

# The Just Write Life

## Inside This Issue

President's Article.....	1
Upcoming Events.....	2
New Members.....	2
Member Spotlight.....	2
Three Links to Websites.....	3
Member Article.....	3
Who's Penned What.....	4
Website Author Bios.....	4
Member Article.....	5
Critique Guidelines.....	6
Chapter Officers.....	6

## President's Article

### Aeschylus Lives On!

by Ann Gordon

Some of you may recognize the name Aeschylus. Even if you don't, you probably recognize this as a Greek name. I was recently reminded of this ancient playwright and philosopher while watching the *Jack Ryan* TV series. I was amazed when the characters Jack Ryan and James Greer briefly discussed a quote from Aeschylus while they ate at a European diner. Although both fictional characters worked for the CIA, neither had a degree in philosophy: Jack Ryan earned a doctorate in economics while James Greer was a career Navy man. So why Aeschylus? Well, for one thing, because he wrote **a lot** and his work won many awards in ancient Greece and Egypt. Although everything had to be written by hand in 500 BC, this poet, playwright, and philosopher wrote 70 to 90 plays and is considered the father of Greek tragedy.

I've always been interested in the Greek gods, especially since I wrote the story about Selene (Greek goddess of the Moon). This interest introduced me to the ancient authors who wrote about these godly figures, including Homer, Sophocles, Hesiod, Aeschylus, and even Virgil (who came much later). Corporate work pulled me away from this research for two years, but now that I've returned to fiction, I'm digging deeper into the legends of Selene, Hermes, and Prometheus. Studying about the latter led me to *Prometheus Bound*, a play by Aeschylus written in three parts (he invented this 3-part form). This famous play is one of only seven of the author's numerous plays to have survived the ravages of time.

And now, of all things, this ancient play is available worldwide on the Internet. Many authors, including Percy Shelley and Henry Thoreau, have taken a stab at translating *Prometheus Bound* into English. Three translations have been narrated and are available as downloads on LibriVox.

Why do I bring all this up? Because once again I want to make the point that audio versions of our fiction are the wave of the future. Although Americans overall don't read as much as they did sixty years ago, nearly one quarter of all Americans listened to one or more audiobooks in 2021, and fifty percent of Americans have listened to at least one audiobook in their life. So, if you have self-published any of your books, don't forget to investigate the audiobook option.

Some references for Aeschylus and *Prometheus Bound*:

- About Aeschylus: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aeschylus>
- About *Prometheus Bound*: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prometheus\\_Bound](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prometheus_Bound)
- *Prometheus Bound* play in English text: <https://johnstoniatexts.x10host.com/aeschylus/prometheusboundhtml.html>
- LibriVox recordings of works by Aeschylus:  
[https://librivox.org/author/478?primary\\_key=478&search\\_category=author&search\\_page=1&search\\_form=get\\_results](https://librivox.org/author/478?primary_key=478&search_category=author&search_page=1&search_form=get_results)

## Upcoming Events



**The Pre-Quill Conference**  
April 20, 2024

The Pre-Quill Conference will be on April 20th, 2024, at Salt Lake City Marriott University Park at 480 Wakara Way, Salt Lake City, UT 84108.

Cost is \$30.00.

The Quills Conference is the LUW's premium writer's weekend at Marriott University Park, Salt Lake City; it's streamed online for virtual attendees.

Come learn what you need to be successful in writing and publishing.

Whether you're looking for traditional publishing or exploring indie publishing, find insider tips from top professionals.

Early-bird registration opens on January 1, 2024.

Visit <https://www.leagueofutahwriters.com> for more information.



**August 8-11th, 2024**

## New Members

Welcome to the following new members of Just Write:

- ❖ Aubree Barnum
- ❖ Alex Hugie
- ❖ Lorraine Jeffery
- ❖ Gwen Soper
- ❖ Kathy Davidson (welcome back)



**“If the noun is good and the verb is strong, you almost never need an adjective.”**

**– J. Anthony Lukas**

## Member Spotlight



### Aubrey Barnum

Aubree lives in Salem with her husband, daughter, and labradoodle. She has loved reading and writing from a young age and often is up, late at night, writing away so she doesn't forget any ideas. When she's not stuck in a book, scribbling furiously, or being a mom, Aubree enjoys teaching her class of first graders.

She self-published a poetry collection in 2021 titled *The Birds and the Beasts*. It is her first published work. Her true love lies with YA Fantasy; this is what she's currently working on. Aubree hopes to enter the query trenches next Fall.

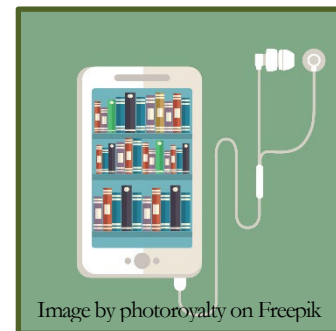
You can follow her writing journey and keep updated on all her writing projects on Instagram at [@aubreebarnumbooks](https://www.instagram.com/aubreebarnumbooks).

## Links to Websites

### Three Links to Websites

by Ann Gordon

I admit to being an audiophile. Before Audible came along, I listened to audiobooks available on Podiobooks.com (no longer available). I subscribed to Audible years before Amazon purchased it, and now my Audible library contains over 1,000 books. Yeah, that's extreme, I know, but because of audiobooks I've read (or heard) all of Jim Butcher's books about Harry Dresden, 22 David Baldacci books, 20 by Lawrence Sanders, 24 by B.V. Larson, and the whole Retrieval Artist series by Kristine Kathryn Rusch. I purchase about as many nonfiction audiobooks too. I listen to audiobooks while cleaning the kitchen, working on computer graphics, updating a website, folding laundry, or driving to Colorado. A few stories I've liked so well I've heard them twice, like *The Innocent* by Baldacci.



To learn more about audiobooks, here are a few links you might want to explore:

- Some facts about audiobooks: <https://ebookfriendly.com/audiobooks-facts-tips-comparisons/>
- “How to Publish Your Book as an Audiobook with Scott Sigler,” an author I've followed since 2001: <https://www.authormedia.com/how-to-publish-your-book-as-an-audiobook-with-scott-sigler/>
- About Audiobooks.com: <https://www.audiobooks.com/about>

**“A professional writer is an amateur who didn't quit.”**

– Richard Bach

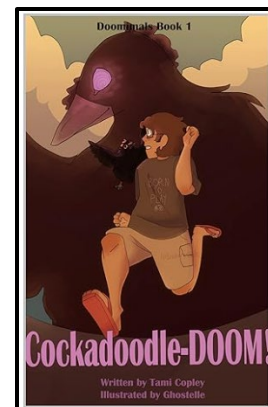
## Member Article

### Tips and Tricks for the Amazon Self-published Author

by Tamara Copley

In preparation for the Logan Holiday Gift Fair this year, I self-published a flurry of children's books. In doing so, I've employed a few lessons I've learned from various experts, lessons that may help other writers:

1. Broaden your audience as much as possible by releasing various editions. I have a family member working on the audiobook. I'm working on a Spanish translation starting with Google Translate and then tweaking it from there. I've heard releasing large print editions can also be a lucrative and easy thing to do because the market is narrower for these. Anything with 16-point font and higher is considered large print. It makes the book more accessible for those with vision disabilities.
2. Find ways to make your books cheaper. If you're publishing on Amazon, making a black-and-white edition of a color book can save money. Also, keeping word count down helps. They won't let you make a hard copy of anything with fewer than 75 pages, but going over 200 pages increases the price. I shortened this book my boy wrote (which won second place from the kids' book category of the League contest a few years ago, when he was thirteen) simply by messing with the white space and made it cheaper still by publishing a black and white edition.

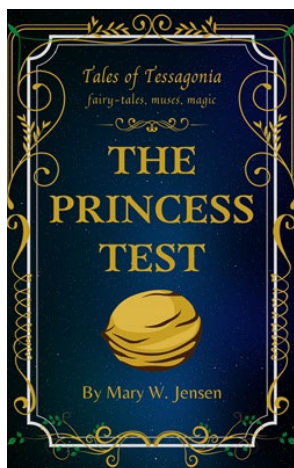


3. I've also heard from an expert that research into the Amazon bestsellers list can help you make a highly marketable picture book. Taking a character type like a dog or a cat that sells well then putting that character into a popular story/plotline/situation could be a winner. When you publish on Amazon KDP Select, they let you drop the price to free to increase sales. I dropped the following books to free for a few days, and most of them ranked in the top ten, some even in the top three, in their respective categories for the duration of the free period. It's also during this time you can ask your friends and family for reviews, which will not cost them anything.

All of this doesn't necessarily translate to an abundance of money. It hasn't for me yet, but it's a start and has put my name out there.

[Click here to find Tamara on Amazon.](#)

## Who's Penned What



Mary Jensen's *The Princess Test*, published October 10, 2023, is a fairy-tale retelling novella, book three in the Tales of Tessagonia series. All three books are now on Kindle Unlimited.

When a prince brings home a foreign peasant girl for his bride, his family doubts her worthiness. They present a series of secret tests to ensure she won't be an embarrassment to the royal family. Can Zuleika live up to their expectations and become the queen her prince believes she can be?

[Purchase the novel on Amazon.](#)



Linda Allison's photograph was used as the cover art in the Autumn edition of the literary journal, *Persimmon Tree*. [Persimmon Tree – An Online Magazine of the Arts by Women Over Sixty](#)

## NaNoWriMo

Lisa Vickers Forsyth participated in and won this year with her romance novel *Heartbreak Hotel*.

## Website Author Bios

**Just Write Members:** Please check out your website bio page and let Ann or Nancy know if you would like any changes to your writing bio. <http://justwritechapter.org/MemberBios.html>

**If your bio isn't on the website, and you want it to be included, send Nancy or Ann a picture of yourself and an author bio no greater than 125 words.** Questions you could answer include:

- When did you realize you wanted to write? At what time in your life, etc.
- What genres do you like to read?
- What are you currently working on?
- Do you have a writing schedule? If so, what's that like?
- Links to social media.

## Member Article

### Relationships that Resonate

By Haley Cavanaugh

In storytelling, a profound magic unfolds—the art of forging relationships that breathe life into characters and resonate with the reader’s soul. As writers, we craft connections that seamlessly span the fictional realm and the beating hearts of those who accompany our characters on their journeys.

Envision your characters as friends, each possessing a blend of flaws and good qualities. Embrace their quirks, fears, and joys, infusing them with authenticity. Within the intricacies of your characters, readers may catch glimpses of themselves or their loved ones.

A relationship must pulse with universal emotions to truly touch a reader’s heart. Let love ripple through your words, permit the sting of loss to linger, and infuse the narrative with the bittersweet taste of joy and pain. By tapping into these shared emotions, your characters’ journey transforms into a collective experience—a tapestry woven with threads of shared sentiment.

Visualize your characters engaging in dance, their dialogues and actions composing a rich and nuanced melody. Balance these dialogues with actions that sing, with each movement an eloquent note in the symphony of their relationships. In this dance, readers twirl alongside the characters, feeling the rhythm of connection and possibilities.

Within the emotional rollercoaster of relationships, conflicts act as steep climbs and resolutions as exhilarating descents. Conflict also drives your readers’ interest. Navigate these twists and turns with grace, for characters shine within adversity. As readers accompany your characters through trials and triumphs, they embark on an emotional journey mirroring the highs and lows of their own lives.

Consider the beauty found in the unspoken—a shared silence that speaks volumes. Sometimes, what we don’t say is more significant than what we do. Subtext becomes a secret language between characters, a language readers interpret. The unsaid, lingering glances and pregnant pauses contribute to the unspoken connections binding characters and readers in a shared understanding.

Characters are not static. They change and evolve like we do, lifelong companions on a journey. Allow their relationships to develop organically, mirroring the ebb and flow of real-life connections. Pour experience and emotion into what you write. As readers witness this growth, they find a reflection of their transformations, forging a deeper, more enduring bond with the characters and the narrative.

A relationship must invite empathy—an open invitation for readers to step into your characters’ shoes and resonate. Envision your audience and craft scenarios to touch upon their experiences and emotions. In the recent Netflix film, “Sly,” Sylvester Stallone mentioned that when he wrote the screenplay for Rocky, he started thinking in terms of “what-ifs.” What if Rocky had a girlfriend? What if he secretly hated his job as a thug? What if he liked pets? When readers feel a kinship with the struggles and triumphs of your characters, they don’t merely read a story. They become integral to it and find a relationship they can root for.

As we embark on the sacred storytelling journey, let the heartbeat of connection guide our pens. Through the authenticity of characters, the resonance of shared emotions, the dynamic dance of interactions, the rollercoaster of conflict and resolution, the power of unspoken connections, the evolution of relationships, and the invitation to reader empathy, we can create narratives that don’t just touch hearts but entwine with them. From one heart to another, let our stories be remembered not as words on paper but as echoes of shared experiences—a testament to the enduring power of human connection.



Image by brgfx on Freepik

## Critique Sessions and Submission Guidelines

Critique sessions run twice a month. Invitation emails are usually sent the first and sixteenth of each month; these invitations include an RSVP deadline. Once the deadline has passed, the spreadsheet with current group information is sent. Each session is generally divided into two or three groups with three to six participants each, depending on how many members participate.

Submissions are then emailed to each member of the participant's group and returned by the end-of-session deadline, usually the fifteenth or the last day of the month. If you want to read a submission from someone in a different group in addition to those in your own group, you may request their work, but please do not expect them to read yours in return.

Fiction and non-fiction chapters, short stories, articles, and poems are all welcome in our critique sessions...query letters too.

### Submission Guidelines

- 3,200 words or less (not including any synopses at the beginning)
- Include a synopsis if there are chapters/ sections prior to your current submission
- 12-point or larger serif font (such as Times New Roman or Cambria)
- Double or 1.5 spaced lines
- Word document format (.doc, .docx)
- Include your name or initials in the filename
- Submit within three days of receiving the group spreadsheet

### Critiquing Guidelines

- Please make at least six suggestions or comments in your reviews (AI grammar programs should not be used)
- Be honest, kind, and encouraging
- Corrections and comments are made using the "Track Changes" and "New Comment" features under the "Review" tab in Word
- Include a note at the end of the document or in the email with an overall review or comment
- Ideally, return your reviews by the last day of the session

## Chapter Officers

- Ann Gordon, President  
([ann@gordoncomputer.com](mailto:ann@gordoncomputer.com))
- Mechelle Morrison, Vice President  
([mechellemorrison@gmail.com](mailto:mechellemorrison@gmail.com))
- Tim Keller, PR and Voting Proxy  
([writerscache435@gmail.com](mailto:writerscache435@gmail.com))
- Website: Ann Gordon and David Armstrong
- Nancy Roe, Newsletter Editor  
([Newsletter.JustWriteChapter@gmail.com](mailto:Newsletter.JustWriteChapter@gmail.com))

"The greatest sin for a writer is to be boring."

– Carl Hiaasen

HAPPY  
HAPPY  
HAPPY  
HAPPY  
NEW YEAR