



The Beacon

Your guiding light for writing and publishing

Number 16, Summer 2003

Recommended websites for writers:

Many readers have asked for a list of writers' websites. Here it is:

- † Publishers in any country can be accessed through <http://www.lights.com/publisher>.
- † All the links you ever need about Canadian copyright are at <http://www.canauthors.org/links/copyrite.html>.
- † For US copyright info, etc. click on www.loc.gov/copyright/
- † Canadian ISBNs come from <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/isbn/index-e.html> and they are free.
- † Ten American ISBNs cost \$225.00USD from <http://www.isbn.org>.
- † Canadian Cataloguing in Publication (CIP) info and application is found at <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/cip/index-e.html>. (Again it's free.)
- † The Writers' Union of Canada: <http://www.writersunion.ca>.
- † For those in Canada who write for magazines: <http://www.pwac.ca>.
- † A listing of British literary agents can be found at: <http://www.firstwriter.com/Agents/index.htm>.
- † For US agents try: www.literaryagents.org.
- † For Canadian agents, you have to buy the 13th edition of the *Canadian Writers' Guide*, but you get masses of other how-to info as well Visit: <http://www.canauthors.org/cwg.html>.
- † Best site for links for Canadian writers is at: <http://www.canauthors.org/links/writing.html>.
- † One of the best writers' websites is www.writing-world.com. It is full of valuable info and changes weekly.
- † Want details about publishers in North America? Go to www.writersmarket.com and pay \$2.99 USD/month for accurate and timely details about publishers. E.g. current editors' names, percentage of submissions that turn into published titles, etc. Marvelous value!

There are many, many more sites for writers of all nationalities. The websites above will simply get you started.... Good surfing!

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From the editor's desk

I always like to recognize triumphs - especially those of writers I have helped. Here's one success that demonstrates a different way to get published by a commercial house for the first time.

Don Cochrane's new book from Self-Counsel Press is out - *Funeral Planning Kit*. Don self-published his first book, *Die Laughing*, a collection of hilarious stories about his experience as an undertaker, which generated much interest from Self-Counsel Press. They approached him about writing a how-to book on funerals with his insider knowledge and soon they signed a contract. Don didn't even have to write a book proposal! The lucky author has already done one paid book tour....

I am proud to be able to tell everyone that The Write Market (www.writemarket.com) chose my website, www.beaconlit.com, as the Website of the Week on May 29, 2003. I am delighted, of course. Now I'm shooting for it to be one of the top 100 sites selected by Writers' Digest...!

Julie H. Ferguson

Some Tips for Self-editing...

Self-editing is never easy but it is sometimes unavoidable. The electronic era has shortened the deadlines writers face and taking your 500 word piece to a writers' group for comment is often not an option anymore. I once queried an ezine and found my article accepted, paid for, and posted in twenty minutes! Good job it was edited or I'd have lost the sale!

To overcome the telescoped timelines, I use an editing checklist that helps me do a reasonable job of finding my errors and omissions. Nothing new here but a useful reminder nevertheless:

- Wait a while and then read the piece out loud.
- Read it backwards – meaning read the last para first and so-on. Check that each para stands alone on its own merits.
- Read forwards for organization and flow – does anything hit you between the eyes as not belonging or not linking well? >>

Forthcoming events

(for details see www.beaconlit.com/beaconli/schedule.htm)

- Jun 4** – **Promote Write!** for Canadian Association of Professional Speakers, *Meet the Pros*, at the Fairmont Waterfront Hotel, Vancouver, 6:30-9:30pm. \$75.00.
- Jun 14** – **Speaking and Writing: the Indivisible Twins**, for the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers' Fast Track program, at the Fairmont Waterfront Hotel, Vancouver, 1:30-4:30pm.
- Oct 1** – **Writing for Success: Essay Planning and Editing** for the teachers of SD 42 (Maple Ridge), Resource Centre, Haney, 3:30- 7:45pm.
- Oct 24** – **Writing with Power!!** for SD 42 (Maple Ridge) professional development day, location TBA, 8:30am-2:30pm
- Oct 16-19** – Join Julie for two workshops (**Leery of Queries?** And **"I've Got a Great Idea for a Book...!"**) and the Blue Pencil Café at the **Surrey International Writers' Conference**, Surrey, BC. Details: visit www.siw.ca.
- Nov 1** – **How to Craft Irresistible Query Letters** for Surrey's Creative Writing Diploma Program, 9am-4pm. \$69.00, Call 604-589-2221 to register after Labour Day.
- Nov 4** – **Writing with Power!!** for selected students of SD 43 (Coquitlam), Riverview Park Elementary, 9:15-11:45am.
- Nov 29** – **Writing with Power!!** for writers at Surrey's Creative Writing Diploma Program, 9-noon, \$32.00.
- Nov 29** – **Writing Online** for writers at Surrey's Creative Writing Diploma Program, 1-4pm, \$32.00. Call 604-589-2221 to register after Labour Day.
- Feb 20** – **Writing with Power!!** and **Essay Planning and Editing, 2004** for SD43 (Coquitlam) teachers' professional development conference, location TBA, 8:30am to 3:00pm.
- Apr 29** – **Writing with Power!!** and **Essay Planning and Editing**, at
- May 1** *Connections 2004*, the annual teachers' conference of MY ABC, Penticton, BC.

Self editing / continued

- Now do a line-by-line copy edit. I do this on paper, never on the computer screen. I make several passes focusing on different issues like spelling, punctuation, verb tenses, etc.
- Take a **yellow** highlighter and mark every pronoun. Check that a reader can easily understand to whom each pronoun refers. Confusion is rampant.
- Take a **pink** highlighter and mark every instance of the verb "to be," especially when used as an auxiliary verb. E.g. *was murdered*. Get rid of as many of these uses of "to be" (the passive voice) as you can. Also change phrases like "It is clear that..."

Follow this check list faithfully and your editing skills will improve along with your article sales.

All previous issues are archived at www.beaconlit.com/beaconli/newsletter.htm



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