

STIMULUS

Phoenix Writers Club Newsletter

Editor: D'Anne Pientka

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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, March 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.

Questions? Email Cindi Reiss at writeoncindi@gmail.com

March Meeting —

We are excited to reveal the *PWC Centennial Year Founders Contest* winners at the Saturday, March 21st PWC meeting held at the Devonshire Senior Center in Phoenix at 10 am. Come help us celebrate.

PWC Centennial Celebration is Rolling Along

Thank you, thank you, thank you, PWC Volunteers! Our writers have been stepping up to the plate and filling in the blanks for our Help Needed Call. We are making excellent progress planning for the Centennial Celebration; members are even bringing in their partners to help with some of the more labor-intensive tasks.

There are still openings for committee work in the following areas: musical entertainment for the social hour, assisting Tamara with decorations, working with Jane on the "caterer search," soliciting ads for the program, additional greeters at the welcome table, and other "day of the event" helpers. If you have the time and desire to be part of the organizational team, please contact me (Lois Kiely, lkiely@aol.com / 602 354 2951 (landline)). I'll gladly and gratefully find a spot for you.



A Note from the PWC President

“You gotta bloom where you’re planted.”

– Dolly Parton



Choosing to bloom isn’t easy some days, is it? I’ve been planted in places where I’d rather hide in the dirt than stick my head out into what awaits me.

This is true for my writing, too. It’s easy to get caught up in daily tasks, helping others, and handling everything we have to do, while putting our own writing aside.

I need to plant myself at my desk and write! PWC continues to bloom into our 100th year, and I am grateful for the many years I have been part of our club. Our motto, ‘Writers Helping Writers,’ has certainly rung true for me. I have been fortunate to meet, learn, and share with hundreds of writers over my past 23 years in the club. I have participated in successes and disappointments with fellow writers and have formed lifelong friendships. My writing genres and interests have taken various forms, leading me on a path of self-discovery.

I invite you to partake in all that PWC has to offer as we go into our next 100 years!

You’ll find many ways to take part in our centennial celebrations throughout the year and get involved in the workings of our club, all listed in this newsletter.

Write on,
Cindi Reiss

PWC Critique Writing Group(s)

D’Anne (workgroup facilitator) put this notice in February’s *Stimulus*. No one has replied yet. She’s including the notice in March’s *Stimulus*. If no one replies, she will remove this notice in future *Stimulus* releases.

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) by **April 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/>

February Minutes

February 21, 2026, 10-12:30 pm

Devonshire Senior Center

Submitted by Sybil Yeaman

Welcome and Introduction to PWC by Cindi Reiss, President.

- Thank you to the Centennial Committee. PWC is 100 years old this year
- Review of news article in the Feb. 26th, Arcadia News.
- Introduction and recognition of new members and guests.
- Thank you to all who provided refreshments.

Centennial News:



Centennial Co-Chair, Lois Kiely, and committee member, Tamara Santley, discussed dates and locations for the centennial celebration.



- Possible location at the North Mountain Visitor Center on 7th Street
- Costs will run \$120 - \$150 per hour
- Keynote speaker for the event is being confirmed
- Writers Day is May 30th at the Visitor Center. Call 602-343-5125 for more information

Converting PWC history to digital: Sybil Yeaman announced that she's pursuing two possible digital record companies to digitize all available PWC documents from the last 100 years.

- Cost is estimated between \$2,000 and \$3,000
- Recommended a fundraiser for the expense

Stimulus Newsletter: D'Anne Pientka announced PWC members will soon be able to advertise their businesses in the newsletter and on the website. The board is ironing out the details.

Book Selling: PWC will reserve a PWC table at multiple events. Authors selling their books are requested to donate \$20 per event to help offset table costs.

Guest Speaker: Robt Pela



Deborah introduced Robt Pela, the guest speaker. Robt Pela is a journalist, editor, teaches at ASU, runs local writing workshops, and more.

Robt Pela said current publishing companies are seeking blended genre books. He also presented: *Ten Things All Writers Should Know (plus bonus 2)*:

1. Write in your own voice and drop the imposter syndrome.
2. Stop using formal language. For example, use contractions.
3. There is no such thing as writer's block. It's an excuse not to write.
4. Read other authors' books for motivation and inspiration. It's not cheating.
5. The most important piece in any writing is the first sentence. Do not use a run-on sentence. You must grab and hold the attention of the reader in the first line.
6. Don't try to copy someone else's writing style.
7. There are no new stories. Write your story using your voice.
8. You're not going to become rich and famous writing books.
9. Writing is not a gift, and all writers have to work at it.
10. Do not use "groovy" slang. Do not use corporate culture terminology, such as "juice path" or "journey".
11. Bonus Tip: It is important to reveal things you don't want anyone to know if you're writing a memoir. It's the same with fiction for complexity in characters.
12. Bonus Tip: Don't use AI. It's cheating in any form.

Cindi Reiss announced the March meeting would be in another room and closed the meeting.

You Ought to Write a Book, with Robt Pela

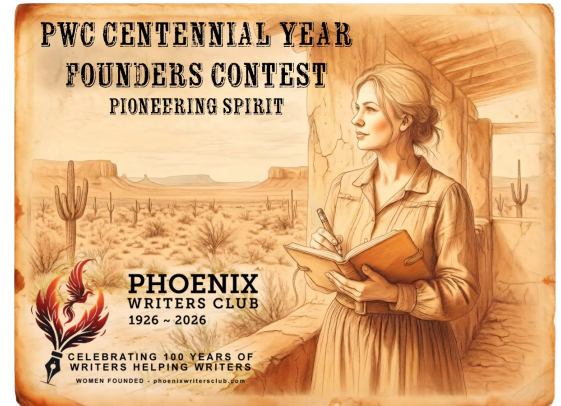
Robt Pela is leading a workshop for first-time authors, April 1-22, Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30 pm at Piper Writers House. \$200. Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/52x2hv3k>. For more information, check out the attached flyer.



PWC Centennial Year Founders Contest: Pioneering Spirit

By Navissa Kaiser

The *PWC Centennial Year Founders Contest* celebrates Women's History Month with a nod to the feisty founders of the Phoenix Writers Club. 100 years ago, after being denied entry to the Phoenix Press Club because of their gender, the Phoenix Writers Club was formed. This year's contest theme of *pioneering spirit* was embraced by the entrants so wholeheartedly that it made for tough decisions in choosing an essay winner and honorable mention, as well as a poetry winner and honorable mention. We are excited to reveal the winners at the Saturday, March 21st, PWC meeting held at the Devonshire Senior Center in Phoenix at 10 am.



The Phoenix Writers Club & writing contests go way back. The club retains copies of letters that establish Phoenix's first postmaster general and newspaperman, and one of the original Roosevelt's Roughriders, Colonel James Harvey McClintock, as a judge in an early PWC contest from 1930. You may recognize the name from McClintock Road or the many schools that bear his name. Col. McClintock was an instrumental part of Arizona history in the 1920s and 30s. Getting a renowned writer like Col. McClintock to judge a contest should convey how seriously the Phoenix Writers Club founders took their writing.

Today, we are a club for all writers, regardless of gender, but recognize that during Women's History Month, the *PWC Dear Founders Contest* honors the pioneering spirit of those witty Western women whose legacy lives on a century later. Winners will receive prizes and certificates at the ceremony, where they will be given the opportunity to read their winning piece. Updates on our more formal winter Centennial celebration, as well as historical information, will also be discussed at our March 21st meeting. Please join us for the festivities!

Centennial History

Apply your craft to tell our story! As we explore our centennial history by decades, this is your opportunity to celebrate it in your own unique way with words, be it through poem, essay, art, song, or play, you can take on the events, spotlight a person, or reflect on the times. We still have openings for the 1960s, 1990s, and 2020-present, but do not feel constrained if another part of our history here at PWC moves you. We'd love to hear from you. If interested, contact Jeff Callan @ message.jacallan@outlook.com.

Erma Home Schooling

March 26—March 28, 2026—Erma Home Schooling.

Enjoy our popular keynote talks and four exclusive humor-writing workshops, thoughtfully designed for the virtual experience. Registration open. After March 9, \$199.

Register at: <https://udayton.edu/calendar/events/erma-home-schooling.php>

Thank you, Patti Meis, for sending us this workshop.

ESSO Coffeehouse Reading and Open Mic

March 15th, 5 pm.

June Powers will be the featured poet, reading at the ESSO Coffeehouse, 4700 N 12th St, Phoenix, AZ. She'll be reading a poem from each of her books, plus loads of new poems.

June Powers is a free verse poet from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, now residing in Phoenix, Arizona.

June has self-published three books of narrative poetry: *CHILD/poems of consciousness*, *SOUTH/poems of passing through*, and *HEART/poems of love*, and has been included in numerous anthologies. A member of the Arizona State Poetry Society (ASPS) and PWC, she enjoys writing about social issues, nature, love, and family, often intersecting these topics. She is currently working on poems that embrace the traumas of the human condition. She shares the following poem, *inner child*.



inner child

1
outside she sits next to the seashore
holding my heart in her hands with care she
is protecting our future

2
inside she stands behind a curtain ready
to give me her language to decipher
the situation our situation

3
she is waiting for me the shining girl anxious
and lovely i see her feel her insistence

4
she tells me not to color within the lines she
asks me when
when are we going to visit the songkeeper to
dance again

5
i say to her there is conflict there is purpose in my cup
full of dreams our dreams at the same time
there are visions of us lost in fields of sunflowers bending
towards the wind when we get there
when we get there she says
when

PWC is in the News

PWC is featured in the February issue of Arcadia News. It is also a print newspaper, with copies at the Devonshire Center where we meet and around central Phoenix. Celebrate PWC and spread the news! https://www.arcadianews.com/local_news_and_features/phoenix-writers-club-celebrates-100-years/article_2e0ff333-83f0-4003-b26e-f54de4d7b5af.html

If you have an outlet for an article, please email Cindi Reiss at writeoncindi@gmail.com

PWC Critique Workgroup and AI

I'm not familiar with ChatGPT, but I've been informed that it's an AI tool. When a file is loaded in ChatGPT, it's then available to whomever on the internet. Not all AI tools upload the files to the internet; so, we must educate ourselves on which tools are safe.

Please note the following:

- The authors of our stories have not been asked for approval to upload their stories;
- By virtue of having the story online (considered published now), contests and publications may decline the story;
- The story is open for other AI tool use or plagiarism.

I shall be updating the workshop guidelines, approved by the board with the following statements:

- Stories must be original. No AI tool use is permitted.
- Edits and feedback must be original. No AI tool use is permitted.

If the PWC board determines that these guidelines are violated, the perpetrator shall be banned from the workshop. Eric Miller shall include similar instructions on submissions to Substack.

The board has taken note of AI questions and issues and plans to schedule one or more monthly club meetings to discuss AI, its pros/cons, how to recognize AI, and how to safely apply it. It's a changing world. Technology now requires us to make these declarative statements and actions to protect our work.

PWC Board

Beth Johnson, Secretary
Ilsa Manning, Social Media
Navissa Kaiser, Treasurer
Cindi Reiss, President/Membership
D'Anne Pientka, Stimulus Editor
Eric Miller, Web Editor (missing)
Jeff Callan, Historian (missing)



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 D'Anne your request along with your contact info so she can include your request here.

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>

Writers Inspiration Group (WIG)

Writers Inspiration Group (WIG) is a writing prompt group that meets on the 1st and 3rd 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. We'd love to have you join us!

For more information, you may go to <https://tinyurl.com/37ennt92>.

ASU Workshops

The Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing is offering workshops this spring in several genres.

There are several poetry workshops and one to explore your relationship in Arizona! There are offerings in-person and online. And through PWCs partnership with ASU, we are eligible for a discounted price. Please email Cindi Reise for that info. The associated flyers are attached.

Date/Time	Title, Presenter	Description
Feb 28—March 31, Saturdays, 10am-12pm	Write the Memoir to Remember by Patricia L Brooks	Everyone has a story to tell. Learn how to tell yours. Write the Memoir.pdf
March 10-31, Tuesdays, 5:30—7:30	Sound and Vision, by Lorin Drexler	Crafting the poem through the Sensory World Mar_Sound & Vision.pdf
April 2nd 5:30—7:30	Writing Poetry in an Era of Overwhelm, by Diego Baez	How do we find the space to create? Apr_Writing Poetry.pdf
April 1-22, Wednesdays, 5:30—7:30	You Ought to Write a Book, by Robrt Pela	A workshop for first-time authors. Registration: https://tinyurl.com/52x2hv3k Write a Book Ad.pdf
April 25, 10am-12 pm	Write your Arizona Story, by Jonathan Danielson	Arizona is the story; you are the voice. Apr_Arizona Story.pdf

Writers Read Craft Book Club

March 28, 10am—noon

The Studios @ Mesa, 59 East 1st St, Mesa AZ

Read fiction, discuss it in terms of writing craft, improve your own work. FREE, please RSVP. Either scan the QRC code or go to <https://na.eventscloud.com/ereg/newreg.php?eventid=872466&>. Run by Phx OASIS Press (POP). Flyer attached, March Craft Book Club 2026 Flyer..pdf

Check Out *The Cleaner*

A dramatic Podcast based on a book Jeff Callan co-authored (coming in 1Q26) and in conjunction with Voyage Media was released on Wednesday, an 8-episode action/thriller series entitled *The Cleaner*.

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/78fFulGQB8PKm2WZQdGb0M>

Apple: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-cleaner/id1880124167>



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 (AAA) — 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

It's time for the 2nd Edition of *The Desert Willow*, A Literary Magazine of the Phoenix Writers Club. You can find details on the types of work on the About page: <https://phoenixwritersclub.substack.com/about>

Please send your submissions to pwc.substack@gmail.com . Deadline for the 2nd issue, Spring 2026, will be March 31st, 2026. Our volunteers will read everything and select a piece for each category.

You can view the magazine online at <https://phoenixwritersclub.substack.com> . Please consider subscribing even if you don't plan to submit. It is a way for us to support one another's writing.

We look forward to reading everyone's submissions!

PWC Contacts

President/Membership	Cindi Reiss	writeoncindi@gmail.com
Vice President	Volunteer requested	
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Website/Substack	Eric Miller	eric@millerphx.com
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PWC Historian	Jeff Callan	message.jacallan@outlook.com
PWC Centennial Co-Chairs	Cindi Reiss	writeoncindi@gmail.com
	Lois Kiely	llkiely@aol.com

Phoenix Writers Club Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/phxwritersclub/>

Phoenix Writers Club Website <https://phoenixwritersclub.com>

PWC Desert Willow Substack <https://phoenixwritersclub.substack.com/>

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