but most people will be happy for you. And remember: every time you share a win, you're reminding other writers of what's possible for them, too.

"I DON'T WANT TO JINX MYSELF."

Western culture pushes the idea that sharing your desires—for example, telling people what you wish for when you blow out the candles on your birthday cake—means your wishes won't come true. Many of us have also been raised to expect that good is followed by bad, and research shows that the "waiting for the other shoe to drop" phenomenon is particularly prevalent among ambitious, driven people.

But these superstitions simply aren't true. In fact, a recent study in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* found that sharing your goals with a person whose opinion you value makes you more likely to reach them. Likewise, scientists at the University of California, Riverside, discovered that positive emotions—like the joy and optimism that accompany true celebration—don't set you up for disappointment. Instead, they increase your likelihood of reaching your goals. So rather than hijacking your career ambitions, celebration actually *fuels* them.

If nothing else, remember that more than 80 percent of people want to write a book. Less than 0.1 percent (yes, that's *point one percent*) will do it. Whether you just finished your first draft or published your twentieth novel, never discount what an incredible accomplishment it is to be a novelist.



CELEBRATION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOU MAY REALIZE. IT'S A WAY TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR EFFORTS—WHICH IS ESSENTIAL FOR BUILDING THE BELIEF THAT YOU CAN AND ARE ACCOMPLISHING YOUR GOALS.

Camille Pagán is the #1 Amazon Charts and *Washington Post* bestselling author of 10 books. A master certified coach, she's also the founder of Even Better Co. and the host of the You Should Write a Book podcast. She is the WFWA Guiding Scribe through 2023 and will be the closing keynote speaker at the September conference.

WRITING A FANTASTIC BOOK IS ONLY THE FIRST HALF OF THE JOURNEY TO CAREER SUCCESS. THE OTHER HALF—THE HALF THAT SURPRISES MANY NEW AUTHORS—INVOLVES THE BUSINESS ASPECTS. PARAMOUNT IN THIS CATEGORY IS MARKETING, WHICH FOR SOME AUTHORS TAKES UP AS MUCH TIME AS WRITING. WELCOME TO **WRITEON!'S NEWEST COLUMN, THE BOOK BIZ. IN EACH ISSUE, WE'LL DIG INTO VARIOUS ASPECTS OF MANAGING YOUR BUSINESS WITH AN ARTICLE CHOCK-FULL OF TIPS AND IDEAS TO SUPPORT AND INSPIRE YOUR BOOK BIZ.**

7 BOOK MARKETING TRENDS WORTH YOUR TIME IN 2023



In a perfect world, your publisher would throw millions into a marketing campaign for your books so you could spend your time writing your next novel (insert wistful sigh here). For 99.99% of authors in 2023, that perfect world does not exist. Nowadays, book marketing is part of an author's job description.

Many debut authors get overwhelmed learning the book marketing ropes and even seasoned authors get exhausted trying to keep up with evolving trends from book launch to book launch. With thousands of marketing opportunities available to you, how do you decide where to focus your time?

There isn't one right answer. Your book is unique, and you offer a unique set of skills. What worked for one author won't necessarily work for you and even what worked for your last book won't necessarily work for your latest. It takes experimentation, perseverance, and hard work to find your way to marketing success. Luckily, writing a book has already honed those personality traits!

So how exactly do you decide what marketing strategies to experiment with? An important part of that answer lies in your skills and preferences, so lean into options that appeal to you and fit your wheelhouse. Examining marketing trends is a good way to make a list for yourself. So what is hot in 2023?

1 AUTHOR BRANDING

What comes to mind when readers think of a particular author? What do readers expect from an author they've come to know? That's author branding. It answers what you write, why you write it, and who you write it for. This involves introspection on your part. What you write and why you write hold the keys to the content you use to market—the words, the images, the colors, the mood, etc. Who you write for adds another layer of insight into that content and also adds strategic insights including where you should market your book.

The sooner you are able to figure out who your ideal reader is the more effective your marketing will be. Your ideal readers are the people most likely to read and RAVE about your book. Readers gushing about your book will spread to a wider audience through word-of-mouth.

2 VIDEO MARKETING

Video marketing is the use of video to promote or inform readers about your books. It is an emotionally engaging and multi-sensory experience that connects with readers to sell books. Book trailers make popular marketing videos. Authors also successfully make videos featuring readings, interviews, panels, and events. Try filming yourself talking about the inspiration behind your book, writing tips, books that are like your own, themes related to your book, etc. Consider partnering with other authors who share your readership and create video interviews that you both share.

YouTube and TikTok are the kings of video marketing, but Instagram and Facebook are pushing it too. You can use video successfully on your own website and in your emails.

Across platforms, you'll find some commonalities as to which videos gain traction in 2023. Audiences these days don't expect perfect videos. Instead, they gravitate toward real people and authenticity. Videos that are informative or entertaining are the most likely to go viral. If you can be both, then you're all set!

3 STORYTELLING

Copywriting is a specialized skill set, and one you would be smart to learn. It turns out though, that you already hold a latent copywriting superpower—storytelling! Storytelling as sales copy is very effective in 2023. Share your marketing journey, your writing hiccups, the inspiration for your book, etc. Potential readers eat this stuff up and buy, buy, buy!

4 READER REVIEWS

Book reviews sell books. Since books are an investment of time and money, potential readers use reviews to help them determine the quality and fit of your book. Quantity and quality matter. You'll find plenty of magic numbers thrown around social media claiming a certain number of book reviews make certain things happen. While there are no official standards, it's safe to say more reviews are better.

5 NETWORKING

Relationships with readers, writers, and book influencers are the backbone of your writing career success. While social media and online meeting spaces allow this to be accomplished virtually, don't overlook the value of connecting in person when the opportunity arises. You can connect with readers through book clubs, festivals, bookstores, and libraries. To network with other writers, join writing organizations, volunteer for them, and attend their events. Finally, build rapport with influencers by supporting their endeavors before pitching them (this is key!).

6 EMAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is sending a commercial message to a group of readers using email. Authors usually do this through an author newsletter that provides content as well as book advertisements and other promotional materials. The goals of these are to develop reader loyalty, build awareness for books, and keep your audience engaged between book launches.

While social media may seem easier, it is less dependable. Without an email list, you are at the mercy of other platforms and algorithms for your business. Furthermore, open rates of emails are MUCH higher than the reach of most free social media posts, so your subscribers are more likely to open your email than they are to see your social media post. Given that people have signed up for your emails, it isn't surprising that the average open rate is 20% and the average click-through rate is 2.5%. Compare this with Facebook (for example) in which an average of 2.2% of followers see your organic posts and the average click-through rate is 0.9%.

Finally, an email list allows you to stay in contact with your readers from book to book, communicate the entirety of your work (interviews, blog posts, etc.), and convert onetime fans to lifetime fans. If you are planning to write several books, newsletters are your best long-term strategy for getting readers you've already earned to know about and buy your next book.

7 PODCASTS

Podcasts are hot and gain new listeners every year. There are several ways to leverage podcasts as a book marketing strategy. Find podcasts that share an audience with your book and buy ad space on them. If the show has an interview format, pitch the host for a guest spot. Note that hosting your own podcast can be an effective marketing strategy as well, but is VERY time intensive.

The marketing power you have at your disposal is infinite. The key is not to get overwhelmed by the plethora of options available. Instead, play around with book marketing strategies until you find a few that work for you and lean into those. 2023 is a great year to market your book!



Mary Helen Sheriff serves as an [Author Marketing Coach](#) helping authors save time and money on their journey to sell more books. She's the author of women's fiction *Boop* and *Eve's Road Trip*, the CEO of Bookish Road Trip, and is currently co-editing a collaborative anthology entitled [Launch Pad: The Countdown to Marketing Your Book](#) (releasing June 2023).

THE NEWS ON AUTHOR NEWSLETTERS

By Sharon Ritchey

At the 2022 Alexandria retreat, keynote presenter Jane Friedman spent considerable time discussing newsletters as an important author promotion tool. Her advice concluded that the best time to launch a newsletter is now, even if you don't have a book yet to promote.

A recent report from [BookBub](#) on author newsletters provides a detailed breakdown of newsletters in the publishing space.

NEWSLETTER PROS

We've all experienced how unreliable and uncontrollable social media can be. We've seen posts in the WFWA Facebook forum about hacked Instagram accounts, accounts suspended (Facebook jail) and Twitter... yeah... Twitter. Here are a few advantages to having an author newsletter instead of relying solely on social media for book marketing.

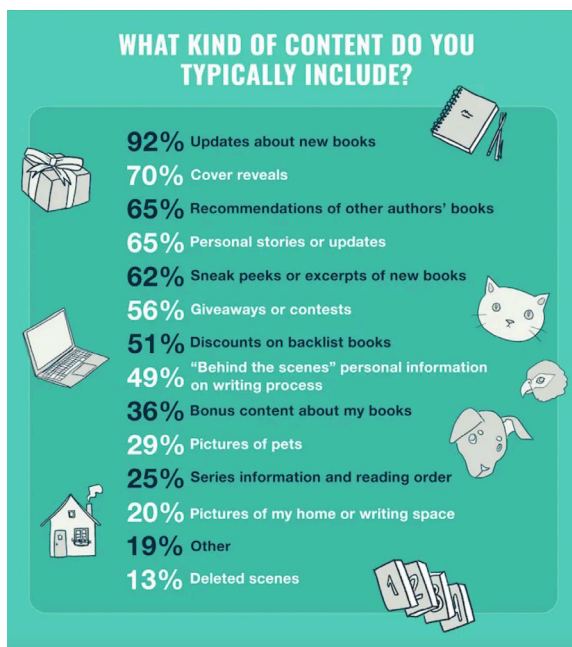
■ **YOU OWN YOUR LIST:** While social media has a huge and easy reach, no platform is yours. Email newsletters are based on subscribers. You own your subscriber list no matter what any tech billionaire or hacker decides to do.

■ **YOUR READERS HAVE SUBSCRIBED:** All newsletter platforms allow for subscribers to opt-in or opt out at any time. That means your readers want to hear from you and are receptive to your news—they're there because they want to be.

■ **RICH ARCHIVES:** Social media whizzes by us every minute. It's hit or miss if your posts are seen. The more news you publish, the more news is available. New subscribers can access back issues and you can link to previously published material.

■ **CREATE YOUR OWN CONTENT AND COMMUNITY:** Newsletters allow you to write longer pieces, encourage comments, host giveaways, and promote your current, past, and future projects.

■ **NEWSLETTERS WORK WITH SOCIAL MEDIA:** As you build your subscriber list, you can and should promote your newsletter



through social media and link your social media to your newsletter and promotions.

FIRST AND NEXT STEPS

If you're considering a newsletter, have a newsletter, or are looking to improve your newsletter, the work can feel overwhelming, but it's not impossible.

Newsletters require a platform, content, images, an audience, and a regular publishing cadence.

CHOOSING A PLATFORM

You can send a newsletter as a blog from an author website, or you can use a newsletter service. Some popular ones are MailChimp, MailerLite, Constant Contact, and Substack.

Each service has its fans, and you'll need to investigate what would work best for your needs and in some cases, your budget.

CREATING CONTENT

What am I supposed to write? An author newsletter doesn't only have to be about your books. Readers want to connect with their favorite authors. That means you can and should include some personal insights that could include travel, hobbies, your writing process, a look inside your

books, reviews of what you're reading, and even interviews with other authors.

If you don't have a book yet, you can still write a newsletter. My newsletter, *Research for Writers and Other Curious People* is for writers to read about research techniques and spark writing ideas.

WISDOM OF THE WFWA

We surveyed WFWA members for their best advice on managing author newsletters. Here is some of what they said:

"Newsletters are not about making people buy your book. They are about letting readers fall in love with you and consequently your stories." Heather McCollum

"The WFWA webinars on branding and newsletters by Lisa Montanaro (in the replay section) were incredibly helpful in getting started." Rachel Stone

"I make a practice of promoting at least one other author in my newsletters so when I have a book promo, other authors are always glad to return the favor." Sarah Vance-Tompkins

"The inclusion of some consistent bit of content that readers will come to expect and look forward to has helped my newsletter grow a bit lately. For example, I started seeing a small rise in open rates when I started including 'something that made me smile this month' in the form of a cute, heartwarming, or funny reel or meme. Something else that helped me is starting a Note on my phone where I could drop ideas for the next newsletter. When it's time to compile a newsletter, I have plenty of content for inspiration." Tamantha Cain

"Sign up for lots of authors' newsletters to see what you like and don't like about them. Make your subject lines intriguing so people want to open them!" Ann Marie Bennett

WE'RE TAKING ANN MARIE'S ADVICE

Looking for inspiration? Here are WFWA member newsletters from our survey. Check out a few, engage with these members, ask questions, and experiment.

WFWA AUTHOR NEWSLETTERS

Amy K. Dressler

A Little Qwerty
tinyletter.com/littleqwerty

Amy Q. Barker

Welcome Friends!
amyqbarker.com

Ana K Wrenn

Wrenn's Nest
anakwrenn.com

Anne Marie Bennett

Stories That Stir Heart and Soul
annemariebennett.com

Barbara Conrey

Once In A Blue Moon
barbaraconreyauthor.com

Betty Bolte

Betty's Book News and Updates
bettysbooksstl.com

C. D'Angelo

C. VIPs
cdangeloauthor.com

Camille Pagán

You Should Write a Book
camillepagan.com

Cara Achterberg

Cara Writes
carawrites.com

Caren Simpson McVicker

Book News
carenmcvicker.com

Caro Carson

An infrequent but friendly newsletter
carocarson.com

Carolyn Brown

Carolyn Brown's Newsletter
carolynbrownbooks.com

Charlotte Chipperfield

Her Narrative
.charlottechipperfield.com

Christine DeSmet

Christine DeSmet's Newsletter
christinedesmet.com

Debra Borchert

My Francophile Community
debraborchert.com

Debra Richmond

Deb Richmond, Author
debrichmond.com

Duygu Balan

duygubalan.com

Elizabeth Solazzo

Liz Says
elizabethsolazzo.com

Erin Bank

Bank of Erin
bankoferin.com

Georgie Blalock

Georgie Blalock Newsletter
georgieblalock.com

Heather McCollum

Heather's Kilt Chasers
heathermccollum.com

Heidi McCahan

Heidi McCahan's Newsletter
heidimccahan.com

J Marie Rundquist

J Marie Rundquist, Author
jmarierundquist.com

Jacque Hamilton

Soapbox Talks
soapboxedits.com

Janis Robinson Daly

Janis R Daly Book Lover
janisrdaly.com

Jennifer Gold

jennifergoldauthor.com

Jennifer R. Jensen

Jennifer R. Jensen newsletter
jenniferjensenbooks.com

Jessica Strawser

Career Authors
Career Authors

Joan Koster

Historical Tidbits
joankoster.com

Joanna Monahan

XoXo, Jo
joannamonahan.com

Jode Millman

Jode Millman
jodemillman.com

Johnna Lacey

Writer Authentic
jmlacey.com

Julie Anne Lindsey

Cozy Club News
julieannelindsey.com

Karen Lynne Klink

Thrive
karenklink.com

Karen Martin

KazJoyPress
kazjoypress.com

Kathleen Basi

Kathleen Basi, Author/Composer
kathleenbasi.com

Kelly Farmer

kellyfarmerauthor.com

Kelly Ralston

KEHCentral

Kerry Lonsdale

Kerry's Beach Club
kerrylonsdale.com

Kerry Savage

Some Novel Ideas
kerrysavage.com

Kerry Schafer

All Things Kerry
allthingskerry.com

Kim Lozano

Kim's Notes
kimlozano.com

Kristin Kisska

#SupsenseGirl
kristinkisska.com

Kristin Owens

VIPS only
kristin-owens.com

Kyle Ann Robertson

Kyle Ann Robertson
kyleannrobertson.com

Laura Drake

Laura Drake Author Newsletter
lauradrakebooks.com

Lauren Faulkenberry

Lucy's Loveletters
faulkenberryarts.com

Linda Rosen

Linda's Tea Room
linda-rosen.com/

Linda Ulleseit

Paper Lantern Writers
paperlanternwriters.com

Lisa Montanaro

Prosecco & Prose
prosecconprose.com

Lya Badgley

lyabadgley.com

Lynne Golodner

The Rebel Author Newsletter
lynnegolodner.com

Maggie Giles

my journey to publication
maggiegiles.com

Marie W. Watts

Stories About Life
mariewatts.com

Marta Lane

Dream Chaser
martalane.com

Mary B Hansen

The Book of Mary
marybhansen.com

Monica Cox

Monica Cox
monicacoxnet.wordpress.com

Nancy J. Fagan

Smartweed & Ginger
buttdown.email/Fagan

Paulette Stout

Monthly Update
paulettestout.com

Peggy Joque Williams

Musings of a MadCityWriter
peggywilliamsauthor.com

Rachel Dacus

Rachel's Readers
racheldacus.net

Rachel Lincoln Sarnoff

Good News from Rachel Lincoln Sarnoff

Rachel Stone

Rachel Stone's Newsletter
rachelstone.org

Rebecca Hodge

News from Rebecca Hodge
rebeccahodgefiction.com

Rita Dragonette

ritadragonette.com

Robin Henry

Readerly Tea Break
readerly.net

Rochelle Weinstein

Rochelle B. Weinstein
rochelleweinstein.com

Ruth F. Stevens

Book Notes and Beyond
ruthfstevens.com

Sandra L. Young

sandrayoungauthor.com

Sarah Soon

Sarah Soon Newsletter
sarahsoon.com

Sarah Vance-Tompkins

sarahvancetompkins.com

Savannah Gilbo

Fiction Writing Made Easy
savannahgilbo.com

Shail Rajan

Happy. Reading
shailrajan.com

Sharon Wishnow-Ritchey

Research for Writers & Other Curious People
othercuriouspeople.substack.com

Sherry Lee Comstock

Sherry Comstock, Author
sherrycomstock.com

Sylvie Kurtz

Life in the Labyrinth
sylviekurtz.com

Tamatha Cain

Tamatha Cain
tamathacain.com

Teri M Brown

Teri M Brown, Author
terimbrown.com

Tiffany Yates Martin

FoxPrint Editorial
foxprinteditorial.com

Tracey Buchanan

traceybuchanan.com

Tracey Enerson Wood

News from Tracey
traceyenersonwood.com

Zoe Disigny

For Lovers of Art and Travelers at Heart
zoedisigny.com

IN THEIR WORDS: JOANI ELLIOTT

By Sharon Ritchey

In this issue we're excited to feature Joani Elliot, winner of the 2022 STAR Award in the Debut Author category for her book, *The Audacity of Sara Grayson* published by Post Hill Press. *WriteOn!* sat down (okay we Zoomed) with Joani to talk all things Sara Grayson, the writing process, and the surprises that have come from her book's publication.

WO!: *The Audacity of Sara Grayson* is about a woman who is shocked by the death of her famous author mother and then learns that her mother has left her much-anticipated unfinished manuscript to her to complete. This story has all the hallmarks of women's fiction, complicated family relationships, grief, and growth. What about this genre appeals to you?

Joani: As the middle child of six sisters, I am drawn to women and their stories. The world asks a lot of women. I'm fascinated by the strength women have and how those beautifully complex relationships challenge us. For that reason, I love to write characters who rise to the occasion and dig deep.

WO!: Where did the idea and character of Sara Grayson develop?

Joani: Sara came to me after I left my teaching job to focus solely on writing. Here I was having left a job I loved at the University of Maryland, and *nothing* was working for me. What had I done? I was frustrated. Then I began thinking, *Well, no one is waiting for this book.* No agent, no editor, no one.



THE WORLD ASKS A LOT OF WOMEN. I'M FASCINATED BY THE STRENGTH WOMEN HAVE AND HOW THOSE BEAUTIFULLY COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS CHALLENGE US.

What would it be like if ten people, one hundred people, or millions of people were waiting for this book with the weight of the world on my shoulders? This is what happens to Sara. Millions of her mother's fans were waiting for the next book. Once I reframed my thinking, the writing shifted, and I was able to begin.

WO!: What's your writing process?

Joani: I start with a fifty-page outline, planning the story and developing the character arc. I then workshop it to a few beta readers. My goal is to find the holes and where the story is not working. I then begin writing. I also do a lot of editing as I go, which can be wasteful, as there are lots of pages that I never use, but it's what works for me.

WO!: What has surprised you about publishing this book?

Joani: I've heard from several authors who have told me how this book has inspired them and helped with their own writing. One commenter asked if I intentionally wrote the story as a teaching tool. Since then, I've been thinking how this book could be used in a creative writing class either at the high school or undergraduate level. I've already pitched it to one professor and have scheduled a class visit. I'd like to do something more with this story as Sara Grayson experiences so much as a writer, including self-doubt, the writing process, revisions, and how to capture emotions on the page.

Joani is now revising her second contemporary women's fiction novel and we can't wait to see her star continue to rise.

CHAPTER ONE

Writing is not life, but I think that sometimes it can be a way back to life.
Stephen King

She refused to be triggered by breakfast food, so she went straight for the waffles. Real Belgian ones made of yeast dough—not batter. She'd eaten two of them already. Hot, bronzed waffles with Nutella and strawberries and vanilla bean ice cream. There were times to avoid your triggers and times to chew them up slowly and deliberately. Plus, eating was preferable to small talk, not that anyone would want to talk to her. They were here for Ellery, and Ellery was *everywhere*.

Life-size cutouts of Ellery and her family stood proudly next to Belgian flags and clusters of bright red poppies. Since Ellery's family was stationed at the embassy in Brussels, it was an obvious design choice but achingly unoriginal. Elegant black and gold streamers hung loosely across high ceilings. A Neuhaus Chocolatier table crowned the center of the room with pralines, truffles, and dark chocolate medallions stamped with Ellery's portrait. Taps of Belgian beer flowed into frosty mugs with Ellery quotations about gifts and potential and other ridiculous ideas.

It was a smashing tribute to someone who didn't actually exist.

Sara unwrapped an Ellery chocolate and quickly bit her head off. A clean snap is a sign of excellent chocolate, she'd read once. She let it melt slightly in her mouth before she chewed and swallowed. She unwrapped another medallion and bit the heads off several more, leaving a pile of unfinished chocolate torsos on her plate. For 300 bucks an hour, her therapist, Sybil Brown-Baker, might diagnose this as passive-aggressive behavior.

Or was it misplaced anger?

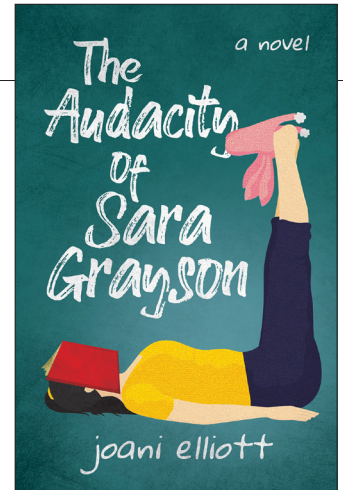
Sybil Brown-Baker sent a pamphlet home last week: "How We Transfer Feelings of Shame and Pain." Sara read it word-for-word and returned it the next day with her editing feedback, all free of charge: bad semi-colons, comma splices, and sentence fragments.

She didn't teach freshman English for nothing.

She just earned next to nothing.

For now.

Her freelance work with Cozy Greeting Cards International was poised to take off. They loved her work and thought she had a real knack for cancer cards, and could she please send more?



MEET TARA BAISDEN, WORKSHOP CHAIR

You may have once heard a saying that says, "If you can read this, thank a teacher." In WFWA parlance, if you learned something at a workshop, thank Tara Baisden.



TARA JOINED THE ORGANIZATION IN 2020 AND IS A KEY VOLUNTEER IN PROGRAMS, ALLOWING MORE WORKSHOPS TO REACH MORE MEMBERS. ONE OF HER FAVORITE WORKSHOPS WAS A NEW OFFERING, GRABBING THE READER WITH A COACH.

Tara is the organizational powerhouse behind WFWA's stellar workshop offerings. She's especially suited for the job as she believes, "Education is the key to moving ahead in life and in business. Being the workshop chair brings me joy to know that I might be a small piece of a person's future success."

Like all members, Tara is a writer. Professionally, she ghost writes in the creative arts industry. She is also working on her novel, a mystery and police procedural featuring a strong-willed female protagonist.

Tara joined the organization in 2020 and is a key volunteer in programs, allowing more workshops to reach more members. One of her favorite workshops was a new offering, Grabbing the Reader with a Coach. "This workshop alone proved to me that the people who make up the WFWA community are stellar, amazing individuals. The encouragement, advice, and support that I witnessed during this workshop left a lasting impression on me," Tara says.

We think Tara is stellar too! She'll be in her old stomping grounds of Chicago for the September conference, and is looking forward to meeting more members in person. Those of us who are there can take the opportunity to thank her for her dedication to WFWA.



**TO WARD OFF A FEELING OF
FAILURE, SHE JOKED THAT
SHE COULD WALLPAPER HER
BATHROOM WITH REJECTION
SLIPS, WHICH SHE CHOSE
NOT TO SEE AS MESSAGES
TO STOP, **BUT RATHER AS
TICKETS TO THE GAME.****

ANITA SHREVE

WRITEON!