

"Careers that are not fed die as readily
as any living organism given no sustenance." ~ CHJ

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MAY, 2016

Sharing with Writers Since 2003

A newsletter that is also a community. Share your ideas. Learn from theirs!
Associated with the multi award-winning series of HowToDoItFrugally series
of books for writers.

www.howtodoitfrugally.com

From the Desks of Carolyn Howard-Johnson and #SharingwithWriters Subscribers

In the spirit of the advice I give in [The Frugal Editor](#)—to use an extra pair of eyes whenever possible—this newsletter is voluntarily copyedited by Mindy Phillips Lawrence. Reach her at mplcreative1@aol.com and www.mplcreative.com. In the spirit of writers everywhere, I tell writers to be patient with other writers when they make editing boobos. We're all human.

A curated collection of news,
opinions, articles, and how-tos
on the subjects of writing,
publishing, and marketing.

This newsletter is issued as often as my writing schedule allows. It's usually long, but I promise you that you'll find something new to further your career or some reminder you need in the moment.

This newsletter is powered by AuthorsDen.com.

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## Marketing—Always Changing

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#### Join me

For more writers' resources on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/FrugalBookPromo>

For resources and more personal fun on Face-book:

<http://face-book.com/carolynhowardjohnson>

For writers' resources of all kinds:

<http://HowToDoItFrugally.com>

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Get your cover images on Pinterest; you pin one of my book cover images and I'll pin yours: <http://Pinterest.com/chowardjohnson>

**Note: "Expensive" and "rule-laden" aren't necessarily effective ways to distribute a newsletter. I try to avoid the fancy (and less frugal) HTML services and am glad to be offering this letter on my own Indie terms. You can now download the current and recent back issues on my Web site at [http://howtodoitfrugally.com/newsletter\\_copies.htm](http://howtodoitfrugally.com/newsletter_copies.htm). If you can't copy and paste from .pdfs, try updating your Adobe pdf program or send me a note and I'll attach a Word copy for you.**

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Note from Carolyn

Dear Subscribers:



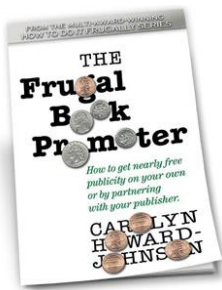
Did you think I had died and gone to heaven—or elsewhere. No. I just take every chance I can to travel. It's inspiration for my writing but also a search, I think, for belonging, for finding the connection between human beings of all kinds.

I thought you'd enjoy the picture at left of me with my new friend. His colorful huge, placid self cheered me up after I blacked out in the beautiful village of Yelapa, Mexico, a hillside and beach town that can be reached only by boat—in this case a catamaran of crazy Mexican tour guides. It was one of those stand-out days—maybe even more memorable because of what the cruise folks call an "incident!" (I'm fine! But I sure wasn't in any shape to do a great job of taking care of my husband who broke his back last January!)

Tell me, is there a story here?

Sending hugs to all of you!

**Happy writing, marketing, and editing
Carolyn**



PS: My hubby and I use our cruises not only for inspiration but also to market our work. Sometimes I read poetry in the cruise talent show, usually poems inspired by our travels (or cruise ships or ports!). We usually give Lance's [What Foreigner's Need to Know About America from A to Z](#) to tour guides, ship personnel and—on this last trip—to the ship's captain because he was soon to move o North Carolina and become a US citizen. (The book includes accent reduction and lots of American idioms, culture etc.—perfect for immigrants and anyone who encounter Americans in their work.)

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Needing something more meaningful for the celebrations in your life? Something that stays within your budget? Check out [Cherished Pulse](#) (\$6.95) for someone you love. Try [Imagining the Future: Ruminations on Fathers and Other Masculine Apparitions](#) for the men in your life. Sure, they like fusses made over them, too! (\$6.95). [She Wore Emerald Then](#) (\$12.95), for mothers and other women; [Deeper in the Pond](#), for the feminists in your life— both men and women (\$6.95); and [Blooming Red](#), to use as Christmas cards or incidental holiday gifts. Plan next Christmas early. And ask about my special price on chapbook/cards purchased in bulk at HoJoNews@AOL.com. All these chapbooks are from the Celebration Series of poetry from Magdalena Ball and me. You also will find an entry intended to please the tree-huggers in your social circle. [Sublime Planet](#) celebrates the universe and Earth Day. Proceeds go to World Wild Life Fund.

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Letters to the Editor

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Hi Carolyn,

I always mean to drop you a line and then.....life gets in the way and I forget. I just want you to know that I think you have an absolutely a terrific newsletter. It's chock full of valuable information—so much, in fact, that I generally have to walk away from the computer for a few minutes to clear my head, before returning to read more, and more, and more.

If you ever want my two cents about anything writing related, from my point of view/personal experience, don't hesitate to let me know.

((Hugs)),  
Laverne

**Note:** My treasured (and I mean that sincerely!) subscribers are always welcome to share tips or submit articles on processes—writing or promotion. ~ CHJ

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I am eagerly waiting my own copy of Patricia Fry's new book *Propose Your Book, How to Craft Persuasive Proposals for Nonfiction, Fiction, and Children's Books* (Allworth Press). Read about it on her blog at <http://www.matilijapress.com/publishingblog/> A disclaimer here. I endorsed the book for her, and that is in spite of the fact that it is in direct competition with my Great First Impression Book Proposals booklet; I think you should have both books if you intend to shop for a publisher on your own or with an agent. My

agent wanted a book proposal for the novel she is shopping for me, so fiction writers may need both copies, too.

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**Surprise Editing Tip:** “Predominate” is not just a verb. It is also an adjective just like “predominant.” In fact, according to dictionaries “predominate” *means* “predominant.” Still, great editors know which are first choices when they must make a choice. [Mirriam-Webster](#), the go-to dictionary for those who write books, says “predominately” is the variant form of “predominantly”—meaning “predominantly” is more standard. When we’re writing books, we don’t want to use nonstandard or second choice and we don’t to use one version on one page and another later in the book.

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If you need a speaker or panelist at your authors group, I’d love to be there. I believe authors are made a little like teachers; we love to share. Learn more about my speaking (and acting) at [http://howtodoitfrugally.com/speaking\\_&\\_judging1.htm](http://howtodoitfrugally.com/speaking_&_judging1.htm) .

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## Accessible Contests

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I generally don’t recommend contests that I haven’t either entered or had some success with. The benefit could be a win, place, show, finalist. Or it could be an opportunity for an impartial critique or a networking opportunity. But all the ones I recommend judge a book by its contents, not the press it’s published on.

Foreword Magazine’s New Indie Focused Contest

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Michele Lonoconus, Indies Awards Director at Foreword Reviews says, “Each year we award the best books from independent publishers and authors with our book of the year awards program. We are excited to let you know that not only are [submissions open](#) for 2016, but for this year, we’ve rebranded the awards as The INDIES.



**FOREWORD  
REVIEWS**

“The INDIES (formerly INDIEFAB) will continue to be awarded to only the best of the best in independent publishing, and any book published in 2016 is eligible to be entered. The INDIES are awarded in over 60 categories by our panel of judges made up of librarians and booksellers who are considered specialists for each genre they judge.

“The movies have The Oscars, music has The Grammys, now indie publishing has The INDIES. [Register your book today](#) for early-bird pricing.”

### Accessible Aid for Scholarships. . .

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Before I tell you about this new scholarship, let me tell you a little story about Phyllis Gebauer. When I went back to writing creatively, she was one of my first teachers in the art of writing a novel at UCLA. She was an amazing woman, fluent in English and Spanish, a member of Phi Beta Kappa and an author in her own right.

As an instructor, she always went a step (or more!) beyond what the syllabus promised. The first class I took from her was a [UCLA weekend long conference](#). She went to the trouble afterward the class of suggesting that four of her students form a critique group because we wrote "in similar genres and had compatible goals." Several years later when she was writing her memoir, she contacted us and asked if she could join that same critique group. It was as if the tables had been turned and now we were helping her. Honestly, it was a bit intimidating but she assured us that by now we were as professional as she and knew as much about writing as she. Yes, we were a bit puffed up about it, but we owed our much of our newfound expertise to her.

She was with our group for several years and in the midst of writing a new cozy mystery when she died of lung cancer. It was a loss to UCLA and a personal and professional loss to those of us in our critique group. Now I find that there is a new scholarship offered in her name. She was always interested in helping those who didn't have the means to jumpstart their writing careers with the kind of vetted education required to speed along their progress. And now this!



I hope you will apply for this scholarship if you qualify. If not, I hope you will spread the word about it on your social networks, your blogs, your critique groups and libraries—anyone who is in a position to spread the word to writers.

Learn more about [the scholarship](#) at:
http://writers.uclaextension.edu/scholarship/?utm_source=unex&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=17995w1 SU16 Phyllis Gebauer Scholarship.

WriterAdvice.com Contest

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Because the first chapter of my new novel *This Land Divided* won WriterAdvice.com's Scintillating Starts contest, I can personally recommend it. You can now read the winning first chapter at <http://www.writeradvice.com/archives/21-flash1902> and the submission guidelines at <http://writeradvice.com>. It is the only contest I know of that help an author sell his or her book to an agent or publisher (most contests are only open after a person has published his or her book). Check it out for yourself and bookmark it for your own future needs.

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I love grammar guru June Casagrande's new book [The best punctuation book. Period.](#) (<http://bit.ly/PunctuationBook>) because it covers a little about style choices, too. I also like it because it covers some things rarely addressed like slashes and backslashes we're seeing more of these days and single quotation marks (which are often misused). It makes a fine companion to my [The Frugal Editor](#) that tackles punctuation along with formatting, the editing process, choosing a great editor, and even formatting directions for uploading an e- book to Kindle found in the Appendix.

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**TIP:** If you gave up on Twitter or if you haven't been by to see how much more interactive it is than it once was, now is the time to rethink your decision. You can now retweet using additional information about your book (and a link!) to any related conversation. The keyword here is "related." Remember, unlike most social networks, Twitter welcomes marketing and, as Penny Sansevieri says, "Everyone is equal on Twitter." You can now also include images of your signings, book covers, and topic related tweets in every tweet.

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Here is the link for the page on my Web Site that lists some of my favorite accessible contests, an article on using contests, and more. <http://howtodoitfrugally.com/contests.htm>.

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**Mini Feature:**

**A List of Agents from Independent Book Publishers Association**

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The trouble with trying to get recommendations for agents is that most authors are usually unable to compare them in a meaningful way because they usually haven't been associated with very many of them. To find the names of agents who may be suited to your personality and your title, go to conferences that feature pitch sessions with agents and read newsletters like this one or magazines like the newly named *IBPA Independent*. That magazine recently ran a feature that some agents contributed to and I compiled them for you. It's up to research preferences and submission guidelines for each one.

Barbara Lowenstein and Mary South at Lowenstein Associates. Find them at <http://lowensteinassociates.com>.

Denise Marcil of Marcil O'Farrell Literary, <http://marcilofarrellliteraryagency.com>.

Jane von Mehren at Zachary Schuster Harmsworth, <http://szhliterary.com>.

Caryn Karmatz Rudy at DeFiore and Company Literary Management Inc. <http://defliterary.com>.

Sheree Bykofsky, founder of Sheree Bykofsky Associates, Inc.; <http://shereebee.com>

Anne Edelstein, President, Anne Edelstein Literary Agency LLC; <http://aeliterary.com>.

You'll find tips from other generous agents—the kind willing to contribute where their advice can be useful to authors in my multi award-winning [The Frugal Editor](#). All of them were generous enough to help me help authors like you with things to avoid when approaching them with your query letters. I give their contact information in the Appendix of that book, too.

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My review blog is my gift to authors. It's a place for you to honor authors and books you've loved with a review. It's a place to recycle the review of your own book, the one you love most. It's free. Submission guidelines are in the left column at www.TheNewBookReview.blogspot.com.

Feature

Small Publisher Shares Always Changing Marketing Tips

This is from Christopher Meeks. He is a fellow instructor at UCLA Writers Program and a small publisher. I first met him when he attended my first marketing class for writers at UCLA and we have kept in touch. He is also an author in his own right, and a very find one at that. I asked him to share his publishing experience so that subscribers to this letter—both authors and those interested in becoming publishers—could benefit from his experience. It is also clear he learns from his authors!

BOOK MARKETING—ALWAYS CHANGING

By Christopher Meeks

The publishing business became tougher over the last year. I have a small publishing company with books from five authors, and two recent books show the problem. One book, [*Love Will Make You Drink and Gamble, Stay Out Late at Night*](#), was a short story collection that won Best Anthology at the Los Angeles Book Festival (different from the Festival of Books). Bookstores seemed to order it, then return it a month later. That's because bookstores use tracking software, and if a book doesn't move, stores can return it. That cost me so much, I'm in the red on it. Well-reviewed books that catch the eye of bookstores could lead to crippling returns. That's sad.

The other book comes from a talented woman in Santa Barbara, Robin Winter, whose mystery [*Watch the Shadows*](#), is a great read. A young woman from Isla Vista, California (near Santa Barbara) notices birds start to go missing in a local park, and then the homeless people there do, too. In the end, aliens are involved, so it's science fiction partly. It's received strong reviews, and just hasn't sold. I'm not giving up, though, and I'm trying a specialized ad campaign for it on Amazon, where you're charged only for clicks on the ad. The hope is that clicks lead to sales lead to higher ranking, which could lead to more sales. Ah, hope springs eternal.

Another of my authors, E. Van Lowe, has had the best success, but he's an unstoppable marketer. Because he's retired and because he is a force of nature, he keeps trying new things for his series *The Falling Angels Saga*, which starts with [*Boyfriend from Hell*](#). The series has fifteen-year-old Megan Barnett realize that her single-mother's new boyfriend, who's suave and charming, may be Satan. When a teenage angel comes to help her, Megan discovers she's the only one who can stop the man—but powerful forces are against her. It's often been #1 in its category, and, in fact, I'm offering it for nuthin' right now as a way to keep interest in the series.

What's interesting is the series sold well month after month until a year ago sales plummeted for no clear reason. Our usual ads didn't work. What I realized was there are so many self-published books out there now, when any new avenue in marketing works, everyone leaps on until it stops

working.

Thus, E looked where the next tool might be. He sensed it was Facebook, so he took a long course in Facebook marketing. Facebook works, but it takes a lot of energy and time. It's a lot like the stock market--not a fast or incredible success, but similar to getting a certain percent back on an investment each year. This is to say, he's used Facebook to do two things:

1) He has built and continues to build a database of fans and possible readers. After about a year, he has a database of just over 2,000 names. When he has a new book, he sends these people a message or two. About 30% act right away.

2) He also creates Facebook ads for his published books. He searches for impressions, and for about every thousand impressions, he gets a click, one or two a day. Every few days, one of the clicks leads to a sale.

He figures it costs him about a dollar for each person he adds to his database. For the ads, they are inexpensive, but when he's spending more money than he gets in sales, he stops the ad and tries a new one.

He's also writing two books a year to keep his name out there. This is his full-time job. My job, in turn, is to keep my eye out for new marketing possibilities. I'm hoping the Amazon ad campaign works for Robin.

Christopher Meeks writes novels and short fiction, and he and five other authors are published by White Whisker Books. He's just finishing his new novel, *The Chords of War*, based in Iraq during the war. Learn more about [Christopher Meeks on his Amazon profile page](#). Follow him while you're there.

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Please paste this little blurb—perhaps with a little endorsement—in your newsletter or Web site: "To subscribe to Sharing with Writers send an e-mail with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line to HoJoNews@aol.com or go to www.howtodoitfrugally.com for an auto subscribe box." Let me know you did and tell me what I can do for you in a Resources for Readers section of my Web site.

www.howtodoitfrugally.com.

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Tip: There are some [essential library resources](#) archived on Midwest Book Review Web site for authors. Here are instructional articles on selling and to and/or dealing with libraries--with thanks to Jim and Beth Cox:

Marketing to Libraries:

<http://www.midwestbookreview.com/bookbiz/advice/marketingtolibraries.htm>

Public Library Talks: <http://www.midwestbookreview.com/bookbiz/advice/public.htm>

Library Approval Plans: <http://www.midwestbookreview.com/bookbiz/advice/library.htm>

Google Library Project Title Exclusions:

<http://www.midwestbookreview.com/bookbiz/advice/googleex.htm>

This last one has more to do with Google than libraries per se, but still is information that authors and publishers should be aware of.

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This is Here is the only site I know that can help novelists, screenwriters, and playwrights get noticed by directors and producers. It's BooksToFilm and it's run by iFOGO's Gene Cartwright. It isn't as frugal as I'd like, but there are times it pays to spend a little to give our work a chance at the bigtime.

http://www.ifogo.com/buy/order_chj.html .

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Time to Make Holiday Plans

How to Jazz Up Book Sales with Seasonal Promotions

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Have you heard of *The Christmas Box* by Richard Paul Evans?

This bestselling book was originally self-published. Evans believed in himself (and his book) when big publishers didn't. When it did well, "lo and behold," as they say in the Christmas stories, someone saw the light.

The motto here, for writers, is seasonal material can be used effectively no matter what kind of writer you are—even if you confine yourself to your blog. (Nina Amir's [How To Blog A Book](#), tells us posts can become a book—either a promotional book or a book to sell).

Books are especially good for holidays that call for gifts because even the most expensive among them are reasonably priced at \$15 dollars or less. They lend themselves to the inspirational (always high on the list of gifts people like to give). And they lend themselves to great cover and book design including religious, whimsical, cartoons, and on and on. Oh, and books are easily and inexpensively mailed or e-mailed!

So, are you using the seasons to build your writing career?

There are all kinds of ways to do it. Magdalena Ball and I are seasonal poetry partners. That is, we have written the Celebration Series of chapbooks. She contributes half the poems, I the other half. And we also share publishing and marketing skills. *Blooming Red: Christmas Poems for the Rational* (<http://bit.ly/BloomingRed>) is the Christmas entry for that series. We also have entries for Mother's Day (<http://bit.ly/MothersDayKind>), Father's Day (<http://bit.ly/Imagining>), Valentine's Day (<http://bit.ly/CherishedPulse>) and even one with a feminist theme (or Women's Day) to celebrate women for—maybe their birthdays (<http://bit.ly/DeeperPond>). Our full book in the series, *Sublime Planet* (<http://bitly.com/EarthDayKind>) is perfect for environmentalists or to give to a green friend like Kermit on Earth Day. But there are so many other seasonal themes you could use. How about:

- The spring and fall equinoxes.
- Easter
- Fourth of July
- The Signs of the Zodiac—both Western and Chinese. I count a series of 12 books here! No?

- Chanukah
- Passover
- Kwanzaa
- New Year's
- St. Patrick's Day. Think of all the Irish, all the beer drinkers.
- State holidays like the 24<sup>th</sup> of July in Utah. Something local could have a surprisingly big fan base.
- Patriotic books that would work for Labor Day and Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving
- Halloween

Gordon Kirkland is a humorist (Canadian, bless his little soul!). He has written a couple of very funny (and extremely giftable!) books including [Holly Jolly Frivolity](#) and [The Plight Before Christmas](#). I met him when we both spoke at a writers' conference and I know he believes in marketing almost as much as he loves writing.

And that brings me to using seasons, holidays and themes to market any of your work. Here are some ideas for doing that, even if you don't have an entry in the seasonal category (Yet!)

- Plan well ahead. Print magazines often work four to six months out. This is about the right time to promote or offer feature articles to editors for Christmas, Halloween, or Thanksgiving. Don't forget bloggers need seasonal material, too.
- Write articles (like this one?), using your own themes related to your books or whatever else strikes you. They can be used as guest posts on others' blogs or on your own blog or Web site.
- Offer a discount on a book to be used as a greeting card or casual gift. See how Magdalena and I suggested using our *Blooming Red* as a Christmas greeting card at [http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/more\\_on\\_blooming\\_red.htm](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/more_on_blooming_red.htm). Of course, most who send Christmas cards buy them by the box of 25 or so!
- Cross promote with a fellow author on a book in your genre. People who read cozy mysteries likely read more than one a year. And they often love to give them as gifts. Both authors' contact lists should be full of people who read cozy mysteries so offer them all a two-fer-one special—a new one for themselves and another for a gift.
- Share a list of holiday (or Easter or Valentine's) gift book ideas. Post it on your blog. Put it in your newsletter. As an example see Karen Cioffi Ventrice's list at <http://www.writersonthemove.com/2011/11/writers-on-moves-authors-books-for.html>. A list like this is Zen. It helps your book. It helps other writers. It is an ideal way to build a lasting network of authors both willing and able to cross promote. It is also a way to benefit the publishing industry
- There is even a way to make the idea in above this into a seasonal catalog and produce it as an income-producing venture in the new edition of my award-winning *Frugal Book Promoter* (<http://bit.ly/FrugalBookPromo>) on page 340 (check the index for other ideas for using catalogs, too).

- Write a little seasonal poem, story, or article to include with your holiday letter or greeting card. Always include a credit line that lists one of your books and a link to a buy page for it.
- Send your poem to the editors of newsletters, blogs, print magazines both large and small and especially your local newspaper. Eleanor Gamarsh just had a nostalgic article she wrote on gifts vs. gift cards on the front page of her local newspapers. Everyone loves to have something seasonal to pretty up an issue at any given time of the year.
- Consider putting your book into commercial catalogs. There are resources for online book catalogs in [The Frugal Book Promoter](#), too, as well as information on how to sell almost any book—even ones that aren't holiday themed like the ones you receive in your mail box. You'll find ideas your junk mail delivered by USPS, in your e-mail box, and in the pocket in front of your seat when you fly. Think, how can I pitch the idea of my book in a way that will fit with the catalog's theme or their audience? And remember: These catalogs pay the freight on books (bookstores do not). They also don't return books as bookstores do. And they tend to buy a lot of books to cover their orders.

Do you have ideas of your own? Please send a tip to me at HoJoNews@AOL.com (with your e-mail address) and I'll add them to this newsletter.

Have you heard of Charles Dickens? Do you know Scrooge—in person or as a character in *A Christmas Carol*? If so, how can you argue with what writing for the season can do for you?

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If you really want people (like me!) to repin the cover of your book or other of your book-related pins, you should have a board dedicated to your own work. That doesn't mean you can't pin you book cover on your other boards when they fit the theme, but consider the difficulty those who want to help you promote will have finding them if they can't go to a designated board—for either all your work or for pins related to your individual titles. If you need examples of how to do that, check my board at <http://pinterest.com/chowardjohnson>.

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#### **Mini Feature**

## **Generous Marketing**

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Because our culture has done such a good job of training people—especially creative types—to be embarrassed about being proud of anything that smacks of self-promotion, I sometimes have trouble convincing clients that it isn't necessary to brand their campaigns as "shameless" because when they do, they are putting an unspoken subtext into the universe that they *should* be ashamed of something. Marketing is not self-aggrandizement. It is not bragging. It is not even selling.

True marketing is generous. It's about making friends. It's about doing for others without being asked and, yes, when one is asked, too. My favorite

marketing anecdotes usually have something to do with networking and giving. Remember the song, "Little Things Mean A Lot?" So I remember when [Joan Stewart](#) sent me an endorsement for this newsletter out of the blue—and that was years ago. And I'll remember an off-the-cuff e-mail I received from [Denise Cassino](#) recently. She said, "I sent out a notice to all my clients to check out your books on marketing" in the midst of an e-mail conversation about something else! Both women are well-known in marketing and have loyal clients and associates. Their word is trusted. Their words and the way they use them—it turns out—is "generous marketing."

So what kind of generous marketing gift can you give someone today?

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Are you confused about how to credit facts or quotes when you write articles or nonfiction? Check out my *Frugal, Smart and Tuned-In Editor* blog: <http://thefrugaleditor.blogspot.com/2010/10/q-la-ann-landers-academic-accreditation.html> or the new edition of *The Frugal Book Promoter*, www.bit.ly/FrugalBookPromo. Most new writers are under the impression that that they always have to get permission to print a quote. This makes writing an article needlessly onerous. See guidelines in [The Frugal Editor](#), too

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Author Successes

Only subscribers' successes are listed in this section. Thus, I do not pick up news from general media releases for there is often no way for me to know those releases come from subscribers. If you have an Author Success story, please identify yourself as a subscriber in the subject line of your e-mail. Something like: "MEDIA RELEASE: Subscriber's Success." Do peruse these successes so you'll have an idea of what to submit when you have a big success. In fact, read them in any case because you will find resources for publishers, contents, awards, that can make a difference for your own book. You may even find a book for your own reading pleasure.

Nan Phipper Member of Authors' League

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*Memoirs of the Soul: A Writing Guide*, author, Nan Phifer, has been offered membership in the Colorado Authors' League. <http://coloradoauthors.org/category/member-news/>

Learn more about Nan and her writing at [www.memoirworkshops.com](http://www.memoirworkshops.com)

## Ginger King Plans Scholarship in Patricia Terrell's Name

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We should all be so lucky to have associates who make sure our contributions are recognized and passed forward. A case in point is just such an honor for founder of the Book 'Em conference and book fair, Patricia Terrell. It is held each spring at Robeson Community College in Lumberton, NC. Ginger King, author of *Diamond Road*, was instrumental in setting up the scholarship that is awarded to a student who volunteers for the Book 'Em and demonstrates financial need. It has raised \$1300 so far. The mission of Book 'Em is to raise public awareness of the correlation between high illiteracy rates and high crime rates.

If you would like to contribute to the Patricia Terrell's Book 'Em NC Scholarship, mail your check to the Robeson Community College Foundation at PO Box 1420, Lumberton, NC 28359. For more information contact Regina Branch by phone at 910-272-3235 or by email at rbranch@robeson.edu.

Audio Book Author Shares Successes and Process

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My psychological thriller, *The Prodigal Son*, is now available as an audio book on iTunes and Audible via [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

*The Prodigal Son* is a story about a teenager's refusal to attend school which leads to criminal charges against his parents and disastrous consequences for him. His parent's recent divorce, his father's hasty remarriage, his brother's leaving for college leave Andrew Tippet in a desperate whirlwind of emotions. Using revenge as his weapon of choice Andrew sets out to destroy his family emotionally and financially. Psychologist, Allyson Freemont, comes to understand the boy's anger and frustration when she learns the disturbing truth about what's been happening behind closed doors.

If you enjoy listening to books, contact me for a FREE coupon for *The Prodigal Son*. I'd like to hear from you.

You can find *The Prodigal Son* here [Amazon.com/dp/B01BPGJNQO](http://Amazon.com/dp/B01BPGJNQO)

In addition to *The Prodigal Son*, I've now published five other audio books all via ACX. They can be found here:

- *Suffer the Little Children*, <http://Amazon.com/dp/B01369MDYC>
- *Sins of the Father*, <http://Amazon.com/dp/B016LH0XOI>
- *Amazing Grace*, <http://Amazon.com/dp/B01974PXLU>
- *'Tis Herself: Short Story Collection*, <http://Amazon.com/dp/B00VU39JSA>
- *Beyond the Inkblots: Confusion to Harmony* <http://Amazon.com/dp/B00HYO5X98>

I do a 50/50 royalty deal with the narrator. This does not cost me any money up front and it also opens up an entirely new source of contacts. The narrators have their own network and are eager to promote the audio book to earn royalties and to grow their talents with more and more exposure within their theatrical world.

Audio books are my biggest sales revenue. The audience is a smaller but these folks are eager to find new books in audio format. Not too many authors publish audio books, thus, there is less competition for those of those of us who do.

It's an easy process via ACX (Audio Creation Exchange) and it's FREE.

Find them at <http://ACX.com> .

Please tell your SWW subscribers to give it a try ~

~ Valerie Allen ~  
ValerieAllenWriter.com  
[VAllenWriter@cs.com](mailto:VAllenWriter@cs.com)

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**Tip:** There are all kinds of ways to get attention for your book other than getting reviews. Why not pitch your book to be one of [Bill Gates' Book Recommendations](#) or [Mark Zuckerberg's Next Book](#) pick? [Fareed Zakaria](#) features a book each Sunday on his CNN GPS show, too. Most of their picks are nonfiction, but I've seen an occasional fiction choice among them, too.

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Did you know that you can buy your e-books from Kindle, even if you don't have a Kindle? Patricia Fry, founder of SPAWN says, "If you need an e-book but don't have a Kindle, just go to any Kindle book page look for the buy options. [You may find a widget there offering a free app to make your download easier.] Choose Kindle. After you've done that, the site gives you several options or platforms for that book so you can buy the e-book for yourself or to send one as a gift to someone else whether or not you (or they!) have a Kindle. I believe this shows up on any Amazon page where they are selling Kindle. ~ Submitted by Patricia Fry, author of the Klepto Cat Mystery series. First in the series is *Catnapped*, <http://amzn.to/14OCk0W>.

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**Tip:** Your social networks love quotations. And they can be *your* quotations. Invite your friends to share and pass them around. Here's one of mine from *The Frugal Book Promoter*: "Marketing skills are essential to success in every business, every profession. They are so basic to most of the world's way of life, they should be a compulsory subject in schools everywhere along with math and science."

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**Book Proposal Help:** *The Great First Impression Book Proposal: Everything You Need To Know To Sell Your Book in 30 Minutes or Less* is now an e-booklet (\$2.99) or paperback booklet (only \$6.95). The perfect giftlet for nonfiction and even some fiction writers. Find it at <http://bit.ly/BookProposals>

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## **Opportunities**

### **Agni Literary Journal Calls for Blog Guestposts**

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The editors at Agni say, "As you may have seen by now AGNI has an active blog! We've got an amazing community of writers (yourself included), and we've enjoyed keeping the conversation going online. For those of you who don't know me, my name is David Ebenbach and I'm curating the blog. We're always looking for posts by AGNI authors on any number of possible topics: craft advice, issues in the writing world, the story behind your AGNI piece,

etc. Above all, we want it to be a conversation driven by the writers of AGNI.

"So, the invitation: if you have something that you think might work for us as a blog post between, say, 500 and 1,000 words, please reply to this message and send it our way for consideration. If you have an idea that you think could work, write the piece and send it to agni@bu.edu when it's ready. We hope to hear from lots of folks, so don't be shy! In the meantime, please visit and see what we're up to at [the blog](#).

"Take care and good writing.

David
Agni Editor"

Judith Briles Offers Free E-Book on Book Marketing!

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Judith says, "I get so many questions from our members—and many of them are the same ones. I've just created a 24-page pdf of Publishing Alphabet Soup—the 8 Essentials Author of Publishing how-tos ... that authors need. Copyrights, ISBN, LCCN, CIP, Categories, Amazon, Acknowledgments, Footnotes-Endnotes. Now, get your copy of the FREE Publishing Essential Alphabet Soup pdf--8 critical must haves: <http://thebookshepherd.com>  
<http://ow.ly/i/iK49F>"

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Social networking is one of the best ways to make valuable contacts and build a list of readers. Join me on Pinterest. You pin one of my book covers on one of your bulletin boards and I'll pin yours on one of mine.  
<http://Pinterest.com/chowardjohnson>

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**Tip:** This is more of a reminder than a tip. When you submit a guest blog or a feature article or anything else for promotion, include your credit line or mini biography. Your editor or other contact probably needs the information even if they don't use the credit line. You have more control over what information and the links that they use when you do it yourself. And you come off as a professional because you save your contact (and yourself) followup time in the publishing process.

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Frugal. Free is always frugal. It's my Resources for Writers pages at <http://bit.ly/CarolynsResources4Writers>. Browse for tips on every page, read how-to articles, and get lists and other resources you really cannot do without!

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Guest Feature

## **Cox Shares Little Known Amazon Program**

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Reprinted with permission from Beth Cox at Midwest Book Reviews

The latest innovations in digital publishing never cease to surprise me. Just recently, I learned about Amazon's "Kindle Scout" program for both e-book readers and e-book authors. <https://kindlescout.amazon.com>

Essentially, it's a review program for never-before-published e-books, which enlists readers to help sort the wheat from the chaff. Readers browse e-books that have never been published in any format before, and nominate up to three e-books at a time (each book has a 30-day nomination campaign). Readers also receive a free copy of any e-books they championed that are selected for publication.

E-book authors who submit never-before-published e-books to the program can potentially earn publication by Kindle Press, 5-year renewable terms, a \$1,500 advance, a 50% e-book royalty rate, easy rights reversions, and featured Amazon marketing... if (and only if!) their e-book receives so many nominations from interested readers that Amazon selects it for publication.

Of course, in order to secure nominations, prospective e-book authors are encouraged to promote their Kindle Scout title, perhaps starting with their Facebook fans and Twitter followers.

Oh, and please allow me to give a shout-out to the author who first informed me about the Kindle Scout program, Donna M. Zadunajsky. Her current title awaiting nominations on Kindle Scout is the suspenseful mystery "Hidden Secrets": <https://kindlescout.amazon.com/p/181EOC08YIMTY>

Bethany Cox
Managing Editor
The Midwest Book Review
<http://www.midwestbookreview.com>

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You'll love the information on blogging for authors that Phyllis Zimble Miller and I wrote with fiction writers in mind--see <http://www.fictionmarketing.com/bloggng-chapter-excerpt/>. Phyllis is also the author of the e-book TOP TIPS FOR HOW TO PUBLISH AND MARKET YOUR BOOK IN THE AGE OF AMAZON at <http://www.amazon.com/Tips-Publish-Market-Your-Amazon-e-book/dp/B009RBJW3E>

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TIP: Are you shortening your long URLs using bitly.com? I like them because they allow me to change mixed numerals and letters out for real words. They make your addresses more memorable so you can use them again and again without looking them up. They're more memorable for your readers, too. These address can even say something that helps sell your book—a title, a benefit, a genre. So, my *Great First Impression Book Proposals* booklet is <http://bit.ly/BookProposals>. It works in a tweet even when I don't have room for the title!

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I believe in learning from successful authors via newsletters and online streaming. Morgan St. James is launching a Blog Talk Radio show, *Writers' Tricks of the Trade*, with co-host Dennis N. Griffin. It broadcasts on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. My time with Morgan and Dennis is archived at <http://bitly.com/WTTjan14show>.

On Poetry

This is a running feature for the poets among us and those who would like to try writing poetry but feel . . . well, inadequate about the writing or the promotion. Please send in your poetry tips and resources for this section to HoJoNews@aol.com

Tip: Use your poetic instincts when you write titles or subtitles. Alliteration, as an example, is powerful because it is memorable.

A general marketing rule is that a product must be seen seven times before it is purchased. That is just as true for books (because they are products, like it or not!). Let people see that book cover image! To do that, you are invited to advertise as a site sponsor at www.howtodoitfrugally.com/advertising.htm for only \$35 a year. Yep, the frugal way! Click on the Advertising tab at the top of the page or contact me personally at hojonews@aol.com. And I set up the ad using your book cover image, pitch, and link.

Tip: If you are self-publishing (or not), pay attention to the formatting and design of the journals, magazines and books you read and borrow their ideas instead of using the built-in design features of Word or any other program you use.

Find info on entering contests and some of my favorite, accessible contests in the Writers Resources section of my Web site's myriad of writer helps at <http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/contests.htm>.

Thank You

These are, indeed, thank yous but it occurs to me that many Sharing with Writers readers may not be using them as resources. Often the blogs, newsletters, Web sites, and other entities mentioned are perfect vehicles for exposing your books to new readers. It is up to you to click or copy and paste to see which might be suitable—and for inspiration on how to make what you do a match for them.

Thanks to Darcia Helle. . .

. . . for the beautiful review of my newest book of poetry, *Imperfect Echoes*. See the review at <http://quietfurybooks.com/blog/bookreview-imperfect-echoes-by-carolyn-howard-johnson/>. While you're there, sign up for her newsletter and subscribe to her blog—and put her on your list to query for reviews.

Thanks to Dr. Bob Rich. . .

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...for the review of my newest poetry book [Imperfect Echoes](#) and posting it in his Bobbin Around newsletter.

<https://bobrich18.wordpress.com/2016/03/01/bobbing-around-volume-15-number-9-2/#REVIEWS>. Bob also publishes articles on a variety of subjects that might fit with promotion plans for your book. Subscription are available and Bob is open to communication from his subscribers—as all newsletter editors should be! (-:

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Are you an ampersand fan? Chaz DeSimone designs a free series of art prints & posters featuring “the ampersand as fun & fabulous art. A new edition is released each month. Each is entirely different, creatively & professionally designed, & each is associated with the ampersand & by extension, our love of writing. Each comes with directions for printing, & framing to make each into a keepsake. To subscribe and view all Chaz’s past poster designs go to: <http://amperart.com> By now he has covered so many themes, one is sure to be perfect for you or a friend.

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[An Itty-Bitty Column on Writing](#)

REPURPOSE YOUR OLD WRITING

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Mindy Phillips Lawrence

Do you read your old writing? Do you revisit novels that have died in a drawer or articles that no one published? Maybe you should. Looking back on your old work may show you where you’ve improved. Over time, writers tend to develop a keener eye for their deficiencies and their successes. When you see errors in your previous novels, short stories, articles or poetry, you can rework them to make them fresh and new.

If your work from the past seems un-reclaimable, the option is still open for you to cannibalize the piece, suck out the good stuff, and rebuild around it. If nothing else, reading your older work will show you where you have grown. Often we don’t realize how far we’ve come until we see where we came from.

Recently, author Jane Yolen posted an interesting comment on Facebook. She said, “Sometimes when we fall in love with a piece of our own writing, we simply can’t see the problems. Sometimes all we CAN see are the problems and we can’t turn off the editor-in-the-head.” This is what happens when we are newer writers. All our words sound so beautiful. Many times they are not. We need to give ourselves some space. We need to reach back in the past to see where we have grown and realize the benefits of editing. By editing, I mean taking a good, sharp machete to our lovely phrases and lofty words to pare them down to reality. We also need to realize where the jewels are and put them in their proper setting.

Repurposing is good news. By re-reading old work, we may find more than one piece that can rise from the ashes of a single old novel. Find those

timeworn manuscripts and see what new works can come from them.

Happy Writing!

## **LINKS**

### **The Ultimate Guide on Repurposing Content**

<https://blog.bufferapp.com/repurposing-content-guide>

### **Lessons Your Can Learn from Reading Your Old Journals**

<http://blog.paperblanks.com/2015/08/writing-wednesday-lessons-you-can-learn-from-reading-your-old-journals/>

### **Re-Read Your Writing: A Simple Revising Strategy**

<http://thisreadingmama.com/re-read-your-writing-a-simple-revising-strategy/>

### **Reading Your Own Writing**

<http://www.writebynight.net/abcs-of-writing/strategies/reading-your-own-writing/>

### **The Secret to Being a Better Writer: Reread your Own Work**

<http://www.poynter.org/2016/the-secret-to-being-a-better-writer-re-read-your-own-work/401255/>

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Mindy Phillips Lawrence is a writer and artist based in Springfield, Missouri. She worked for the State of Missouri for over 24 years and has now retired to her sumptuous home office where she's writing and doing calligraphy. You can contact her at: [mplcreative@yahoo.com](mailto:mplcreative@yahoo.com) or [mplcreative1@aol.com](mailto:mplcreative1@aol.com).

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I have a series of retail books that authors could benefit from. The reason? Authors are retailers, too. They must sell their books. But A Retailer's Guide to In-Store Promotion will be especially valuable because it will give authors insight on how to convince retail outlets that a partnership (like a book signing, workshop or seminar) with them will benefit their bottom line. Find this book at [www.bit.ly/RetailersGuide](http://www.bit.ly/RetailersGuide) or more about the whole series at [www.howtodoitfrugally.com/retailers\\_books.htm](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/retailers_books.htm)

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**Tip:** Subscriber Jendi Reiter says, "Just found this list of book clubs online: <http://www.bookmarket.com/bookclubs.htm>. Her new novel *Two Natures* will be released this fall. She has a page on Facebook and would love some likes: <https://www.facebook.com/twonaturesbook/>. She also wrote *Bullies in Love* which won Little Red Tree International Poetry Prize, <http://littleredtree.com/bullies-in-love>.


**Tip:** I was a guest on Patzi Gill's Tampa Bay, Fl. WTAN Talk Radio show. It was pure pleasure. She reads the books of the authors she interviews and keeps the questions on target and moving along. You may want to send her a

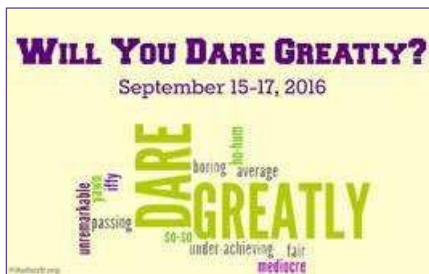
For a nominal fee your ad could go here (or in a similar position between sexy red lines). It's something new. Heretofore all content in this newsletter has been printed at no charge and I will continue to do that for subscribers. Sponsored ads will be marked "Sponsor." Or I can tweet to my 20,000 plus Twitter followers, also marked sponsor. E-mail me at [hojonews@aol.com](mailto:hojonews@aol.com) with SPONSOR ADS in the subject line for a quote and help choosing what is best for your title. This is a way to accommodate authors with services that they need frugally.

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Learn more about Maxine at <http://www.maxinethompson.com> and <http://www.maxinethompsonbooks.com>



 Carolyn will be the guest of “Writers Block” Thursday, July 14 at 8 pm Pacific Time. The host is Jim Christina, author and owner of Black Dog Publishing, and the co-host is Bobbi Jean Bell of Outwest Boutique and Cultural Center, in Newhall. The show features 100% writers, poets to songwriters, and everything in between—and can be found at www.latalkradio.com/content/writers-block at 8 PM Thursday evenings. It can be heard worldwide live or folks can bring up the podcasts anytime.



Sign up to receive a copy of my Sharing with Writers **blog** in your e-mail box. It is a focused blog on all things related to writing and publishing. Go to www.sharingwithwriters.blogspot.com. Sign up in the left-hand column. Find related resources by scrolling to the bottom of the blog.

Something to Make Writers Smile

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Some believe that those who can understand and make up puns are using the highest level of language development. Some say that studies have proved that. And besides, writers love them! This is one of the winners in the International Pun Contest.

### **Puns for the educated....**

There were three Indian squaws. One slept on a deer skin, one slept on an elk skin, and the third slept on a hippopotamus skin. All three became pregnant. The first two each had a baby boy. The one who slept on the hippopotamus skin had twin boys. This just goes to prove that... the squaw of the hippopotamus is equal to the sons of the squaws of the other two hides.

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### **Essential Book and Record Keeping:**

This is the place to share with others and learn from others.

Although I do attempt to verify information used within this newsletter's pages, *Sharing with Writers* does not guarantee entities or information. Subscribers should research resources.

To submit information articles, tips or other information, e-mail Carolyn at [HoJoNews@AOL.com](mailto:HoJoNews@AOL.com) Please put "Submission: Sharing with Writers" in the subject line.

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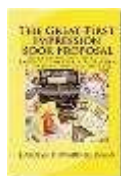
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*Great Little Last-Minute Editing Tips for Writers: The Ultimate Frugal Booklet for Avoiding Word Trippers and Crafting Gatekeeper-Perfect Copy*

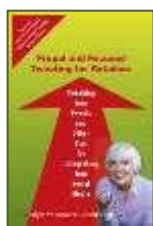
For paperback or e-book: <http://bit.ly/Last-MinuteEditing>

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To order paperback or e-book: <http://bit.ly/RetailersBlog>

## **Carolyn's Fiction and Creative Nonfiction**

*This Is the Place* (Out of Print. Available only on Amazon's New and Used feature): <http://bit.ly/ThisIsThePlace>

*Harkening: A Collection of Stories Remembered* (Out of Print. Available only on Amazon's New and Used feature:

<http://bit.ly/TrueShortStories>



**Carolyn's Poetry**

Find Magdalena Ball's and my poetry fanpage at

<http://face-book.com/CelebrationSeriesPoetryChapbooks>



*Cherished Pulse: Unconventional Love Poetry*. Coauthored with Magdalena Ball

Order as an e-book or in print to be used as a greeting card or booklet

<http://bit.ly/CherishedPulse>



*She Wore Emerald Then: Reflections on Motherhood*, a chapbook of poetry. Coauthored with Magdalena Ball. To order paperback, Kindle, or e-book: <http://bit.ly/MothersDayKind>



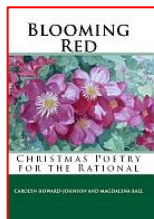
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*Deeper into the Pond: A Celebration of Femininity*, Co-Authored with Magdalena Ball. Artwork by Jacquie Schmall

To order as an e-book or paperback:

<http://bit.ly/DeeperPond>



*Blooming Red: Christmas Poetry for the Rational* Coauthored with Magdalena Ball. Artwork by Vicki Thomas USA Book News finalist, Silver Award from Military Writers' Society of America

To order e-book or paperback: <http://bit.ly/BloomingRed>

Part of the Celebration Series by Carolyn Howard-Johnson and Magdalena Ball, this little \$6.95 book was written with passion and love for those who understand all the ramifications of the holiday that dominates celebrations throughout most of the English-speaking world. It is a lovely tuck-in gift that goes beyond the typical greeting card and is available in

quantity discounts to use as a holiday greeting by contacting the authors at [HoJoNews@aol.com](mailto:HoJoNews@aol.com).



*Sublime Planet*, a full book of poetry celebrating Earth Day.

Coauthored with Magdalena Ball.

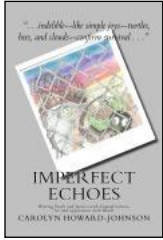
Photography by Ann

To order paperback or e-book: Howley. Proceeds go to the World Wildlife Fund. <http://bit.ly/SublimePlanet>



*Tracings*, a chapbook of poetry (Finishing Line Press)

<http://bit.ly/CarolynsTracings>



*Imperfect Echoes:*

*Writing Truth and Justice with Capital Letters, lie  
and oppression with Small*

*To order paperback or e-book: <http://bit.ly/ImperfectEchoes>*

*Inspired by Nobel Prize winner Czeslaw Milosz's poem  
"Incantation" that lauds the power of human reason over the  
reoccurring and seemingly insane political realities, Howard-  
Johnson holds out hope but is not persuaded by trends that seem  
worse now than they were in Milosz's time. A student of Suzanne  
Lummis, UCLA poetry instructor and the Fresno School of Poetry  
fronted by US poet laureate Philip Levine, she touches on the  
isms of the world—racism, ageism, even what might be termed  
"wallism" but was once referred to as xenophobia. In her poem  
"Crying Walls," she sounds a low warning reminiscent of Robert  
Frost: "Chains linked. Wire barbed,/ Krylon smeared. Feeble,/  
useless, unholy billboards,/ anything but mending walls."*

## **Contact Information**

### **Websites**

<http://HowToDoItFrugally.com>

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