

In this issue:

- September Monthly Meeting
- PWC President Message
- Member News
- PWC Centennial News
- Resources for Publishing
- What's Happening Around Town
- PWC Member Websites/Blogs
- Contact Information

PWC Monthly Meeting

Reminder: There is no monthly meeting for July or August. We start back up in September.

Phoenix Writers Club meets monthly on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

Pre-Payment & RSVP Required

Membership Annual Dues

Annual dues of \$40 are due by the end of September. You may pay via Zelle or Venmo

to phoenixwriters1926@gmail.com or mail a check to our treasurer, Navissa Kaiser, payable to Phoenix Writers Club, 5715 E. Alder, Mesa 85206. **Questions?** Email Cindi Reiss at writeoncindi@gmail.com



It's Complicated

By Robert A. Saigh

Ever feel lost in the rapidly evolving technological 'advances' that are supposed to make our lives easier? Between browsers, smart phones, computers, and passwords, how do we know our information is safe? Robert (aka Bob) shares his experience and technical knowledge to help us navigate through this morass of technical noise. The information is broken down into easy to understand subjects, too many to list here. Please find "Computer article 03232026", attached to this email.

Thank you, Bob, for sharing this useful information.

If anyone else has expertise they'd like to share, please send D'Anne your article. We'd love, and need, to hear from you.

A Note from the PWC President

“It’s a sure sign of summer if the chair gets up when you do.”

– Walter Winchell

This certainly applies to our Phoenix summers! But if we’re sitting that long in a chair, hopefully it’s because we are writing or reading.

We have much to write about as our country celebrates its Semiquincentennial. We are reminded that for 250 years, we have laughed, cried, been joyous, horrified, apathetic, or passionate about our place in this country. As writers, we have the opportunity to express what it means to be an American, even in our divided world, when our words may not be welcomed. I encourage you to write what is in your heart, whether you share it or not, or whether it is welcomed or not. We were given a gift that should not be wasted.

We have enjoyed having our meetings at the Devonshire Senior Center for the past few years. We are at a point where we are looking to secure a different venue due to several city guidelines. We have some options where we may not need to move, but we want to have a backup. We need to be in Phoenix, preferably centrally located, able to accommodate 30-40+ attendees, allow us to bring our own refreshments, and meet on the third Saturday of each month, with the room available from 9:30 to 12:30. Churches could be a good option. If you have a venue that may work for us, please email me, and I can provide more details.

We do not meet in July or August, but you are always welcome to come behind the scenes as the board keeps the PWC wheels rolling, especially during our centennial-year events.



A favorite summertime poem of mine is *Fishing on the Susquehanna in July* by Billy Collins. I hope you enjoy it too.

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/53810/fishing-susquehanna-in-july>

Write on,
Cindi Reiss

Artist unknown

So You Think You Know English

The Words the New Administration is Quietly Banning

By Katy Reagan

Not to be political; however, sometimes we must speak out.

<https://tinyurl.com/4zznymeU>

June Minutes

June 20, 2026, 10-12:30 pm

Devonshire Senior Center

Submitted by Kristin Hugins

Happy Father's Day to all the fathers!

President Cindi Reiss welcomed everyone

Board Introductions

- Ilsa Manning: social media person - if you have something you want to share, contact her.
- D'Anne Pientka: newsletter editor and critique group coordinator.
- beth Johnson: secretary, absent today, so Kristen Hugins is taking minutes.
- Jeff Callan: PWC historian.
- Centennial committee was recognized.

New Member & Guest Introductions

- Amina Ghalyoun - fiction and nonfiction
- Karin McAreavy - poetry and children's books
- Traci Langston - has 18 titles on Amazon, Chicken Soup for the Soul: Care for the Caregiver
- Dave Wingert - retired rocket scientist, technical writing background, trying creative writing, historical golf fiction
- Ann Videan - former speaker, has 5 books on Amazon, ghostwriting, book shepherd, runs an ALWAYS group (Authors, Literary Writers and Yabbering Scribes) - see FB - meet 12:30-2 on Wed at Redemption Church in Gilbert, informal
- Russ Birk - wrote a novel about a family during an earthquake on the Oregon coast
- Jodi Birk - was a bookkeeper and now a publicist (for her husband's book)
- Bob Weber - retired, loves to write historical fiction, time travel and future writing, worked for 3M

Venue Change: May need a new venue starting in September

If any of you know of a place that might work for our monthly meetings, please contact Cindi. Church or center is great. Needs to be in Phoenix, preferably Central.

Tributes for Penny Orloff - send written tributes to Eric Miller with "tribute" in subject line

Penny Orloff was tragically killed riding her bicycle. There is a tribute page on the website; you may send a tribute to Eric and he will put it on the website.

Tamara Santley brought chocolate kisses to honor Penny today. Penny used to sift through the candy to find

all the kisses. Life is short - eat the chocolate.

Leslie Cox said Penny was the very first person in the club to greet her, and she was bubbly and welcoming and helped her feel like she belonged. Grateful to her for that.

Events

- **DNRS Conference:** Oct 16-17—See note from Cindi and flyer. Early bird registration ends July 15th for \$175.
- **Blue Guitar Festival:** Sunday, November 8th, 10-3—PWC will present around 12:30 or 1:00, contest winners will read, and we'll have other presentations of our history.
- **PWC Centennial Celebration:** North Mountain Visitor's Center, Thursday, Nov 12, 4-7, need sponsorship chair and committee.

History Centennial Writing—Jeff Callan

- Still need someone to write for the 1990s and 2010 to present.
- When you contribute, we publish it on our website.
- Cindi read a poem, *PWC in the Eighties*, written by Bibi Khalsa.

Board Member Election: PWC board election is to be held at the October meeting for 2026-2027. If you are interested in running, contact Ilsa Manning, the nominating chair. If you would like to get involved with PWC in any way or would like more info about a board position, contact Cindi. We are especially in need of a vice-president.

Member Announcements

- Leslie Cox announced she is part of Phoenix Oasis Press - in-person craft book club and author networking events - four times a year - next one in August. Every Wed at 7:30, she hosts an online write-in. Have published three anthologies of AZ writers. Check Phxoasispress.com for more info.
- Wanda Bevan was interviewed by Maggie Smith and shared this link for you to enjoy - Hear Us ROAR ... <https://maggiesmithwriter.com/podcast/>
- Kixx Goldman announced she is starting a new book as an infectious disease doctor and invited people to talk with her about it.



Speaker-Kolby Granville

(see his attached presentation outline for more notes "Outline-Publish my Writing")



- Spent five years teaching Socratic discussion and Great Books.
- Works with his sister as a lawyer - criminal defense - lots of fentanyl cases.
- His lit mag of seven years (nonprofit) was voted #2 by Chill Subs.
- Talked about submitting to literary magazines.
- He identified two types of books: Books where the author has something to say and

they generated a plot to say it. Then, books where someone has a plot they want to tell, and because they are human, their own beliefs get inserted in the book. He really likes the first type.

Examples of that first type of short stories: *Harisson Bergeron* by Kurt Vonnegut or *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas* by Ursula K. Leguin

He started collecting stories on a website. Then put them on Amazon as short stories. He was adding one a week, and someone told him, *that's a literary magazine*. He started making a PDF once a month and inviting subscribers. Then by year two, the authors said they wanted print books. Now he has a submissions director and full staff.

Invented a genre. Any genre + subgenre of "something to discuss" - meant to be ethical and philosophical short fiction. Each story comes with five discussion questions at the end.

He shared example of ethical questions around story about putting down dog for \$50K.

Score based on two criteria: 1. how's the writing? 2. Does it generate five ethical questions?

Publishing is more like venture capitalism - they publish 10K books that lose money, but publish one, e.g., *Memoirs of a Geisha* or *Harry Potter* series, that pays for all the losses. And past titles keep them afloat.

Learning this, he repackaged stories into 10 books on themes around all different ethics topics - hopes teachers will put them in their classrooms.

Also publishes a yearly "best of" anthology.

Sells 5-7 copies per month, but zero effort.

Literary magazines lose money if not supported by a university, a donor, or are a household name - there are about 3K - can find them all on Chillsubs.com - of that 3K, only three actually make a profit; skewed supply and demand curve. He pays \$75 per story, and for three years, the lit mag gets exclusive rights to publish it however they want, in any form, under the *After Dinner Conversation* brand.

Awards: all of the awards you submit with everything included (names, mag names). About 80% of Pushcart awards have been won by the same five lit magazines. "If they did complete blind readings, he believes they would find they didn't know what was good."

Most authors spend 90% time writing, 10% submitting. Successful authors spend 70% writing, 20% researching where to submit, 10% submitting.

Our split is about 50% writers, 50% experts in their field.

"I don't need to understand what you're writing. I need to understand that *you* understand what you're writing. Write what you know."

A good story is obvious from the first paragraph.

We publish through Amazon, Draft to Digital (gets us on Ingram Spark, B&N, libraries, etc.). We ship to anywhere in the world.

Seven years of doing this 40-50 hrs a week, now make \$2200-2800/month; has team of about 200 (!) people who help. Expenses have grown for magazine as it's grown - expenses are mainly for the infrastructure. Does email drip campaigns to get people into the system.

Most lit magazines have less than 500 subscribers. The people who make more are genre magazines, like best horror or romance short stories.

Discussed how to give away a free magazine and make it profitable.

20 Books to 50K - great organization - they do a big annual convention in Vegas - they tell you don't release your first book until you're finished your 4th or 5th book so you have a runway for readers.

Why would anyone submit to a literary magazine?

Two kinds of writers: writers who have a book in them and writers who will write what they write whether anyone reads it or not.

If you're the kind of person who will be writing your whole life, submitting to a literary magazine is a resume building thing. You learn from submitting short stories and work your way up the literary magazine hierarchy. As you are finishing your book you're getting better at writing because of all the short stories you're writing. And you go to your agent and say you have a list of magazines you've been published in. You may not know if it's good or bad, but if people whose job it is to say no said yes, you know you have something good. Helpful to have proven that you can get through gatekeepers.

Has mailed his After Dinner Conversations books to about 100 schools

Marketing suggestion: Book Funnel is an organization he recommends - they have shared email lists. We all submit together as a group. He has 40K people on his list. Here's a sample short story, and he's another one from someone else. Connects you with other authors' lists. Generates links and tracking for you and gives you a reputation score.

Build an email list of people to share your book with up to a year before your book launches. Build your base through list shares, advanced reader copies, etc., then release the book. Include in book 1 the first chapter of book 2. The whole name of the game is capturing fans.

Sweet spot for short story for his collection is 2500-4000 words; won't read anything less than 1000 words or more than 7000 words.

No meetings in July and August, Next meeting in Sept.

Meeting adjourned

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. <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>

Some PWC
meeting
attendees



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: assisting Tamara with decorations, tamsantley@yahoo.com and other “day of the event” helpers.

We need a chair and a committee to oversee the option of having sponsors included in the program. The chair would maintain a list of members who have successfully secured sponsors’ funds for ads in the program, and communicate that information to the treasurer and program designers. Sponsors will receive a copy of the program with their ads. Costs and sizes of these ads are to be decided.

If members have relationships with local businesses, this may be an easy way to further fund the celebration's expenses. Lois has developed a letter and more instructions for those soliciting ads and the chair of this committee.

If you have the time and desire to be part of the organizational team, please contact Lois Kiely, llkiely@aol.com/ 732 531 4648 (phone calls only, no texts). And she will gladly and gratefully find a spot for you. Note that currently she is on the East Coast, and there is a 3-hour time difference.

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, then move to the next prompt. 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!

PWC History

We still have areas for eager writers to contribute written work: the 1990s and 2020 to the present. Works can be anything: an essay, a poem, a song, a skit, or anything that brings your inspiration to the club for the time period. You are not limited to a particular decade. You may choose to write about a particular person or event that was instrumental to the club. Go with what moves you. Contact Jeff Callan at message.jacallan@outlook.com if you want to join us in sharing our history or have any questions.



Book Events/Signing Parties

Lighten Up, by Kitty Page Tomkinson (former PWC member), July 7th, 4pm-6pm. Flyer attached.

Miracle on Windy Point, by R.A. Birk, August 8, 7pm-9pm. Flyer attached.

Desert Owl Bookclub—this Book Club to continue through the summer. Flyer attached.

- *Kin*, by Tayari Jones, July 16
- *The Ghost Women*, by Jennifer Murphy, August 13

Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing

Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing at ASU has many opportunities for writers, including the annual Desert Nights, Rising Stars conference on October 16th and 17th, 2026. If you are interested in leading a session, please see the attached flyer for application instructions.

Looking Ahead

July and August: No general meetings (summer break)

September 19th: General Meeting Speaker—attorney Maria Crimi Speth is speaking on intellectual property, copyrights, and much-needed information to protect our writings

October 17th: General Meeting—PWC History presentations

November 8th: Blue Guitar Festival—Contest winners will read, and we'll have other presentations from members

November 12th, 4-7: PWC Centennial Party

November: No general meeting

December 19th: PWC Holiday Salon Party with members' readings (in lieu of general meeting)



PWC Beta Readers Wanted

Bob Weber is seeking beta readers for his historical and time-travel novel. The story alternates between 2045 and 2AD, following Jordanian archaeologist Peter Radwin and three students as they are transported back in time during an investigation of the tomb of Nabataean King Aretas IV. As they are thrust into 2AD, they hear their names and the phrase “The Story Has Been Written.” While exploring antiquity, they find Moses’s mystical staff, meet historical figures, and discover their true purpose. The novel combines futuristic technology with themes of self-righteousness, wickedness, and greed that have persisted throughout human history. The word count is 98839. For more details, contact Bob and take a ride back in history and then into the future! Bob's email is bjclweber2014@icloud.com, and his phone number is 612.747.3611

Editor’s Note: We’ve read a couple of Bob’s chapters in our PWC Critique workshop. I recommend Bob’s book from the chapters I’ve read thus far. I look forward to reading future chapters.

PWC Critique Writing Group

Our critique workshop meets via Zoom every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, from 6:00-8:00. Enjoy one of the great benefits of being a PWC member. The success of PWC’s workshops is highlighted by:

- Numerous workshop attendees publishing their books
- Strong attendee growth.

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

Upcoming Book Fairs

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

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

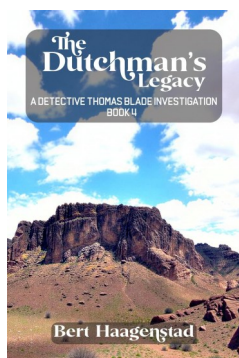
Member News

D'Anne Pientka's short story, *Song Dog Songs*, was picked a Finalist in the 2026 *Next Generation Short Stories* contest.

Jeffrey Callan's new book, *The Intrigants: The Cleaner*, is available on Amazon <https://a.co/d/0dk3jKu3>. It's the basis for "The Cleaner" podcast.

Rick Lindstrom's final novel, *Abduction*, is now available on Amazon, <https://a.co/d/0fy7ykaN>. His wife, Kim Nielsen, forged ahead to get it published, now a year since his passing.

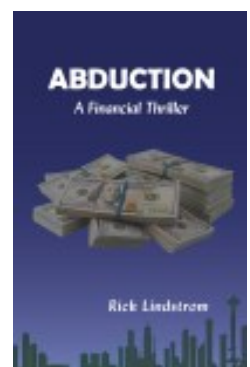
Bert Haagenstad: *The Dutchman's Legacy*, 4th in the Detective Thomas Blade Investigations series is available on Amazon <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0H3R8JCDW>



Cindi Reiss is included in the Motherhood Anthology with little somethings press with Revisionary Arts.

Patricia Brooks, Jody Sharpe, and Bobbie Bennett: *Meet the Authors* at Payson Book Festival, July 18. <https://paysonbookfestival.org/meet-the-authors-2026/?shem=rimsouwouoe>

beth Liechti Johnson has 2 poems included in ISSUED:stories of service, v.4 (2026), sponsored by ASU. <https://issuedjournal.com/>



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 July 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 3rd Edition of *The Desert Willow*, the Phoenix Writers Club Literary Magazine. You can find details on the types of work accepted on the About page: <https://phoenixwritersclub.substack.com/about>

The winners from the 2026 PWC Centennial Pioneer Women's writing contest have been published (2nd Edition).

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
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PWC Centennial Co-Chairs	Jeff Callan	message.jacallan@outlook.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