

WISE WOMEN WRITE™

October 2009

Local author and Wise Woman Write founder Diane Amento Owens brings women together to write, share, and grow. Need some inspiration? Visit Diane's [Weekly Wise Words](#) and sign up to have them delivered to you each week.



The Power of a Writing Group by author Diane Amento Owens

I'm a big fan of writing groups. Not only are they the great places to get feedback on your writing, but they're places to deeply connect with other women as we share our truth. Each [Wise Women Write group](#) provides a safe and supportive place for a woman to share her work, her story, her truth.

Often we talk about how the story a woman tells impacts each of us. If we detect some waffling on the part of the writer, we'll ask her, "So what was your truth in that experience?" Sometimes we ask, "What was the REAL story behind this piece?"

I remember at the end of a recent group when one writer wisely observed, "You know, we're not just telling stories about our dogs. There's a peeling of the layers."

Writing your story is sort of like peeling an onion.

Sue Monk Kidd, author of *The Secret Life of Bees*, tells us in *Firstlight* that, "The word *story* actually means 'to know'" and that, "When we share our inner stories, we allow others to enter our lives and partake of our deepest truths. We discover that we share the same joys and tragedies, the same ambiguities and struggles. In the end, we are all one story."

Writing is a great gift to give yourself, but so is joining a writing group. We learn more about ourselves from the process of sharing our story in writing. By "allowing others to enter our lives" through our writing and then sharing that writing with a group, we can grow as writers and as women. Sometimes it takes a certain amount of onion peeling, and the group will gladly assist in the process.

I can't think of a better place to share writing than the supportive environment of a writing group. --Diane

Want more information about writing groups? Visit [Wise Women Write](#).

Returning the Favor

by author Susan Pohlman

The road to publishing your first book starts with a little attitude, an ounce of audacity, and a dollop of nerve. You must believe that you have something unique to release upon the world. And you do. We all do. The prize goes to the person who has the courage to commit his/her bared soul to paper. While walking through a library or bookstore it may appear that this is easy. It is not.

Halfway to Each Other started as a series of emails to girlfriends and family members describing our family's experiences after moving to Italy. The thought of writing a book did not enter my mind until I received a response one day from John McCaslin, an old friend and columnist for the *Washington Times*. He suggested that I stop sending out these "chapters" that were gaining a following and compile them into a book.

I looked in the mirror, recognized that ounce of audacity glimmering faintly in my eyes, and said aloud to an empty room, "I can do this." I had no real idea what I was embarking upon, all I did was listen to my heart and find a computer when I felt a chapter bubbling up inside of me. Where that year would lead was anybody's guess, so I did not worry that I had no story arc in mind. Months after we returned from Italy, I finished the manuscript. I did my best, but it was far from perfect.

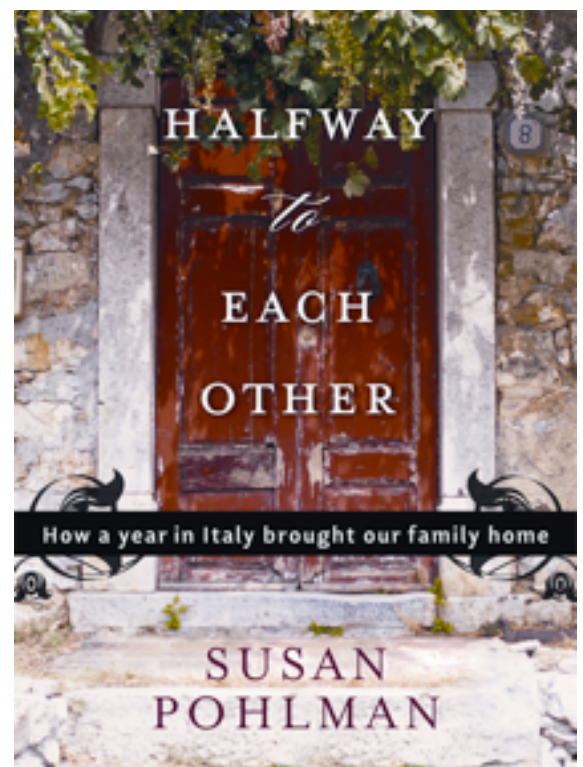
Moral of the story: You don't have to know what you are doing to get started. Have confidence in your writing and ask questions along the way. --Susan

Visit Susan at www.susanpohlman.com.

Next month's topic: Finding an Agent!

Great News!

Susan's debut memoir, *Halfway to Each Other*, is available in bookstores now!



Spinning a Good Yarn

by Trish Dolasinski, Ed. D.

Welcome back! I hope you enjoyed visiting the *cozy knitting corner* last month and that your word-wise reflection was an enjoyable and enlightening experience. As you ponder and write upon each weekly passage I offer, you will grow to learn more about yourself and become a stronger writer in the process. If you are writing a story or a book, your self-knowledge through personal reflection may even help in creating strong, poignant characters in your piece.

Now, pick up your notebook and your favorite writing tool, grab a cup of tea, perhaps light a candle, and curl into that cushy seat you save for special times like these...

READY? SET? REFLECT...

The season of autumn is officially upon us! The cooler mornings, almost crisp even in the desert southwest, remind us that the proverbial lazy, daisy, crazy days of summer are gone. This very minute, the green leaves on trees are now blazing with

color in many parts of our world. They will soon fall and return as fodder for the earth to hibernate, disintegrate and begin anew next spring.

Last week we considered ourselves in the chronological autumn season of our lives—change abounding. Is this change of season a loss or a gain for you? Does this new season make your piece of the planet very different? Or as Andy Warhol said, “*They say that time changes **things**, but **you** actually have to change them.*” Are you a change agent, or does change become your agent? Write your thoughts in your notebook.

After considering this prompt, you may wish to spin another yarn with me on my website. Please stop by www.trishdolasinskiwrites.com each week and be sure to leave a comment before you close your pages.

WRITE ON! --Trish

Be sure to stop by the cozy corner of Trish's journal writing page and become inspired to Spin a Good Yarn.

Join the conversation by leaving Trish a comment!



Trish is facilitating the newest Wise Women Write group at The Dog Eared Pages Used Bookstore in Phoenix. A warm welcome goes out to: **Kathy Dempsey, Rudi Bhatt Patel, Phyllis Schwartz, and Linda Hernandez!**

Corner the Market

by Windy Lynn Harris

Today's topic is OPPORTUNITY and how to create it in your writing life. My advice is to network, network, and then network some more.

Networking is generating future opportunities by getting to know people in the writing and publishing industry. You like people, right? So go introduce yourself!

No, I don't mean that you should sidle up to random writers you find at libraries or send emails to writer's group members you don't know, although I've done both with great results. This week I want you to jump into the giant world of ONLINE networking.

Facebook, Twitter, and blogs are a great way to connect with other writers, editors, and agents.

Think about the story my friend Mabel Leo shares below (go ahead and read it, I'll wait). Would Mabel's manuscript be making the rounds in New York or LA if she hadn't signed up for that Facebook account? Maybe, but connecting with Mabel online reminded this interested producer about her projects.

In my own little cyber-world I have been "Facebook-friended" by *Writers Market* editor Robert Lee Brewer, which led to two article pitch opportunities already. More recently, the editor of *Narrative Magazine* (another place I would love to see my work published) started following me on Twitter, complete with a friendly thank-you for mentioning her magazine in my tweets.

Will these connections lead to a byline, an editing job, or a book deal someday? Maybe. And that's reason enough to keep shaking those online hands.



So what can YOU do this month to create a connection online? Consider trying these:

- 1) Read a writer's blog and leave a comment. See "Blogroll" below for ideas.
- 2) Join Twitter, even if you are just a "listener" for now.
- 3) Open a Facebook account and look for magazines or writers you admire.
- 4) Start your OWN blog so that other writers can find YOU!

--Windy

NETWORKING WORKS!

In January 2005, when the stage play, *In My Humble Opinion* (based on local author Mabel Leo's book, *The Saga of Jack Durant*) was running, a friend told a friend of hers about the play. This friend of a friend, Catherine, turned out to be a movie producer, and soon approached Leo about the possibility of Jack's story being told on PBS and other venues in the future. Nothing more happened for a while, but fast forward with me to August 2009: Leo started a Facebook account and rediscovered Catherine there. Now, after several email messages have sailed back and forth, Zocali Productions has acquired a two year option to sell Mabel Leo's story to the media.

[Mabel Leo](#) is the President of [The Phoenix Writers' Club](#) and author of two books about Phoenix's famous mobster, Jack Durant.

Got a networking success story that you'd like to share? Tell me about it [here!](#)



ANNOUNCEMENTS



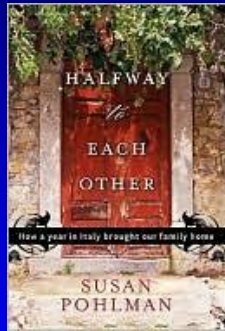
Windy Lynn Harris' essay, "How to Talk to Your Teen Without Pulling Out a Single Strand of Your Hair," was published this month in *Nights and Weekends Magazine*.



Read **Trish Dolasinski's** insights on the future of education and the teaching profession, coming soon in the January issue of *Raising Arizona Kids Magazine*.



*You're Exclusively Invited To
A Book Launch Celebration & Signing
"Halfway to Each Other"
By Author Susan Pohlman
www.susanpohlman.com*



Thursday
October 15th*
5:00 PM-7:00 PM
No Host Bar
Books Available for
Purchase at Event

GRAZIE
Pizzeria Wine Bar
Grazie Old Town Scottsdale
6952 E. Main Street
(Goldwater & Main)
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251
(480) 663-9797
www.Grazie.us

*For Those Unable to Attend
Book Signing
Saturday, October 17th
2:00 PM-4:00 PM
Barnes & Noble
Scottsdale Fiesta Shopping Center
10500 N. 90th Street (Shea & Pima)
Phoenix, Arizona 85258



JOIN NOW!

[The Arizona Consortium for the Arts](#)
unites, advances,
collaborates, partners, and supports
individuals and organizations in all
aspects of arts, performing arts,
literary arts and cultures in Arizona.
Visit their website for information
about *The Blue Guitar Magazine* and
how to become a free consortium
member.

THANK YOU

Dog-Eared Pages Used Books



A huge THANK YOU goes out to [Dog Eared Pages Bookstore](#) in Phoenix. Dynamic writers/owners Melanie and Tom have welcomed the newest Wise Women Write group to meet in their lovely store. Visit Dog-Eared Pages to buy, sell, and trade new and used books.

WRITER'S RESOURCE

DO YOU WRITE ESSAYS, SHORT STORIES, OR POEMS? WANT TO GET PUBLISHED?

MARKET COACH FOR UNPUBLISHED WRITERS AVAILABLE

Award-winning freelance writer Windy Lynn Harris will teach you:

- *Where to find thousands of markets for your work
- *How to find the right editor for each piece
- *How to format your manuscript for submission
- *How to write winning query letters

There is no magic wand needed to get your creative writing published, only a professional attitude toward the publishing industry and endless determination. Show editors that you deserve to be taken seriously as a writer by professionally presenting them your best work. When you submit an edited piece of writing and an interesting query letter to the right editor, you open the door to success.

Get the information and the confidence you need to submit your work today!

4-Week Coaching Session - \$100

Visit www.windylynnharris.com for more information.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Melanie Tighe at The Dog Eared Pages Bookstore is putting together a local writers' holiday book. Submit your 1000 word max Christmas/Hanukah/Kwanzaa story by Oct. 14th. ALL entries will be published and books will be sold at the store for \$1 each. Visit www.dogearpagesusedbooks.com to contact Melanie and join the fun!

[The National League of American Pen Women](#) will resume their monthly meetings in Scottsdale on October 14th. The League promotes and conducts literary, educational, and charitable activities in the fields of Letters, Art, and Music. Interested in coming to a meeting? Contact League member [Windy Lynn Harris](#).

Got news to share? Contact Wise Women Write Monthly editor [Windy Lynn Harris](#).

WWW BLOGROLL

[Wise Women Write](#) is a community of new and established writers gathered together by author Diane Amento Owens. Read Diane's blog for encouragement, support, and mentoring in your own writing life.

[Spinning a Good Yarn](#) is freelance writer Trish Dolasinski's wonderful blog dedicated to journal writing. Stop by each week to have a conversation with Trish and join the fun with her latest journal prompt.

[Moments that Matter](#) is written by Susan Pohlman, award-winning author of the memoir "[Halfway to Each Other.](#)" Susan shares new moments from her world with the same blend of blatant honesty and lyrical prose that captivates us all in her book.

[Maryann McCullough](#) posts a thought-provoking (and often laugh-provoking) new essay at the beginning of each month.

[The Backstory Cafe](#) is a creative space designed by freelance writer Windy Lynn Harris where the characters from her fiction writing come to hang out after a hard day in her office.

Looking for more great blogs? Visit Windy Lynn Harris' list of "[Great Blogs Written by Fun People.](#)"