

~Mindy Lawrence's Itty Bitty Column: "Defining Yourself"
~Carolyn's Appearances and Teaching
~Wordstuff™

This Issue Only

~Feature: **Kickstarter: Beth Cox Thinks Your Time Might Be Better Spent**

~Feature: **Borrowing Green Formatting Ideas from the Smithsonian**

Join me

For more writers' resources on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/FrugalBookPromo>

For resources and more personal fun on Facebook:

<http://facebook.com/carolynhowardjohnson>

For writers' resources of all kinds:

<http://HowToDoItFrugally.com>

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 the most effective or useful way to distribute a newsletter. Though I try to avoid the fancy (and less frugal) HTML services, the technical aspect of sending out a newsletter has been giving me fits. I'm finally glad to be offering this letter on my own Indie terms. You can now download the current and recent back issues on my Web site at http://howtodoitfrugally.com/newsletter_copies.htm

~~~~~

## Note from Carolyn

Dear Subscribers:

In a newsletter I received recently, a picture showed an author wearing a shirt he had printed up—probably for a book fair—that said, "Please Buy My Books." It was visual. The author was adorable. His enthusiasm for his product shined through his face, right through the photo, right into my office.

The trouble is, he had got his marketing message wrong. It should have read "Let Me Tell You What My Book Can Do for You." Yeah, not as short but infinitely more to the point. Maybe the back of the shirt could include a bulleted list of things his book could do for

most readers (though no one book will reach every reader!). People who are waiting behind you in the food line at a book fair when you're wearing a shirt like that will have plenty of time to read bullets! (-:

The first rule of marketing anything is this: It is not about *you*. It is about what you can do for others. Make your readers feel it. Steak sizzles and Coke makes you happy when it fizzes. You can feel the passion behind these products, too. It's just done in a way that can actually turn someone on instead of off.

## Joy, Happy Writing, Editing, and Promoting!

### Carolyn

**PS:** If you're in the mood for a day at a book fair (and a nice tax deduction for treating yourself), come hear my keynote at the Southern Utah Festival of Books, Associated with the Utah Humanities Council. I'll be speaking at 2 pm on October 19<sup>th</sup> and it's free. If you have a fair coming up, don't forget to use the index of your [Frugal Book Promoter](#) to learn all the tricks for making book fairs successful.



=====  
Needing something more meaningful for the celebrations in your life? Something that stays within your budget? Check out *Cherished Pulse* ([www.budurl.com/CherishedPulse](http://www.budurl.com/CherishedPulse)) (\$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! ([www.budurl.com/Imagining](http://www.budurl.com/Imagining)) (\$6.95). *She Wore Emerald Then* ([www.budurl.com/MotherChapbook](http://www.budurl.com/MotherChapbook)) (\$12.95), for mothers and other women, *Deeper in the Pond*, for the feminists in your life—both men and women ([www.budurl.com/DeeperPond](http://www.budurl.com/DeeperPond)) (\$6.95) and *Blooming Red* ([www.budurl.com/BloomingRed](http://www.budurl.com/BloomingRed)), 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 is at <http://amzn.to/SublimePlanet>.  
=====

## Letters-to-the-Editor

~~~~~

Hi Carolyn,

Awesome newsletter, as always! Very cool you were in a poem. Thanks for the feature on Amazon's new MatchBook. And don't you love it when movies help us figure things out with our manuscripts? :) I also enjoyed reading the article on paying it forward by Karen Cioffi-Ventrice. I'm a firm believer in doing that very thing!

I have a question I'm hoping you can answer: I have heard that book events work better than book signings. What is a book event and how does the actual process of signing/selling books at them work? Keep up the good work.

Take care and enjoy your day!

Much love,

Dawn Coclosure

ANSWER: Dawn, Thank you for the letter. I love knowing that SharingwithWriters is doing my subscribers some good.

Now to your question. The difference: Signings are boring. Events are fun, educational, or both. There are way too many new books out there for an author to draw a crowd by just sitting behind a desk signing books. [The Frugal Book Promoter](#) has a whole section on this topic--along with alternative ideas for you to pitch to bookstores (and alternatives to bookstores—they're not the only retailers out there!). My favorite is doing a seminar on a topic related to my books. Example: When my novel *This Is the Place* was new I did seminars on fighting intolerance. If you have *The Frugal Book Promoter*, use the index and look up "book signings" and other related words like "seminars" and "events," in the index. You'll come away with so-o-o-o many new ideas for your new books.

Oh! The signing comes after the seminar. Or after the reading. Or after you've told your publishing story. Or after you've jazzed up the audience with tips they can use. Trust me. You'll sell far more books after you've related to attendees in some other ways.



Endorsement: "Your book is a tremendous help to me as a first time published author, and the discount for Display Stands 4 You in the back of the new edition was very nice too."

~Ginger K. King, cookbook author, blogs at <https://corkandforkblog.wordpress.com/>

=====

In the News: Subscriber Lance Johnson, now a multi award-winning author of *What Foreigners Need To Know About America From A To Z* (<http://amzn.to/ForeignersAmericaUS>), sends along this link about the Booker Prize. Americans now qualify and the Brits are sure we'll degrade it with the same approach we take to our classless movies and TV. Here's the link:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/21/books/the-backlash-to-the-american-invasion-of-the-booker-prize.html?ref=books&r=2&>

=====

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.

=====

Accessible Contests

~~~~~

### Digital Book Contest Early Bird Offer

I hadn't heard of this contest before. It's for e-books of all kinds other than .pdf e-books. Learn more at

<http://www.wisebearmedia.com/entry-guidelines/>

### Essay Contest from Nonprofit

#### Be the Star You Are!® announces its 10th Annual National Essay Contest

Sponsored by US BANK

**Topic:** What does it mean to be an American?

**Win:** \$100 + Books, Radio Interviews, Publicity, Publishing

More prizes for 2nd place and runner ups.

**Guidelines:** <http://tinyurl.com/EssayContes>

or

[http://starstyleradio.com/Events/Entries/2013/10/18\\_Win\\_%24100\\_.Radip\\_Interviews%2C\\_Books\\_in\\_Essay\\_Contest.html](http://starstyleradio.com/Events/Entries/2013/10/18_Win_%24100_.Radip_Interviews%2C_Books_in_Essay_Contest.html)

## **The Next Global Ebook Award Contest is Now Open**

Contact Becky at [becky@globalebookawards.com](mailto:becky@globalebookawards.com) for help choosing a category or anything else, like maybe a list of what the judges look for in the formatting of the e-books they read. She's great. Or just go to <http://globalebookawards.com>.

=====

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](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com) for an auto subscribe box. Let me know you did it so I can do something similar for you on my Resources for Readers page at [www.howtodoitfrugally.com](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com).

=====

**Tip of the Week:** You can produce ARCS (Advanced Reader Copies) on Createspace by getting your book ready for release but not signing up for any of the distribution channels. Then you order your ARCs (similar to galleys) to send to reviewers. You can even use a cover marked "Reviewer Copy Only. Not for Sale" or some such thing. Then, when you're ready for your real release date, you change out the cover to a new one or at least one without the disclaimer and put it up for distribution. This allows you to give yourself the time you need for pre-release reviews. For more on the subject, check your copy of *The Frugal Book Promoter* (<http://budurl.com/FrugalBkPromo>) and the section on getting reviews at [http://howtodoitfrugally.com/reviews\\_and\\_review\\_journals.htm](http://howtodoitfrugally.com/reviews_and_review_journals.htm)

=====

This is the only site I know that can help novelists, screenwriters, and playwrights get noticed by directors and producers. It's BooksToFilm and it's run by iFOGO's Gene Cartwright. It isn't as frugal as I'd like, but there are times it pays to spend a little to give our work a chance at the bigtime. [http://www.ifogo.com/buy/order\\_chj.html](http://www.ifogo.com/buy/order_chj.html) .

=====

## **Q&A A La Ann Landers**

## Debating KDP Select (Kindle's Promo Track)

~~~~~

QUESTION

[Ester Benjamin Shifren](#) says, "I'm debating whether to do KDP Select, or put my book out there with all the other e-readers. I'm leaning towards the latter. I think some of the magic of Select is wearing off. What's your opinion or thinking on the subject."

ANSWER

I did just the opposite, Ester, though I do think some of the novelty is wearing off. But I also see that there are many more support sites out there for e-book freebies so those benefits could make up for the lack in newness. Also B&N has pulled support for the Nook and the other platforms require another kind of language/format from Kindle's--so it's a whole new formatting job for every one of my books. And Smashwords only pay you through Paypal which I distrust. Other authors also say that their royalties with Smashwords is negligible. Thinking back to my marketing theory that even promotions have to be promoted, that sounds about right. People usually go to buy your book where you send them and none of us can be promoting six to a dozen different e-book sites. Focus. Focus! Mind you that does not mean to focus on paperbacks only. We need to cater to readers who prefer digital, too.

=====

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>.

=====

Author Successes

Only subscribers' successes are listed in this section. Thus, I do not pick up news from general media releases for there is usually 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."

Volume Three of a Law of Attraction Book of Inspiration

~~~~~

*Messages from The Three Sisters*, Volume 3, is a compilation of hundreds of messages shared by the nonphysical, eternal light beings, The Three Sisters, through their scribe, Gregory A. Kompes. These positive, uplifting messages explain our physical existence through the lens of Law of Attraction. Gregory Kompes is president of the Henderson Writers Group, <http://kompes.com/books/>

### **Patricia Fry Keeps Rolling on Her Cat Mystery Series**

~~~~~

Cat-Eye Witness, the second in Patricia Fry's Klepto Cat Mystery series, is at Amazon for Kindle now. Here's a short link you can use to view it. <http://amzn.to/1bJiq0x> She says, "smashing cover, don't you think?"

The first in the series is *Catnapped*. <http://amzn.to/14Ock0W> Check out both ebooks. They're for Kindle and only \$2.99 each.

=====

Here's a bakers' dozen of ideas to make BEA (Book Expo America) and other book shows easier and more productive: <http://sharingwithwriters.blogspot.com/2007/03/bakers-dozen-work-bea-frugal-way.html>. Please leave comments with ideas of your own--and links to your book's sales page.

=====

Tip: Forget Mozart to increase your smarts, creativity, and social skills. A new study shows that reading good literature works! Here's a link to *The New York Times* article http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/03/i-know-how-youre-feeling-i-read-chekhov/?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20131004&r=1 And thanks to Dan Poynter's newsletter for bringing it to my attention (Well, OK. Don't forget Mozart. Just read Chekhov, too! (-:)

=====

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://budurl.com/BookProposals>

=====

Featurette

Borrowing Green Formatting from the Greats . . .

~~~~~



Subscribers to SharingwithWriters know how I feel about learning from the greats—in this case the *Smithsonian* magazine. You may also have figured out that I’m a greenie.

So, ta da! Introducing the paragraph icon. You know, the one that looks like a backward “P” with two heavy lines on the right like the image at the left. But instead of using it as an invisible formatting tool, Smithsonian can see its beauty and makes it a space-saving design element on the opening pages of their feature

articles. That means less white space (which costs money in print magazines), but it also may mean a little more space for nifty illustrations.

They just stick one of these symbols into the copy anywhere there would normally be a new paragraph or the start of a new block of dialogue. To make it ever-so-clear that this is intentional, they make the symbols a nice dark gray—a slight departure from the black used in their fonts. Here is information from Ehow on how to make the paragraph symbol—one that can be *seen*—in your copy.

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_6951039\\_insert-paragraph-sign-word-document.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_6951039_insert-paragraph-sign-word-document.html)

I think this design element would be especially useful for authors’ sell sheets where every fraction of an inch counts. To make your paragraph icons gray, just use your Font Color icon in the ribbon in your Word program.

CHJ

=====

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>

=====

**Tip:** Have you ever thought of trying to get sponsorships to finance your book? Here’s a way to learn more about that instead of blundering through the process without guidance:

<http://thgmwriters.com/authors/sponsorworkshop.html>

=====

I keep adding new resources for authors on my Web site. Please use the huge Resources for Writers section [http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/links\\_for\\_writers.htm](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/links_for_writers.htm). And please let me know if you find broken links. I need your help!

=====

**Tip:** Read author interviews, reviews, contest opportunities, markets, author announcements, and learn about the upcoming contest at Writer Advice, [www.writeradvice.com](http://www.writeradvice.com). For a subscription to our quarterly newsletter, send an e-mail to editor B. Lynn Goodwin at [Lgood67334@comcast.net](mailto:Lgood67334@comcast.net).

=====

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:** Here's a link to a good video that shows how to set up a closed group on Facebook: <http://howtofacebook.co/how-to-create-group-on-facebook-how-to-make-a-group-on-facebook>. I got interested because YahooGroups is always giving me the runaround. Not sure FB would be better, but some of you may find this useful.

=====

Subscribers who have websites or newsletters of their own may be interested in the Free Articles 4 Readers and Writers on my site, [http://howtodoitfrugally.com/free\\_content.htm](http://howtodoitfrugally.com/free_content.htm). I try to add new articles to it frequently. If you don't see what you need for your blog or newsletter, just ask. [HoJoNews@aol.com](mailto:HoJoNews@aol.com).

=====

## On Poetry

~~~~~

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

HoJoNews@aol.com.

Tallahassee Writers Association Honors Haiku

~~~~~

Norma Sundberg won honorable mention for a haiku in Tallahassee Writers Assn. [Penumbra Poetry contests](#). It will be published in a volume titled, *Seven Hills Review*. *Penumbra* used to stand alone but in recent years the organization has combined the fiction and other categories in *Seven Hills Review* and *Penumbra* poetry and haiku winners are included in the volume. Norma says, "I'm delighted with this win" and I'm glad she shared her resources with SharingwithWriters subscribers.

=====

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).

=====

**Literary News:** One of my favorites, Alice Munro, [wins Nobel in literature](#). She is eighty-two years old. It's never too late to achieve a dream.

=====

Ta Da! E-books are great tools for promotion  
<http://www.bookbuzzr.com/blog/book-marketing/ta-da-e-books-are-great-tools-for-promotion/>  
The Anatomy of a Free (Read that Promotional!) E-Book  
<http://www.bookbuzzr.com/blog/book-marketing/the-anatomy-of-a-free-read-that-promotional-e-book/>

=====

**Tip:** If you're about ready to publish your book, check to be sure your frontmatter is similar to what the big publishers would do. It's easy. Just use [Chicago Manual of Style](#). (You really need to have one to refer to all the time for all kinds of things like when to use the relative pronoun "that" and when not to). Here's a starter tip: If you write fiction, you do not have a Table of Contents. If you write nonfiction, you do. But you don't call it a "Table of Contents." You call it "Contents." Think about the redundancy in the former term.

=====  
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.budurl.com/FrugalBkPromo](http://www.budurl.com/FrugalBkPromo)  
=====

**Tip:** Longtime subscriber and copy editor of this SharingwithWriters newsletter Mindy Lawrence suggests this list of writing tips from the famous. <http://thoughtcatalog.com/2013/21-harsh-but-eye-opening-writing-tips-from-great-authors/> I liked it because it told me I'm on the right track with the tips I give to SharingwithWriters readers. (-:

=====  
Yes, I do consult. I tailor my fees to your needs—everything from coaching to full edits (sorry no partial edits) to hourly consultations to help you with your marketing campaign or your path to publishing. <http://budurl.com/carolynsconsulting>  
=====

**Scam Alert:** Though not really a scam, author Sheri McGuinn (<http://sherimcquinn.com>) warns against using the iUniverse pro package for marketing. She says, "I warn people away from any organization that's pushing packages and encourages self-publishers to overstock by offering discounts on your own book when you buy larger quantities. The primary advantage of POD should be that you don't end up with boxes of unsold books."  
  
=====

I need editing questions and tips for my The Frugal, Smart, and Tuned-In Editor blog, [www.thefrugaleditor.blogspot.com](http://www.thefrugaleditor.blogspot.com). Articles, too! You ask and I'll provide ample credits and links to whatever site you choose. [HoJoNews@aol.com](mailto:HoJoNews@aol.com).



**Big Favor:** Hoping my subscribers—even the ones who already have my *Frugal Book Promoter*—use this notice that Amazon sends around and add the book to your wish list. The button for doing that is on the right of your buypage at <http://budurl.com/FrugalBkPromo>? Why? It helps with Amazon algorithms. You might want to ask your friends and associates to do this for your book, too.

|  |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                        |
|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><a href="#">The Frugal Book Promoter: Second Edition: How to get nearly free...</a><br/>by Carolyn Howard-Johnson, Chaz DeSimone</p> | <p><a href="#">Learn more</a><br/><a href="#">Add to Wish List</a></p> |
|  | <p>List Price: \$17.95<br/>Price: <b>\$16.16</b>  Prime<br/>You Save: \$1.79 (10%)</p>                                                  |                                                                        |



You'll find a myriad of writer helps at [http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/links\\_for\\_writers.htm](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/links_for_writers.htm). It includes a list of small presses of various kinds that I am familiar with.



## Thank You

**These are, indeed, thank yous but it occurs to me that many Sharing with Writers readers are not 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 Fran Silverman . . .



. . . for reprinting my article on the lessons I learned from the online book tour for the second edition of *The Frugal Book Promoter* online tour. Subscribe to her newsletter:

<http://www.mailermailer.com/u/signup/12216rin> .

## Thanks to Gregory Kompes . . .

~~~~~

. . . for giving a shoutout to the book festival I'll be keynoting in St. George Utah on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/129467787093881/>. BTW, are you sharing literacy/writers events when they appear on your timeline or others'?

Thanks to Dr. Bob Rich . . .

~~~~~

. . . for recommending this newsletter in his newsletter:

<http://mudsmith.net/bobbing13-3.html>. You might want to subscribe to his, too, because he is also open to sharing with his subscribers. E-mail him at [robert.rich01@bigpond.com](mailto:robert.rich01@bigpond.com)

=====

Fun and Free: If you purchased the *Frugal Book Promoter* or the *Frugal Editor*, I'd love you to review it on Amazon or BN.com. Make it simple; just tell what part of it you found most valuable. If you do, send me the review link (URL) and I will send you a 35-page handout from one of my UCLA marketing classes. As a thank you, of course. [HoJoNews@aol.com](mailto:HoJoNews@aol.com)

=====

**Tip:** When you do an online blog tour, don't forget to keep a list of the contacts you made. Follow up with a thank you, an e-gift (perhaps your book if they don't already have a copy), an idea for an additional post on their blog, an offer to let them guest post on your blog. It's about networking!

=====



Are you an ampersand fan? Chaz DeSimone designs a free series of art prints & posters featuring "the ampersand as fun & fabulous art"—this one for Labor Day. 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. They come with directions for printing, framing & making this into a freebie that lasts. To subscribe and view all his past poster designs go to: <http://amperart.com> Perfect for 4<sup>th</sup> gifts and decorations! He has three others with patriotic themes.

=====

**Quote:** You should never, ever, ever market your book. You should only market what the book can do for your reader. ~ Penny Sansevieri, book marketing guru

=====

The Publishing Insiders (Paula Krapf and Penny Sansevieri) and I talk about book promotion on their BookTalkRadio program. I know you'll pick up some new tips or encouragement. <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/thepublishinginsiders/2012/05/29/no-money-out-of-pocket-shooting-your-book-to-stardom>

=====

**Feature**

**Kickstarter: Beth Cox Thinks Your Time Might Be Better Spent**

~~~~~

By Beth Cox

I'm a big fan of brevity. :)

Today I'd like to talk a little bit about Kickstarter (www.kickstarter.com), the increasingly famous crowdfunding website.

The concept, if not the name of crowdfunding has existed in various endeavors throughout history. Something as simple as playing an instrument on the sidewalk with a hat to accept tips can be seen as crowdfunding one's musical career. Kickstarter started a commercial revolution with more than just the idea of "ask the general public to donate a few bucks to your project; if enough of them say yes then you'll have the money you need to make it real". They implemented the codified rules, requirements, and tools to make it possible--including the ability to return all donated money to all backers if a project doesn't meet its stated minimum funding goal - packaged into a streamlined, easy-to-use website interface.

Of course, nothing is free, and Kickstarter takes a 5% fee from the raised money for its services... but only if the project is successfully funded! Kickstarter only lets people solicit backing for specific projects in concrete categories (Art, Comics, Dance, Design, Fashion, Film, Food, Games, Music, Photography, Publishing, Technology, and Theater as of this writing), not open-ended causes (charity or otherwise). In a stroke of purest wisdom, "Kickstarter cannot be used to offer financial returns or equity, or to solicit loans" (a quote from their FAQ), and the project creators retain complete ownership of their work. This tenet differentiates Kickstarter from fundraising through creating a company and selling stock, and also protects Kickstarter crowdfunding from the vagaries of today's financial market.

I first learned about Kickstarter through one of my favorite humor/fantasy webcomics, *The Order of the Stick* (www.giantitp.com). I was a backer of their drive to reprint old graphic novels and create new comic stories because, what can I say, I love the strip. And I wasn't the only one. Comic creator Rich Burlew raised well over one million dollars from his fans! (Only \$10 of that was from me--I live on a budget. I received a sturdy refrigerator magnet as a backer reward). At the time, it was the most money raised by any creative work on Kickstarter, and Rich Burlew's stunning success turned heads.

Today, more and more small-scale authors and publishers are contemplating the idea of raising funds to create a book through Kickstarter. But is this truly a practical idea?

I'm not a Kickstarter expert by any means. But what little familiarity I do have (mostly from reading blogs by people who have successfully used it, or news about particularly spectacular Kickstarter failures) underscores that running a Kickstarter campaign is an immense amount of work. Getting publicity for one's crowdfunding campaign is crucial, and requires extensive preparation well before the project's 60 days of Kickstarter time begins. The "reward tiers" that backers crave had better be limited to digitally distributed prizes unless they're for very large amounts of money, or else simple shipping fees--not to mention the sheer man-hours of labor required to mail out so many items--will eclipse the raised funds.

Furthermore, most if not all fiction books don't really need a Kickstarter; the prospective author's time is better spent writing, reading, researching, or experiencing life in search of inspiration. The books that need Kickstarter the most are nonfiction ones that may require expensive technical expertise to be properly completed.

One example I'll give is a book project called "The Untold History of Japanese Developers", which successfully completed its funding in June. British journalist and author John Szczepaniak had the extensive credentials to support his ambitious endeavor: to travel to Japan, interview Japanese video game developers, and collect their little-known true stories into a single treasury for anyone and everyone who wants to learn more about the Japanese history of video gaming. Most of his funds were required not for travel expenses (which he planned to keep as cheap as possible), but to hire professional Japanese-English interpreters. One of the key selling points of his campaign was that 20 different Japanese game developers had already agreed to be interviewed before he started the Kickstarter--an act of preparation that was undoubtedly critical to his success.

My advice to nascent and aspiring authors is to start small. Get a track record of published books or ebooks first (writing and publishing fiction ebooks can be done completely from your home computer, with almost no monetary investment)! But if you achieve enough success that your literary or nonfiction ambitions begin to exceed the scope of your available funds and resources, Kickstarter could be a valuable option. October's Link of the Month is Crowdfunding Dojo,

<http://crowdfundingdojo.com>

a website entirely devoted to tips, tricks, techniques, articles, and advice for making Kickstarter work for you!

I'll make a brief, final note that Kickstarter is not unique; there are other crowdfunding websites, and sometimes individual creators attempt to pursue their own, independent crowdfunding campaigns. These websites don't have Kickstarter's name recognition or reputation for professional ethics (yet), so I won't list them here--I honestly don't know enough about them to say any more, positive or negative. As always, beware of scams and scam artists!

Bethany Cox is Managing Editor of Midwest Book Review www.midwestbookreview.com. This is reprinted with her permission for this review site's newsletter.

~~~~~

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

## Defining Yourself



An online friend said that she self-identified herself as a writer, not as an artist, yet she is very good at both. She teaches a writers' workshop in which she lovingly lets the participants know that, yes, they are actually writers, regardless of their level of expertise because they are *writing*. She keeps a very interesting and provoking art journal in which she includes writing, art, and deep thoughts about the events in her life. As proficient as she is, she still posted a statement on Facebook wanting to know what her online friends thought about her self-identifying as one specific entity.

I responded that, yes I was a writer and an artist, but I self-identified as a creative individual--neither just as a writer nor just as an artist. I may not be the best writer, but I write consistently. I may not be the best artist but I am one because I *do* artistic things. I don't think we have to be one thing or the other. We are *all* a collection of different talents on difference skill levels.

Denis Brown is a calligrapher, one of the finest in the world, but he's also a glass artist, film maker, and deeply into music. He defines himself as an artist who uses calligraphy. I look at his work and wonder why I have the right to say I am a calligrapher--to say I follow in those footsteps. Yet, I am following his lead as well as I can, one letter at a time. I have to let the comparison drop. Will I ever reach his level? No. I can say that emphatically. However, that doesn't mean I am not a calligrapher. It means I am an individual that is learning to use the skills I have to be the best that I can be at everything I try.

When you define who you are, do it with some deep thought. Do *not* compare yourself to another writer or artist. Be yourself. Advance in your own way. Define yourself through the lens of compassion.

## Links

**Denis Brown: QuillSkill**

<http://www.quillskill.com/>

## **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myers-Briggs\\_Type\\_Indicator](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myers-Briggs_Type_Indicator)

## **How Blogging Makes You a Better Writer**

<http://dish.andrewsullivan.com/2013/09/18/blogging-makes-you-a-better-writer/>

=

Mindy Phillips Lawrence, owner of MPL Creative Resources, is a writer and artist based in Springfield, Missouri. She is working on the e-book edition of *An Itty Bitty Book on Writing and Life*.

<http://mplcreative.webs.com>

=====

I believe in social networks. Big and small. Sometimes the smaller ones are easier to make lasting and more productive contacts on. I recommend iFOGO ([http://www.ifogo.com/buy/order\\_chj.html](http://www.ifogo.com/buy/order_chj.html)) which is, in part, because there is a small membership fee. And, of course, my usual. No membership is good unless it's an active membership.

=====

**Heads Up** on Nina Amir's new book, *The Author Training Manual*, which will be released in February 2014 by Writer's Digest Books. Please tell your new writing friends about it—at your critique groups, social networks, etc. It trains aspiring authors to become successful published authors by taking them through the process of creating a business plan for their books, seeing themselves and their ideas through the eyes of acquisition editors, and developing an Author Attitude. In this way they produce marketable ideas--ones that sell to readers and to publishers--and become savvy indie publishers and attractive publishing partners.

The business plan the writers produce is based upon a book proposal. They are asked to see themselves as entrepreneurs starting publishing companies or asking venture capital partners (publishers) for backing for their products (books). The Author Attitude entails developing willingness, optimism, objectivity, and tenacity. Woot!

Lear more about Nina at <http://itsmyurls.com/ninaamir>

=====

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.budurl.com/RetailersGuide](http://www.budurl.com/RetailersGuide) or more about the whole series at [www.howtodoitfrugally.com/retailers\\_books.htm](http://www.howtodoitfrugally.com/retailers_books.htm)

=====

**Writing Tip:** This is from the second edition of *The Frugal Editor*. If you already have the book, let me know and I'll send you an e-copy when it's ready in return for a little review (but only if you love it.) Here's the tip:

In *On Writing* Stephen King tells us that a dialogue tag can dictate the use of punctuation in the dialogue itself. For instance, if the tag uses a form of the word *ask*, avoid using a question mark at the end of what the character said (the dialogue portion of what the characters said—the part between the quotation marks.) That makes sense. We're trying to avoid being redundant. Here are examples of ways to do that:

- He asked, "How old are you." (Note the period after the question.)
- He said, "How old are you?" (Note the tag uses the word *said*, not *asked*.)
- "How old are you?" (No tags at all.)

## Carolyn's Appearances and Teaching

~~~~~

New! 📖 Carolyn Howard-Johnson will discuss marketing essentials that work for fiction and poetry too on Teresa Morrow's Inspirations Nations Radio Show (<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/creatingcalmnetwork/2013/11/01/inspiration-nation-with-carolyn-howard-johnson>). November 1 at 4 pm Pacific, 7 pm Eastern. Call in to participate: (347) 884-8377

📖 Southern Utah Book Festival, St. George, Utah; October 14 to 19. I am a keynote speaker at 2 pm on the 19th. Director: VS Grenier.



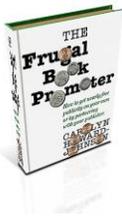
If you do not care to receive this newsletter, send an e-mail to [HoJoNews \(at\) aol \(dot\) com](mailto:HoJoNews@comcast.net) with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line, but please, please don't tell me you've given up writing or promoting! It makes me sad.

To subscribe to *Sharing with Writers* send an e-mail with "Subscribe" in the subject line to [HoJoNews \(at\) aol \(dot\) com](mailto:HoJoNews@comcast.net).

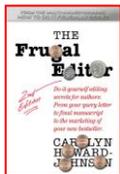
Please pass this newsletter to friends or e-groups. It needn't be pasted in its complete form, but please credit this newsletter, and the individual contributors with anything you snip and paste.

Ordering Information

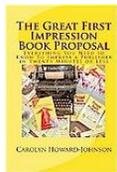
The HowToDoItFrugally Series for Writers



Frugal Book Promoter: How to Do What Your Publisher Won't <http://budurl.com/FrugalBkPromo>
The e-book at <http://budurl.com/FrugalBkProKindle>

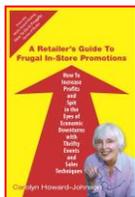


The Frugal Editor: Put Your Best Book Forward to Avoid Humiliation and Ensure Success
E-book: <http://budurl.com/FrugalEditorKindle>
Paperback: <http://budurl.com/TheFrugalEditor>
Coming soon: An updated e-book version with a new cover by Chaz DeSimone. Do you like it?



The Great First Impression Book Proposal: Everything You Need To Know About Selling Your Book in 20 Minutes or Less
Paperback: <http://budurl.com/BookProposals>
E-book: <http://budurl.com/bookproposalskindle>

Great Little Last-Minute Editing Tips for Writers: The Ultimate Frugal Booklet for Avoiding Word Trippers and Crafting Gatekeeper-Perfect Copy
Paperback: <http://budurl.com/WordtrippersPB>
E-book: <http://budurl.com/WordtrippersKindle>



**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

Paperback: <http://budurl.com/RetailersGuide>

For Kindle: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004H1TACC>

Frugal and Focused Tweeting for Retailers: Tweaking Your Tweets and Other Tips for Integrating Your Social Media

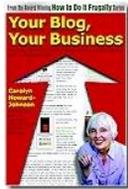
Order in paperback direct from Amazon:

<http://budurl.com/Tweeting4Retailers>

Order for Kindle Reader: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004H4XCCS>

Order an e-book from the publisher:

<http://wwwcreatespace.com/3439623>.



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

To Order: <http://budurl.com/Blogging4Retailers>

To Order for Kindle: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004H1TACC>

Carolyn's Fiction and Creative Nonfiction

This Is the Place: <http://budurl.com/ThisIsthePlace>

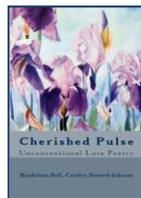
Harkening: A Collection of Stories Remembered:

<http://budurl.com/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

For Kindle: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004GXB4AW>

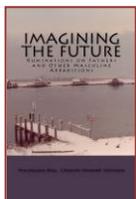
In print to be used as a greeting card or
booklet: www.budurl.com/CherishedPulse

For e-books:

She Wore Emerald Then: Reflections on Motherhood, a chapbook of poetry. Coauthored with Magdalena Ball.

Paperback and Kindle: <http://budurl.com/MotherChapbook>

For Kindle: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004GXB4AW>

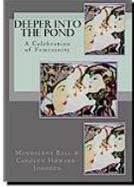


Imagining the Future: Ruminations on Fathers and Other Masculine Apparitions. Coauthored with Magdalena Ball

To order as an e-book: <https://createspace.com/3419505>

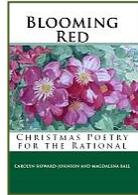
To order as a paperback or for Kindle:
<http://budurl.com/Imagining>

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



To order as an e-book:
<https://createspace.com/3608866>

To order as a paperback: <http://budurl.com/DeeperPond>



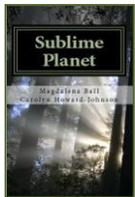
Blooming Red: Christmas Poetry for the Rational
Coauthored with Magdalena Ball. Artwork by Vicki Thomas

USA Book News finalist, Silver Award from
Military Writers' Society of America

To order e-book: <https://createspace.com/drl6064>

To order paperback: <http://budurl.com/BloomingRed>

Part of the Celebration Series by Carolyn Howard-Johnson, 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.



Coming soon! *Sublime Planet*, a full book of poetry celebrating Earth Day. Coauthors with Magdalena Ball, Photography by Ann Howley. Proceeds go to the World Wildlife Fund.

<http://bitly.com/EarthDayKind> for e-book

<http://amzn.to/SublimePlanet> for paperback

Tracings, a chapbook of poetry (Finishing Line Press)
<http://budurl.com/CarolynsTracings>

Contact Information

Websites

<http://HowToDoItFrugally.com>

For special help for fiction writers

<http://www.fictionmarketing.com>

Blogs:

<http://SharingwithWriters.blogspot.com>, a blog on all things publishing

<http://TheFrugalEditor.blogspot.com>, all things grammatical and ungrammatical. On editing, formatting, and craft.

<http://TheNewBookReview.blogspot.com>, a blog focused on YOUR reviews

<http://WarPeaceTolerance.blogspot.com> War. Peace. Tolerance. And Our Soldiers.

<http://sizzlingbookfairbooths.blogspot.com>, a blog where you can learn to get some mojo behind your own booth by learning from the successes and mistakes of others. It is no longer active but there are lots of ideas you can use here, just the same.

Pinterest: Repin one of my book covers, I'll pin yours to one of my boards. <http://pinterest.com/chowardjohnson>

Tweeting at:

<http://twitter.com/frugalbookpromo>

<http://twitter.com/frugalretailing>