



# The Authority

Connecticut Authors & Publishers Association—Since 1994

Connecticut's Source for Writing, Publishing & Marketing Information

Volume 18 Issue 9

September 2011

## Peggy Gaffney to speak about "Marketing to the 700 Million Using Facebook" at both CAPA & SECAPA Meetings

Authority editor and the author of ten books, Peggy Gaffney has based her entire marketing platform for her independently published books on social media since she brought out her first book in 2005. By using this skillfully, she has been able to uncover a niche market that is worldwide for her unique knitting books.

Though she covers all the types of social marketing in her book, *Do it Yourself: Publishing Nonfiction in Your Spare Time*, Peggy

knows a marketer has to stay ahead of the curve in today's fast changing online world.

At this month's meetings of both CAPA Central & SECAPA, she will present a program that will detail the ways authors may tap into a massive and ever-growing online market and how they may effectively build a website directly on Facebook, to bring members' books right to their readers.

Peggy will also cover a variety of marketing tips and offer a free online course for



those wishing to build their own free Facebook web page to market their books.

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### Meetings

Southwest Division  
Shelton — 9/12

**To be announced**

Main Meeting  
Avon — 9/17

**Peggy Gaffney  
Facebook Marketing**

Southeast Division  
Groton — 9/19

**Peggy Gaffney  
Facebook Marketing**

Check <http://www.aboutcapa.com> for details.

## MEET A MEMBER

**Lisa Saunders**

By Carol Healy



Humor is something Lisa Saunders takes seriously. From her days as the humor columnist for her high school paper through her books and blogs, Lisa captures the humorous aspects of life.

Now a Connecticut resident who spends her non-writing time as an historical

interpreter for Mystic Seaport and as a publicity consultant, Lisa was born in Virginia and grew up in the metropolitan New York area. She graduated from Cornell University and followed a path many others have walked: She married, had children and took a hiatus from her writing career.

Like all published authors, Lisa could not stay away from writing forever. With the birth of her severely handicapped daughter, she returned to writing as a way to work through her grief. With her titles *Anything But A Dog!* (about a homeless, old dog and her daughter disabled by CMV) and *Ride a Horse, Not an Elevator*; two of her published books leave no doubt that she takes pleasure in weaving her

observations into humorous stories that book clubs appreciate.

In addition to writing non-fiction with a humorous slant, Lisa enjoys research and brings a sense of the time and place to her historical work. Her book, *Ever True: A Union Private and His Wife*, involves the Civil War letters of Seward's 9<sup>th</sup> Artillery, a story which she also turned into a one-act play, similar to the A. R. Gurney play, "Love Letters."

Lisa has also authored several e-books and articles and is a prolific blogger. She hopes to turn her blogs into books. "HOW TO GET THIN AND

*continued on page 3*

## Baking With Barb by Barbara Klein

### Hidden Kale Casserole

Everybody knows kids don't like kale. In fact, many children won't eat anything green unless it's disguised. You can make a fabulous smoothie with a frozen banana, fresh berries of your choice, plain yogurt, a little honey if you wish *and* a few kale leaves. Blend it until it's smooth and add a little apple juice if it is too thick, or ice cubes if not thick enough.

Since green and red make brown the kids won't be suspicious. Well, you have to get nutritious food down them somehow.

Now for the kale casserole — here is another sneaky way to get children to eat greens. I invented this fragrant golden cheese-topped wonder that will

have them running for the table. Just try it and see how many vegetables you can hide in a savory dish.

#### Ingredients:

1 large bunch fresh kale  
4-5 cups cubed stale bread  
¼ cup melted butter (no substitutes)  
¼ cup olive oil  
2 cups sliced mushrooms  
1 cup chopped onion  
4 cups grated cheddar cheese  
2 cans cream of mushroom soup  
3 cups milk  
2 beaten eggs

#### Directions:

Wash and drain kale. Trim vegetables with bread cubes and three cups of cheese into a large, greased casserole dish. Top with spread into a large, greased remaining cheese and pour

casserole dish. Heat a large skillet with half the butter and oil and then add the onion and mushroom. Sauté vegetables until they are light brown. Pour into a small bowl and set aside. Next add more of the oil and butter to the skillet, and after it melts start adding kale. Stir until you have room for more and continue stirring until about half the kale is wilted. Then remove from the skillet and continue the process with the rest of the kale. Beat the eggs in a bowl, add the cream of mushroom soup, then the milk, and stir to incorporate. Set aside.

Gently toss the sautéed and three cups of cheese into the casserole dish. Top with remaining cheese and pour

soup mixture over the top. Bake in a preheated oven at 350 degrees for 50 minutes or until set, bubbly, and golden brown. Serve hot with fresh fruit to make a rainbow of color on your plate. Your children and guests will love it.



### CAPA Board of Directors CAPA Officers & Board Members Contact Information

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### Article Submission

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

**Topics may cover any aspect of writing, publishing and marketing.** Your personal slant on this is of interest to all of us and welcome.

Articles should be no longer than 400 words. If the article is longer, 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. Submit single spaced with no built in formatting. Submit all articles to Peggy Gaffney at gaffney@kanineknits.com.

Send submissions for the **Meet A Member** column to Carol Healy at carolhealy@comcast.net

### ARTICLES DUE BY THE 28TH OF THE MONTH

Editor—Peggy Gaffney, Meet A Member Column—Carol Healy  
Copy Editor—Rita Reali Staff Photographer—Deborah Kilday, Chris Blake—Staff Writer

**Meet A Member - Lisa Saunders**

continued

FAMOUS (especially if you're lazy)" is one of her entertaining and informative blogs. Humorous adventures with her beagle-basset hound along the Mystic Seafarer's Trail can be found among her blogs and vlogs (video logs on YouTube).

She would love to learn how to monetize her blog sites and how to grow the number of people who go from followers to book purchasers. If any CAPA members have any good tips, she would

love to hear from you.

For Lisa, one of the most rewarding aspects of being a CAPA member is attending author events. In an otherwise- lonely business, CAPA meetings are great times to share ideas and reconnect with writers who share similar interests and goals.

To learn more about Lisa Saunders, visit her website [www.authorlisasaunders.com](http://www.authorlisasaunders.com)

**Using Structured Feedback to Improve Your Writing** by Chuck Miceli

You just read your latest rejection letter, "Thank you for your submission but..."

Why don't they appreciate your masterpiece? The beginning grabs readers and doesn't let go. The characters are complex, and believable. Your protagonist is handsome, virtuous and strong and the antagonist is unspeakably vile. The settings, dialogue and narrative are so gripping you're already working on your Pulitzer acceptance speech. This is the next great American novel. Or is it?

The question is, How do you know? You gave it to your mother, sister and best friend. Each said it was the best thing they'd ever read. (Actually, Mom said the Bible came first, but just barely.) Were they wrong? Maybe.

Receiving useful feedback is harder than we think, and for good reason. First, we sometimes unconsciously solicit only positive feedback by selecting people who love us and will praise whatever we do.

Then, when an objective reader says they aren't emotionally connected to our protagonist, we might spend five minutes defending our hero's qualities. After thwarting their constructive criticism, will they tell us our villain is also bland?

Finally, we might get feedback on minor issues like the misspelled word

on page 211, but not major problems like the clichés scattered throughout the book.

To get consistent, honest, accurate feedback, here are some suggestions:

1. Structure it. Decide what you really need to know. Ask questions that coincide with the advice you find in well-written books on writing.
2. Put your questions in writing. Create a standardized form. Keep it short and simple.
3. Give your manuscript to critical, objective evaluators who read often and will be candid.
4. Review their answers. Avoid explaining away criticisms.
5. Evaluate the feedback. If one person doesn't like something, that may be personal taste. If everyone dislikes it, reevaluate it carefully.
6. Make needed changes and repeat the process with new reviewers. With each subsequent review, your feedback should improve.
7. When your feedback becomes consistently positive, give the book to a professional editor to move it to the next level.

You may still receive multiple rejection letters (J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* was rejected 12 times). That's where persistence comes in. But even if you

decide to self publish, with structured feedback you'll dramatically improve your ability to produce a truly "great read."

*Chuck Miceli is co-author of Fire Behind Bars: An Administrator's Guide to Prevention and Control. His book, Visiting Procedures, was published by the National Institute of Corrections. Several of his poems and prose recently appeared in Visions and Voices. Chuck is a member of CAPA and has recently completed his first novel, Amanda's Room, a paranormal mystery. He has lectured extensively on Total Quality Management and used the feedback instrument and guidelines discussed in this article to revise the drafts of his novel.*

**Wanted:**

**Guests to be on  
Jean Marie Rusin's  
Talk Radio Show.  
Just email  
[jrusin31@yahoo.com](mailto:jrusin31@yahoo.com)  
Hope to hear from you  
soon!!!**

**Be a guest on a radio or TV program.**

By Wayne English

There is little better for you and your writing career than being on radio or television. To date, I've done two Internet radio shows, a live broadcast radio show, and a television show. The TV show was not a live show. It was recorded and broadcast at a later date.

Here are some of the things I learned from doing this. Before you appear either on camera or behind the microphone be absolutely sure that you know what is going to be discussed. If talking about your book the interviewer should have read it. In fact, you will likely be asked to provide a copy weeks in advance of doing the show. Not to worry, it will be returned.

If you have any doubts of what show will be talking about, ask specifically in advance. Remember, the viewer knows nothing about you or your work so keep your comments general and non specific. Begin to record your radio and TV appearances and add them to your resume and Web site. The more of this that you do the easier it is to get more of this sort of exposure.

Men, if you are wearing a

tie and jacket, pull the knot tight of your tie to your throat and sit on your jacket so that it does not bunch up behind your neck. Ladies and gentlemen bring a comb with you and check that your hair is in place before the show. Personally, I favor light colors because backgrounds can appear quite dark. Ask about this. I wore a light colored jacket and shirt because dark colors can appear very dark.

Don't worry about needing to speak for the entire show. That's what the interviewer is for. A good interviewer will keep the conversation going with open ended questions. Keep your answers general in nature, don't go prancing through the technical tulips because the audience won't have a clue what you are talking about.

Get the word out about your appearances online and offline. Mention it at all networking events you attend. Blow your horn.

If your show is being broadcast live arrive in plenty of time. Do factor in traffic, parking, the weather, what floor the studio is on, and a few minutes to comb your hair, if doing a TV show. When doing a live presentation you abso-

lutely need to be there on time. If the show is being recorded for broadcast later, this is less critical. However, you must still meet the scheduling needs of the host and the studio. So, be on time.

**TV**

- Wear light colors
- Bring a copy of your book that is in excellent condition, as you will be showing it on camera. When you hold the book up for the camera tilt the book back slightly so the cover is not lost in the glare of the studio lights. Look at the studio monitor to see how the cover looks to the camera.
- You will be wearing a lapel microphone that the staff will clip to your jacket, blouse, or shirt.
- Ask about, and request, a DVD of your show. This should be available shortly after the show is aired for the first time. Public TV runs on a shoestring, so don't be surprised if you are asked to pay a dollar for the DVD, or bring a blank one with you. Use the DVD to place the show on YouTube, your Web site, and on your blog.

**Radio**

- Ask if this is a roundtable show where anyone may join the conversation at any time or if you should wait for your portion of the program to begin.
- Bring something to drink and a light jacket as some studios keep the air conditioning very low.

The radio show I did in Middletown on WESU 88.1 FM was the result of a cold call. This show is business and finance oriented — a perfect fit for my business related book. How did I find about them? I stumbled over them online. Then some searching with Google and a phone call were all that was required.

To get booked, you will need to contact the show's producer; that person is not necessarily the host. If you can't find the producer's name online, a phone call to the station's general number will get you the name and contact information you're looking for. These shows are always looking for guests. Make the call and start racking up radio and TV appearances!

**How *Oliver, the Lion Who Wants To Be A Lion* Came to Be**

By Cynthia Bercowetz

Oliver was a very curious lion who sets out on a journey to become a "Lion." He meets many kind strangers on the way to town searching for the Lions Building and to fulfill his dream of becoming a member of a wonderful organization, the Lions Club.

To research my book, I went to the Naples Zoo while I was in Florida, to discuss this new lion of mine. The zoo keeper was so very helpful.

The next step was to go to Lions International in Oak Brook, Illinois, to get permission to have the lion wear its emblem. I thought the staff member would be delighted

with the book. He wasn't. I went to see him with another Lion (a real lion). She knew more than I did about the ethics and laws of Lionism. We had to make some changes.

The result was a beautiful book. However, the book is on a trial basis, depending on how many I sell. Lions International receives a royalty.

This is the first time I wrote a book for which I needed permission to publish it. I had to make up a club name, as it could not interfere with a real Lions Club; so it became The Good Samaritan Club.

I love Oliver and I am sure you will when you read the book.

## Why Is the Story of Jack the Ripper So Popular? by Jerry Labriola

The time: a nine-week period in the fall of 1888, sometimes referred to as “The Autumn of Terror.” The place: the Whitechapel district of London, the east end where the slums were and where prostitutes flourished. The character: Jack the Ripper.

Few names in history are as instantly recognizable and fewer still, evoke such vivid images of noisy courts and alleys, cabs and gaslights, swirling fog, prostitutes decked out in the tawdriest of finery, the shrill cry of newsboys – and silent, cruel death personified in the cape-shrouded figure of a faceless prowler of the night, armed with a long knife and carrying a Gladstone bag. And his identity is still unknown, although there’s hardly a year in the 123 since, when a new brainstorm doesn’t emerge or when experts don’t continue to speculate.

I won’t dwell on the many aspects of this saga; it would take up an entire book. But the salient points are (1) the homicides themselves, at least five, usually with terrible brutalization; (2) the victims, all female prostitutes, usually older, usually alcoholic; (3) the investigation was intense and prolonged; (4) the endless theories; (5) the abundance of graffiti; (6) the varied letters and postcards, some considered authentic (i.e., sent by the killer) but most considered hoaxes; and (7) the suspects included a mad doctor, a professional butcher, a deranged midwife, a mysterious lodger and even a member of royalty.

Actually, so much of The Ripper is mired in mystery

and myth. And with the passage of time, much can get exaggerated, embellished upon or otherwise distorted. I have a simple way of viewing such things: The older a story, the more grains of salt it should be taken with.

But here goes. It’s not very long – quite short and concise, in fact. I’ll simply devote the next several paragraphs to why The Ripper continues to be discussed – throughout the world. To give you a sense of what it was all about... to scratch the surface, as it were.

I must emphasize, first and foremost, that Jack the Ripper created the myth, representing the evil archetype of the more modern serial killer, like those I cover in other lectures. This isn’t to say the whole story is a myth – just that the story has been one of mythic proportions.

But by today’s standards of crime, Jack the Ripper would barely make international headlines, the murder of five prostitutes in a slum swarming with criminals. It would be just one more violent creep satisfying his perverted needs. Hardly anyone would be incensed over the fate of those five prostitutes – as were the respectable families and friends of the pretty college students who were Ted Bundy’s victims. Unfortunately we’ve become a society numbed by horrible crimes inflicted upon many victims.

Why then, are there stories and songs, operas and movies, and a never-ending stream of books on this one Victorian criminal? Why are there many Ripperologists and no Bundyologists? Why is the Ripper story as popular today as it was in Victorian London?

The answer lies in two

main reasons: First, because Jack the Ripper represents the classic whodunit; the story has a terrifying – almost supernatural – quality. It’s been said he came out of the fog, killed violently by slashing a throat from ear to ear, disappeared without a trace; and, after his last victim was found, he vanished from the face of the earth. Yet, over time, much has been distorted – and that brings us to the second reason for the continued fascination with Jack the Ripper: mis-impression. As I stated before: exaggerated, embellished upon and otherwise distorted over time.

In spite of their barbarism, the murders represent a real-life mystery from the era of Sherlock Holmes (the late 1880s) the bygone, romantic era of high Victorian society, with gaslights and swirling London fog. But get this: Not one single killing took place on a foggy night! Not one single killing had any real relationship to Victorian splendor. And, of all possible coincidences, at the same time these murders were occurring, guess what was thrilling audiences across town at the Lyceum Theater, in the fashionable west end: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Together, these two factors, a classic whodunit and the Jekyll and Hyde coincidence, gave many people their first awareness of the potential for inherent evil in so-called normal individuals.



Finally, permit me to end this brief account with this: first, no hint of who I think the killer was because I haven’t the slightest clue. And second, with the unabashed claim that if modern forensic tools had been available back then, the mystery would have been easily cracked in short order. Even if the tools were confined to the barest essentials – DNA analysis, fingerprint analysis and so on – if that had been the case, we wouldn’t have such a lasting melodrama, would we?

And that’s my Ripper Report.

*This article represents a segment of a lecture that is one of a collection of several shipboard talks mystery author Jerry Labriola delivers when he travels around the world on cruise ships. His talks, a string of successful novels and the true-crime books he has penned with Dr. Henry Lee, are among the reasons Jerry Labriola remains in such high demand as a speaker.*

## Planning & Rewriting = Success in Writing a Novel

By Chris Blake

Developing a planning process prior to beginning a novel and then employing a rewriting and editing process after the completion of a first draft are keys to completing a quality novel award-winning journalist, author and editor Eileen Albrizio said during a presentation at CAPA's August 20 meeting in Avon.

Albrizio described the process she uses when writing a novel. Before she starts writing, she develops a plot sentence. The sentence describes the plot and the main conflict that will be resolved.

"The conflict is the anchor of your story," she said. "I develop my conflict first and then I decide what character fits the conflict."

Next, she develops her characters around the main conflict. "I sit down and I interview my characters," she said. She asks about physical details, such as their gender, eye and hair color, height and age. Other details then follow: education, job, marital status, where they live. This is all part of developing a relationship with her characters.

"Problems happen when we don't have a relationship with our characters," she said. "When you try

to just figure it out as you go along, you run the risk of developing flat, one-dimensional characters."

After Albrizio develops her characters, she plots out the novel's chapters. Think of this as similar to a roadmap.

"Ask yourself, 'Where do I want to go? Where do I want to end up?' You wouldn't get behind the wheel of a car and start driving if you didn't know where you were going and how to get there," she said.

Finally, Albrizio said she figures out how the story is going to end. "Not every writer does this," she said. "Some successful writers don't have the ending figured out when they begin drafting a novel. They let the story take them where it will." Both methods are valid, but she finds the process goes more smoothly when she knows how the story will end.

Once a writer finishes a first draft, the work is far from done. "It's about rewriting and rewriting again and again," she said. She said best-selling author Stephen King rewrites his first draft three times before he submits it to an editor, who will recommend further changes.

When an author is satisfied with the novel, it's important to submit it to an editor before shopping it to an agent,

she said. "It needs a set of eyes that can see it objectively," she said. "You are too close to your own work to see its flaws."

Even at the point where a writer submits a work to an agent, the writer must be open to changes suggested by an agent. "If you're not willing to consider changes to your work that an agent suggests, you shouldn't be a writer."

Writers should also be voracious readers of fiction, especially successful works in the genre in which they write.

"You should have a library of books in that genre in your home and re-read the ones you like. They almost become textbooks for you on how to write in that genre."

Proper formatting is also crucial when submitting a piece to an agent, she said. The correct formatting is: double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point type with 1.5 inch margins. Dialogue should be set off by quote marks with the comma inside the quote mark, followed by the speaker's name. In a longer piece of dialogue, when it is clear who is speaking, the attribution should be left off. Never use bold-faced type or all caps.

"The creative process in your book comes in the rewriting," she said.

Albrizio shared some great insights and tips that will benefit all of us, no matter where we are in our writing journey.

### Schedule of Upcoming Meetings

#### CAPA-SE MEETINGS: Monday 7:00 pm

September 19: Peggy Gaffney, "Marketing to 700 Million Readers on Facebook" Hoxie Fire House Hall, 134 Broadway, Mystic

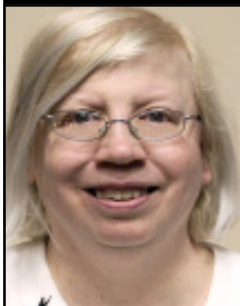
#### CAPA CENTRAL MEETINGS: Saturday 10:30 am

September 17 Peggy Gaffney "Marketing to 700 Million Readers on Facebook"  
 October 15 Karlee Turner speaks on Historical Fiction  
 November 19 Brian Jud speaks on Beyond the Bookstore, Selling Your Books In Large Numbers.  
 December 17 Annual CAPA Christmas Party

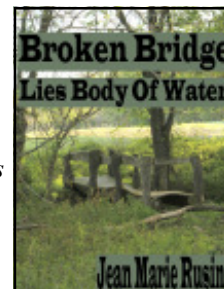
#### CAPA SOUTHWEST MEETINGS: Monday 6:30 pm

September 12 Speaker to be announced.

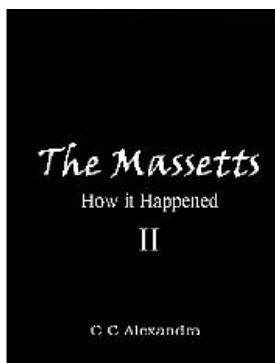
## 🌿 Celebrating Success 🌿



Great News from **Jean Marie Rusin**: “On July 26, 2011, my new release, *Broken Bridge Lies Body of Water*, with cover by Deborah T Kilday of Kilday Kraft, edited by Ben Hardy, will be available for sales at Authorhouse.com, Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com. *Broken Bridge Lies Body of Water* will also be available at the CAPA booth in the Connecticut Building at the Big E, along with *A Polish Christmas with a Magical Christmas Tree*, and *Spooky, Willow Lakes Hauntings!* and *Mysterious Nights*. For other authors appearing at the Big E, it is good to have a promotional poster and bookmarks. Talk to the people who come by the booth and say hello! Be noticed and don't let them miss you!



**Cathy Gibson** will be appearing at the TuTu Party at Kidz Kutz in Simsbury. This will include, story time, book signing and cake & lemonade, on Saturday, September 17th, from 2-3 p.m. Also the public may meet Cathy & Pucky, The Connecticut Whale Mascot at Geroge's Pizza and Restaurant, 9 School Street, Unionville, Thursday, Sept. 8th from 6-8 p.m. These appearances are fundraisers to help her cause **For Children With Love** at <http://www.ForChildrenWithLove.com>. Her picture books are *Through Sophie's Eyes*, *Sophie Discovers Synchronized Swimming* and *Coach Bob & Me*.



*The Massetts: How It Happened*, a young-adult novel by **C C Alexandra**, is now available on Kindle! In this early-1920s story, Gaskain Massett whisks his family from Canada to the United States. A genius for finding work and for making money, he frequents saloons to flush from them skilled – but down-on-their luck – artisans. His 12-year-old son, Jean-Pierre, indoctrinated since birth to believe that disobeying one's father is to disobey God, is trained to be his father's mirror image. Jean-Pierre is forced to accompany his hard-driving, hard-drinking father everywhere – as he did since he was six back in the Hereford Mountain area of Québec. The father cruelly exploits the boy for personal gain and is quick to render relentless physical and emotional hazards upon him. By 16, Jean-Pierre must choose to either stay and die or dishonor God and his father and escape. *C C Alexandra is the pseudonym of a CAPA member.*

**Shannon K. Mazurick** published her third book. It's titled *Gemma: The Search for the Gem* and it is her first children's book. Her four-year-old cousin inspired Mazurick to write this book and Mazurick hopes it will inspire other people. The main lesson in the book is that everyone is an individual with his or her own unique qualities.



**Jason Mark Alster** will be interviewed about my books “*Leaving Home, Going Home, and Returning Home*” and “*Being In Control: Natural Solutions for ADHD, Dyslexia, and Test Anxiety*” on the West Hartford Community Television show *Positively West Hartford*, September 1st by host Silvia Brill. Also, the next CAPA business networking meeting will be Thursday, September 15th from 6:30-8:30 at the Wethersfield Library, please RSVP to [jasonalster@gmail.com](mailto:jasonalster@gmail.com).

*“You can't say, I won't write today because that excuse will extend into several days, then several months, then... you are not a writer anymore, just someone who dreams about being a writer.” ~ Dorothy C. Fontana*

## The ABCs of the Editing Process: Discovering Writing Opportunities

By Roberta Buland

Look for opportunities to write! Writers need other writers, don't we? What I find fascinating about living in 2011 is that there are so many opportunities to interact with other writers, either in CAPA, private critique groups, library-sponsored writing groups and other venues. In my neighborhood alone, at least two libraries sponsor writing-critique groups – including fiction, non-fiction and script. Most of these groups meet monthly or more often.

### OLLI – Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

There are also other opportunities that give you time to write, be critiqued and improve your writing. I recently attended OLLI, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, sponsored by UConn, Waterbury, where I was introduced to an incredible group of friendly, educated people eager to learn new things. Joanna Clapps Herman, the keynote speaker, is a writing professor at City College of New York, who had grown up in "Italian" Waterbury and still considered it "home," even though she had moved away many moons ago. She was the consummate writing teacher, one of the very best I have worked with in my entire career.

### Growing up in "Italian" Waterbury

In the morning, Herman not only motivated us to learn, but she also informed us, based on her own book, about writing a memoir and the tools needed to do so.

During the afternoon, in "Going Deep: A Memoir Writing Workshop," she taught us how to write and motivated us, even as we wrote! Just in case, we felt "blocked," she was there almost subliminally to keep us going. All 30 or so of the attendees had the opportunity to write a short piece based on our own lives. Afterward, if we volunteered, the piece was critiqued by other participants and by her. We applauded others, laughed in all the right places, felt sad when the writing dictated it, and came away with tools to continue writing our memoirs.

### The Day's Outcome

Suppose I had gone but I wasn't in the process of writing a memoir? Would that have made a difference in the outcome? Probably not. The goal was to write — and that should be a daily goal we all should strive to accomplish. Some days, you can work on your novel or non-fiction. But, some days, you may not be prepared to continue writing what you had previously been writing. The tools of writing, the skill or craft of

writing doesn't stop with just one kind of writing or the writing you are doing at the moment.

Had I expected the outcome? Had I expected to be mesmerized by a 68-year-old college writing teacher who had grown up in Waterbury and found her own world in writing? No and no. I expected to learn about OLLI and that would have been enough. Why? Because no matter what age we are, we need to keep learning every day! We need to be stimulated. And that is what I went for!

Writers need the learning and stimulation so very much because we write in a vacuum, our own little quiet uninhabited world, except for ourselves and a computer or a pad of paper. Meeting others, learning with others, being constructively critiqued by others makes us better writers. And the outcome, when we hire an editor to help us put our writing into the best publishable shape, will be so much better.

### What OLLI offers

You know the best part of the day: It was free! Of course, the sponsors had an ulterior motive. They wanted us to sign up for courses in music, computers, history, visual and performing arts, etc.; but, and this is a big "but," it didn't matter to me. I could have left when it was over and never looked



back. I still would have had an original piece of writing that had been read to an audience and critiqued by it and a fabulous professor. I was sold. I joined OLLI and will keep you posted about my new learning experiences, which will undoubtedly affect my writing.

Look around. Join an ongoing writing group or attend single book lectures or writing workshops. The information you come away with will be invaluable to improve your writing!

Questions or comments?  
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**Connecticut Authors and Publishers Association is establishing a CAPA Bookshelf at the Avon Senior Center. The Avon Senior Center has generously provided CAPA with a central meeting space at a low cost for many years. This is an opportunity for CAPA authors to pay tribute to that generosity and to introduce their writing to an appreciative audience. CAPA members may bring books to a CAPA meeting (Central, Southeast or Southwest). Bookplates will be added to each before they are placed on the library shelves.**