



The Authority

Connecticut Authors & Publishers Association—Since 1994

Connecticut's Source for
Writing, Publishing &
Marketing Information

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How To Get The Most Out Of CAPA-University January Panel Discussion (Avon Meeting)

With CAPA-U coming up fast, many members who have never attended are wondering how this writers workshop can benefit them. Well, the committee understands this and is going to make the January meeting one where members will be given the inside track on how to get the most out of this event.

First and fore-

most for those who will be meeting with an agent, will be lessons in how to develop the perfect query letter. This is the short but vital pitch to get the agent to like the book.

Next in the realm of most asked questions there will be a discussion of "How to pick the right agent."

There are 15 workshops on a variety of

topics from which attendees may choose three. The panel will go into detail on each to give you our best information for each member to form his or her choices.

This is the perfect chance to get the inside track so that CAPA-U will be a perfect opportunity for each attendee to advance his career as a writer or publisher or marketer.

Meet A Member: *Barbara Klein* By Ursula McCafferty



For the "regulars" at CAPA meetings—and all others—let me tell you about that fantastic provider of those super, mouth-watering delicacies that have been gracing our table in recent months. Her name

is Barbara Klein.

After experiencing some of her creations, I was sure she would tell me that she was a Cordon Bleu trained chef. Not so. Barbara's start in the culinary field began with a cake — that flopped!

Apparently Barbara's mother was a good cook, and, when Barbara was all of ten years old, she allowed her young daughter to bake a cake. She told Barbara to follow the recipe on the Hershey's cocoa box. It called for

buttermilk but Barbara had no buttermilk so she used all the proper ingredients but substituted fresh milk. Now any of us who bake know that you use baking soda with buttermilk but NOT with regular milk. The cake was, literally, a flop. Barbara described it as "flat with holes that looked like my dad had used it for target practice." She received a great lesson in substitutions from her mom. Her cake was fed to the family pig. The pig

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Meetings

Southwest Division

Shelton

1/11

Topic to be announced

Main Meeting

Avon

1/16/10

Panel Discussion

"How To Get The Most Out Of CAPA-U"

2/20/10

Wayne English

"Writing Web Content"

Southeast Division

Groton

1/18/10

Topic to be announced

Check the CAPA website

www.aboutcapa.com

Baking With Barb by Barbara Klein



Once in my youth I had a Danish friend who was the ultimate 'Housewife' and cook. Her floors were mopped daily and no one wore shoes in her home. Daily she did her marketing, as she had done in Denmark, and she cooked using only the freshest ingredients. She once remarked to me that in Denmark she had heard that American women only cooked from cans. At the time I resented the remark and resolved to make her recipes exactly as she did. However as life went on and I began to work and

raise a family my priorities changed. Instead of asking the butcher to grind one pound of pork and one pound of beef together to make the meatballs, I could buy the meatballs at the market already prepared and add a few other ingredients that were perhaps in cans or boxes to make my life a little simpler—as long as the taste wasn't compromised. And so the recipe for Danish Meatballs evolved into something I could make in a slow cooker and save myself time to make the recipes that must be made slowly, such as Julia Child's French Crescents.

So perhaps I have become that American woman who has decided that I must cook smarter not harder as long as the food tastes good. That leaves time for things that really matter like my granddaughter 'Princess' Lana and taking time to smell the roses.

Danish Meatballs

1 two-pound bag of good quality prepared meatballs
2 cans of cream of mushroom soup
1 cup of milk
1 package of dry Lipton's onion soup
½ cup of dry white wine (secret ingredient)

Use a slow cooker to prepare these dainty Danish delicacies—say that quickly three times. Combine all ingredients and stir to coat the meatballs. Cover and turn on high just until they begin to simmer. Turn cooker to low and allow the meatballs and sauce to simmer for several hours. Your friends won't know they weren't prepared by a Danish Chef.



Article Submission

The Authority welcomes articles written by members. Here are some guidelines that we would encourage.

Articles should be about 500 words in length. If the article is larger, the editors reserve the right to reduce the size or divide it into sections that would be run in successive issues. All articles will be edited.

Every aspect of writing, publishing and marketing is of interest to readers of the Authority. Your personal slant on this business is of special interest to all of us and welcome.

Please submit articles to editors Peggy Gaffney or David Garnes .

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Meet A Member: *Barbara Klein* continued from page 1

loved it!

Barbara began her life in Fayetteville, West Virginia, the second of ten children of a coal miner. Fortunately, she had an active imagination and talent: She painted, sang, read, made mud pies and watched her mother cook. She has fond memories of the smell of her mother's gingerbread cake filled with reconstituted spicy dried apples. A big regret is that she never got that recipe.

The family moved to Ohio when Barbara was eleven. She was evidently a cracker-jack student, finishing third in her class; a member of the choir; and the lead in both class plays. She became the family

baker in her home, and their extended family enjoyed her meringue pies every Sunday at dinner.

Another move took the family to Indiana, where Barbara attended Indiana University and received a Bachelors in Education. She learned French cooking and bread baking (for which she thanks Julia Child), entered cooking contests and placed every time. One of her winning recipes was Danish Orange Cake (and my mouth is watering as I write!)

By the time she moved to Dallas, Texas, she was the married mother of four (well-fed, no doubt) children and had a husband who loved her cooking, espe-

cially Tex-Mex. She was also teaching school. Her favorite activity was Friday cooking class. Every cooking activity was related to something that the class was learning about. Usually a story they had read, or something involving math, science or writing was incorporated into the lesson plans.

Barbara was asked to teach other teachers in the district how to use cooking in their classroom. She even wrote it into the curriculum and won "teacher of the year" at her school. Barbara also taught cooking classes to high school students at Temple Shalom, where they made bagels, challah, potato latkes and other traditional Jewish food.

She especially loves to bake, particularly yeast breads. Now she's talking my language. I know just how she feels when she says, "making yeast breads and kneading dough for me is almost a religious experience."

Of course I asked Barbara what she had written, although with her prowess in the kitchen and my appreciation for good food, writing was almost secondary. She has written two middle grade children's books that are creative non-fiction and a picture book entitled *My Grandma and Me*. Her current project is a cookbook for children, but with a twist. (You'll have to wait!)

I can't remember a more mouthwatering interview. Thanks, Barbara!

Members Celebrate With Holiday Party



ABCs Of The Editing Process

How Long Does it Take to Edit a Manuscript?

By Roberta J. Buland



Many people have asked me, “How long does it take to edit a manuscript?” The answer can vary. In fact, it almost becomes a multiple-choice question with the answers illustrating a process. Depending on a variety of circumstances, some legitimate answers are questions that need to be answered first:

- When do you need the edited manuscript? Are you on a deadline?
- What is the total number of pages or words in the manuscript?
- What exactly do you expect the editor to do? That is, do you want a total edit including content and technical editing? Do you want a partial edit? Do you want an evaluation or re-

view of the manuscript?

- Are you interested in proofreading only? Some people equate editing and proofreading. They are two distinct jobs. Editing is helping you to be sure that your work is well-organized, transitions between paragraphs are smooth, sentence structure is good and not boring, vocabulary is appropriate for the target market, and grammar issues are resolved. Proofreading is looking for surface errors such as inconsistencies in grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc., and flagging them. Proofreading is usually the final stage in the editing process.

If you have a deadline, the editor may or may not be able to meet it. Ask the editor if he/she will be able to meet your deadline. The editor should answer this question honestly. If the editor can meet it, then the editor is obligated to you to meet the deadline.

Length and how much editing is needed

will help determine how long it will take to edit the manuscript. I usually do an “initial” or “sample” edit for my clients to determine how long it will take to edit it. Many kinds of errors and concerns I find in the first few pages tend to continue throughout the manuscript, such as organization, sentence structure, misspellings, grammar issues, etc. As a generic answer, it can take from two weeks to two months to edit up to a 500-page manuscript if the author doesn’t have a sooner deadline.

As for what is expected of the editor? It is important for the author to enumerate exactly what he/she is looking for the editor to do. If the author perceives certain weaknesses, tell the editor. If the author is unsure what he/she needs an editor for, then ask the editor to explain what he/she will look for and try to help the author fix.

To assess the answers to the questions above, the editor and author should discuss them and arrive at definite answers. Then the editor can more honestly esti-

mate the time it will take to edit the manuscript.

“ABCs of the Editing Process” will appear as an occasional column in “The Authority”. Roberta Buland is the owner-operator of RIGHT WORDS UNLIMITED in Avon. She is a past president of CAPA and an experienced editor who can be reached at 860-214-5367 or at rjbuland@comcast.net. She is always happy to answer questions about any aspect of editing and publishing.

Note: when submitting articles to the Authority, it would be very helpful if they were single spaced, unformatted and typed in Times New Roman font. This would save the editor a great deal of time reformatting them. If you have a book brag, please send a photo of the book cover.

Word for Words - "A Cricket in Her Hair" by Adele M. Annesi

It's tempting to cut the odd bits of a story that don't seem to fit—a character's idiosyncrasy, an unusual setting, an unexpected plot twist. But when these strange bits are valid and handled well, they serve the work by advancing it.

Two great examples of *not* cutting seemingly out of place details appear in *My Ántonia*, a 1918 memoir-style novel that is among Willa Cather's best. In this poignant tale of immigrant families in rural Nebraska, Cather didn't shy away from the peculiarities of the time or the people. In one instance, she wrote of sunflowers growing along a rural roadway. Transplanted into a harsh climate where you wouldn't expect them, the flowers were like the immigrants who settled the area: out of place, enigmatic, exotic.

The brilliance is

that the reader *feels* the flowers' "out of place-ness" and that of the families who were *t r a n s - p l a n t e d*, too, bringing their unique cultures into a "nowhere" *p l a c e*. Without them, the area would have been unremarkable. The same is true of the families. In their native central Europe, they would have been few among many, small fish in a big pond. Now, empathy registers something about them—how hard it must have been so far from home. In dazzling strokes, like sunflowers in a barren place, the author restores a bit of their dignity.



Just as memorable is Cather's description of Ántonia rescuing a cricket from death. She does it by hiding the

cricket in her hair, under a scarf. The image is arresting and uncomfortable for the reader, though not for Ántonia. For her, the cricket was a reminder of home. With Cather's expert description, an oddity becomes a memory, not just for Ántonia but also for the reader.

The sunflowers and the cricket are important to Cather's story because they reveal the humanity and identity of German and Bohemian immigrants at a particular time in history. The details work because they

show, without telling, the people's indispensable contributions to rural Nebraska just by being there.

Not every quirky detail in our stories should be kept just because they're unusual. This is where it's important, from an editing perspective, to determine what to cut. One way to find out is to ask yourself whether the detail deepens the story, reveals a character or advances the plot. The key is to be honest with yourself when answering. If you're unsure, note the section and work it out later—before you send it off to a literary magazine, a literary agent or an editor.

Cather's descriptions worked well because each was instructive, revealing some truth, flattering or not. She didn't shy away from these realities. Truth never does.

Agents Announced For CAPA-U

Ann Collette—Her non-fiction interests include memoir, biography, pop culture, and military (particularly Vietnam and anything set in the Asian theater).

Jennifer Didik - While

she mostly reads fiction, her nonfiction interests include history, memoir, current events, politics (and of course political humor), and baseball.

Jeanne Fredericks—Most of the books she represents

are practical popular reference. Her favorite categories are health, lifestyle (especially "green"), psychology/relationships, science/nature/pets, gardening, business, cooking, elite

sports, parenting and travel.

Miriam Kriss—Miriam's focus remains on commercial fiction and she represents everything from

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An Invitation To Children's Book And Young Adult Authors

Mary Lou Casotto, a member of CAPA, and the Vice-President of the Connecticut Association of School Librarians, recently attended CAPA's November meeting and extended an invitation to all members who are children's book authors and Young Adult authors to be presenters, to meet school librarians and sell their books at the next School Librarian's conference, traditionally held the final Monday in October. She indicated that this is a unique opportunity for authors to meet with the kinds of professionals who buy books for the younger set and would also give au-

thors exposure, and a chance to perhaps book school visits and events.

She indicated that in earlier years, she has personally extended invites to noted authors from Connecticut and surrounding states, and that usually ten to fifteen authors have taken advantage of the opportunity.

She said, "We have looked to big names as keynotes and have recently had Wendy Mass as a speaker; last year we even looked at Rick Riordan, but I am sure there is talent within our own state. We had been thinking of Suz-

anne Collins for this year or the author of Dormio.

"We are looking at people who just want to meet librarians, but more importantly, we are looking for authors who can present workshops on curriculum connections and reading strategies." Mary Lou offered to talk with authors who are interested and help brainstorm some ideas. She also talked to one of the illustrators at the October meeting about presenting on book walks and the value of pictures.

This year, the Association is talking with the Connecticut Association of Reading

Teachers about collaborating with them on new reading strategies. Some school districts are still concerned about low Connecticut Mastery Test scores.

CASL just this fall held a very successful convention with the state computer teachers about new social networking tools (web 2.0), and the differences between how students read in print and on line. Dr. Jamie McKenzie, the author of Cut and Paste was the keynote speaker.

Interested parties can reach Mary Lou at mlcassotto@aol.com, or at (860) 659-3009.

Why An "Eval" After Every Presentation? By Millie Grenough



Whenever I do a presentation of my book - and of myself - it's a terrific opportunity to meet new people and share our passions. Whether it's in a bookstore, hospital, Chamber of Commerce,

correctional institution, PTO group, corporation, or a simple neighborhood gathering, I always take time *beforehand* to know about the group, talk to key members, find out what their greatest desires/needs are.

It only makes sense that, *after* each presentation, I want *their* honest opinion: did it work? was it useful? what will they remember? what do they want more of?

My simple eval

deals with all those 4 questions. It takes only ½ sheet of paper and 1-2 minutes to fill out, and it

serves multiple purposes:

1 gets the "audience" more involved and thoughtful - a chance to ponder the presentation and give feedback in their own words

2 deepens their connection with themselves, and with me and my books

3 lets me know honestly where I scored and where I bombed.

4 gives them the opportunity, in a gentle way, to ask for more from me.

After many years of presentations, I find that the form below does the trick. Feel free to use it/adapt it. I put a © on it; you know how it's always nice to be acknowledged for something you create.

A tip: I usually do it on yellow paper both to brighten people and so that it will stand out in my

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Adele Annesi's Connections

Have you heard of content aggregators? They're Web organizations that compile material from tons of contributors into category-based websites. There are pros and cons to these sites. They can be beneficial to writers who are just starting out, who are branching out into new markets or who need flexible work hours. This month's column lists a few aggregators, but make sure you read the fine print before submitting work.

About.com

Squidoo

www.squidoo.com

Squidoo is a growing publishing platform and community that makes it easy for users to create online "lenses," pages

that collect knowledge from you about your topic. Contributors have the option to earn royalties.

Suite 101

www.suite101.com

Suite 101 is an online community of writers whose work reaches millions of readers monthly. This site offers new and established freelancers a way



to advance their careers via flexible hours and topics, and they can receive royalties from their work. *To be continued next month.*

Agents *continued*

hardcover historical mysteries to all sub-genres of romance, from young adult fiction to kick-ass urban fantasies, and everything in between. If it's fun to read, she probably represents it. **Linda Roghaar**—The Linda Roghaar Literary Agency represents authors with substantial messages and specializes in nonfiction. Linda sells to major, independent, and university presses. Linda is a generalist, but does not handle romance, horror, or science fiction.

Jessica Sinsheimer - "Ensure that the first line of your pitch proves that you've done your research: I spent six months gathering data on why I reject authors and the number one reason is a lack of research into agents. It's not necessarily

genre, here, but fit: a certain feel that makes a work compatible with that agent's sensibilities. Your pitch letter may change your writing life forever. Do not simply cut and paste, and certainly do not BCC. Tailor each one. Say something like, "I see that you represented [name of book]; I liked X, Y and Z about it" or "I loved what you said at [conference name]" or "I see you like [name of TV show]—my

work is similar." Vary your sentence structure, use strong verbs and advanced punctuation—and do so correctly. Prove with your writing that you love the language." Jessica handles literary fiction, young adult, women's fiction, food memoirs, travel memoirs, parenting, psychology, and cookbooks. **Categories she's not interested in:** Science Fiction, fantasy, horror,

genre romance or genre mystery, screenplays, and almost anything channeled. **Dr. Uwe Stender**, founder of TriadaUS Literary Agency, is a Full Member of the AAR (Association of Authors' Representatives). "We are open to all submissions in nonfiction and fiction. In fiction, we are particularly looking for literary fiction, women's fiction, YA and mysteries."



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