

# Lpwordsolutions Newsletter

for anyone who writes for profit or publication

[www.lpwordsolutions.com](http://www.lpwordsolutions.com)  
Writing ~ Editing ~ Consulting ~ Workshops  
May 2006

Brought to you  
by the letter 'P'  
for  
Poetry &  
Self-Publishing.

The LPwordsolutions newsletter is published monthly in Surrey, BC. 604.596.1601  
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Contributor: Pamela Kent  
*Send us your short articles, book reviews, recommended websites, and market, contest & event listings, responses to anything you read here.*

## In this issue

- Markets p. 1
- Announcements p. 3
- Contests p. 2
- Writing Tip p. 2  
*How to Avoid  
Premature Submissions*
- Book Review p. 3  
*Self Publishing in Canada*
- Events p. 3
- Essay by Pamela Kent p. 4  
*Poems that Rhyme  
Aren't Worth a Dime*

## Markets

► **Body Breakdowns Anthology** seeks submissions 1,500-2,000 words. True stories about middle-aged brushes with mortality and the medical establishment. Pays \$20 - \$100 and copies. Info.  
[bodybreakdowns@hotmail.com](mailto:bodybreakdowns@hotmail.com)

► **LesPlan International** seeks social studies specialists and middle school teachers to write articles to help students learn about current events. Pays \$45 per hour; one article=about six hours work; assigns one or more a month. Check out their website at  
<http://www.lesplan.com>

► In a recent issue, **Woman's Day** wrote that "libraries are magical places" and asked women over 18 years old to submit their stories in 700 words or less. Stories can be sent to  
[womansday@ala.org](mailto:womansday@ala.org)  
until **May 10, 2006**.



## Editor's Notes

"Self-publishing is a mug's game," say those who'd like to see their work represented by the big name publishers and are willing to do the rounds of agents, editors, and publishers. "It's just the thing for my family story/war memoir/poetry collection," say others who want total control over the project and a better shot at the profits falling into their own hands.

Who's to say one is right, and not the other? Not me – I want both. Some projects are best suited to self-publishing, while others might have the best chance of success if they can be sold to a publisher with a network of marketing and publicity vehicles.

But like anything else, if you want to do it your way, you'd do best to do it right.

In this issue, our resident book reviewer Jennifer Sommersby Young reviews a book that can help you make your way through the demanding process of publishing your own work. We've also listed a few online and print resources that might help. And for some practical tools and tips, and a good overview of what's involved from idea to finished product, you might want to sign up for the self-publishing workshop below.

Also in this issue you'll find an essay by Surrey writer Pam Kent who has a lot to say about the value of rhyming poetry.

So enjoy issue #3, *brought to you by the letter 'P'* – for Poetry & Self-Publishing. And do send your comments on the newsletter, contributions of market and event listings, and submissions to [lpwordsolutions@hotmail.com](mailto:lpwordsolutions@hotmail.com). I hope to hear from you.



LPWS

## The ABCs and 123s of Self-Publishing

*A full-day seminar & workshop*

Sat. May 27, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Johnston Heights School, 10707 - 146 Street, Surrey, BC  
\$69.00

Learn the basics of publication design, planning and production, and marketing. Then start to develop a step-by-step plan for publishing your own book, chapbook, newsletter or magazine.

Bring a notebook and pen, a bagged lunch, and your ideas, notes, and early drafts of projects.

**Registration 604-589-2221 or online at <http://www.ce.sd36.bc.ca>**

## Contests

- **Deadline May 31, 2006**  
**Sword Review Poetry contest**  
No entry fee. Prizes \$50 / \$25 / \$12.50. Contest theme: Hope.  
<http://www.theswordreview.com>
- **Deadline May 15, 2006**  
**West-End Writers 17th Annual One Page Contest** Poetry or Prose.  
Prizes: \$100 /\$75 /\$50. Poetry 50 lines max. Prose 500 words max. Complete info.  
<http://www.wewriters.com/>
- **Deadline July 31, 2006**  
**Libbon Short Story Magazine**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Contest. Any topic except childrens'. Word limit : 2,500.  
Submit entries online or by mail.  
Entry fee £3. Prizes : £100 / £50 / £25. 10 Winners will be published in *Libbon magazine Edition 3* and authors receive a free copy.  
Details: [www.libbon.co.uk](http://www.libbon.co.uk).
- **Deadline July 1, 2006**  
**The International Cat Writers' Association (CWA)** 13th annual contest for writers, photographers, and editors in print, online and broadcast media. 35 categories. Prizes \$550-\$1000.  
Details: <http://www.catwriters.org/>

## Announcements

- **Saturday, May 13 - 2006**  
**Conference BC Assoc. of Travel Writers - The Art Of Successful Travel Writing - From Proposal to Publishing.** Abercorn Best Western Inn, 9260 Bridgeport Rd. Richmond, 3 – 7 p.m.  
Members: free; non-members: \$15  
Admission by reservation only.  
**Register by May 6th** to Margaret Deefholts [deefholt@shaw.ca](mailto:deefholt@shaw.ca)  
[www.bctravelwriters.com](http://www.bctravelwriters.com)
- **Friday, May 26, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Federation of BC Writers AGM,** Listel Hotel, Vancouver.  
1300 Robson St. Guest speaker Steven Osborne. Admission free to Fed. Members. Refreshments, readings, door prizes.  
Details: <http://bcwriters.com/>
- Need an excuse for a few days away? **Visit Portland, Oregon** where **Powell's Books** offers an extensive schedule of events and readings, along with a great selection of books. Check their calendar online at [www.powells.com/calendar.html](http://www.powells.com/calendar.html).

## Writing Tip of the Month

### Ten Tips for Avoiding Premature Submissions

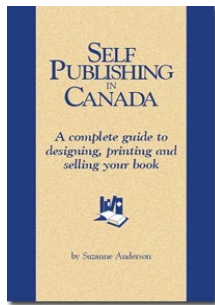
Writers rarely get much feedback on why an editor or publisher rejects their submissions. But if you polled them they'd be likely to tell you that most rejected work falls into one of two categories: they're either inappropriate or premature.

You need an objective approach, an eagle eye, and some personal restraint to prevent premature submissions. Here are ten steps to ensure your work gets the attention it deserves.



- 1. Check the Market** – This means reading and adhering to writers' guidelines, usually available on the publisher's website.
- 2. Check your intentions** – If you're working on an assignment, take notes and file copies of all discussion and email from the assigning editor to ensure you're giving them what they want and need.
- 3. Know yourself** - If you've been writing for a while, you'll have some idea of your weak spots – whether it's overusing passive voice, weak spelling, or excessive use of adverbs. Make a checklist of your own weaknesses and check your work twice against it before sending it out.
- 4. Read your work aloud** – This helps you catch weak phrasing, pacing and other problems that you might not see in print. Better yet, get someone else to read it to you.
- 5. Check the fine print** – You'll soon lose an editor's attention- and trust - if you submit work that includes typos and factual errors. Having a third party proofread your work may catch glitches you can no longer see.
- 6. Looking Good Counts** – Double space your manuscript, use a good clear serif font (Times New Roman or Garamond in 12 point), good quality paper, and ensure each page header includes your last name, one or two words from the title, and the page number. If you're submitting by email (with the editor's O.K.) use the same format.
- 7. Get a trusted writing peer to read your work.** Ask them to read it once as a reader – with no pen in hand – to help identify questions of development, credibility, and suitability. On the second go-round they might point out craft problems you missed.
- 8. Go back to the beginning** – Sometimes you only have the first sentence, paragraph, or perhaps the first page, to get the editor's attention. Make sure your opening sets up the topic, establishes the tone, and reflects your best writing skills - whether you're submitting a query, a complete essay or poem, or the cover letter of a book proposal.  
*And when you think you've got the right piece at the right time ready for the right market,*
- 9. Give your work some breathing room.** If you set it aside for seven to ten days before you ship it out, you'll have the chance to give it one more objective review.
- 10. Aim to beat the odds** – Editors and publishers only accept a small percentage of submissions. But knowing that many of these are prematurely submitted should motivate you to do everything you can to ensure that editors have every reason to say 'yes' to yours.





**Self Publishing in Canada:  
A Complete Guide to Designing, Printing  
and Selling Your Book**

by Suzanne Anderson  
Half Acre Publishing, Duncan, BC  
ISBN #1-894208-00-5, \$24.95

As writers, we dream about the Finished Book. But for many of us, the sad reality is that Random House has yet to call back. Even sadder, they probably won't. So, what to do, *what to do?* Your work is ready for the world. You've poured everything into it. And, you **own** 100 percent of it.

Stop and think: Even if Big Publishing House were to call and offer an obscene advance, would you want to give up editorial control? Do you want someone else telling you who your target audience is? What about the cover artwork? Are you willing to sell your baby in exchange for a 10 percent royalty?

Suzanne Anderson's book, *Self-Publishing in Canada*, valiantly attempts to impart wisdom by encouraging the writer to reflect on his or her ultimate vision for their book. Anderson delves into the nitty-gritty of self-publishing, encouraging any writer considering this avenue to become acutely familiar with all the angles *before* committing to anything.

Though she only briefly touches on other popular options of do-it-yourself publishing, Anderson does an adequate job of covering the self-publishing stratosphere by including chapters on design, marketing and sales, even how to get an ISBN and bar code for your book. The book and its seven appendices are focused on the *business* aspects of self-publishing, intended for an audience who either is considering the self-publishing option or already has a book ready to print.

While reading this self-published book, it quickly became evident that Anderson must have done her own copy editing. Unfortunately, it *looks* self-published. The presentation is professional enough: a tasteful cover, detailed table of contents and index, requisite ISBN and bar code, and the above-mentioned appendices. However, the structural and grammatical inconsistencies that sneak around in the paragraphs are distracting, again reminding the reader that the book is, well, self-published.

Because self-publishing has suffered (and continues to suffer) from a major inferiority complex, there is a collective effort by self-publishing authors to shift the thinking of booksellers and consumers. Works by self-published writers are no less amazing than the works of those whose books make it to market via the trade publishers; however, oftentimes, the self-publisher's work lacks the finesse and polish of the bigger publishers, thereby perpetuating the stereotype of self-published books as inferior.

In a perfect world, writers would be able to bring their work to market without having to deal with the scary business side of things (agents, editors, publishers). But if a book is replete with grammatical and structural errors, it reeks of amateur. And that does little to further the cause of self-publishing authors.

*Review ctd.*

Editors can be expensive, but in the extremely competitive book publishing market, I think it wise to pay astute attention to the finer details, particularly the editing. It's the literary fragrance that will attract your readers. And isn't that the point?

If you're considering self-publishing, Anderson's book is a good place to start as it provides a fine overview. Don't stop here, though. Ask questions, read small print, research your options, and spend your tax refund on an editor instead of that wicker patio set.

And don't forget to sign up for the one-day self-publishing workshop listed on the front page of the newsletter. ☺

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*Jenn Sommersby Young, a red pen and style manual junkie, is a devoted disciple of the Chicago Manual of Style's Commitment to Serial Commas. A freelance editor (and writer) she loves sharing the Comma Gospel. Become a believer and share your manuscripts! Stop in [www.calliope.creative.com](http://www.calliope.creative.com).*

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### Self-Publishing Resources

- ▶ **Parapublishing** – Home of the self-publishing guru Dan Poynter <http://www.parapublishing.com/sites/para/>
- ▶ **Self Publish.ca** – Vancouver company <http://www.geist.com/vancouverdesktop/>
- ▶ **Writers Write website** – lots of great stuff at this useful website <http://www.writerswrite.com/selfpublishing>
- ▶ **Self-Publishing 101** by Debbie Elicksen. ISBN 1551806398
- ▶ **The Self-Publishing Manual: How to Write, Print, and Sell Your Own Book** by Dan Poynter. ISBN 1568600887 *Also available as an e-book. But be warned, it's over 500 pages long!*
- ▶ **Putting it on Paper: The Ground Rules for Creating Promotional Pieces that Sell Books** by Dawn Josephson. ISBN 0974496618
- ▶ **Publish Your Own Magazine, Guide Book, or Weekly Newspaper: How to Start Manage, and Profit from a Homebased Publishing Company** by Thomas A. Williams. ISBN: 1591810035.

**Contribute** market information, event listings, publication success news, writing-related articles & essays and/or web recommendations. Send them to [LPwordssolutions@hotmail.com](mailto:LPwordssolutions@hotmail.com) with 'Newsletter' in the subject line.  
**We'd love to hear from you!**

## Poems That Rhyme Aren't Worth a Dime

by Pamela Kent

**Current literary trends eschew that which rhymes.** Undoubtedly this will change in due course, and once more those who find merit in rhyming poetry will not be considered poor cousins of the 'real' poetry lovers. Proponents of free verse are quick to point out that their poets are not hampered by rhyme and can therefore most accurately express their thoughts. But for me there is an exquisite beauty in a poem which conveys just what the poet wishes to say, and yet rhymes.

The Bard himself was not averse to verse. Admittedly, the only rhyming stanzas I can find on a quick perusal of 'The Complete Works of William Shakespeare' are lighthearted, but I'm sure somewhere in that huge volume must be stirring bits that rhyme. On the other hand, perhaps Shakespeare, by his example, was the instigator of this castigation of all that rhymes for anything but the lightest of forms.

One has to admit that it greatly adds to the humour of a verse to make the point in rhyme.

The panther is like a leopard  
Except it hasn't been peppered  
Should you behold a panther crouch  
Prepare to say 'Ouch'  
Better yet, if called by a panther,  
Don't anther.

Ogden Nash

The Limerick gets its humour from its metre and rhyme. On the occasion of the fight between Mohammed Ali and Leon Spinks a number of years ago, I was moved to write:

Two fighters named Ali and Spinks  
Went to see a psychiatrist named Binks  
Leon's chin reached for miles  
Ali's face, wreathed in smiles  
Said, 'The shrink thinks that Leon Spinks stinks'.

Not much to recommend it, except that perhaps it will prompt a smile from the reader. For me, that's enough.

Along with their wonderful cadence, many rhyming poems are easier to commit to memory. Sometimes we need to be able to recall a verse of poetry. In times of stress there's comfort in recalling a favourite poem. Who isn't moved on Remembrance Day by *In Flanders Field*?

I still remember the poems of the Second World War RAF poet, John Pudney. What could be more poignant than the simple lines:

No roses at the end  
Of Smith, my friend.  
Last words don't matter  
There are none to flatter.  
For Smith, our brother  
Only son of loving mother,  
The ocean lifted, stirred,  
Leaving no word.

A fitting memorial for those airmen and sailors whose family were left bereft of even a body to mourn.

For me, Wordsworth's poem *Daffodils* evokes 'a host of golden daffodils.

*Beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze.*' With or without, rhyme, I can think of no better way to express that scene. Without rhyme, I doubt if I would have remembered it for almost 60 years. This is not to say that I do not enjoy or even commit to memory poems written in free verse. But why must we act like fickle lovers, casting aside one when embracing the other?



Poetry  
Resources  
For poets & their  
readers

► **Poets & Writers** – the US nonprofit organization not only for poets. Their magazine includes contest and awards listings, articles, etc. <http://www.pw.org/>

► **Free online rhyming dictionary**  
<http://www.rhymer.com/>

► **University of Toronto Canadian Poetry website**

[www.library.utoronto.ca/canpoetry/](http://www.library.utoronto.ca/canpoetry/)

Links to poets' work, journals, awards.

► **League of Canadian Poets**  
<http://www.poets.ca/> Events, member info. etc.

► **The Eserver Poetry Collection**  
Searchable archive of online texts from a wide range of recognized historical and contemporary poets.

<http://poetry.eserver.org/>

► **The Art and Craft of Poetry**  
by Michael Bugeja. An invaluable handbook. ISBN 0898796334

► **John Hollander's Rhymes Reason – A Guide to English Verse**  
ISBN 0300027400. Examples of all the forms from *elegiacs* to *triolet*.

► **The Practice of Poetry** by Robin Behn & Chase Twichell. Challenging exercises for working poets ISBN 006273024X

► **Where the Sidewalk Ends – poems and drawings** by Shel Silverstein. Great for turning kids on to poetry. ISBN 0060256672.

### Events

► **Mon. May 15, 7 p.m.**

**Poet Diana Hartog, author of *Ink Monkey*** reads at the White Rock Library, 15342 Buena Vista Ave. Register by calling 541-2201.

► **June 22-26, 2006**

**Writing It Real in Port Townsend**

Conference at the Harborside Inn, Port Townsend, WA. Presenters include Sheila Bender, Jack Heffron, Meg Files, Susan Rich <http://writingitreal.com/wirconference2006.htm>

Fall courses & workshops  
in the  
**Surrey Creative Writing  
Diploma Program**  
are now listed at  
[www.lpwordssolutions.com](http://www.lpwordssolutions.com)