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## PWC Monthly Meeting

*Phoenix Writers Club meets monthly on the 3rd Saturday of the month.  
Pre-Payment & RSVP Required*

**Devonshire Senior Center**, 2802 E Devonshire Ave (28th St., north of Indian School Rd.). Saturday, February 21, 10:00-10:30: socialize; 10:30-11:00: announcements, 11:00-12:00: speaker, 12:00-12:30-wrapup. \$10 fee for members, \$15 for guests.

To RSVP and/or pay your annual dues of \$40, if you haven't done so, mail a check to our treasurer, Navissa Kaiser, payable to Phoenix Writers Club,

5715 E. Alder, Mesa 85206; or use Zelle which goes into our club account.

You are also welcome to pay for several monthly meetings at one time in advance. If you already have a Zelle account and would like to pay this way, add new recipient [phoenixwriters1926@gmail.com](mailto:phoenixwriters1926@gmail.com).

**Questions?** Email Cindi Reiss at [writeoncindi@gmail.com](mailto:writeoncindi@gmail.com)

## February Speaker—Robrt Pela

Robrt Pela is a Pulliam Prize-winning journalist who, for 30 years, was a staff writer at *New Times*, the Phoenix city weekly. He's held staff positions at *The Advocate*, *Psychology Today*, and *Men's Fitness*, and is a longtime regular contributor to National Public Radio affiliate KJZZ. These days, he writes for *Phoenix Magazine* and *Phoenix Home and Garden*. His last book was *Filthy*, a biography of the film director John Waters; he's working on another, about America's broken elder-care system. He teaches writing workshops at ASU and Changing Hands Books and owns an editing business, Red Pen Ink, where he works on book projects with first-time authors. Robrt and his husband divide their time among homes in Arizona, Ohio, and Provence.



Robrt will speak on how it's possible to keep writing even when you don't want to, the current state of the publishing industry, and how it's working and not working, and "writer's block". Is it a myth or a fact?

## A Note from the PWC President

"I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells." - Dr. Seuss

After the busyness of December and January's resolutions, February can bring a sigh of relief and allow us the joy of utter nonsense with the wisdom of Dr. Seuss. It gives us a chance to slow down, take a breath, and reflect on where we are in our artistic lives, not with to-dos and resolutions but with the magic of just being.

When my grandkids give me cards with hearts and smiles, I delight in their artistic selves. And I'm reminded to let my imagination take charge and to let the words flow. I wish you the same on your writing journey.

PWC has so much to celebrate this year as we mark our centennial. Our history is filled with the creativity and strength of the women who founded our club. Each month, we will present that history, and you'll see how you can participate in this newsletter. Also, how you can participate in the planning of our events. We are growing and learning, and we appreciate all of you for sharing your talents with us.

Write on,  
*Cindi Reiss*

## Writers Inspiration Group (WIG)

Writers Inspiration Group (WIG) is a writing prompt group that meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays from 3-4:30 pm via Zoom. The group is based on Natalie Goldberg's book "Writing Down the Bones." Natalie says that, just as with any instrument, we must practice our writing to master our craft. We give out prompts, write for 10 minutes, and share if we would like to. No critique, just enjoying writing with no pressure or judgement and delighting in the company of fellow writers. Wherever you are in your writing journey, it works for us. No cost, and you can drop in anytime. For more info, contact Cindi Reiss at [writeoncindi@gmail.com](mailto:writeoncindi@gmail.com). We'd love to have you join us!

## So You Think You Know English

### 6 Commonly Mispronounced Words by Americans

<https://tinyurl.com/2t8yfhuc>

Story by *Damián Rancez*

Not to be political, merely to inform you of a **War Declaration on a font**

<https://tinyurl.com/ypz4j9c9>

Story by *The Daily Press*

# January Minutes

Start 10:34 AM End 12:10 PM

-

PWC Board: Prez-Cindi R, beth J-secretary, Newsletter Editor-D'Anne P, Centennial Co-chairs. Lois K, Jeff C

Attendees: 27 + speaker

**Stimulus (PWC Newsletter) Editor D'Anne Pientka:** Requested submissions from members: website, blogs, published work, events. She also leads PWC Critique Group, which has grown in size. Group is considering starting a 2nd critique group to keep each group to 5 participants either on same day (2nd & 4th Fri of month at 6pm) or on another day.

## **PWC President Cindi Reiss:**

Introduced guests (first time at PWC):

- Michele Cochrane: worked in social services, then IT for 2 years, Master's in Clinical Counseling
- Sarah Schrimsher: student @ ASU Creative Writing pgrm, also studying philosophy, has written 14 novels & working on 15<sup>th</sup> but not published. Currently working on speculative fiction, modern gothic & needs BETA readers.
- Lois Kiely, former member, rejoined and is willing to be co-chair of the party committee for the centennial. She will send info out for tasks needed. Lois has published in several anthologies and was a PWC winner in the previous PWC 55-word contests.

*PWC Writing Contest* opened, 1 Jan – 1 Feb, theme Pioneering Spirit, \$10 to enter.

Jan 16, 2026 POP event at ASU.

*100th PWC Centennial Celebration* TENTATIVE DATE Thursday, November 12, 2026.

**PWC Historian Jeff Callan:** We are dividing PWC history by decades so volunteers can write about each decade and present at PWC meetings. Focus is on Community, Connection and Celebration. Writing can be essay, poem, skit. Finals will be presented at PWC meetings and posted to PWC website. Pictures OK.

**Cindi:** we need a volunteer to collect PWC history from 2020 forward and assemble. PWC newsletters avail from early 2000s.

**PWC Member Deborah Partington:** Sunday, Mar 1, 2026 Sunday Off Central hosted by the Phoenix Midtown Neighborhood Assoc. In 2025 PWC had a table, brought awareness of PWC to many, and sold some books. We plan to host a table in 2026. Contact Deborah for info, 602-334-8154.

<https://www.midtownphx.org/new-events/2025/5/8/sunday-off-central-block-party-2025-cms9e-n93es>

**Jan 24, 2026 Scottsdale Book Festival.** Two PWC Members have tables:

- Bobbie Bennett, author of *Widowhood, the Next Chapter* (Table 20) <https://bobbiebennett.com/widowhood-the-next-chapter/>
- Laura Nastasia, author of *Soul Ferriers* (Table 40) <https://www.soulferriers.com/>

**Discussion AI (artificial intelligence):** Member Jody had 1 page of her novel translated by AI into a Shakespearean sonnet in 1 second. AI copyright and legislation changes coming.

### Presenter Connie Galeener, Storyteller, Actress, Entertainer since 1983 throughout Arizona

A native Phoenician, Connie Galeener is a lifelong learner. She is currently enrolled in the Storytelling Institute at South Mountain Community College and is the newest member of The Storytelling Fellows, an Honors Program at the Institute. Connie has been a costumer since 1978, an actress since 1983, a puppeteer since 1998, a playwright, director, and theater teacher since 2016. “Stories are told in many, many ways. As with most creatives, we have more ideas than we have time to develop them,” says Connie. Connie looks forward to having more time soon, as she retires in April. Not one to be without a project, Connie has begun her retirement as a professional storyteller and has taken steps to launch a new business featuring giant puppets!

Connie spoke to the particulars of reading your pieces to an audience. Presenting yourself at readings, book fairs, and open mics is essential to both promoting your work and inviting your audience into your world. She addressed topics such as microphone handling, vocal variations, reading the audience, and more.

Today’s takeaways:

- What are questions and what are answers I can provide to my community?
- We are all lifelong learners.
- What is your 5 year, 10 year plan? Next week plan?
- Consider backward planning based on date of event

I teach adults with disabilities. Interviewed for one job and offered a job that I could create. Roles I’ve had: Playwright, Director, Lyricist, Puppeteer. I’m OK with failing so I learn! Each of you are teachers with a lifetime of knowledge which you may or may not want to share.

Connie treated us to a Yodeling demo – impressive

Takeaways: What do you want your audience to leave with?

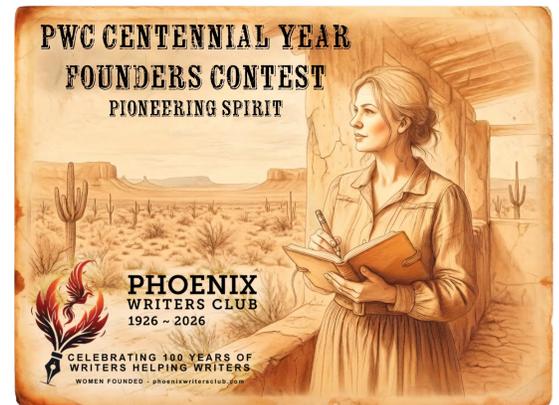
- Stay away from memorization but rather KNOW your story so you can tell it
- Commonalities between Story Telling and Writing Literature:
  - \* Plot, Character, Theme
  - \* Shared human experience
  - \* Crafted to maximize impact to audience
- When folks see your book or event, they are judging if they should spend time with you, your book, your story.
- Microphones:
  - \* handheld – take time to adjust level
  - \* Speak close enough to mouth, keep mic same distance from mouth
  - \* Lapel mic – clip on clothes, belt, pocket
- We see better than we hear
- Be prepared. Be Flexible.
- Facial Expressions / Gestures. Consider volume and vocal variety. Stomp foot for attention.
- Hire an actor to read your work. Seek them at university drama programs, theaters, Facebook
- Your booth:
  - \* Use real people you know and add their characteristics to your characters.
  - \* Dress in character when pitching your book
  - \* Have an ice breaker: e.g., stuffed animal.
  - \* Consider reciprocity: giveaways (pens, pencils, bookmarks) encourages folks to ask questions.

Cindi thanked everyone for coming and encouraged all to support other members at future book events.



## PWC Centennial Year Founders Contest: Pioneering Spirit

The Phoenix Writers Club (PWC) celebrates Women's History Month in March by honoring the founding women who formed PWC 100 years ago after being denied entry to the press club due to their gender. These witty Western women found a peaceful way to promote creativity and camaraderie in the face of adversity, demonstrating tremendous pioneering spirit in establishing a safe space for writers.



Today, the legacy of the Phoenix Writers Club (PWC) is one of inclusion and celebration of community connections. PWC is a social writing group that offers monthly lectures to support writers of all genders through our website, gatherings, and contests. Please join us and see what we are all about! We also support local charities and programs through donations and volunteer work, encouraging the next generation's love of writing.

Winners will be announced March 1, 2026.

## PWC Critique Writing Group(s)

PWC is pleased to announce that due to the success of its current PWC Critique Workshop, we're creating a second workshop to meet on a day other than Friday.

If you're interested in participating, please email D'Anne ([dannewriteson@gmail.com](mailto:dannewriteson@gmail.com)) by February 10th and include days/times you can meet to discuss the schedule you'd like for the new workshop, and identify who will facilitate it.

The current workshop shall continue to meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. Members are free to move to the new workshop if the new schedule works best for them. At this time, we ask that participants choose one workshop, not both.

Workshop guidelines are available on the PWC website: <https://phoenixwritersclub.com/pwc-critique-workshop-guidelines/>

## So You Think You Know English, Part 2

Just found this link: **How well do you know the English Language?**

<https://tinyurl.com/2zcv49f4>

*Story by Andrew Lisa*

## Scottsdale Book Fair

Two PWC Members had tables on January 24:

- Bobbie Bennett, author of *Widowhood, the Next Chapter*  
<https://bobbiebennett.com/widowhood-the-next-chapter/>



- Laura Nastasia, author of *Soul Ferriers*, and her sister, Michaela Nastasia (Mik).  
<https://www.soulferriers.com/>



Look at this booth. Mik designed the book cover, bookmarks, and panels. Laura confessed that the panels were shower curtains that cost \$9.00 and were delivered within two weeks. We can all learn from each other—the bold colors, trinkets, and handouts helped draw in the crowds.

See Mik's contact information on the next page.

## Writers Helping Writers

For those looking for an artist to help with their cover design and/or website, check out Laura Nastasia's sister's website, Michaela Nastasia (Mik). Mik is an immersive artist and filmmaker, who also runs a home Halloween Haunt called 'Hellbilly Holler' that has won best Arizona home haunt display on several occasions. Her short film, *The Possession of SueBob* was a quarterfinalist in both the Lonely Wolf and Upstate NY Film festivals, as well as second place in the smartphone division of the Moonrise Film Festival.

<https://linktr.ee/michaelanastasia>  
<https://www.nastasia.com>

PWC members: If anyone has a specific request, for example, editor advice, publishing questions, beta group, send me your request along with your contact info so I can include your request here.

## Changing Hands Bookstore—Tempe Feb 3

Hi fellow writers! My husband, Greg Rosenthal, and I are both members of the Maryland Writers Association. We are coming to visit relatives in Phoenix next week, and my husband will be giving a talk on Tuesday, Feb. 3 at 7 p.m. at Changing Hands Bookstore in Tempe about his book, *Tactical Writing Guide*. More information is at the below link; we'd love it if some PWC members could attend! Hope to see you there! --Joyce Rosenthal

<https://www.changinghands.com/event/february2026/greg-rosenthal>

## VNSA 69th Annual Used Book Sale

Feb 14-15

Arizona State Fairgrounds, Ag Center Building

<https://vnsabooksale.org/>

## Phoenix Writers Network

Check out the Phoenix Writers Network website. You'll find great resources for writers. They meet bimonthly via Zoom and highlight topics we can all learn about. Their next meeting is March 20, speaker Marshall Terrill.

<https://www.phoenixwritersnetwork.com/> - WRITE. LEARN. CONNECT. - Home

Susan Pohlman is the founder and director of The Phoenix Writers Network. She is a freelance writer, editor, writing coach, and workshop facilitator based in Phoenix, Arizona. For more information, check out her website:

<https://www.susanpohlman.com>

## Upcoming Book Fairs

Thank you, Laura Nastasia, for this list. Readers, note that Laura plans to attend each of these.

### **Readers of the Valley**

<https://www.bookishbeccaco.com/collections/bookish-events>

March 8, 2026

Bellair Golf Club

17233 N 45th Ave, Glendale, AZ 85308

### **Scottsdale Sparkle March Madness Event**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/9500-east-via-de-ventura-scottsdale-scottsdale-az/scottsdale-sparkle-march-madness/1162714592646022/>

March 28-29

Arizona Boardwalk

9500 East Via De Ventura

Scottsdale, AZ 85256

### **Readers of the Valley**

<https://www.bookishbeccaco.com/collections/bookish-events>

May 9, 2026

DoubleTree Resort

5401 N. Scottsdale Rd. Scottsdale, AZ 85250

### **Books in the Desert - Book Bliss, LLC**

September 26, 2026

DoubleTree by Hilton

1011 W Holmes Ave

Mesa, AZ 85210

### **Readers of the Valley**

<https://www.bookishbeccaco.com/collections/bookish-events>

October 4, 2026

Bellair Golf Club

17233 N 45th Ave, Glendale, AZ 85308

### **Readers of the Valley**

<https://www.bookishbeccaco.com/collections/bookish-events>

November 8, 2026

Bellair Golf Club

17233 N 45th Ave, Glendale, AZ 85308

## Local Writing Clubs

PWC may be the longest running Arizona writing club; however, there are others in the area you might enjoy.

- Shut up and Write—Shut Up & Write hosts free in-person and online writing events for writers all over the world. Updated calendar may be viewed here: <https://www.meetup.com/shutupandwritephoenixaz/events/calendar/>
- Tempe Science Fiction Writing Meetup—Thursday Evening South Tempe. Come write and talk about writing craft with other local writers. All skill levels welcome
- Scottsdale Society of Women Writers—<https://brooksgoldmannpublishing.com/scottsdale-society-of-women-writers/>
- Phoenix Oasis Press (POP) - <https://www.phoenixoasispress.com/>
- Arizona Authors Association— [www.arizonaauthors.org](http://www.arizonaauthors.org)
- Arizona Professional Writers - (formerly Arizona Press Women) <https://arizonaprofessionalwriters.org>
- Poetry Center—<https://poetry.arizona.edu/> - a volunteer group focused on working with incarcerated writers throughout the country.
- SouthWest Writers (SWW)—<https://www.southwestwriters.com/>
- Phoenix Writers Network— <https://www.phoenixwritersnetwork.com/>

## PWC Website

<https://phoenixwritersclub.com>

Visit the website to find information about past and future meetings, contest information and winners, tributes to past members, and "Author Pages." Don't forget, as a member, you get a free "Author Page." To learn more, visit the new About page for Author Pages: <https://phoenixwritersclub.com/members/about-pwc-author-pages/>

## PWC Substack

<https://phoenixwritersclub.substack.com/>

Being a PWC member just got more exciting. Eric Miller is developing a PWC Substack literary magazine, temporarily titled *Desert Willow*, for our members. You can then list your published piece in your biography. Pieces can be written, audio, or visual art. Copyright is limited rights to magazine. Start date- maybe February 2026. 1<sup>st</sup> issue is posted and includes pieces from 2025 PWC contest winners. (eric@millerphx.com)

## PWC Contacts

<b>President</b>	Cindi Reiss	writeoncindi@gmail.com
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Volunteer requested</b>	
<b>Secretary</b>	beth Liechti Johnson	eljohnson707@gmail.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Navissa Kaiser	navissak@hotmail.com
<b>Social Media</b>	Ilsa Manning	ilsamanningwrites@gmail.com
<b>Website/Substack</b>	Eric Miller	eric@millerphx.com
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<b>Membership</b>	Cindi Reiss	writeoncindi@gmail.com
<b>PWC Historian</b>	Jeff Callan	message.jacallan@outlook.com
<b>PWC Centennial Chair</b>	Cindi Reiss	writeoncindi@gmail.com
<b>Phoenix Writers Club Facebook</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/phxwritersclub/">https://www.facebook.com/phxwritersclub/</a>	
<b>Phoenix Writers Club Website</b>	<a href="https://phoenixwritersclub.com">https://phoenixwritersclub.com</a>	
<b>PWC Desert Willow Substack</b>	<a href="https://phoenixwritersclub.substack.com/">https://phoenixwritersclub.substack.com/</a>	

## Member Links

If you have a blog or website you’d like included in the newsletter, please send D’Anne the link.

Member	Type	Link
Bobbie Bennett	Website	<a href="http://www.bobbiebennett.com">www.bobbiebennett.com</a>
Wanda Bevan	Website	<a href="http://www.wandaswayiswrite.com">www.wandaswayiswrite.com</a>
Nick Bratcher	Podcast-Greenwood & Co	<a href="http://jamisongreenwoodpodcast.com">jamisongreenwoodpodcast.com</a>
Patricia Brooks	Website	<a href="http://www.brooksgoldmannpublishing.com">www.brooksgoldmannpublishing.com</a>
Mary Cornelius	Website	<a href="https://www.corneliusblogs.com/">https://www.corneliusblogs.com/</a>
Brad Graber	Blog	<a href="https://www.bradgraber.com/there-i-said-it/">https://www.bradgraber.com/there-i-said-it/</a>
Carolyn Golden	Website	<a href="http://www.aworkinprocess.us">www.aworkinprocess.us</a>
Kixx Goldman	Blog	<a href="https://www.drkixxgoldman.com/blog/">https://www.drkixxgoldman.com/blog/</a>
Bert Haagenstad	Website	<a href="https://booksbybert.online/">https://booksbybert.online/</a>
Eric Miller	Substack	<a href="https://emillerphx.substack.com/">https://emillerphx.substack.com/</a>
Laura Nastasia	Website	<a href="https://www.soulferriers.com/">https://www.soulferriers.com/</a>
Louise J Privette	Website	<a href="https://louiseprivette.com/">https://louiseprivette.com/</a>
Mark Prior	Website	<a href="http://www.markpriorauthor.com">www.markpriorauthor.com</a>
Diane Shotton	Website	<a href="https://dianewahnshotton.com/">https://dianewahnshotton.com/</a>
Mark D Walker	Substack	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/mrrmz6j2">https://tinyurl.com/mrrmz6j2</a>
Trudy Wells-Meyer	Website	<a href="http://www.trudywells-meyer.com">www.trudywells-meyer.com</a>