

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

Find back issues at [http://HowToDoItFrugally.com/newsletter\\_copies.htm](http://HowToDoItFrugally.com/newsletter_copies.htm)

February, 2017

## 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](http://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 proofread by Mindy Phillips Lawrence. Reach her at [mplcreative1@aol.com](mailto:mplcreative1@aol.com) and [www.mplcreative.com](http://www.mplcreative.com).

In the spirit of writers everywhere, I tell writers to be patient with other writers when they make editing booboos. We're all human.

A curated collection of news, opinions, articles, and how-tos on the subjects of writing, publishing, editing, marketing, and keeping your eye on the ball.

This newsletter is issued as often as my writing schedule allows. It's usually long, but I promise you will find something new that will help propel your book to stardom or some reminder to do something for your writing career.

This newsletter is powered by AuthorsDen.com.

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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>

To subscribe to SharingwithWriters blog:

<http://SharingwithWriters.blogspot.com>

To subscribe to SharingwithWriters newsletter:

[http://HowToDoItFrugally.com/newsletter\\_&\\_blog.htm](http://HowToDoItFrugally.com/newsletter_&_blog.htm)

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 offer this letter on my own Indie terms. You can 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:

Today I heard about a new kink in the old agent-for-upfront-fee scam. One of my longtime friends on Facebook told me that just as she had been waiting for the "right time to terminate" her relationship with her agent, she received a mass e-mail informing her of the agent's new fee-for-service plan. My friend then terminated her contract and ask that the mention of her books be removed from this former agent's Web site. The agent refused her request (and others' requests) citing that she was the "agent of record" for those books.

My friend says, "I feel bad for new writers who fall for this trap of paying her upfront fees." This agent also added another wrinkle to her fee collecting program—a cancellation-of-contract fee. Learn more at (<http://accrispin.blogspot.com/2017/02/red-flag-alert-loiacono-literary-agency.html?m+1> )

I have no idea whether keeping a book that is no longer represented by an agent on an agent's site is legal, but it certainly is misleading if not downright unethical. One of the tools that authors use to judge the effectiveness of an agent is their catalogue of book sales. It is important that you are all aware of this practice and double check with some of the authors who have been (or are) represented by any agent you are considering.

You should also be aware that some agents "sell books" to presses that would take any book presented to them, often called (rather erroneously) self-publishing presses and that were once called "vanity publishing or presses" and still are by anyone who cares to flaunt their #bookbigotry. Of course these agents usually still take their 15% for "handling" and

“representing” or “selling” the book to that press. There is more on that in the blog link above.

You will also find more on finding reputable agents and editors in both [The Frugal Book Promoter](#) and [The Frugal Editor](#) including things to look for and questions to ask both the professional you are considering as a hire and those clients they provide as references. There are all kinds of ways you can be misled—both intentionally and unintentionally.

## Happy writing, marketing, and editing Carolyn

**PS:** Have you done a search on the Walmart site for your book? Authors are telling me that their Createspace-printed books have been appearing there with no extra effort on their part. In the past—even before Createspace—I have found my books magically appearing in sites as varied as Harvard’s bookstore and Costco. If you find your book on one of these sites, check to see if the buy page needs any special attention from you—like the addition of reader reviews as suggested in [How to Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically](#).

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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. And ask about my special price on chapbook/cards purchased in bulk at [HoJoNews@AOL.com](mailto: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. And you’ll find my take on making the world a better place in my newest poetry book, [Imperfect Echoes](#).

## Letters-to-the-Editor

**This February I am doing something a little different. This is definitely a letter to the editor (me) but delivered via Midwest Book Review’s own newsletter along with their review of my most frequent book. What a surprise! But it also a fantastic example of what those personal contacts (like Letters-to-the-Editor and thank yous) can do! I hope it will encourage you to do more of this kind of thing for and with your fellow authors and your readers! [Printed with permission.]**

Dear Publisher Folk, Friends & Family:

We all know that book reviews can impact and influence librarians and the general reading public. What is perhaps underestimated is the impact and influence book reviews can have on the author. Last month I was vividly reminded of this fact while reading my review copy of "How To Get Great Book Reviews Frugally And Ethically" by Carolyn Howard-Johnson.

Here's what I came across in the introduction on page VIII:

"We have all had disasters if we've been around very long. My book of poetry, "Imperfect Echoes" ([bit.ly/ImperfectEchoes](http://bit.ly/ImperfectEchoes)) was released just after my husband broke his back trouncing around on our roof to save \$140 on solar repairs. I became a full time caretaker and part time writer and had not time to market my book. I did occasionally send out a query for a review and one was so special that it made up for the sad reality that few will read the book because few will have heard about it. So, thank you to Jim Cox, Editor-in-Chief of Midwest Book review for that memorable gift."

I had no idea at the time who Carolyn was or anything about her circumstances. It was just another self-published book of considerable merit by an unknown author and I was trying to establish the Midwest Book Review as a champion of just such folk.

Since then Carolyn has gone on to a career of writing 'how to' books for authors and publishers and we became 'cyber-space pen pals'. When I thanked her for her very kind words in her introduction, she noted that we first met in person at a BEA convention in Chicago back in 2001. But as I was meeting hundreds (no exaggeration) of folks at that event I didn't remember her specifically.

But I did recall meeting Carolyn at Dan Poynter's ebook publishers convention in Santa Barbara, California in 2012 when I was awarded that Life Time Achievement in Publishing award.

I think she was also in the audience for my 'workshop' at that event -- I recall that one was 'standing room only' it was so crowded in that huge room. A few folks couldn't physically get in because there was no more room -- there was even a line of people standing along the back and side walls of the room.

Incidentally, that Dan Poynter convention was also the first time I met in person my managing editor Diane Donovan who for many years prior to our meeting in the flesh had (and continues to be) the editor for three of my nine monthly book review publication: The Bookwatch, California Bookwatch, and Children's Bookwatch. Up until then she was a just a voice on the phone and an email correspondent only.

I'm now in my 41st year as the editor-in-chief of the Midwest Book Review. That means at the age of 74 I have now spent more than half my life in this position!

Every now and then I get an email or a letter expressing heartfelt appreciation for myself and the Midwest Book Review from authors and publishers for what we try to accomplish in their behalf. It's those messages of support and thanks that give me a reason to keep doing this job for as long as my health, my wife, and my daughter will allow.

Here is the review of Carolyn's most recent publication and the one that started me down memory lane:

How to Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically

Carolyn Howard-Johnson

HowToDoItFrugally Publishing

[www.howtodoitfrugally.com](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com)

<http://facebook.com/carolynhowardjohnson>

9781536948370, \$17.95, PB, 340pp, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

In the pages of "How To Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically", Carolyn Howard-Johnson draws upon her many years of professional experience and expertise

spent helping writers to avoid pitfalls, misconceptions, and out-and-out scams perpetrated on unsuspecting authors -- and helping them reach their dreams of obtaining great reviews, going on great book tours, and experiencing great launches.

Simply stated "How to Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically" comprises the complete, comprehensive, and core manual for obtaining reviews and utilizing them in a practical, effective, and successful marketing campaign that includes all those things and for building the readership necessary for a financially prosperous and emotionally satisfying writing career.

Covering every aspect of the book review process from solicitation to exploitation, "How to Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically" is thoroughly 'user friendly' in tone, content, commentary, organization and presentation.

Basically, "How to Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically" is classified as a "must" for the instructional reference shelf of any and all authors and publishers be they novice beginners or seasoned professionals. While an essential and unreservedly recommended addition to community, college, and university library Writing/Publishing collections, it should be noted for personal reading lists that "How to Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically" is also available in a Kindle format (\$9.95).



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) .



## Accessible Contests



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 contests I recommend judge their entries by their contents, not the press they are printed on.

## 6th Annual 2017 Kindle Book Review



This is a frugal contest (\$29) but I fear that it focuses on attention to the author's buy page more than the content (quality) of the book—at least in the early stages. Still, the requirements for attention to your Amazon page would probably benefit your book anyway—unless it's already perfect!

<https://www.thekindlebookreview.net/2017-kindle-book-awards/>



I love grammar guru June Casagrande's new book [The best punctuation book. Period.](http://bit.ly/PunctuationBook) (<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.



### Subscribers Helping Subscribers

## **Marlan Warren Shares Scam Experience**



Hi Carolyn:

I suppose it might be good to put out a Scam Alert about this (I haven't done it yet, but should):

I got a call from "Eleanor" saying that she's from "Empire Radio" which is like Pandora Radio, and I'd been "selected" to be interviewed about my business. When I asked her what biz that might be, she didn't know. She excused herself and came back and asked if I did Reiki or Psychic counseling. I said yes. She said, "That's why. They give me those businesses." She still knew nothing about my biz.

The first thing she said was, "I'm not going to sell you anything. This is not a sales call."

So anyway, then she asked if I was ready to answer some interview questions that she would record. I was not at home and just asked her to call the next day.

In the meantime, I investigated and did find evidence of a scam online. Someone complained that

1. There's no Empire Radio
2. There is an Empire Broadcasting, Inc.
3. They answered the questions and were told that the actual radio host would call them to record the actual interview. So they prepared, including an offer of a discount, etc.
4. I don't recall if they recorded a brief interview with no time for the discount, etc. and then a station manager called this guy offering an \$8000 package. The guy declined and they got to the point where the station guy said he'd take \$1000.

So I think people need to be alerted. Especially since they have various categories for businesses.

Best,

**Marlan Warren**

**Roadmap Communications**

**Book Publicity by Marlan**

***Marlan is so knowledgeable and an expert at what she does. She is a joy to work with!***

—Kari Hock, Managing Editor, Gemelli Press & Green Darner Press

Mail: [memoircity@gmail.com](mailto:memoircity@gmail.com)

Twitter: @marlanwarren

Roadmap Girl's Book Buzz: <http://roadmapgirlsbookbuzz.blogspot.com/>

Web site: <http://bookpublicitybymarlan.blogspot.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bookpublicitybymarlan/>

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>.

**Tip:** Amazon just sent an announcement that when you publish your e-book on Kindle (KDP), you can now “automatically” make it into a paperback which means your book will be available digitally and in print and—they point out—that you don’t have to pay any costs upfront or carry any inventory to do it and your royalty payments will be consolidated which saves you some bookwork, too. They also automatically post the paperback to all their Amazon sites for you. You can also use the Web site in most of the languages (not all yet!) that Amazon has outlets in. All true enough and they are working on more improvements. But until then, they don’t have some of the benefits of Createspace which Amazon owns. Amazon admits you can’t yet order paperback proofs (they are working on it!) Many Amazon experts are saying it is better to wait a while to use this feature and suspect that Amazon will soon be folding Createspace with *all* its benefits into the KDP platform anyway.

**Amazon’s One-Stop-Ebook Shop** Helps authors and readers alike! A SWW subscriber says, “Did you know you can have your readers buy your e-books from Kindle, even if they don’t own a Kindle reader? Just have them go to any Kindle book page look for the buy options. They will find a widget there offering a free app to make their download easy in any format. Or they can just choose Kindle. After that, the site gives you several options or platforms for that book so to buy the e-book. ~ Submitted by Patricia Fry, author of the Klepto Cat Mystery series. First in the series is Catnapped, <http://amzn.to/14Ock0W>. If you pass along the word to your readers, you may make it easier on them and you may sell more books!

**Tip:** I have been a Barbara McNichol fan for years. She now combines a new program for authors with her Wordtrippers: <http://www.profcs.com/app/?af=1663611> Highly recommended! Follow her @bookeditor.

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 your 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>.

**Tip:** Dr. Bob Rich offers this tip about mastering the art of pre-publication marketing with an article on the topic at BookDaily.com:

<http://www.bookdaily.com/authorresource/blog/post/1911342>.

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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](http://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. My *How To Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically: The ins and outs of using free reviews to build and sustain a writing career* also makes it clear that how and when to credit excerpts from reviews.

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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, contests, awards, that can make a difference for your own book. You may even find a book for your own reading pleasure.

## Helen Dunn Frame Published 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Cross-Genre Memoir and How to Retire in Costa Rica

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Helen says, "*Retiring in Costa Rica or Doctors, Dogs and Pura Vida, Third Edition*, is live on Amazon in both Kindle and paperback. I've added a new first chapter called *Retirement 101* that discusses planning beyond financial security. Feel free to tell people about this as it should be helpful no matter where anyone decides to retire. This chapter is also available as a Kindle booklet. Author's Page: <http://www.amazon.com/Helen-Dunn-Frame/e/B0054LDOBW>. I'll be interviewed on Sat. April 22 in Dallas. You can Tune into 1190 AM Dallas or download iheartradio's app to listen LIVE from 11AM-12PM Saturday."

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No author ever knows enough about editing—even the ones who can afford top editors. It's the reason I have *The Frugal, Smart, and Tuned-In Editor* blog. And I pester you only about once a month with (usually) very short observations and tips that will make a better publisher of you—and a better partner with your editor. <http://thefrugaleditor.blogspot.com>.

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## Carolyn's Little Rant

## Your Email Sig: Choose Failure to Get What You Want or Success?

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In a public e-mail to her clients, someone near and dear to me (an expert) said most people look at the first two lines of an email. That's it. They aren't interested in fishing through pages of post-signature blather. People need to have ways to learn about you, not reasons to put up shields." She advised



three or four lines, tops. Boy, did that set me off. So, these people we send mail to are in such a hurry that they'd rather spend time looking up in dozens of place the information that could just as easily have been in the contact's e-mail signature? Here's my rant—er . . . rebuttal:

My old friend, I so disagree with this.

For one thing, there are no fast rules. Much depends on the genre an author writes in. Another depends on the author's personality. But more than that, I view a signature as a courtesy. Put that word in caps! COURTESY!

There is nothing more annoying than getting an e-mail from someone who doesn't have proper contact information in it. And the trouble is, depending on what the recipient plans to do with the email, it is difficult for the sender to know exactly what will make the life of that contact easier. Will she need your website address? Will including your Twitter moniker help her in some way? Won't the repeated visual of your book cover to your contacts help your branding? And if your contact has seen your cover before, will it hurt her that much to see it again? Especially considering that old marketing advice based on research that people need to see something seven times before they act on it.

And don't you--as someone whose business it is to help authors--want your authors to sell as many books as possible and to get as much media attention as possible? In the PR world the winner is the person who makes it easiest on the gatekeeper to do her job. It is a busy world. She doesn't need to be searching for information, especially information that could easily go into a signature.

To arbitrarily tell anyone how to sign their emails without any idea of the tone or purpose of the email seems very presumptuous to me.

I hope you will give your authors this alternative view. Many authors are already far too reluctant to get the word about their books out there. Telling them to arbitrarily limit information in their signatures may encourage their reluctance to do right by their books—and their own careers.

Hugs, [Yes, hugs. Even rants are mostly designed to help rather than make enemies!]

CHJ

\$6.95). The perfect giftlet for nonfiction and even some fiction writers. Find it at <http://bit.ly/BookProposals>

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**Tip:** Author Helen Dunn Frame also shares this tip with the new, easy instructions for uploading a video to YouTube!  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7iUiftbKU>

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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](http://www.TheNewBookReview.blogspot.com).

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**Opportunities**

**South Florida Book Fair Invitation**



If you live in Southern Florida you are invited to

The Writers' Conference: Write, Publish, Sell!

Sunday ~ March 26, 2017

Hilton Melbourne Rialto

9:00 Am to 5:00 PM

Learn to write better, sell more, and market effectively!

Meet and network with successfully published authors, editors, and publishers. Make new friends, learn more skills and enjoy a day of support for your writing dreams! There will be:

- \* 24+ Workshops
- \* 20+ Vendors
- \* 16+ Genre Discussion Groups

Learn more at [AuthorsforAuthors.com](http://AuthorsforAuthors.com) .

Directors: Valerie Allen, Marshall Frank, and Holly Fox Vellekoop

**MILITARY WRITERS CONFERENCE COMING**



The Military Writers Society of America is not just for those who write with a military theme. It is also an organization the supports writers who are or have been military or are related to military. Membership is reasonably priced and offers an excellent book award contest. And now all members of MWSA are

encouraged to attend this year's conference in September. They say, "In addition to a general membership meeting that will enable you to learn more about what's going on in MWSA and provide you the opportunity to voice your suggestions for the future of MWSA, the agenda includes seminars to improve your skills as a writer and presentations that will entertain and educate you on the military history of San Antonio.

"We have worked hard to keep the conference costs down this year and are offering an early bird price at an amount below prior conferences and way below other writers' conferences held around the country. The Menger Hotel is located right in the heart of San Antonio, minutes away from many major attractions: the Alamo, River Walk, Old Market Square, and more.

Learn more at <http://www.mwsadispatches.com/events/2017/9/7/mwsa-general-membership-meeting>

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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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## Word Lovers Corner

### **The Fun Meaning of Symposium**

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**Valentine's Day is gone but I am introducing a new corner for word lovers anyway. We are all word lovers, right? This feature will only appear when the spirit (and interesting tidbits) present themselves to me, but feel free to send me your favorite word or a new one that has sparked your imagination or found useful in your writing. Yes! As a contributor, I will include your author name, title, mini pitch for your title and links to its buy page.**



Because I am a big fan of Greek Classicism, this photo from *National Geographic* caught my eye. The painting on this ancient drinking cup (no mugs for these guys!) caught my attention. It depicts a drinking party known as a *symposium*, presumably where things were discussed between serious downing of spirits. The word is still used essentially the same way, but it has come to mean something much less social and far more erudite. I have been to few

symposiums in this century where "drinking" was a part of the event—except perhaps surreptitiously!

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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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## On Poetry

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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](mailto:HoJoNews@aol.com)

## A Contest for Published Poets

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If you have a recent self-published book of poetry, I have a credible (and rare!) contest for you! It's from Writers' Digest. Find it at

[https://app.wizehive.com/apps/WDSelfPub2017?utm\\_source=competition&utm\\_campaign=wd-tjo-comp-170209-SPUB-POEM&utm\\_content=920251\\_WC170209+V2&utm\\_medium=email](https://app.wizehive.com/apps/WDSelfPub2017?utm_source=competition&utm_campaign=wd-tjo-comp-170209-SPUB-POEM&utm_content=920251_WC170209+V2&utm_medium=email)

This contest isn't cheap but the possible benefits of winning outweigh that for self-published books and authors who can afford it. It's a rare chance for self-published books to be noticed and honored by a prestigious entity.

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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](http://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](mailto:hojonews@aol.com). And I set up the ad using your book cover image, pitch, and link.

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**Tip:** In her *Publicity Hound* newsletter, Joan Stewart says, "When journalists, bloggers or casual visitors arrive at your website, surprise them with a list of "5 Fun Facts You Didn't Know About Me" in your media kit." She shares one her fun facts with subscribers. It made me think of the time my father brought home a single vinyl recording of "I'm My Own Grandpa." I didn't know I had memorized the words until about forty years later when I realized I had memorized every weird word of the song. (I was only about eight when I played the record over and over again!) The trigger was a story my husband told me about his extended family living in the city where we were about to relocate! Every word came back to me as we traveled Route 66 west!

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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>.

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## Thank You

These are, indeed, thank yous but it occurs to me that many **SharingwithWriters** 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 for marketing your own book.

## Thanks to Suzanne Lieurance

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. . . the guru behind the morning nudge, blogs and tons of other ways to help authors succeed including her marketing blog for letting me share [why you may not have a "true" publisher](#) and what you can do about it on her Working Writers club blog. Learn more about her at [www.workingwriterscoach.com](http://www.workingwriterscoach.com) and [www.morningnudge.com](http://www.morningnudge.com).

## Thanks to Dawn at Dawn Reviews Books. . .

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. . . for the lovely and through review of [How to Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically: The ins and outs of using free reviews to build and sustain a writing career](#) for her blog where she reviews both new and old books. Find it at <http://writedm.livejournal.com/15242.html>

## Thanks to Garry of InTouch Rugby . . .

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. . . for including Magdalena Ball's and my chapbook of [love poetry](#) for Valentine's in their Valentine gift guide. The guide was for their huge following of Rugby fans who need Valentine's gifts. The lesson, of course, is not to be so bound by rules that you don't pitch someone who might be interested. The list of places he included it (all for free) was two pages long! Find more about him samples of his magazines at [www.intouchrugby.com](http://www.intouchrugby.com) & [www.rugbyrep.com](http://www.rugbyrep.com) and <http://www.intouchrugby.com/magazine/summer-fitness-4/> t

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My great cover designer for the HowToDoltFrugally series of books for writers has a gift for you. He says, "My free posters feature 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](#)

## **Entering Contests to Build up your Name and Skill**

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**By Mindy Phillips Lawrence**

Every year, publishers, writing groups, and online sites offer writers the ability to enter contests. When you have work you can submit different places, you have a chance to win—maybe first place. If not first, maybe second or third. Contests give you a platform to advertise your work and introduce your name to readers and publishers. It also gives you another credit to add to your creative resume.

Avenues are available to submit many kinds of writing: Short stories, poetry, micro-fiction. There are well-known competitions and lesser known competitions. You can win anything from several thousand dollars to copies of the literary magazine where your piece placed.

In order to win, it's important to become familiar with accepted contest submission processes. It's also important to learn the different types of work accepted and to read other writers' works who have won those competitions to see what judges are seeking. It helps YOU grow as a writer.

I've listed several places below that have competitions open. Most hold contests yearly. Get in there and submit. I'm right behind you.

## **LINKS**

### **Writer's Digest Competitions**

<http://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions>

### **Funds for Writers Contests**

<http://fundsforwriters.com/contests/>

### **The Write Life 27 Free Writing Contests**

<https://thewritelife.com/27-free-writing-contests/>

### **Poets and Writers—Grants and Contests**

<https://www.pw.org/grants>

### **Finding Christian Writers Contests**

<http://www.jerryjenkins.com/writing-contests/>

### **Postcard Contest**

[http://www.geist.com/contests/postcard-contest/?gclid=CjwKEAiAoaXFBRCNhautiPvnqzoSJABzHd6hbMS5paFgxi-omtIPE6hXuR5IUtxdVBhP7Gj9UpfnrBoC5Kvw\\_wcB](http://www.geist.com/contests/postcard-contest/?gclid=CjwKEAiAoaXFBRCNhautiPvnqzoSJABzHd6hbMS5paFgxi-omtIPE6hXuR5IUtxdVBhP7Gj9UpfnrBoC5Kvw_wcB)

### **Writer's Magazine--Contests**

<http://www.writermag.com>

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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, doing calligraphy, and assembling a book based on the best of her Itty-Bitty columns that first appeared in this SharingwithWriters newsletter.


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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 gives authors insight on how to convince retail outlets that a partnership (like a book signing, workshop or seminar) will benefit their bottom line. Find more about the whole series at [www.howtodoitfrugally.com/retailers\\_books.htm](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/retailers_books.htm)


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## Carolyn's Appearances and Teaching

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 **New!** Robin Quinn, an editor extraordinaire and producer of seminars and panels, will have tons of questions for me when I present at PALA, an LA subsidiary of Independent Book Publishers of America (IBPA) on "Tapping the Power or Reviews for Publishing and Career Building." It will be on March 13 at 7 pm at the Veterans Memorial Building, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City, CA. at the corner of Overland and Culver in the greater Los Angeles area. The event includes a Q&A and networking time. Reach Robin's Word for Word business including coaching and professional writing and editing services at [quinnrobin@aol.com](mailto:quinnrobin@aol.com). Her Web site is [www.writingandediting.biz](http://www.writingandediting.biz) and her Twitter moniker is @RobinQuinninLA.

 **NEW!** I am excited about presenting at Kathleen Sexton Kaiser's launch of her new series of seminars this spring—Indie Author Seminars—for the marketing session on Sunday, April 9. I would love to see you there. Learn more at <http://www.indieauthorseminars.com> It will be in Camarillo, CA. so please mark your calendars now and start making plans. Camarillo is beautiful and historical so give yourself an extra day to see the sights! Kathleen is an indie author, the President of Small Publishers, Artists and Writers Network ([SPAWN](#)), producer of [805 Writers Conference in Ventura, CA](#), and was named Publicist of the Year for 2016 by the Book Publicists of Southern California. All those who attend my seminar will receive a copy of my multi award-winning *The Frugal Book Promoter* courtesy of Kathleen.

 **NEW!** Philadelphia area folks, watch for news about my participation at a big new writers' conference in your area.

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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](http://www.sharingwithwriters.blogspot.com). Sign up in the left-hand column. Find related resources by scrolling to the bottom of the blog.

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*In paperback and as an e-book. How To Get Great Book Reviews Frugally and Ethically: The ins and outs of using free reviews to build and sustain a writing career. See the prepromotion page on the HowToDoItFrugally Web site at <http://bit.ly/GreatBkReviews>.*



*The Great First Impression Book Proposal: Everything You Need To Know About Selling Your Book in 30 Minutes or Less*  
Order for paperback or e-book:  
<http://bit.ly/BookProposals>



*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>

### **The Survive and Thrive Series for Retailers (Authors need to know about retailing, too!)**



*A Retailer's Guide to Frugal In-Store Promotions: How To Increase Profits and Spit in the Eyes of Economic Downturns with Thrifty Events and Sales Techniques*  
Order from Amazon in paperback or e-book:  
<http://bit.ly/RetailersGuide>



*Frugal and Focused Tweeting for Retailers: Tweaking Your Tweets and Other Tips for Integrating Your Social Media Order*  
paperback or e-book from Amazon: <http://bit.ly/RetailersTweet>



*Your Blog, Your Business: A Retailer's Frugal Guide to Getting Customer Loyalty and Sales—Both In-Store and Online*  
Sponsored by Gift Shop Magazine <http://giftshopmag.com>  
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>



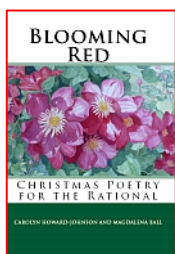
*She Wore Emerald Then: Reflections on Motherhood,* a chapbook of poetry. Coauthored with Magdalena Ball. To order paperback, Kindle, or e-book: <http://bit.ly/MothersDayKind>



*Imagining the Future: Ruminations on Fathers and Other Masculine Apparitions.* Coauthored with Magdalena Ball To order as an e-book or paperback: <http://bit.ly/Imagining>



*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>

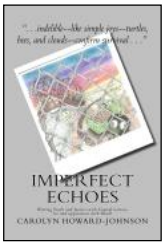
Part of the Celebration Series by Carolyn Howard-Johnson and Magdalena Ball, this little \$6.95 book was written with passion and love for those who understand all the ramifications of the holiday that dominates celebrations throughout most of the English-speaking world. It is a lovely tuck-in gift that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

**For special help for fiction writers**

<http://www.fictionmarketing.com>