

MELANIE'S WRITING NEWSLETTER - July 2008

"Writers aren't exactly people ... They're a whole lot of people trying to be one person." - F. Scott Fitzgerald

Wasn't Fitzgerald talking about parents too? :)

How is your summer going? If you're in California, I hope you're not in harm's way with the fires and that you're breathing less smoke. The air was horrible in our area last week primarily because of the Butte County fire, but I'm sure nothing compared to the people who live in the thick of it. Yikes--over 1,000 fires were going in the state at the same time.

Time-sensitive announcement from Michael Larsen. This free event is happening tomorrow!: "Legendary editor and publisher Alan Rinzler knows publishing...inside and out. You can listen in as he talks with Michael Larsen of Larsen Pomada Literary Agents in a live 50-minute teleseminar. During this telephone-based event, Alan is going to take **your** questions. This event is coming up quickly so send us your questions NOW. Then call in on July 16th to our FREE teleseminar and listen as he answers as many as he can. Let these experts (Alan and Michael) tell you how the right writer with the right message can **Change the World One Book at a Time**.

Alan has been the executive editor of Jossey-Bass Publishers for the past fifteen years. Many of you will remember Alan as the associate publisher and vice president of *Rolling Stone Magazine*. He began his publishing career in 1962 as the assistant to the eminent Bob Gottlieb at Simon and Schuster. Mr. Rinzler was senior editor at Macmillan and Holt, president of Straight Arrow Books, West Coast editor for the Grove Press, and director of trade books at Bantam."

The teleseminar will be Wednesday, July 16th
5:30PM Pacific / 7:30PM Central / 8:30PM Eastern. Click here to register and send in your question: www.creativecvg.com/ask

PRESENTATIONS:

_ Friday, August 1st, 9 a.m.: I will be speaking to the Nonfiction Network of

the **California Writers Club**. Come have breakfast and meet with other writers. The topic: "Always, Always, Always Ask For More Money For Your Writing." I will discuss negotiating techniques that have earned me bigger paychecks and other tricks of the trade.

The Nonfiction Network meeting will be held at the IHOP Restaurant at 2216 Sunrise Boulevard, Rancho Cordova, just north of Highway 50.

_ This fall I will be teaching a writing class 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 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.

Enrollment will begin soon, but you can learn more about the class at the Extension link. It is one of the required courses for the Specialized Studies Program in Non-Fiction Writing offered through UC Extension.

I'm looking for a publishing agent to host as a guest speaker for one night of my fall class if you know of anyone.

WRITING AND OTHER STUFF:

_ Would you like some **slick postcards** with the cover of *Why Didn't Anyone Tell Me?* on one side and information on how to download a free chapter on the back?

If you would like some cards to distribute to friends, clients, expecting or new parents, or whoever!, send me an email with your postal mailing address and how many cards you would like.

_ **AMAZON LAWSUIT**: In late March, the news broke that Amazon had begun a new policy requiring print on demand (POD) publishers to use and pay Amazon's distribution services to print their books using Amazon's subsidiary BookSurge. In a nutshell, if you're book is a print on demand book (like mine), Amazon will

only distribute it if you use and pay their printer. It's pretty outrageous.

Here's is the latest update on a lawsuit that is being filed against Amazon due to their new policy:

SPAN INITIATES STRONG ACTION IN SUPPORT OF LAWSUIT
AGAINST AMAZON.COM

The Small Publishers Association of North America (SPAN), a 1000-plus member national trade association dedicated to advancing the interests of independent publishers, is throwing its support behind Booklocker.com, Inc. vs. Amazon.com, Inc. The SPAN board recently voted to publicly support the Amazon antitrust lawsuit.

Read more, including information on how you can help small publishers and SPAN (including signing the [Amazon/BookSurge Antitrust Lawsuit Campaign Petition](#)), right here. You can also view an interesting post at Mental Health for Writers about Amazon's new policy.

Please join me in boycotting Amazon until they rescind this new policy that hurts print on demand publishers and authors. It's ridiculous that they are requiring POD authors to **only** use Amazon's printing services or they won't distribute your book. If you'd like a copy of my book (and the only way to get an autographed one), please order it through my web site, not Amazon!

_ I will be attending the Sacramento State Summer Writers' Conference on August 16th and 17th. The keynote speaker is Dinah Lenney, who will talk about the power of memoirs. I like that you register for the workshops you want in advance so you know you'll get in. Registration is \$198 and there are also options, at extra fees, for one-on-one writing critiques or sessions with agents and editors. Please let me know if you'll be there so we can meet up!

_ My family is back from our ten day [Seeds of Learning](#) trip to Nicaragua. What an experience! It was beautiful, challenging, amazing, hot, and truly life changing. I now can mix mortar, prep and lay bricks, give assertive Nicaraguan young men the "eye" when they flirt with my daughters, and speak more Spanish. The people of Nicaragua are some of the sweetest I've ever met. I miss so many of them already. If you ever get a chance to go on a work group trip like this, I highly recommend it.

_ My article *Housework or Your Life* appeared in the June issue of Community Parent and my article on spirited children was published in their July issue.

_ FREE GIVEAWAY: Would you like a free copy of the 2007 edition of *Writer's Market*? The first person who asks for it, gets it! You only pay for postage and, if you live nearby and can pick it up, you don't even have to pay for that. Along with over 4,000 market listings, *Writer's Market* includes exclusive interviews with writers and publishing industry professionals on the business side of writing. The original list price was \$29.99.

_ My web site is now featured in Tillsey Web Design's portfolio here.

_ Not writing news, but we just got a new dog-literally two hours ago. He's a tri-colored (black, brown, and white) terrier and cute as the dickens. So far, so good between the dog and our two cats, but I'm sure it will take awhile for the adjustment. The animal shelter had named him Oliver, but we changed his name to Wendell (as in Oliver Wendell Holmes, I knew I'd get a writing reference in her somehow), since we already have a cat named Oliver. Because Wendell's three, I hoping I'm not in for too many sleepless nights during the transition-wish me luck!

_ Next month: Information on how much to charge for your writing and a new web site on free places to take kids.

Melanie Bowden

Author of *Why Didn't Anyone Tell Me? True Stories of New Motherhood* and *Get Your Articles Published!*

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