

"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

November 09, 2015

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

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

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 booboos. We're all
human. This newsletter is issued as often as my
writing schedule allows. It's usually long, but I promise
you it's full of resources you can use.

This newsletter is powered by AuthorsDen.com.

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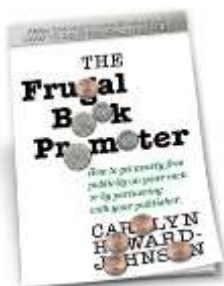
Me: Mmmm. Because I didn't think of doing that? What an opportunity missed! The translation for this would be "Duhhhh!"

So my letter to you this November is about opportunities missed. November for novels. But also about assuming that our "writer" stuff isn't suitable for general consumption—like an editorial page! And about how all those meaningless national days like "National Popcorn Day" could actually mean an "in" for your local newspaper's editorial page if the main character in your novel has gotten fat on Movie Popcorn and Saturated Fat or if your story is set in South Carolina where their favorite elected politician just got excluded from the recent Fox debate.

It's also about, my mother's favorite motto: "You won't know if you don't try (or pitch)!"

Here's the *LA Times* link to the Op-Ed piece: <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-1105-bransford-nanowrimo-tips-20151105-story.html>. It's not an article that will give someone who already knows a lot about writing a novel, but you'll be able to see how something like this approach to using your writing as part of your marketing campaign could be VERY good for your book!

## Happy writing, marketing, and editing Carolyn



**PS:** Bookbaby.com's offer of my e-book for free is done. It was a two month agreement that extended to three months because it was so successful. Watch next week's newsletter for my rundown on how "free" worked out for me, and why I still think "free" is one of the best ways to promote your book. If you are not convinced that "free" can make a huge difference for you, I know you'll want to read it. I also know you'll be interested in learning the two kinds of "free." Partnership "free" and on-your-own "free."

In the meantime you can see what my take on "free" has always been with a copy of not- too-late-to-take-advantage-of [The Frugal Book Promoter](#) in paper or as an e-book. Bookbaby called it a "classic" and has helped make it so.

**PPS:** TRUTH Anyone who believes in the power of words will love this movie. Dan Rather tells us that this film is truly about the "truth." It's also about politics and intrigue. I love it at least in part because I started in journalism. I experienced some grief and loss in the watching of it, but I also came away with renewed hope because this movie got made. More here: <http://dld.bz/dY34N> to follow my Twitter mini reviews go to #MovieReviews.



**PPPS:** You have probably heard but in case you haven't, the publishing industry and indie authors in particular have lost a friend. Dan Poynter died on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. He will be missed.

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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](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.  
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## Soaking Up Stephen King’s Wisdom

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My husband, Lance, sent me a link to a Huffington Post article straight from the writing wisdom of Stephen King’s pen. I thought I’d share it with you. Lance writes plays and wrote the book [What Foreigners Need To Know About America From A To Z](#) published in simplified Chinese, Ukrainian, and English and soon again in another country that speaks Chinese (not yet released). We see almost every movie that comes out and believe in learning more about our craft from movies and any other writing including copywriting, screenplays, poetry, journalism, and all fiction genres. Find the article here: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/screencraft/17-screenwriting-lessons-b_8216844.html. And have you read King’s [On Writing](#)? It is truly the epitome of that old cliché “must-read.”

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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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Tip: Deltina Hay who often chairs the Indie Book Publishers of America board of directors says, “Facebook has been tweaking its feed algorithm for some time now, with the result that fewer of your followers are seeing your page updates and you are seeing fewer of theirs. But in 2015 the company plans to get still more aggressive in monitoring and removing what it deems ‘overly promotional posts.’” I imagine my posts that aren’t personal—the ones that share my favorite resources for writers may be censored. Therefore I’ll be making some changes; spending less time on Facebook, not feeding my #FrugalBookPromoTips and #SharingwithWriters tidbits from Twitter to Facebook and a few other tweaks of my own! It’s sad, but this kind of thing is one of the reasons that many experts advise authors (and others) not to rely too much on networks controlled by others.

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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.



Accessible Contests



I generally don't recommend contests that I haven't either entered or had some success with and that doesn't necessarily mean winning. 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 don't discriminate against self-published!

WinningWriters.com is my favorite resource for finding calls for submissions and contests that can be trusted. They send their newsletter to your e-box monthly. I try to make it a practice to enter at least one contest on their list each time I receive it. And many contests on their lists are free.



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 book, [The Frugal Editor](http://TheFrugalEditor.com) 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.



Editorial

Amazon Attacks Fake Reviews and Reviewers



Amazon is suing more than 1,000 writers for selling recommendations (and reviews!) for books (and other items) they didn't buy.

If you have read [The Frugal Book Promoter](http://TheFrugalBookPromoter.com) you know that I recommend writing reviews of other authors' books as a way to network and as a way to give back to the industry that makes books possible. In fact, a free and unbiased review is the nicest thing you can give to an author as a token of appreciation. And one of the best places you can post your review is on Amazon where it has the best chance of being read by thousands of readers. There are, of course, other places to post them including your own blog, Goodreads, and other sites. You can also volunteer to review for sites like BookPleasures, MyShelf, and Midwest Book Review that depend on those who love to read to keep their sites going even when profit margins are slim.

It is reported that Amazon is looking at reviews that are too glowing. That's fair. Professional reviews can be rave reviews but no book is perfect. In fact, a review is more trustworthy (and therefore sells more books) if it does point out places where the book is weak. Such critiques needn't be snarky. They can be tactful, firm, and helpful to readers and the author alike.

Perhaps it was the offers on Fiverr.com that finally ticked Amazon off enough to do this. Many offered reviews for \$5. And some of those *promised* five-star reviews. And, yes, this is—to put it mildly—unethical. You've probably seen me discourage authors and publisher from paying for reviews in the past because they aren't credible. People like

bookstore owners, librarians, and other publishing industry professionals generally know when they have been paid for even if they come from *Publishers Weekly* or *Kirkus*. In fact, those magazine put paid-for reviews in a separate place or mark them differently so their readers will know! Reviews that aren't credible are a waste of money and time. And, did I mention unethical? Ahem!

Some of these reviews are offering to post reviews using multiple accounts and IP addresses. I say, go after them, Amazon! What they are doing ruins the process for everyone!

Nevertheless, I've seen Amazon pull reviews based on flimsy excuses in the past and so I worry.

The trouble with pulling reviews too aggressively is that they may ascertain bad reviews on whether a reviewer bought his or her review copy by using their own records to make that judgment. That seems like a good idea at first, but their site is not the only one that sells any given title, so if their algorithms are picking up reviews of items not purchased from them, they may be wrong, terribly wrong.

Here is why:

- It is a publishing tradition that publishers and writers provide books to those who write reviews of their book (s). They would not show up as sales, but it is ethical.
- Many who write reviews of a book or product may have received it as a gift for their birthday or a holiday.
- Many readers and reviewers write reviews of books or products that they buy at a bookstore or any other retail outlet.
- Some may write reviews of books they borrow from the library or buy from secondhand bookstores.

So, are they fake reviews? I don't know how Amazon is selecting those it will sue, (and I know they have plenty of money to waste if their selection is off base and they lose!), but I think they are once again on very shaky ground.

In the meantime, if you review for Amazon (and you should), be liberal with disclaimers like this:

"Disclaimer: This reviewer received a book in exchange for an unbiased and fair review. No fee was charged either the author or the publisher."

And do avoid touting your own book. The link used in the review (the one that Amazon provides) takes readers back to your profile page. That, dear author/reviewer should be enough for you. Offering this to authors and reviewers is indeed a gift from Amazon and we should not abuse the hand that feeds us.

Note: For more on this topic see the *LA Times'* Technology page in their business section, Thursday, October 2, 2015.

CHJ

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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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Resource: Beth Cox of Midwest Book Reviews often talks tech in her

newsletter and has a "Technical Resources" subsection in their "Publisher Resources" links page at http://www.midwestbookreview.com/bookbiz/pub_res.htm#technical

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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.

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Tip: When you and your cover designer (or publisher) are considering a cover for your book, consider cover designer Lon Kirschner's practice of avoiding portrayal of a book's character on the cover. He says, "I don't want to impose my idea of what someone looks like because what I love about reading is that everyone sees characters differently. We are reading the same script but watching a slightly different movie on the screen."

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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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Quote: In an article on the subject of newsletters for writers, Jane Friedman says, ". . . e-mail has so far proven to be a more long term and stable tool than social media, which is constantly shifting." Another advantage: "You truly own your e-mail list." Many don't realize that isn't true on social media where you will be contributing to the saleable lists of Internet giants. Oh! One of the advantages (even if you only send out a few issues of your letter a year), it will keep your name and what you do in front of a specific audience. Even if they don't open your mail or read it!

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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, 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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TIP: Fiction writers often don't know what to blog about. To get ideas, read books in your genre as part of your ongoing effort to grow your skills so you can make those reading experiences into blog posts. Here are other ideas: Post a little piece about what you've recently published or about the publishers or bloggers kind enough to publish your work. Post links to poems or short stories you've read along with your comments. Or write full reviews (though) that's not necessary.

You could just go on a bit about what you've noticed about style, setting, characters—whatever! In fact, mini comments on what you've been reading could be recycled to...well, Twitter!

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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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Tip: Did you know that MailChimp is free for you to use up to 2,000 contacts?

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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

Author Successes

Only subscribers' successes are listed in this section. Thus, I do not pick up news from general media releases because 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.

No one sent me a success this month! I know some of you must have had one! Remember, grassroots marketing sometimes brings unforeseen (and amazing!) results.

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Tip: Building your contact lists is one of the most important things you can do for the health of your book and your writing career. If you have a form on your Web site to glean names, don't ask for too much information. If you do, you may lose possible subscribers (and, thus, future fans). Email addresses are all you need. If you ask for a name, make it optional. All you really need is that e-mail address.

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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>.

On Language:

As you may know if you've been hanging around this SharingwithWriters newsletter very long, I am a bit of an amateur linguist. Thus I thought I'd share this with you: "Linguists call combinations of words that go together "collocations" because words *collocate* or are placed together to express meaning. Learning collocations or word combinations improves your ability to express ideas in a fluent and understandable way. Knowing how words combine to express meaning also enables you to avoid overusing words such as *nice, good, pretty much, a lot.*" Read more of this blog article at <http://perezapple.com/englishvocabulary/>. By the way, I'm wondering why it spelled with two Ls. The prefix "co" is certainly not spelled with an "l." Maybe the "col" is taken from "collate." Yeah, I'll probably look it up. Will you? (-:

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>

Opportunities

Perfect Opportunity to Begin or Expand Your Speaking Resume

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West Coast Writers Conferences is one of the few writers' conferences that provides both high quality conference experience and remain as inclusive as possible for new presenters and panelists. They invite you to appear and speak as an honored guest at the **Digital Author and Indie Publishing Conference February 26-27-28, 2016** at the Los Angeles Valley College. Director Tony Todaro says, "While many speakers/faculty are regulars, we are always looking to expand our offerings, as attendees have come from as far away as Switzerland, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, as well as around the country and Southern California. We offer attendees the opportunity to meet and pitch agents, at no extra charge, by appointments that we manage. Plus we like to provide a daily "Meet the Pros" panel each day, so attendees can meet the agents and publishers 'du jour', hear what each of you are looking for, and how you like to be approached. This unique approach provides for a lower-key, professional environment, without the pressures of speed dating; which professionals appreciate."

Learn more here: <http://www.wcwriters.com/da> **If you would like to speak/appear at this event, and have never submitted a talent/faculty profile, you may do so at <http://wcwriters.com/faculty/talentprofile.html>.** Make your pitch to present or be on a panel to Tony Todaro.



## Lists That Save You Time and Help You Promote Better

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Jackie Lapin offers 200 plus radio shows and they all want you. They want you if you write books about personal development, have a career in that field, or speak on that subject.

Contact her at: [Conscious Media Relations](http://ConsciousMediaRelations.com), (818) 707-1473 or e-mail her at jackie@consciousmediarelations.com

Here are some other lists, too:

- **80+ Article Subscription/Submission List (\$350)**
With the proliferation of websites that feature self-help, spiritual and conscious living content, there is a great opportunity for you to dispense your wisdom across a wide platform.!
- **80+ Paid and Unpaid Book Review Sites (\$350)**
Why hope that reviewers will find or request a review copy of your book — when you can actively solicit them? These sites span everything from Publisher's Weekly and Kirkus Reviews to niche sites.
- **275+ Health and Spirituality Websites Requesting Guest Blogs (\$275)**
If you are primarily a health and spirituality author, then you are perfect for the many blogs that are seeking guest bloggers.
- **Key Teleseminar Producers and Hosts (\$350)**
Are you looking to join up with existing teleseminars/ telesummits, or producers who book these? Get a good head start on your next teleseminar by connecting with these hosts and producers.
- **80+ Book Social Networking Sites (\$200)**
One of the ways that authors are finding most effective for increasing book sales is for active engagement with consumers through book social networks. On these sites, you can secure reviews for other members to see, get your book bookmarked or added to shelves for future reading, conduct giveaways and promotions, do Q&As, blog, correspondent with other members and much more.
- **All Top Award Submission Sites for Nonfiction Books (\$100)**
Wouldn't you like your book to be considered for commendation and awards in competitive contests that select the best books of the year in your genre? This is the most comprehensive list that currently exists!
- **75+ Mind/Body/Spirit and Wellness Networks (\$75)**
If you are committed to tracking down radio shows that are a perfect match for your message, than a very quick way to start the process is with our comprehensive list of specialized radio networks.
- **2600+ Bookstores – General and Metaphysical Books (\$200)**
Are you looking to arrange book signings at book stores that are in alignment with your message and mission? Or perhaps you would like to contact stores directly about carrying your book? Here's a list of more than

2,600 "friendly" book and metaphysical store contacts, along with the emails and phone numbers.

Be a Reviewer: Get Free Books and Network

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Entra Publishing is adding reader/reviewers to our team! Anyone who loves to read is welcome! . . .Reviewers get great (free) books to read and all we ask for is an honest review on Goodreads, your blog, or wherever you would like to post it.

You'll only be notified to review books to read and review when they match the types of books YOU are interested in reading. Just to be clear, these are unpaid positions, but you will end up with more books that you can read! Also, our best and most professional reviewers are the ones that are first offered paid positions when we need to add to our beta reading and editorial staff. [http://www.entradapublishing.com/marketing/review\\_team.html](http://www.entradapublishing.com/marketing/review_team.html)

Also, we are running a contest online for a free editorial book review from one of our professional editors. We're awarding one review a week and the link is: <http://www.entradapublishing.com/contest.html>

### **Plan To Attend My Fave Writers Conference of All Time . .**

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Mark your calendars! Registration for the 2016 Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop opens Dec. 1. Who are the keynoters and faculty? Check [our blog](#) next month for the amazing line-up. The [2016 Erma Bombeck Writing Competition](#) will open Jan. 4.

Webinar to Get Help Upgrading Your Amazon Exposure

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I've just created a new series of "Ask Penny" webinars to ensure I'm answering the questions that are most important to YOU!

Each webinar is free. Each lasts 30 minutes, and focuses on a broad topic.

Find out more about submitting questions in advance (to better ensure yours gets answered) and sign up to receive the webinar log in info here:

<https://authormarketingexperts.leadpages.co/askpenny/>

*At the end of the day, it's only partly what info I think you need; what YOU want to learn more about means just as much!*

Happy Marketing,

Penny Sansevieri

## Selling Your Books for Charity at BookEm

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[BookEm](#) encourages authors to register for their table at their annual conference and book fair combination. I encourage authors to consider it because a percentage of book sold at the fair goes to literacy programs. It is held at Robeson College in Lumberton, NC. Contact Patricia Terrell, patricia@pnterrell.com for more information.



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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: You already know how to hook a reader with fiction or nonfiction. Now apply that to your marketing. Divide a long article into installments to get a reader to come back to your blog. How could you use a cliffhanger at the end of a blog to get readers to come back? The Laemmle theater chain in LA poses a multiple choice question; the audience doesn't want to miss the answer so they keep their attention focused on the screen at least long enough for the answer to appear. What if you played a game and had readers find clues to a prize in a newsletter? What if you did that every single issue?

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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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Feature

Promoting Hard-to-Promote Books

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- I've always said that the two most difficult to promote genres--poetry and literary fiction--can be promoted like any other book. The trick is, authors have to work harder at it. By that I mean that rereading our books--no matter what genre they are or topic or theme they cover--is essential. You put your marketing bonnet on and take notes on ideas that come to you as you read. So other than the obvious, you list what is in your book that might appeal to a feature editor, a radio host, a TV producer or any other gatekeeper. I'll give you an example, my most recent poetry book is Imperfect Echoes: Writing Truth and Justice with Capital Letters, lie and

oppression with Small

([http://howtodoitfrugally.com/more\\_on\\_imperfect\\_echoes.htm](http://howtodoitfrugally.com/more_on_imperfect_echoes.htm)) It's very serious compared to past poetry chapbooks from the Celebration Series that are inspired by holidays like Mother's Day and Father's Day (they are poetry greeting cards). So how am I going to promote it when I can't offer a humorous poem for them to use to spice up whatever they are doing for the holidays?

- I'll find a poem that could be offered to feminist bloggers and radio hosts.
- I may reach even higher for those covering the Planned Parenthood/Congressional things going on.
- I will find a poem I could offer free to non profits, especially the one that I'll be sending proceeds from the book to, Amnesty International.
- I'll try to think of similar organizations that might be interested in a couple poems about the future of the universe, like Greenpeace.
- There is a poem inspired by an audition I did for a commercial so newspapers that cover the entertainment industry might be interested in that one.
- Each of those categories are also supported by several trade journals that might be interested in a free reprint or an article or an essay.
- There are lots of poems in it about war; so what about Vet's organizations, military newspapers, writing groups, etc.

As you can see, finding the right medium is not a magic bullet. Each book is different. Each title. Each author. We must apply the same creativity to finding markets for our promotion as we did to write the book. And each time we write a new one, we may have to start all over again.

Here's a quick example of a success. Magdalena Ball, my coauthor of our [Celebration Series](#) of chapbooks, sold our Mother's Day Chapbook ([She Wore Emerald Then](#)) to an online florist company to give away to customers who ordered a Mother's Day bouquet to send to their mothers via wire.

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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-ebook/dp/B009RBJW3E>

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Feature

## Getting to the Nitty-Gritty of a Pitch

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The query letter you write to media gatekeepers is in fact a pitch. It has several parts to it and all the parts are important including that part that includes your one or two line pitch.

People tell authors to pitch to the media; they even tell us how to write a pitch. But only sort of. Here are three things your pitch (query letter) can do to keep a gatekeeper interested long enough to book you:

1. Your headline or first sentence must capture the reader. Ideas for that? A statistic that so off-the-wall that it's hard to believe (but it's true). Make an

outrageous statement. Be so clever with rhyme, alliteration, or pun that the gatekeeper just plain wants to read some more. But most of all, it should be about something that is somehow related to the media gatekeepers demographic (meaning their reader or audience) so it will be immediately obvious how it will fit into their own plans or business needs.

2. Throw in adjectives. No, not "awesome" or "great." That's up to each gatekeeper to decide if your story idea is awesome or great. Words like "award-winning," "multi award-winning," "bestselling" or "two decades of experience."
3. Your release or query must be about something more than "I published a book." Substance. Concrete. Useful. Powerful. Think "benefits" when you write this sentence or paragraph.
4. Offer exclusivity. Maybe offer exclusivity with a deadline. You can make that offer to someone else when that deadline passes.
5. Let the media know that you are equipped to handle their needs. With experience in radio (or whatever) as an example. With Toastmaster experience. As a team leader and speaker in the business world.
6. Close with a sentence that makes it clear you'd like to provide them with anything that would make their job easier.
7. Don't ask questions. It's your job to make it so clear they won't have to ask any.

So, what sells? If you can angle your pitch around current new, sex, money, kids, celebrity, better health, travel or sports, go for it. You'll be ahead of the game. Just make sure you send your pitch to the right editors/gatekeepers for each topic. Celebrity? Entertainment or politics. Money? The business section of your newspaper. Kids? Some women's magazines. You get the idea.

Bonus tip: Learn about new Twitter cards at <https://dev.twitter.com/cards/overview>.

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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>.

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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).**

## Poet Who Changed the World

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A poet once started a revolution. Read this about one who changed the face of Europe: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A1ndor_Pet%C5%91fi.
~Dr. Bob Rich, editor of his [Bobbing Around](#) and author of [Ascending](#).

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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 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.

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Editing Tip: Keep in mind that in some circles the word "graffiti" does not have negative connotations. Travel to Europe—places like Prague where architecture is often embellished with *tromp l'oeil* details like carved friezes--or read in disciplines like archaeology and you'll find it means simply an inscription or drawing made on public surfaces. You'll sometimes see variations on the spelling like "graffito" which is a tipoff that it is being used that way.

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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 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 Denise Alicea . . .

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. . . for letting subscribers and visitors to her Pen Muse blog know about my new release, *Imperfect Echoes*. Find it and leave a comment at <http://wp.me/p4ceV8-3bF>. While you're there, put on your marketing bonnet and think of a way you might network with Denise.



## Thanks to Dr. Bob Rich . . .

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. . . for publishing my humorous poem from the holiday entry in the Celebration Series of poetry chapbooks, *Blooming Red*, in his Bobbin' Around newsletter. "Christmas Magic Wrought by Google's Keyword Elves" is listed under "poetry" but Bob says it could also be under the "Fun" category along with a fun poem called "Horsing Around." Find them both at <https://bobrich18.wordpress.com/2015/11/01/bobbing-around-volume-15-number-5/#POETRY>. And here is the link to Bob's whole eclectic newsletter: <http://wp.me/p3Xihq-y4>. What category could you make some of your book news fit into?

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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.



Thanksgiving for Writers



By Mindy Phillips Lawrence

Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks for what has aided you through your life and what has helped you grow. Each of us makes it more than just a turkey dinner in our own way. Recently, I read a book by author Bob Baker who I know from my time in St. Louis. I’ve seen him on and off for years and have watched him mature as both a writer, an artist and as an improvisational theater instructor. Now he’s has a book out that offers help to other creative artists showing them how to market their work. He and his book reminded me of how much I owe to others while I’ve been on this dingy path I’ve taken as a word weaver and artist.

People like Bob are on my thankful list—as well as my first freelance writing instructor Bev Sninchak (Bev Walton-Porter).

It’s time again to celebrate the individuals who have helped us. It’s also time to reach out and be the help others need to grow.

I’m thankful for:

Authors’ books and workshops that help me grow as a writer:

- Anything by Carolyn Howard-Johnson (of course)
- The first book I read on freelance writing by Bev Walton-Porter (Sninchak)
- Crescent Dragonwagon’s Fearless Writing seminars in Eureka Springs, AR
- Stephen King’s wonderful book, *On Writing*
- The works of Dan Poynter who has left us way too soon. He parachuted into my life years ago when I went to one of his workshops.

I must add to this list my own quirky mind which dreams up odd ideas and tries to expand them into stories. Not everyone tries to do this.

What are YOU thankful for as a writer? Let’s see those lists.

LINKS

Bob Baker, *The Empowered Artist*

http://www.amazon.com/Empowered-Artist-Musicians-Difference-Creativity/dp/151421511X/ref=la_B001K7PWBO_1_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1447009644&sr=1-5

Bev Sninchak (Walton-Porter), *Secrets of the Freelance Writer* (Kindle)

<http://www.amazon.com/Secrets-Professional-Freelancer-Bev-Walton-Porter->

[ebook/dp/B004QT6XZC/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1447009814&sr=1-1&keywords=bev+walton-porter](http://www.amazon.com/Para-Promotion-Program-Step-Step/dp/1568601654/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1447009814&sr=1-1&keywords=bev+walton-porter)

Dan Poynter, *A Step-by-Step Guide to Successful Book Promotion*

http://www.amazon.com/Para-Promotion-Program-Step-Step/dp/1568601654/ref=sr_1_4?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1447009933&sr=1-4&keywords=dan+poynter

Stephen King, *On Writing* (Tenth Anniversary Edition)

http://www.amazon.com/Writing-10th-Anniversary-Memoir-Craft/dp/1439156816/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1447010096&sr=1-1&keywords=stephen+king+on+writing

Crescent Dragonwagon, author and Fearless Writing instructor

<http://dragonwagon.com/>

Carolyn Howard-Johnson, *The Frugal Book Promoter* (second edition)

http://www.amazon.com/Frugal-Book-Promoter-partnering-Howtodoitfrugally/dp/1463743297/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1447010552&sr=8-1&keywords=Carolyn+howard+johnson

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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 or more about the whole series at www.howtodoitfrugally.com/retailers_books.htm

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Tip: People often ask me bookish legal questions. I can weigh in, but I don't have a license! Instead try Helen Sedwick's book, [*Self Publisher's Legal Handbook*](#). Learn more about her at <http://helensedwick.com>.

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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 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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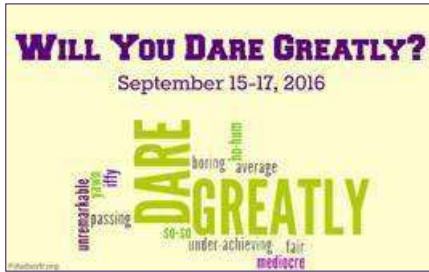
Carolyn's Appearances and Teaching

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**New!**  Watch for the next Greater Los Angeles Writers' Society (GLAWS) conference, the **Digital Author and Indie Publishing Conference February 26-27-28, 2016**. This event has grown larger each year because of its wide focus on the business of writing, from working publishers other than the Big Five, developing pitches to developing a platform, understanding the terms and tech of the digital age, as well as how to create profit centers. The conference offers highly informative, educational, and inspirational sessions tailored for today's

authors, presented in a progressive manner, so attendees learn all weekend. Whether they plan to publish traditionally, through an Indie or Small Press Publisher, or Self Publish, this conference offers the choices they need to know to succeed. The conference attracts new authors and veteran writers from around the country and overseas.

Learn more here: <http://www.wcwriters.com/da> Director is Tony Tondaro.



**Coming in 2016!** 📖 I will present at Judith Briles' "Dare Greatly" in Denver. The conference is Sept 15-17, 2016. Watch for more in this space but start making plans now! Reach Dr. Judith Briles at [judith@briles.com](mailto:judith@briles.com).

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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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**Wordstuff™**

**Something to Make Writers Smile**

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, writer love them! This is one of the winners in the International Pun Contest.

Evidence has been found that William Tell and his family were avid bowlers. Unfortunately, all the Swiss league records were destroyed in a fire...And so we'll never know for whom the Tells bowled.

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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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## Ordering Information

### The HowToDoItFrugally Series for Writers

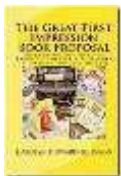


*Frugal Book Promoter: How to Do What Your Publisher Won't*

Order as a paperback or e-book:  
<http://bit.ly/FrugalBookPromo>



*The Frugal Editor: Put Your Best Book Forward to Avoid Humiliation and Ensure Success* Order for e-book or as paperback: <http://bit.ly/FrugalEditorKind>



*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:  
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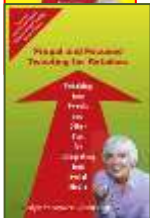
*Great Little Last-Minute Editing Tips for Writers: The Ultimate Frugal Booklet for Avoiding Word Trippers and Crafting Gatekeeper-Perfect Copy* For paperback or e-book: <http://bit.ly/Last-MinuteEditing>

### 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:* <http://bit.ly/ThisIsThePlace>

*Harkening: A Collection of Stories Remembered:*  
<http://bit.ly/TrueShortStories>

### **Carolyn's Poetry**

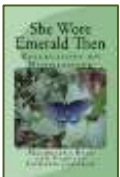


Find Magdalena Ball's and my poetry fanpage at  
<http://facebook.com/CelebrationSeriesPoetryChapbooks>



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

Order e-book: <http://bit.ly/CherishedPulse>  
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>

## Contact Information

### Websites

<http://HowToDoItFrugally.com>

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