

Melanie's Writing Newsletter - August 2008

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Dear Friends,

I'm trying out a newsletter program through [Constant Contact](#) and am having a lot of fun with it. What do you think? This is a free trial that I heard about at a networking meeting. I'm testing it out to see if I'm willing to pay \$ to keep producing the newsletters this way.

The last month has been a busy one. Check out all the latest below and enjoy what's left of your summer.

Presentations/Classes

1) This fall I will be teaching a course through [UC Davis Extension](#). The course, "Getting Published: The Business of Non-Fiction Writing," trains participants in the basics of publishing their non-fiction work. We'll prepare query letters, cover letters, book proposals, an article, and learn about other aspects of professional writing such as contracts, taxes, and working with editors and agents.

The class is held on eight Tuesday nights, September 16th through November 4th, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m at the Sutter Square Galleria in Sacramento. I would love to see you there! Please [email me](#) with any questions about the class or if you'd like a preview of the syllabus.

Enrollment is now open at the [Extension link](#).

Wednesday, August 20th, there will be a free information session about the Extension Writing Program. Go to this [link](#) for the details.

[link](#) for the details.

2) Just hired! I will also be teaching the *Researching and Interviewing Techniques for Nonfiction Writers* class through Extension during the Winter 2009 session.

3) I had a great time meeting other writers when I spoke at the [Nonfiction Network](#) of the California Writers Club earlier this month. My presentation was on ways to make more \$ from your writing. I also made some connections for agents to speak at my Extension class this fall.

4) Coming soon: I will be speaking to the Sacramento chapter of the [Direct Selling Women's Alliance](#) this fall. The topic: Write and Promote Your Business. Look for details in the next newsletter.

Writing Resources

1) The recording of the San Francisco Writing For Change Teleseminar with Jossey-Bass Executive Editor Alan Rinzler and Michael Larsen of Larsen Pomada Literary Agents is now available to download.

Click [here](#) to access the file.

2) From [Funds for Writers](#): The web site [Freelance Writing](#) lists more than 150 magazines, along with writer's guidelines and specifics about editorial needs.

3) What do I charge?

I know well-published writers who struggle with this question, so don't worry if you're unsure what to charge. Here are some tips:

* The annual edition of [Writer's Market](#) always contains a section titled *How*

Much Should I Charge? Fees are broken down from low to high in three ways: per hour, per project, or per word. It gives you a good idea of what other writers are charging and how to set your fees.

* Another option is to determine your annual income goal and go from there to find your hourly rate. Take your annual income goal and divide it by how many weeks a years you plan on working, and then by how many hours a week you plan on working. Once you have your hourly rate, add an additional 20% for business expenses.

* Even if you know your hourly rate, it can be tricky at first to know how many hours a project will take. In the beginning, most writers underestimate the time a well-done piece of writing requires. You have to schedule interviews, hold interviews, do research, write and rewrite and rewrite again, etc... Be sure to keep all those parts in mind when you provide a quote to a client.

Free Places for Kids

I love finding family activities that don't strain my pocketbook. To make my, and your!, job easier, there's a great new resource. [Kids Free Guide](#) is a national directory of restaurants, hotels, ski resorts, airlines, and museums with **FREE** offerings for kids.

The [site](#) is searchable by city or zip code, so you can find deals in your town or use it for trip planning. You can add any locations that you may know of, as well as make comments to help other parents plan outings.

Enjoy!

Writing Updates

* My article on precycling appeared in the Summer 2008 issue of [Catholic Forester](#).

* *Tips for the Full-time Freelancer* appeared in the August 2008 issue of [Freelance Writer's Report](#).

* An excerpt from *Why Didn't Anyone Tell Me?* was published in the Summer 2008 issue of *Living*.

Thank you for subscribing to the newsletter. As always, let me know if there's a writing topic you'd like to see covered here by sending an email to melaniebowden@earthlink.net

Next month I'll have tips for you from the [Sacramento State Summer Writer's Conference](#) I'm attending August 16-17.

Until next month,

Melanie Bowden

Author of *Why Didn't Anyone Tell Me?*
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